

INSPECTION REPORT

GLENTHORNE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cheslyn Hay

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124162

Headteacher: Mrs Diane Richards

Lead inspector: Mr Grahame Sherfield

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd March 2004

Inspection number: 256219

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	221
School address:	Glenthorne Drive Cheslyn Hay Walsall
Postcode:	WS6 7BZ
Telephone number:	01922 857000
Fax number:	01922 857000
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Keith Hardy
Date of previous inspection:	4 th – 7 th February 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Glenthorne Primary School draws about half its pupils from the area round the school and the remainder from further afield. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils and attainment on entry to the pre-reception class are below average. Six pupils are from ethnic minorities and one speaks English as an additional language. At the time of the inspection, there were 221 pupils on roll. There were 33 pupils with special educational needs, most with learning difficulties. Two pupils had a statement of special educational need. The number of pupils leaving and joining the school other than at the usual times is below average. Glenthorne is recognised as a dyslexia-friendly school.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4758	Grahame Sherfield	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Information and communication technology (ICT) Geography History Religious education
9086	Rosalie Watkins	Lay inspector	
27324	Daphne Crow	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage
30457	David Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Music
32358	Helen Griffith	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school's **effectiveness** is **sound** and it provides satisfactory value for money. Children enter the pre-reception class (which, together with the reception class, is described as the Foundation Stage) with standards that are below average. They achieve well and most reach the goals expected by the end of reception. By the time pupils leave the school in Year 6, standards are mostly average, except in science where they are below this. Teaching is generally good and this has enabled important gaps in pupils' previous learning to be addressed so that achievement is now satisfactory overall. The headteacher and her staff provide good leadership.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The governors, the headteacher and her staff are strongly committed to tackling the significant issues raised in the last inspection report and good progress has been made in addressing weaknesses, particularly in English
- Good provision in the Foundation Stage means that children make a good start in the school
- Standards in science by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory, particularly among higher-attaining pupils
- Higher-attaining pupils in mathematics by the end of Year 2 do not do as well as they should.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work, to the staff and to each other are good and this assists them in their learning
- The school's procedures for self-evaluation, while extensive, are not applied with enough rigour to teaching and learning to ensure a good pace in further improvement
- Assessment is not used sufficiently to help individual pupils to improve
- Pupils are very well cared for by the teaching and non-teaching staff
- The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good and makes a positive contribution to pupils' development

Overall, the school's improvement since the last inspection is good. Standards have risen in English and in ICT in Years 3 – 6. The teaching of English in Years 3 – 6 has improved significantly. It was unsatisfactory and is now good. All the key issues have been successfully addressed.

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	D	E
mathematics	E	B	D	D
science	E	E	E	E

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

Achievement is now **satisfactory** overall, as teaching has been successfully improved. In the Foundation Stage, most children achieve well and reach the goals expected by the end of reception. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are average and achievement is satisfactory for most, though higher-attaining pupils do not do as well as they should in mathematics. In Years 3 – 6, achievement is sound and pupils in Year 6 now reach average standards in English and mathematics. In science, achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 1 – 6, particularly for higher-attaining pupils, and standards are below average.

Pupils' personal qualities are **good**. Their **spiritual, moral, social and cultural development** are good overall, with strengths in moral and social development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching and assessment are good in the Foundation Stage and this enables children to make good progress in their learning. In Years 1 and 2, while there is some good teaching and learning, both are satisfactory overall. In Years 3 – 6, teaching is good and gaps in pupils' learning in English and in ICT have been addressed. As a result, pupils are now learning well. Satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' progress are in place but these do not result in enough guidance for pupils in how to improve their work in the various subjects of the curriculum.

The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and meets children's needs well. In Years 1 – 6, the breadth of the curriculum is satisfactory and the opportunities for activities outside the classrooms at lunch and after school are very good. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Arrangements for caring for pupils' welfare, health and safety are very good. There is a good partnership with parents and good links with the wider community and with other schools. These features have a positive impact on achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership provided by the headteacher and other key staff is good. The headteacher and her staff are strongly committed to improving the school. Management is satisfactory. The school runs smoothly and has established procedures for checking on the standards achieved but evaluations made of the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough. The work of the governing body, which is also committed to improving the school, is sound and regular reports on the different subjects taught in the school are received. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are satisfied with the work of the school in all areas. They like the arrangements to help children settle in when they start school and appreciate that their children like school and that they are expected to work hard. Some parents believe they are not kept well informed about their children's progress and that the school does not seek their views and take account of their suggestions. The inspection team does not confirm these concerns. Information for parents is good and the school makes good efforts to seek parents' views.

