

INSPECTION REPORT

CHRIST CHURCH C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cressage, Shrewsbury

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123471

Headteacher: Mrs Jill Watt

Lead inspector: Peter Sandall

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th December 2003

Inspection number: 255807

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 5 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll; 123

School address: Sheinton Road
Cressage
Shrewsbury
Postcode: SY5 6DH

Telephone number: 01952 510383
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr Graham Manning

Date of previous inspection: 24th – 27th February 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Christ Church is a small primary school serving both the village of Cressage and the rural area surrounding it. Parents and governors regard it as being at the heart of the local community. There is a balance of boys and girls in its 123 pupils, the great majority of whom are of white British descent. The school serves a wide area, with some pupils travelling by bus, and there are two fixed travellers' sites within the catchment area. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Pupils' attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly average, although as year groups are small this fluctuates from year to year. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is broadly average. The number entitled to a free school meal is below average. There are two pupils for whom English is an additional language. Some recent new building has improved the school's accommodation. A significant number of pupils move in and out of the school in any one year; last year, for example, 13 pupils joined the school and 23 left at various times.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
25771	Peter Sandall	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, history, geography, religious education, special educational needs
31758	Ted Tipper	Lay inspector	
22157	Mike Roussel	Team inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum, English, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Christ Church offers its pupils a sound education and gives satisfactory value for money. The recently appointed headteacher and deputy have made a good start and are tackling the most important issues constructively. They are supported by an effective governing body and a hard-working staff, both teaching and non-teaching. Sound teaching is supported by a good ethos in which all are valued. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory; it is good for those with special educational needs because they are well supported.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher and her deputy lead and manage the school well.
- The governing body influences the school through both challenge and support.
- Teaching and learning are good in reception and classes 4 and 5.
- Standards in English and mathematics are well below those found in schools with similar prior attainment, but are above average in science.
- Very good links with the local high school prepare pupils well for their secondary education.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good, as are attitudes and behaviour.
- Sport and music are both strengths of the school.
- There are good, productive links with parents and the community.
- Pupils are capable of greater involvement in their own education.
- Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Overall, pupils' attainment is broadly average, as it was at the time of the previous inspection in 1998, although there are variations within this. While the key issues from the previous inspection have all been addressed, some need further consideration. There has been good improvement in the curriculum and science. The school has made satisfactory improvement overall.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	D	B	E
mathematics	C	E	D	E*
science	C	C	A	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E in the bottom 5 per cent nationally. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

NB. Small numbers mean caution should be used when interpreting this data.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve satisfactorily and are in line to meet the goals they are expected to reach in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils reach expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science and achievement is again satisfactory. By Year 6, current standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science. In the 2003 tests in English and mathematics standards compare unfavourably with those in similar schools, particularly in mathematics where they are in the bottom five per cent of schools nationally. While both the small year group size and relatively high pupil mobility mean that results are liable to fluctuate from year to year, the school is aware that standards in mathematics in particular are too low, and is taking action to raise them.

Pupils display good personal qualities, and their spiritual, moral and social development is also good. They have good attitudes to each other and good relationships with adults in the school. This, together with generally good behaviour, contributes to a positive ethos and environment for learning. Both attendance and punctuality are very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education and teaching is sound overall. Good teaching was observed in all classes, and it was never less than satisfactory. Teaching of the youngest children and pupils in classes 4 and 5 is usually good. Lessons are well planned and prepared, methods support the teacher's intentions and pupils are both challenged and encouraged. As a result many are interested, work hard and achieve well. However higher attaining pupils are capable of being given further independence, with greater expectations of what they can do. Teaching in the key subjects of English and mathematics is not yet consistently strong enough to raise standards significantly. Good use is made of support staff in the Foundation Stage, and to support pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. Marking is helpful, particularly in English and mathematics, and pupils' writing is regularly checked to assess progress. Targets for English and mathematics are written in pupil's books but there is no clear system for recording the assessment of progress them, and pupils are unable to say what they need to do specifically in order to improve.

Very good arrangements for introducing children to the school give them a good start. There are very good activities enabling pupils to participate in sport and the arts, partly through the very good links with the local high school. While pupils are well supported, little use is made of their views, either about school life in general or their own work and achievement. Links with most parents and with the local community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is well led and managed. The headteacher has quickly developed a clear vision for the school and a united, supportive staff team provides good role models for the pupils. The planning focus is on raising standards and the school has set challenging targets. Management of the day-to-day running of the school is smooth and effective. The governing body has a good understanding of where the school is and the direction it needs to take, and meets statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The 12 parents attending the meeting were extremely positive about the school and had nothing but praise for every aspect. Responses to the parents' questionnaires showed concerns about knowing how well their child is doing, not having their views sought by the school, and the quality of leadership and management. While inspectors agree that improvements could be made to pupils' reports and the engagement of some parents, they judge that the school is well led and managed.

Pupils were more positive when spoken to than in their responses to the questionnaire, where a majority of older pupils expressed concerns about behaviour. This was not apparent during the inspection, although there are a few individual younger pupils who can be disruptive in lessons. Of more concern is that nearly a quarter of older pupils said there was no adult they would approach if worried, which the inspection team feels the school should investigate further.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Improve the quality of teaching of English and mathematics in order to raise standards.
- Give pupils greater involvement and responsibility, both in decisions affecting the school and in their own learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is satisfactory overall and pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 6. In the Foundation Stage, children achieve satisfactorily and are in line to meet the goals they are expected to reach in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. In Years 1 and 2, pupils reach expected standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school, leading to above average standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. By Year 6, standards are average in English and mathematics and above average in science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English and mathematics compare unfavourably with similar schools by Year 6.
- Standards in science are above the national average by Year 6.
- Standards in ICT are above average by both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Trends over time are below the national trend by Year 2.

Commentary

1. Children in the Foundation Stage enter school with broadly average levels of attainment. They generally reach appropriate standards in relation to the goals children are expected to reach by the end of reception; both higher attaining and lower attaining children achieve soundly.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.6 (16.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.6 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.7 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Trends over time in the tests at Year 2 are below those found nationally, although standards in tests remain slightly above the national average. This is because the school had exceptionally good results in the first year from which overall trends are measured. The small number of pupils taking the tests each year means that results are liable to fluctuate. Standards in mathematics were below those found in similar schools in the most recent tests, and the school has identified mathematics as a target for improvement throughout the school. Teacher assessment of standards in science for Year 2 pupils in 2003 indicated that all pupils attained the expected Level 2 but none the higher Level 3. As several pupils attained the higher standard in both reading and mathematics this suggests that some higher attaining pupils are not achieving as well as they could in science.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.5 (26.6)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.0 (25.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	30.0 (28.9)	28.6 (28.3)

3. By the end of Year 6, results in national tests in 2003 showed standards to be well above average in science, above average in English but below average in mathematics. Comparison with schools whose pupils achieved similar average points scores in 1999 is less positive, showing attainment in English as well below average, while attainment in mathematics places the school in the bottom five per cent nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that current pupils attain average standards in English and mathematics, but they are above average in science. While both the small year group size and relatively high pupil mobility mean that results are liable to fluctuate from year to year, the school is aware that standards in mathematics in particular are too low, and the school's leadership is taking action to raise them. Achievement overall is satisfactory. It accelerates for older pupils due to the good quality of teaching in classes 4 and 5.
4. Despite the school's focus and some effective action, the quality of teaching and learning in the key subjects of English and mathematics is only satisfactory overall. This has implications for the school's attempts to raise standards in these subjects. The good practice which exists in the school has not yet been built on and disseminated so that pupils' achievement can be built on, year on year. In English average and higher attaining pupils receive insufficient demands in applying their independent writing skills. The poetry created in response to Remembrance Day shows what they are capable of.. In mathematics insufficient thought is given to pupils' existing level of understanding and how practical methods can be best used to consolidate and extend this.
5. Standards in the other subjects seen are broadly average. However, standards in ICT are above average by both Year 2 and Year 6 because effective use is made of the technology throughout the school, both in terms of the skills involved and, increasingly, their application in different subjects of the curriculum. This represents good achievement and good improvement since the previous inspection.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The leadership ensures that pupils are identified early and given a good level of support which is clearly targeted at their specific needs. Both class teachers and support staff show good awareness and there is a strong emphasis on including all pupils in lesson activities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to their work and towards others in the school are good. Their spiritual, moral and social development is also good and their cultural development is satisfactory, making these aspects of their personal development good overall. Attendance and punctuality are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is very good, well above that of similar schools nationwide.
- The school instils in its pupils a strong moral code and helps them develop good relationships with each other and with adults working in the school.
- There are good standards of behaviour throughout the school.
- Pupils do not have enough experience of exploring other peoples' cultures.
- The school does not provide its pupils with sufficient opportunities to take responsibility or show initiative.

Commentary

7. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and was well above that of other similar schools last year. This reflects the increased emphasis put on its importance by the school and the overall willingness of pupils to come to school.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.1
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

8. Pupils are taught respect for other people and their belongings from the time they join the school through their lessons and by the direct example of adults. They are also taught the principles of right and wrong through the constant reinforcement of the school and classroom rules. The programme for personal, social, and health education, in particular, covers moral issues and also helps to develop pupils' social skills. In one lesson, pupils in Class 4 openly discussed why some people do not celebrate Christmas and how important it is to be tolerant of others with views different to their own. They also carried out an activity with one pupil guiding a blindfolded partner around a simple obstacle course. This led to a discussion on the importance of trusting one another. Throughout the school pupils were seen working and playing well together in pairs and small groups and also enjoying good relationships with their teachers and the support staff.
9. Overall behaviour in the school is good but in Class 2 a group of pupils are easily distracted, becoming restless and occasionally disruptive. There is a very clear programme of rewards and sanctions and there has only been one exclusion in the last five years. The open way in which the school discusses bullying is appreciated by parents. Pupils feel that, while bullying does happen occasionally, it is handled well by the school. The negative response in the pupils' questionnaire to the question about behaviour was not substantiated during the inspection, when pupils generally got along well with each other.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Ethnic background of pupils Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian

No of pupils on roll
116
1
3
1
2

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

10. In religious education, pupils gain an understanding of other faiths and Class 3, for example, did an assembly on Divali with pupils dressed in national costume. Also, there was an exchange visit last year with a school with pupils from a wider mix of ethnic backgrounds. However, apart from these good examples, there are few displays around the school, or evidence of visits and visitors, which demonstrate that the school is enabling its pupils to fully appreciate the multicultural nature of the country they live in. The opportunities for all pupils to take part in musical activities, taken advantage of by the great majority, make a good contribution to their cultural development.

11. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show their enthusiasm for carrying out any responsibilities offered, such as assisting in assembly and acting as tutors for younger pupils, helping them with reading and working on computers. They are, however, given too few formal opportunities to demonstrate their growing maturity. For example, the school has yet to introduce a school council, though one is planned, or any of the other positions of responsibility often seen in primary schools. Pupils are not fully involved in setting and reviewing their own targets although this is planned to start in the next academic year.
12. Children in the reception class are on course to achieve their early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the academic year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. The school's ethos supports learning, as does a shared commitment to improvement and good leadership and management. Where teaching is good, it is beginning to impact on standards. The school does not yet involve pupils sufficiently in knowing how to improve their own learning. A good variety of activities enriches pupils' experiences. Pupils receive good support and guidance, but are capable of being more positively involved in their education.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is never less than satisfactory and was predominantly good during the inspection.
- Teaching of the youngest children and pupils in Classes 4 and 5 is consistently good.
- Higher attaining pupils in particular have too few opportunities to work independently.
- Teaching assistants are fully involved and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- Marking is used effectively in specific areas to let pupils know how they are doing.
- Pupils are not always clear about their progress, or what they must learn to get better.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 21 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	13	6	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

13. The school places a strong emphasis on creating an ethos in which learning is encouraged and seen as important by pupils. Most lessons are well-ordered and purposeful, so teachers and pupils focus sharply on the learning intentions. Teachers usually expect high standards of behaviour and in most cases pupils respond positively. Occasionally, staff have to work hard to maintain the concentration of a minority of younger pupils.
14. There is an appropriate focus on the skills of literacy and numeracy, particularly in the lessons devoted specifically to these subjects. Pupils are also encouraged to use English effectively in other subjects, whether through explanation or discussion, reading for meaning, or writing reports and accounts in subjects such as science and religious education. Pupils graph the results of experiments in science, sometimes using ICT to produce them.