Pupils like most things about their school. Some think that other pupils do not behave well but the inspection team finds that behaviour is good. Some think that lessons are not interesting and fun but the inspection team does not agree.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards and improve achievement in science by the end of Years 2 and 6, particularly for higher-attaining pupils
- Improve the achievement of higher-attaining pupils in mathematics by the end of Year 2
- Develop further the use of assessment to help pupils improve their work in all subjects of the curriculum
- Develop the rigour of the evaluations carried out within the school's procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning to assist in making further improvements, such as in teaching in Years 1 and 2

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good in the Foundation Stage and most children reach the goals expected by the end of reception. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, achievement is satisfactory in English and mathematics, and attainment is average overall. However, in science, achievement is unsatisfactory and attainment is below average. In ICT, history and religious education, pupils achieve soundly and most reach national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children make a good start to their time in the school in the Foundation Stage.
- Standards have risen in English and ICT in Years 3 – 6 as a result of improvements in provision and teaching.
- Although there has also been improvement in science, standards are below average.
- Higher-attaining pupils do not do as well as they should in mathematics by the end of Year 2.

Commentary

1. In Year 2 national tests for 2003, standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the Year 6 tests, standards were below average in English and mathematics and well below in science. In comparison with national averages, the results in 2002 show a similar picture.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.5 (14.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.6 (13.0)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.8 (15.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 40 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.5 (26.1)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.5 (27.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.1 (26.5)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. The school has worked hard on raising standards in English generally and in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 in particular. As a result, most pupils, regardless of background or prior attainment, are achieving satisfactorily in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in English and mathematics in Years 3 – 6. Standards in the school currently are therefore better than these comparisons suggest. They are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 in these subjects. Pupils with special educational needs in Years 1 – 6 achieve well as a result of the good support they receive. However, the demands of work in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 need to be better matched to the needs of higher-attaining pupils, who are not doing as well as they should. Developing writing has received significant attention and pupils now write using a range of different types of text. Pupils are encouraged to read and to go beyond recognising the

words and draw out the meaning of the text. By the end of Year 6, they are confident readers. In mathematics, most Year 2 pupils add and subtract accurately. Higher-attaining pupils can solve simple mathematical problems. Pupils in Year 6 know a suitable range of mental and written approaches to calculations, though they are less confident in work on shapes, spaces and measures.

3. Action has also begun to improve standards in science. Sound progress has been made but currently achievement remains unsatisfactory and standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. Higher-attaining pupils do not do as well as they should and pupils' skills in carrying out scientific investigations are under-developed. Efforts to raise standards in ICT in Years 3 – 6 have been successful, achievement is now satisfactory throughout the school and standards are average.
4. In the Foundation Stage, pupils join the school with below average attainment. They make good progress, including the pupil with English as an additional language, as a result of good teaching, which concentrates particularly on language and social skills, and good assessment. Most reach the goals expected in the different areas of learning by the end of reception. A small minority does not reach expected goals in communications skills, despite the hard work of the staff to improve these.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning, behaviour and personal development are good. Moral and social development are also good while spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop a mature and responsive attitude towards others.
- Relationships are good.
- There is a good moral code and pupils understand right from wrong.
- The school enables pupils to take responsibility and make decisions.
- A small minority of pupils does not respond well to the behaviour system, leading to some off-task behaviour in lessons.

Commentary

5. Pupils' behaviour is generally good, both in the classroom and around the school. They are aware of what is expected of them and many pupils help others to "be good". For example, many were heard telling others not to run in the corridor and to open doors for visitors. They recognise that a few pupils sometimes have a problem in classes and they find it difficult to listen attentively to their teachers. However, they also confirm that the school handles the few incidents of poor behaviour well and there is no bullying. Most pupils work hard so that they can benefit from "golden time". There have been no exclusions in the past year.
6. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are good and have been maintained since the last inspection. All pupils get on well with each other and there is a real sense of community within the school. Older pupils support younger pupils well and the playground pals often organise games for them in the infant playground. These relationships extend to the classroom where pupils generally work well together and support each other during group activities.
7. The very good extra-curricular provision, in which almost all pupils are involved, promotes good moral and social development. The annual residential experience is a real strength, enabling pupils to mature and develop their personal qualities well. There is an effective moral code and pupils have a clear understanding of right from wrong. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to show initiative and to take responsibilities seriously. For example, they raise

money for causes they believe in and they serve as monitors in their classes and around the school. Class councils are developing appropriately in preparation for a school council.

8. Pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness are developed appropriately, and this position has been sustained since the last inspection. In lessons and assemblies, pupils discuss stories with moral themes and they learn to value different personal histories and opinions. However, periods of reflection are often brief and there are few planned opportunities for pupils to ask questions and express their own ideas in lessons. Whilst various subjects of the curriculum make a sound contribution to pupils' cultural understanding, the school recognises that pupils' awareness of their own and others' cultural traditions is an area for further development. Most children in the Foundation Stage will reach the goals expected by the end of reception in their personal, social and emotional development.
9. Most parents live up to the school's expectations by bringing their children to school as required. However, holiday absences cause concern because they are a significant proportion of total absence levels. The school makes good efforts to promote attendance and discourage such absences. Nevertheless, family holidays caused at least one in five pupils to miss ten or more days of school during the previous year.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall and there is very good enrichment of the curriculum. Pupils are very well cared for.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 – 6; they are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Assessment is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Classrooms are well managed and the resulting good relationships make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The teachers' good knowledge and understanding assists them in planning interesting and engaging activities to which pupils respond well.
- Teaching assistants support pupils well in their learning.
- In the minority of lessons which were satisfactory, tasks were not always closely matched to the needs of higher-attaining pupils and pupils sometimes became noisy.
- Assessment systems are established but they do not yet give pupils enough help to improve their work.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	1 (3%)	21 (54%)	16 (40%)	1 (3%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

Commentary

10. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good. The teacher is enthusiastic and well organised and children's progress in each of the different areas of learning is well supported and well assessed. High expectations of behaviour produce a good response and the consistent challenge provided by planned activities means that children are often engrossed in their learning. Routines are well established and they move efficiently from a whole-class session into groups and back again. Questions are matched well to the needs of children and encourage children to think and to become more confident. All ideas offered are respected, such as when they were building up a picture of sea creatures. Classroom support staff are well used and make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
11. In Years 1 and 2, teaching and learning are satisfactory, including in English and mathematics. In a minority of lessons observed, teaching and learning were good. This was because the pace of the lesson was matched well to the learning needs of the pupils. Teachers used engaging approaches, such as in English when following pupils' instructions exactly in spreading butter to highlight mistakes. Pupils responded well. In other lessons, teachers were encouraging and made clear the focus of lessons. They had sound or good knowledge of the subject and made good use of teaching assistants. At times, the pace flagged a little and pupils' learning was not always checked and reinforced. Some pupils became restless and noise affected concentration and, in such circumstances, the quality of learning dropped to satisfactory.
12. There has been a focus on developing teaching in Years 3 – 6 since the last inspection, particularly in English. This has had some impact and teaching in Years 3 – 6 has improved and is now generally good. Teachers use a range of engaging approaches, such as the use of the image of a tree in a Years 3 and 4 class to help pupils organise their written explanations. Mathematics teaching is mostly satisfactory, though sometimes good when teachers use approaches that catch pupils' interest, such as in a Years 5 and 6 mathematics lesson when pupils stood up, sat down and/or raised one or two arms when working with odd, even, square and prime numbers. Quick-fire questions work well in the right circumstances, such as when consolidating and developing pupils' knowledge of numbers. There is a general and proper insistence on the correct subject vocabulary being used. Teachers' questions are carefully chosen to match the needs of individual pupils, challenging their thinking and moving forward their learning at a good pace. Carefully considered sequences of activities are planned, such as when Years 5 and 6 pupils were using ICT to develop a presentation on rivers, and this supports the steady growth of skills and understanding. There is good attention to matching activities to the needs of individual pupils, including those with special educational needs where there is close liaison between teachers and teaching assistants; support staff make a positive contribution. When teaching is satisfactory, the pace is slower and pupils are not as consistently engaged in their learning. Work is less well matched to the needs of higher-attaining pupils. In the one lesson seen where teaching was unsatisfactory, the pace slowed considerably, there was too little attention to learning meeting pupils' needs and some pupils became noisy and made only limited progress.
13. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are well taught in classes and when working in groups outside the classrooms. Individual educational plans are in place for all pupils with special educational needs and information about needs and targets is passed from

the special educational needs co-ordinator to classroom staff. This ensures that planning reflects the needs of individual pupils.