15. Children in the Foundation Stage are well taught. The direct involvement of teachers and support staff with the children is good, and their good knowledge of the children is a real asset which helps inform accurate assessments. Strategies and methods are carefully chosen to involve the children directly in their learning, and there is a strong emphasis on discussion and the use of language.
16. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, as well as younger pupils in Years 3 and 4, encounter both good and satisfactory teaching. Where it is relatively less successful this is generally due to one of two factors. In some lessons for younger pupils the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority affects the learning of all, because it takes up too much of the teacher's attention. The school needs to develop strategies which are both clear and consistent, so that pupils understand the importance of following instructions and the consequences of failing to do so. In some lessons for younger pupils in Class 3 the planning and structure of the lesson is not carefully thought through, and as a result pupils do not learn as well as they might. In a mathematics lesson, for example, a lack of clarity led to some higher attaining pupils struggling to understand the idea of *equivalent fractions*, although this was well within their ability. However, teachers work hard to capture the interest and enthusiasm of their pupils, and, when successful, this lifts the quality of both teaching and learning.
17. Teaching is usually good for older pupils, and a minority is very good. Relationships are very good, and the teachers' high expectations receive a positive response. Pupils work hard and are keen to discuss their learning and explain their ideas. Pupils spoken to in Years 5 and 6 were well motivated, felt they are working at the right level and that lessons are fun as well as challenging. Parents too were very positive about the teaching their children receive, both in the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting.
18. Teaching assistants are used well and have a positive effect on pupils' learning. As well as supporting pupils in class work, they plan and organise work for groups of pupils throughout the school, especially in literacy. They benefit from training and are given time to put ideas into practice. There are effective links with the school's special needs co-ordinator.
19. Assessment is used satisfactorily. The school has a good level of information on the progress of individual pupils and is in the process of making this more accessible so that teachers can use it to plan the next step. Careful analysis of pupils' answers to test papers is leading to teaching being targeted more effectively at areas of weakness. However, the setting of individual targets for pupils in English and mathematics is at present ineffective. Pupils spoken to are unaware of what their targets are, and they are not discussed or ticked off as pupils achieve them. Conversely, there are plenty of examples of helpful marking in books, where teachers encourage pupils by giving specific advice as to how they might improve.

The curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is sound overall. There is a satisfactory range of learning experiences for all pupils. There are good opportunities for enrichment, particularly through sport and the arts. The accommodation and the quality and range of learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Older pupils are very well prepared for their transfer to high school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The high profile of music and sport and the range and quality of extra-curricular activities support and enrich pupils' learning very well.
- The quality and quantity of resources for ICT are good.
- Resources for the Foundation Stage are lacking in some areas.
- The school library is too small, limiting opportunities for pupils to engage in research.

Commentary

20. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. It meets statutory requirements for all its pupils, including the requirements of the locally agreed religious education syllabus. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. All schemes of work are now in place with advice and support from national guidance in the teaching of the subjects ensuring continuity, progression and coverage. Teaching about relationships and the misuse of drugs is integrated into the school's personal, social and health education programme, which is supplemented by visits from outside agencies.
21. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been soundly implemented, resulting in the use of literacy and numeracy being evident in all subjects. The local education authority has been involved in and added support for the development of numeracy. A specialist musician works with the Years 3 to 6 classes and the expertise available makes a good contribution to developing pupils' skills. The school has focused on developing ICT across all subjects in the curriculum and this is progressing well, with ICT planned into most taught lessons. The ICT suite is used twice a week by all classes, which also have two computers in the classroom so pupils can follow up skills learned in the suite. Support staff are well used and integrated into the school team, and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
22. There are good opportunities for pupils to experience an enriched curriculum, with particular strengths in music and sport. Very good support has been given from outside the school, including specialist teaching for dance and drama from an Arts College, sports coaches from Shrewsbury FC and South Shropshire Sports Development, with further opportunities provided by Youth Sports Trust. Pupils also experience visiting theatre and music workshops. Music has a very high profile in the school and a large number of pupils take up instrumental music tuition for piano, percussion, violin, flute, clarinet, brass and guitar. A music specialist from the local education authority's music service visits each week to take the school orchestra, as well as recorder groups for all children in Year 3 and above. In addition, the school is very involved in the Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival and pupils have won many awards for their entries that include the School Choir, School Orchestra, Primary Large Ensemble, Woodwind Solo and Primary Percussion. The town of Ironbridge, with its museums and other sites of historical interest, is well used to support subjects such as history and geography.
23. There are very good links with the high school in Much Wenlock, to which almost all pupils transfer at the end of Year 6. As well as the customary visits, pupils in Years 5 and 6 are encouraged to join clubs and make use of the high school's facilities after school. There are 'bridging tasks' in English and mathematics, which pupils start in the primary school and complete after transfer. Pupils attend for half-day sessions to experience a variety of sports, and there is an annual formal sports day for partner primary schools, involving over 400 pupils. The high school now has 'performing arts' status, one result of which is the provision of practical training for primary colleagues in dance and drama.
24. Teaching staff have the necessary qualifications and experience to meet current curriculum needs. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The ICT suite allows whole class teaching. There are good outdoor facilities with sports pitches, play spaces, an outdoor play area for reception children and a wild life area. Physical education can be taught fully on the school site, although there are difficulties in storing the large gymnastic equipment. The school library is too small and in need of development; it is currently inadequately stocked to allow pupils sufficient research opportunities. The lack of equipment for outdoor play in the Foundation Stage limits children's physical and social development.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes satisfactory provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils and provides them with good support, advice and guidance. Its involvement of pupils, through seeking, valuing and acting on their views, is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good arrangements for children joining the school allow them to settle in as soon as possible.
- Pupils' views are not sought regularly and, as a consequence, they are not involved enough in helping to influence their life in school.

Commentary

25. The school has a particularly close relationship with the pre-school playgroup based on the school site, from where most of its pupils transfer. Parents attend a helpful induction meeting in the summer term and they are provided with the booklet 'starting school' which has been funded by the parent teacher association. They then meet individually with the reception class teacher to help create a profile for each child. The pupils themselves have three beneficial visits to the reception class, in small groups, prior to joining full-time. In one such visit during the inspection, the teacher had planned well so the newcomers integrated happily with the other pupils. The system clearly works very well and is much appreciated by parents.
26. Teachers get to know their pupils well and give good informal support to their personal and academic development. However, the lack of a formalised recording of their ongoing progress in these areas inhibits the smooth passing of this information between teachers, especially those who are looking after a class on a temporary basis. This may well explain the uncertainty expressed amongst pupils, in the pre-inspection survey and during discussions, over which staff member they would go to if they had any concerns.
27. An annual audit of the health and safety arrangements of the school is carried out by the relevant sub-committee of the governing body. Areas of concern are then reported and appropriate action planned. However, this is not always taken effectively. For example, the school hall is still used as a storage place for equipment, making its use for physical education potentially hazardous. The provision for first aid is, however, very good, with nearly all members of staff having attended a recent one-day training session; one went on the full four-day course. Risk assessments are carried out for trips but there is no consistent approach by teachers and the actual assessments are not as thorough as they should be. The headteacher is fully trained as the designated person for child protection issues and is experienced in operating the procedures and ensuring all members of staff are aware of their roles in identifying and reporting and concerns. However, there is no fully trained teacher to act as her deputy when she is absent.
28. Pupils rarely have the opportunity to express their views about life in the school. In the survey conducted specifically for the inspection, 24 per cent of pupils in Years 3 to 6 who answered did not feel that teachers listened to their ideas. However, on talking to pupils, it seems this was more a reflection of their inexperience of expressing their views rather than real dissatisfaction. On the contrary, they seemed genuinely very supportive of the school but felt frustrated at their limited involvement in shaping their own life within it.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed a good relationship with its pupils' parents and carers and the wider community. Its links with other schools and colleges are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents make a good contribution to their pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Relationships with the secondary school to which most pupils transfer are very good.
- Parents regularly receive good information about their children's progress.
- Links with the local community do much to improve pupils' learning and develop their social skills.
- Not all parents feel their views are sufficiently taken into account.

Commentary

29. Parents are welcome to become involved in the life of the school and several take the opportunity to do so. Some help in the classroom while others run clubs such as football, netball and gymnastics and several willingly assist on school trips. There is also an effective parent teacher association which organises a number of social and fund-raising events which help to provide resources for the school. Most parents are also keen to help their children in their learning at home, and are generally pleased with the amount of homework pupils receive, which builds up as pupils get older. Parents are happy that any concerns they have are dealt with quickly and helpfully, and they appreciate the way in which teachers are readily available for informal discussions.
30. The quality of information parents receive is good, and they appreciate its regularity. The 'Thursday newsletter' is now a feature of school life. As well as providing information about events and pupils' achievements, it gives pupils the opportunity to write for a wider audience, whether reporting on a match against another school or publishing a poem. The 'home-school diary' is another valuable link between parents and teachers, with parents saying that comments are always responded to.
31. The school has developed a very effective working relationship with its main receiving secondary school, William Brookes. Pupils attend days there in the autumn and summer terms, participating in various sporting activities in addition to one day in the school that acclimatises them to life there. Its Key Stage 3 co-ordinator visits the Year 6 pupils, teaching them in class and discussing their individual capabilities and any special requirements with their class teacher. Meanwhile, Class 5 pupils benefit from working with a specialist dance teacher funded by the school, which is also an arts college. Among other links, pupils attend arts workshops at the school and perform a Christmas production at a special evening there and, in return, pupils come to Christ Church to perform a play, all of which make a strong contribution to pupils' confidence about the transfer at the end of Year 6. Finally, the school has introduced transition units of work in English and mathematics, which make pupils' transfer as smooth as possible. Parents who have had older children experience this process were very supportive of it.
32. The school has good links with the parish church, with the local clergy leading assemblies and providing assistance in the teaching of religious education. In return, pupils visit the church four times a year to attend services. Links exist with the village shops and a residential home for the elderly. Local organisations such as the aikido club and the Parish Council use the school facilities. The school also attends numerous sporting events, for example in cricket, football, cross-country and netball, at nearby schools and clubs. The school also regularly attends the Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival, where its pupils have proved very successful over the years. While relationships with business and cultural organisations in nearby Telford are underdeveloped, the school's links with the community substantially enrich pupils' learning and help develop their social skills.
33. The school does too little on a formal basis to seek the views of parents and act on them. Only 66 per cent of parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire felt the school 'seeks the views of parents and takes account of their suggestions and concerns'. Also, 20 per cent disagreed with the statement 'I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on'. This

does not reflect the response of parents at the meeting, who felt the climate was very open for discussion and gave examples of suggestions being adopted. It seems clear that, while a significant minority of parents feel fully involved in helping to determine the future of the school, a further sizeable group does not. While the annual reports have been improved in line with the requirements of the last inspection report, they still do not give a clear view of where pupils are in comparison with national standards, except in reading, or what they need to do to improve. Conversely, a very clear assessment of pupils' personal development is provided.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is good, as is the quality of management in the school. The governance of the school is also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is focused on improvement.
- Governors are well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are fully involved in strategic planning.
- Strategic planning reflects both teachers' intentions and pupils' needs well.
- Management is smooth and effective, both day to day and in the longer term.
- Leaders are good role models for other staff and pupils.
- Performance data is closely monitored by the management team and action is taken as a result.
- Finances are well managed and used effectively to support pupils' education.