14. Sound progress has been made since the last inspection in developing the school's approaches to assessing pupils' work and progress in English, mathematics and science is carefully checked. In English, pupils have individual targets for improvement, though in Years 5 and 6 there are too many for pupils to manage. In the Years 3 and 4 classes, good systems have been established in English where there are a few targets only which pupils understand. It is intended to extend this approach into other year groups. In mathematics and science, the use of assessment to set pupils targets to aim for is at an earlier stage. In the other subjects of the curriculum, useful systems have been set up but there has not yet been time for these to play a clear role in helping teachers to pass on information on pupils' progress to the teacher of a new class. Marking in these subjects only sometimes identifies actions whereby pupils might improve their work.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum that meets pupils' needs well and ensures progression in learning. Extra-curricular activities are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- Personal and social education are both good
- Challenge for higher-attaining pupils is not consistent enough in mathematics and science
- Extra-curricular provision makes a substantial contribution to pupils' learning

Commentary

15. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Planning for each subject is effective in ensuring smooth progress for pupils. The school has fully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The breadth of the curriculum is ensured by the good emphasis the school places on the humanities and the aesthetic and creative subjects. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is well planned to cover all six areas of learning. The planning for pupils' personal, social and health education further enhances the breadth of the curriculum.
16. The school is inclusive and effective in ensuring that most pupils have equality of opportunity and access to the curriculum irrespective of ability, gender or background. Provision for pupils with special educational needs remains good. Staff are committed to ensuring that pupils perform as well as they are able and they provide sensitive support for pupils in their lessons and in the warm and caring ambience of the school community. Lessons are usually appropriately planned to meet the needs of most pupils, while intervention programmes help lower-attaining pupils to access the curriculum. Challenge for potentially higher-attaining pupils, however, is not a consistent feature in mathematics and science and this sometimes restricts their achievement.
17. One of the school's strengths is its very good provision of extra-curricular activities, which makes a substantial contribution to pupils' good attitudes to learning. The provision is very well organised with a very wide range of sporting activities, a good range of clubs, such as those for creative writing, mathematics, computers and "green" issues, and opportunities for learning outside the school day. The school is also very successful in sporting competitions and pupils participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular clubs. French is also taught and the school is in the process of establishing contacts in Germany and the Netherlands.

18. The school prepares pupils soundly for their next stages of education. There is a good level of liaison with the secondary schools that most pupils will be attending in their next phase of schooling. The overall match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. Teaching assistants are well qualified and provide a good level of support. Classroom facilities are generally appropriate, the décor of the building is of a good standard and the school has spacious and well-used grounds. The school identifies rightly that there are insufficient spaces around the building for storage purposes and most of the outside windows are in need of immediate repair. Resources in science are unsatisfactory and this has a negative impact on achievement.

Care, guidance and support

The school gives very good attention to pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides them with good support and guidance. Good consideration is given to pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support for those faced with barriers to learning, such as those arising from personal circumstances or special educational needs, is good.
- Guidance has improved because of increased encouragement for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Children are introduced to school life very well.
- The headteacher and other staff are sensitive to pupils' views.

Commentary

19. The caring environment remains a notable strength. Staff know the pupils and their families well, and strive to meet their needs. They respond readily to any new needs that emerge. For instance, when behaviour at lunchtime caused a degree of concern ways were found to improve the environment. A quiet room is now available and appreciated by pupils. In addition, a different class in Years 3 – 6 is able to enjoy a selection of play equipment each lunchtime. Very thorough attention is given to health and safety routines. First-aid provision is very good. Prompt, caring attention to any casualty is assured by the good number of staff with relevant qualifications. Pupils' healthy and safe living is well promoted through the personal, social and health education programme.
20. Careful attention is given to child protection procedures and to meeting the needs of any children in public care. Staff persevere to meet the needs of any pupil with behavioural difficulties successfully. Efforts to work productively with a range of other relevant agencies contribute to the quality of care and also to the good quality of support for pupils with special educational needs. Staff from specialist sensory services and the speech and language service work effectively with the school to support intervention work and provide training for the school's staff.
21. Pupils are helped to take a share of responsibility for their own learning. The weekly award of certificates and the use of "golden time" to recognise good efforts and good behaviour together motivate pupils to learn. Routines introduced for pupils to agree personal and learning targets and to review progress towards these regularly with parents also contribute here. Staff are developing target setting arrangements further to make them as effective as possible.
22. Staff readily take account of pupils' ideas and opinions. For instance, they used questionnaires to find what pupils like about "golden time" and whether they would like any changes. Staff responded well and helped when pupils suggested raising funds for more play equipment. Class councils are beginning to provide a further, structured route for all pupils to contribute ideas about the functioning of the school. Good plans for a school council are in hand.