Commentary

34. The headteacher, governors and all staff, both teaching and non-teaching, identify strongly with the school, work hard and are committed to its success. The result is a robust shared ethos in which both parents and pupils are valued partners. There is a determination to provide good academic standards, together with the broader aspects of education which enrich pupils' time in school.
35. The headteacher has been in post for less than a year, during which time she has been unavoidably absent for several weeks. Despite this she has worked hard and successfully to raise the profile of mathematics in the school, which she quickly recognised as a key to raising standards. She has been well supported by the deputy headteacher, and together they make an effective team. Governors and staff also work hard and have the best interests of the school at heart. Effective leadership is evident in the work already in place to raise standards in mathematics, and from a clear emphasis in development planning on giving a similar focus to science. The need to raise achievement for higher attaining pupils is also recognised and planned for, although it is too early to judge the effect.
36. The school is well managed. Non-teaching staff are clear about their roles and need little direction. The administrator, also recently appointed, works efficiently, and parents find her approachable and helpful. Targets for staff development relate to teachers' performance and are closely linked both to school improvement overall and to pupil achievement within individual classes. There are good arrangements for the support of newly qualified teachers. Considering the number of recent changes involving key staff, the smooth running of the school is indicative of good management of change.
37. The governing body is both well informed and very supportive. Governors have close involvement with the school and the headteacher, through e-mail as well as personal contact. They are aware of the key issues from the previous inspection, of the various ways these have been tackled, and also of the current challenges faced by the school. The numeracy governor is very involved in the planned improvements in mathematics and the school is making good

use of her expertise. Governors are involved in the construction of the school development plan, initially through the curriculum committee, and regular reviews of progress are written in. As well as setting appropriate performance targets for the headteacher, they are aware of how the targets for other staff are linked into development planning. The governing body ensures that the school meets all statutory requirements.

38. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is well organised and up to date in her professional development. She has established effective procedures, balancing support in the classroom with specific teaching for small groups. There is an emphasis on early identification of need, so that pupils get the help they require as early as possible. Support staff are effectively deployed and there is good evidence of teamwork throughout the school. Regular sessions are held where teachers write the individual education plans for the pupils in their classes, a practice which is both supportive and professionally developmental. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities for all its pupils, but still does not consistently provide challenge for higher attainers.
39. Parents responding to the questionnaire were not very positive about the quality of leadership and management. Only 20 per cent thought it was very good, while almost a quarter responded negatively. It was also the only question at the meeting for parents where their response was very subdued. The inspection team appreciates that parents have been unsettled by the number of recent changes in personnel, but is convinced that the new leadership and management are taking the school in the right direction.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	325,662	Balance from previous year	12,512
Total expenditure	323,037	Balance carried forward to the next	15,137
Expenditure per pupil	2,341		

40. The financial management procedures are clear and are used satisfactorily to support the school's intentions. Governors are well aware of the budget position and the needs of the pupils. Contingency funds are relatively low, enabling the budget to be spent for the benefit of pupils currently in the school. Large amounts of expenditure, such as equipping the computer suite, are carefully analysed and the school makes full use of available expertise. Curriculum innovations, such as those being introduced to raise standards in mathematics, are evaluated to see whether the money and effort has been effective. The school gives sound value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Attainment on entry is broadly average. There are only five children at present in the reception class. During the week of inspection another five children came for their final visit, prior to joining the school in January 2004. Many of the children come from the independent nursery on the school site. The reception children are taught in the same class as the Year 1 pupils. Although the focus of learning in the lessons is similar, the teacher does, however, plan very closely with the Early Learning Goals in mind for the reception children and the National Curriculum requirements for the Year 1 pupils. Children make sound progress and are on target to achieve the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. The class teacher joined the school in September 2003 and in this short time has put good assessment and reporting procedures in place, in line with the Foundation Stage Profile. Children who have an educational special need are identified at an early stage and given the support they require, enabling them to make the same satisfactory progress as their friends.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and there is good teamwork with the classroom assistant.
- Parents like the way their children are introduced to the school.
- The staff are good role models and manage the children well.
- Pairing with older children for reading and computer work makes a positive contribution to both academic and social development.
- A lack of wheeled toys and climbing equipment inhibits outdoor play.

Commentary

41. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and is well supported by the work of the classroom assistant. Where the teaching is at its best, staff are good role models. They have high expectations of behaviour, while encouraging and stimulating children in their learning. The good teamwork is a strong feature of the Foundation Stage provision. Very good links have been established with parents and procedures for introducing new children to school are well organised and helpful. The class teacher liaises regularly with staff in the nursery and arranges a meeting for the parents of new children. Parents are pleased with the induction process and the regular contact they have with the teaching staff. The teacher has benefited from visiting other schools to observe their Foundation Stage practice and has, through additional training, enhanced her own knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage.
42. In the area of **personal, social and emotional development** children learn to share and care for each other through the activities they take part in. It is noticeable in the 'choosing' and 'tidying up' times that the children respond well to their teacher. This is encouraged right from the start when children visit the school. The classroom is well planned to accommodate a range of learning areas, including the 'play house' for role play, mathematics, writing and reading areas, computer and art areas, as well as sand and water.
43. In **communication, language and literacy** the children achieve well in their speaking and listening because they join in activities where they listen, for example, to a story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They join in nursery rhymes enthusiastically and sing the alphabet song. Children practise their writing and in one lesson they were invited to read the letters they had written to one of the 'Three Bears'. The teacher dressed up as 'Mummy Bear' and captured the children's imagination. Children join together with the teacher to read the 'big book' and achieve well because learning is made fun. Children's reading is well supported by adults at home.

Further progress is achieved when the reception children join with older pupils who listen to them read and work with them on their computer skills.

44. In **mathematical development** children count to 10 and back again. They learn to compare length and height practically by looking at a number of objects and deciding whether they were 'taller' or 'shorter' than the other object. They then represented their length and width using paper clips. Important emphasis is placed on children using the correct mathematical vocabulary.
45. In the area of **knowledge and understanding of the world** the children had thought about Christmas and about the birth of Jesus. They talked about why it is a celebration and why we give gifts at Christmas. The sense of hearing had been discussed together with different sounds heard both outside and inside the classroom. The children studied the life of Louis Braille and were able to experience the 'feel' of the dots for the letters in the Braille alphabet. As well as using the computer in the classroom, children worked with their Class 5 partners to access and print out information about Louis Braille from the Internet. Children have started to create a small garden in the outdoor area where they have planted flowers.
46. In **creative development** the children had drawn pictures of Louis Braille using chalk on black paper and charcoal on white paper while others were making a self-portrait from clay. Children are familiar with the beat of music, can clap simple repeated rhythms and enjoy singing the 'Three Bears Rap'. Children listen attentively to various pieces of music and use their imagination to create their own dance movements in **physical development**. A small outdoor area has been resurfaced and made very secure, so children have regular opportunities to play outside and use sand and water play. However, at the present time there are no bikes or climbing equipment, which limits opportunities to practise some skills in this area of learning.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading are good throughout the school.
- Where teaching is good, pupils have good attitudes to learning and using literacy skills.
- Literacy skills are used effectively in other subjects.
- The drive to raise standards in writing is beginning to pay dividends.
- There is good support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils do not use ICT often enough to draft and edit writing.
- A lack of challenge for higher ability pupils in some classes reduces the independence in their learning.

Commentary

47. Standards in English are average by Year 2 and Year 6. Comparing standards achieved over time in English with the national picture, there has been some variation. The school's standards have ranged from well above average to average by Year 2 and from below average to average by Year 6. Attainment on entry is broadly average, but variations occur because year groups are small and there is also considerable movement of pupils into and out of the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective support they receive. However, not all higher attaining pupils achieve as well as they could, because they have too few opportunities to learn independently.
48. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Standards by Year 6 were judged to be above average in 1998. Standards over time, as measured by external tests, suggest that

attainment at this age was below average for much of the time, but improved considerably last year due to initiatives pursued by the school. Standards fluctuate due to relatively small cohorts of pupils and greater than average pupil mobility.

49. Standards of teaching seen during the week of inspection were satisfactory across the school and occasionally good, especially for older pupils. In the better lessons pupils are stimulated, interested and show a more positive attitude towards their work. However, in some classes lessons are totally teacher-directed and lack the challenge and opportunities needed for higher ability pupils to become more involved in independent learning. The analysis of a sample of pupils' work showed that pupils have literacy targets in the front of their books, but no indication as to whether or not any of these targets have been achieved. Teachers' marking is satisfactory and sometimes good. In the better marking, spelling and punctuation is corrected with comments to move pupils on in their learning. However, assessing pupils' ongoing work in lessons is not always effectively undertaken so pupils do not make the best use of their time. For example, in one lesson observed, pupils joined an extending queue in front of their teacher and waited for some considerable time for their work to be checked.
50. Standards of speaking and listening improve as pupils move through the school because there are planned opportunities for discussion, as a whole class, within groups or in pairs, to support the development of speaking and listening skills. The quality of speaking is enhanced by the opportunities afforded the pupils to take part in the choral speaking section of the Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival, where they have been awarded first place on a number of occasions.
51. Standards in reading are good overall because of the high priority placed on developing a love of reading. There is a good range of reading opportunities in school, including well-planned guided reading sessions, and most parents give good support in helping their children to read at home. A number of the older pupils were keen to discuss books they had read by famous children's authors, such as Dick King Smith, Roald Dahl, Jacqueline Wilson and J K Rowling, and confidently explained the skills they used in researching for information.
52. The school is aware that the school library is too small and does not contain a sufficient range of books for the number of pupils in the school. However, they are actively engaged in looking at ways of developing a new library that will further support pupils' reading interests and give better opportunities to access information. The parents' association has been supportive in raising funds to buy group reading books for the school and the school runs two book fairs each year which provide more books. Many pupils also use the mobile library that visits the school playground, and a number of pupils say that their parents take them regularly to the local library.
53. Standards in writing are beginning to improve due to the focus that has been placed on writing across the school. The range includes story and poetry writing, play- and film-scripts, newspaper reports, biographical and autobiographical writing, making notes and writing instructions. Good examples are found in subjects such as history, science and religious education as well as in English books. Pupils also contribute articles and reports to the village magazine and the weekly school 'Thursday Letter.' An example from a recent school letter included 'Remembrance Day' poetry of a very high quality as well as reports of football and netball matches.
54. Handwriting is practised regularly in classes and this has a good impact on the final presentation of work. There were some good examples of individual pupils' writing on display that had been word-processed. Although there are some examples in the school of word-processed work, the use of ICT for the production of written work is nevertheless limited and pupils are not yet regularly revising or re-drafting their work. A very effective display in the school on 'Learning through Language' gives very good examples of pupils' entries to the Arts Festival, which are used effectively as a stimulus to encourage quality in writing.

55. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The pupils' learning is monitored through analysis of test results and by sampling the writing in pupils' books. It has been recognised that there is an issue about tracking pupils' progress across the school and systems for doing this are being investigated. However, the subject coordinator has not yet had the time to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. This curricular aspect is good because pupils frequently use their language and literacy skills in discussions and a range of writing strategies such as writing reports in science, evaluating their products in design and technology and in writing historical and geographical accounts.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at Year 6 are well below those found in similar schools.
- Analysis of tests is used well to identify and improve areas requiring improvement.
- Leadership in mathematics is good.
- Some lessons are too theoretical for pupils at their current level of understanding.
- Pupils only infrequently investigate or discover for themselves.

Commentary

57. Standards are average in both Year 2 and Year 6. For younger pupils this is borne out by the results of tests in 2003. Older pupils did not perform as well, results being below average in national terms, and in the bottom five per cent when compared to schools whose pupils had similar attainment in 1999. Few of these pupils attained the higher Level 5. However, there were only 13 pupils in the year group, and of these, four joined after Year 2. The attainment of current Year 6 pupils is average, with a good proportion in line to attain Level 5. Work seen both in lessons and in pupils' books confirms that, if the school's targets are met, half the year group will do so. The books also indicate that achievement is satisfactory across the school for pupils of all abilities.
58. The school rightly judges that, irrespective of small numbers and pupil mobility, standards could and should be higher year on year, and that this will only be achieved through a consistent development programme relating to all aspects of teaching and learning. To this end, available data has been thoroughly analysed by the co-ordinator and a numeracy consultant from the local education authority, and areas for improvement identified. As well as attention to specific aspects such as fractions and percentages, the scheme also includes the use of informal jottings by pupils to show their approach to calculations. A comprehensive development plan involves all staff and is focused on changing attitudes, so that mathematics is seen as an enjoyable challenge by teachers and pupils alike. The newly appointed governor with responsibility for numeracy has expertise and is very involved, having worked with every class and teacher. Good leadership is starting to have an impact on teaching and learning, and through this on pupils' achievement.
59. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Standards remain similar. The issue of giving pupils more opportunities to engage in practical investigations still exists, although there is evidence that this is being addressed. For example in Class 5 pupils experimenting with shapes made from five squares (*pentominoes*) predict what may happen, try it out and then review what they have found. Such good practice needs to be extended through the school.

60. Teaching is currently satisfactory overall: it will need to get better if the school is going to make the improvements it intends. In a good lesson on two-dimensional shapes the use of practical resources, questioning and discussion led to pupils consolidating and extending their existing knowledge very well. Pupils were very involved and there was a good focus on using the correct vocabulary. In another lesson on fractions a lack of clarity in the teacher's explanations meant that even able pupils were initially confused. Older pupils looking at different methods of tackling addition and subtraction lost interest and involvement because too much time was spent on whole-class, teacher-led activities at the expense of pupils discovering for themselves.
61. Pupils from both Year 2 and Year 6 showed good attitudes to mathematics when the subject was discussed. As well as having a sound level of understanding and the ability to calculate mentally, they were able to explain their answers and the strategies they used to arrive at them. Even where older pupils were faced with an unfamiliar concept, such as cubed numbers, they were able, through discussion, to arrive at the correct answer by applying logic and their existing knowledge. The school is in a good position to make further progress.

Mathematics across the curriculum

62. There is only limited evidence of pupils being encouraged to use their mathematical knowledge in other subjects of the curriculum. There is currently no consistent planning to ensure that pupils apply their skills in a realistic and meaningful context, rather than learn them in isolation. This is, significantly, an important aspect of the school's plans to improve the quality of pupils' mathematical understanding.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in both Year 2 and Year 6.
- Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
- Teaching is good overall, leading to good learning.
- All prescribed aspects of science are covered.
- Pupils produce a good quantity of accurate and well-presented work.
- There is a good emphasis on learning through investigation.

Commentary

63. Standards in science are above average in Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection. Teacher assessment in Year 2 in 2003 indicated that all the pupils attained the expected Level 2, but that none achieved the higher Level 3. Discussion with the class teacher and a review of his analysis suggests that this was accurate. The work in current pupils' books, as well as discussion with some higher attaining pupils, suggests that several are in line to attain the higher Level 3.
64. Pupils' attainment in the Year 6 tests in 2003 was well above average. Almost half the pupils attained the higher Level 5. These results are particularly impressive in view of the relatively weaker performance in the other core subjects of English and mathematics. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 and looking at their books, as well as the quality of work observed in one of their lessons, indicates that standards continue to be above average. Given further progress, standards may be well above average as they were in last year's tests. Pupils achieve well throughout the school.

65. Teaching during the inspection varied from satisfactory to very good, and was good overall. This judgement is confirmed by the work in pupils' books, which indicates good teaching throughout the school. From Year 1 there is a clear emphasis on pupils finding out for themselves through experience and experimentation, with opportunities to predict what may happen and whether the test is fair. This builds up as pupils progress through the school, with good expectations of how results will be presented, using graphs and ICT for research on the Internet and word-processing. Another good feature is the way some topics start with pupils setting down what they already know, or think they do! This interests the pupils and gives teachers a good indication of where the learning needs to be pitched.
66. A very good lesson on the link between sound and vibration in Class 5 incorporated this best practice. A wide range of activities was accessed independently by pupils, who had to observe what happened, record this accurately and try to draw conclusions as they built up evidence. A good question sheet helped to focus their observations, and the activities were very well planned to extend pupils' thinking. There were high expectations that pupils would act independently, and the whole lesson supported the school's wish to promote more active approaches to learning.
67. The subject is well led by an experienced, enthusiastic co-ordinator. The emphasis on involving pupils in investigations demonstrates a good response to one of the key issues from the previous inspection and, together with higher standards, represents good improvement in the subject overall. The planning of one scientific topic for simultaneous study at different levels across several year groups effectively meets the difficulties resulting from mixed age classes. The quality and use of assessment is generally satisfactory, not least because marking is good, but it needs to be more regular and linked to specific areas of knowledge and understanding if further progress is to be made.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

It is not possible to make a judgement on provision in ICT as no teaching was observed. However, pupils were observed working and the subject discussed with them, examples of pupils' work were examined and a discussion was held with the co-ordinator.

68. Standards in ICT are sound because the technology is well used throughout the school. Examples were seen in Year 1 of pupils' good use of ICT in numeracy for developing graphs from a survey of eye colours, sweet and savoury fruit and vegetables. In literacy pupils had word-processed an 'All about me' description of themselves. They had also used the *Paint* program to create a self-portrait and a fireworks picture.
69. The standards of younger pupils are improving rapidly, partly because they work with a partner in the juniors, who pairs up with them to develop their ICT skills. A good example was where they were shown how to access and print out information from the Internet about Louis Braille.
70. Examples from other pupils demonstrated skills in word processing using different sized text and colours, importing pictures using *clip art* and *Publisher*, changing the size of pictures and text boxes and moving both around the page. Although these useful skills had been learned there was, however, no evidence of pupils using computers as a tool for learning by refining the skills independently in their literacy work.
71. Older pupils, all very competent in using ICT, were very good at explaining what they had learned and giving reasons why technology is helpful. They often use the research capabilities of computers, both in school and at home when undertaking homework. One area of relative weakness is control technology. Although the school has programmable floor robots there was no evidence of these being used recently. No other programs were seen being used on computers to simulate similar tasks on screen, or to control external devices through programming instructions.

72. While no teaching of ICT was seen, most teachers' short-term daily plans had an element of planning for ICT and some other subject lessons observed had a group of pupils working in the ICT suite. For example, a Year 5 and 6 group used a film script, highlighting camera directions, scenery and dialogue in different colours. Another group of Year 3 and 4 pupils drafted their own poetry onto the computer. However, ICT is not frequently used for drafting and developing independent writing, so the pupils observed were not very confident and needed support.
73. The management of the subject is good and future plans are well in hand to put projectors in all classrooms as an intermediate stage towards getting interactive whiteboards. The resources, including hardware and software, are good. However, there is a need to increase the spelling and mathematics software to support pupils with special educational needs, as well as programs to enable the further study of control technology. There has been good improvement in standards and provision since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

74. There is satisfactory use of ICT in other subjects. The focus on the extended use of ICT is beginning to impact positively on standards, both in the use of ICT itself and in the way pupils approach the study of other subjects such as history and geography.

HUMANITIES

*Religious education was inspected in full and is reported in detail below. Work was sampled in **history** and **geography**, and discussions were held with pupils, but no lessons were seen. It is therefore not possible to form an overall judgement about provision. Because the inspection was relatively early in the school year, and these subjects are not taught on a weekly basis, there was a limited amount of pupils' work to look at, but indications are that standards are broadly average in both subjects.*

Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- There are good relationships between staff and children, and pupils generally respond enthusiastically to questions.
- Teachers adopt successful strategies to develop speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils' work is well used to encourage writing in various forms.
- There are few opportunities for pupils to experience other faiths at first hand, either through visits to places of worship or visitors to the school.

Commentary

75. Standards in religious education are average overall and in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by Year 2 and Year 6, showing satisfactory achievement. Pupils study Christianity and a range of other faiths and by Year 6 pupils are able to discuss these with both knowledge and understanding. Assemblies are used effectively to encourage pupils to think about the deeper meaning of their personal experiences, often actively involving groups of pupils in acting out stories. There is satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.
76. Three lessons were seen, one of which was taken by a local clergyman. Teaching and learning were good in all three. In a lesson with Year 1 and 2 pupils good use was made of resources from the teacher's own family to explain that names are special and give people identity, linking this to christening. The activity, to make and decorate a bookmark with the pupil's own name,

successfully reinforced the concept and was used to encourage pupils to develop pride in their work and self-esteem.

77. Both the other lessons were concerned with signs and symbols: the use and meaning of candles and food in religious celebration. Good subject knowledge and understanding was used effectively because questions encouraged pupils to think for themselves and build on their existing knowledge and understanding. The quality of the discussion helped pupils who have difficulty with writing to make valued contributions.
78. Work seen in pupils' books in Years 3 to 6 included plenty of examples of pupils developing their writing skills well. Nearly all pupils' writing is independent, and includes descriptions, re-telling stories, pupils' own thoughts, prayers and poetry. Some of the poems written by Year 5 and 6 pupils about Remembrance Day were extremely powerful and showed how linking literacy skills to another subject can greatly benefit both.
79. The co-ordinator has a sound knowledge and understanding of her role. Currently pupils in Years 1 to 2 and 3 to 6 cover the same topic together, and there are sufficient resources to accommodate this approach. The school acknowledges that at present pupils have little direct experience of faiths and cultures other than Christianity, and this needs to be developed through a planned programme of visits and visitors.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

It is not possible to make a firm judgment about provision in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education as only one lesson was seen, in physical education.. However, these subjects were sampled by looking at work covered in books, on display in classrooms or corridors and through speaking to teachers and pupils, as well as seeing part of an orchestra session and a class 5 music lesson.

80. Long term planning is currently being developed in **art and design**, with the same topics covered by all pupils in Years 1 and 2, and Years 3 to 6. Apart from some framed artwork that was of a good quality and some examples of pencil and crayon sketches, there was only limited evidence of the use of other media, such as printing or three-dimensional work. Art resources are currently insufficient to meet all aspects of the curriculum.
81. In **design and technology** some evidence of completed work was seen in samples such as the 'Three Little Pigs' moving pictures from Years 1 and 2. The folders of the older pupils include photographs of wind-up pulley mechanisms made from a variety of materials, including doweling, cotton reels, wooden beads and clothes pegs; and the healthy sandwich snacks pupils had made and eaten at a picnic in the summer term. Older pupils had designed and made torches and burglar alarms, demonstrating close curricular links with science, where pupils' knowledge of electrical circuits was used when making their products.
82. Good design briefs were accompanied by photographs which clearly showed the process involved. However, the development of design briefs is inconsistent across the school and not all pupils evaluate their own products or those of their peers. There is little evidence of the use of materials which can be moulded or rigid materials in the construction of products, with the exception of the models of playground shelters. Resources are sufficient, but the use of ICT is in its early stages, especially in control technology.
83. Although no class lessons were observed in **music** there was a wealth of evidence in files and photographs of pupils engaged in a range of music activities. These include music workshops, composing using ICT, class music assemblies and the successes of the school in the Much Wenlock Live Arts Festival. Group photographs, awards and adjudicators' comments demonstrate the high standards achieved by the pupils. Pupils taking part in orchestra practice were very involved and achieving well.

84. The music curriculum is supported through national guidance in the teaching of music. Weekly teaching support for the school orchestra is also obtained from the Shropshire music service. All pupils from Year 3 onwards have the opportunity to play the recorder and most pupils take advantage of this. Further instrumental music tuition is available for piano, percussion, violin, flute, clarinet, brass and guitar. Pupils also have the opportunity of seeing and taking part in visiting theatre and music workshops. A notable example was the visit of the Brekete African Dance workshop. Resources are sufficient overall, but some repair and replacement is needed for tuned and untuned percussion.
85. In **physical education** pupils take part in a range of activities to develop skills in dance, gymnastics, games and athletics. The school provides a rich variety of extra-curricular physical activities, including clubs for football, netball, cross country, gymnastics and top sport. The school has been fortunate to have the support of specialist teaching in dance and drama, sports coaches from Shrewsbury FC and South Shropshire Sports Development, with further activities provided by the Youth Sports Trust, as well as parents and teachers. An annual football and netball tournament is held in May each year, where local schools compete for the 'Cressage Cup'. These opportunities have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to and participation in physical and sporting activities. A Class 4 dance lesson was sampled in which pupils were achieving well due to good quality teaching.
86. Resources are generally adequate for games and dance, but gymnastics equipment is barely adequate and difficult for younger pupils to set up independently. The school has identified this as a priority.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

87. Only one lesson was seen in this area of the school's work and no judgement is made about overall provision. However, sensitive teaching and good relationships in reception ensure children gain in confidence and self-esteem. The positive effects in the school can be measured by the mature and responsible attitudes of the great majority of pupils. The assemblies seen during the inspection also made a good contribution to this curriculum area. The overall ethos makes a strong contribution to the pupils' development, which the school sees as an important part of its work. The relative lack of opportunity for pupils to show responsibility and make independent choices as they move up the school, however, limits their personal development.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).