23. Induction arrangements are good. Children are able to make a series of visits before they join the youngest classes and these help them settle happily.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school achieves a good partnership with parents. Links with other schools and with the community are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive a good amount of information about the work of the school and about their children's learning
- Most parents respond well to opportunities to support their children's education but a few undermine the school's efforts.
- Links with other schools and with the community make valuable additions to the breadth of pupils' experience.

Commentary

24. A good flow of information is offered to parents. Eye-catching newsletters tell them of important events. A very good guidance sheet helps them support children with reading at home. Information given to them about the curriculum is good, though some material could be more inviting to read. Annual reports have improved since the previous inspection. They now give specific details of what the pupil has learnt in all subjects and include targets for future progress. There is room to improve them still more by comparing standards of work in core subjects with national expectations. The good numbers of parents who send comments about their child's report are mostly very appreciative. The headteacher takes good steps to resolve any concerns that parents raise about reports or about any other aspect of the school's work.
25. Parents mostly come to the termly meetings offered to discuss their child's progress and to agree targets for further progress. They respond enthusiastically to events in which their children are involved, such as sports' day. The Parents', Teachers' and Friends' Association raises appreciable funds. The headteacher has good plans to extend the association's role to gather parents' opinions and ideas. She is also keen to increase parents' understanding of their children's learning and of how they can help. Currently, a well-presented course, designed to build understanding of the teaching of literacy and numeracy, is proving successful with a small but enthusiastic group of parents. The school finds that, despite teachers' encouragement, a few parents are reluctant to support their child with reading or other homework. Others interrupt learning by allowing gaps in their children's attendance; the number of holidays taken in term time is high. Parents of pupils with special educational needs do not always respond to opportunities to discuss their children's individual education plans.
26. The good links with local secondary schools add to pupils' achievements. For instance, Year 6 pupils were able last year to make a series of visits to use computer facilities at one of the receiving schools to research a project on Mexico. Sports teams compete frequently against other local schools. Regular meetings for staff with colleagues at partner primary schools contribute to curricular developments. Similarly, links with the community extend pupils' experience through a wide range of activities, from road safety work in the local area to visits to a power station and a range of other destinations. Good links with local churches include visits from clergy who contribute to assemblies and lessons. Other visitors also support pupils in their learning, for instance members of a local history society help the school's history club.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher and key staff provide good leadership. Management is satisfactory, as is the governance of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is strongly committed to the improvement of the school and her leadership results in key staff providing good leadership in their subjects.
- Good leadership and effective use of the support for improvement provided by Staffordshire Local Education Authority has enabled the school to make good progress and it no longer suffers from significant underachievement.
- Evaluations made of the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough to contribute effectively to plans for further improvement.

Commentary

27. Leadership in the school has improved since the last inspection and is now good. The headteacher provides good leadership and shows determination in leading her staff to tackle successfully the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. The action plan to achieve this is thorough and clear and progress has been reviewed frequently. The standards that the school expects individual pupils to reach in English, mathematics and science are carefully set out and their progress is checked regularly by the teachers. The school has maintained its strong commitment to a broad curriculum and to promoting inclusion through providing a wide range of opportunities to promote pupils' broader personal and social development. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership. Her expertise and knowledge of individual pupils' needs are effective in providing support and increasing the knowledge of her colleagues. Subject co-ordinators are well supported in their roles by the headteacher. Time to undertake observations in classrooms and examine samples of pupils' work is made available and co-ordinators provide energetic leadership, sharing the headteacher's determination to make progress. They have had appropriate training and generally have a strong sense of future priorities.
28. The school has used the support of the local education authority (LEA) well and the headteacher and her staff have been determined to make effective use of LEA advisers and consultants. LEA staff have helped in various important ways. These have included running training sessions, providing advice for individual teachers, giving demonstration lessons for school staff to observe and supporting co-ordinators in planning and evaluating improvements. Good use of LEA support has contributed to an improvement in the quality of teaching, particularly of English, and consequently raised standards in Years 3 – 6 in English and also in ICT. There is no longer underachievement by pupils in these two subjects.
29. The school effectively checks the progress of pupils towards standards expected in English, mathematics and science. There is a thorough policy for self-review which includes detailed guidance for subject co-ordinators on observing lessons and on checking samples of pupils' work as well as suitable forms on which to record judgements. These are in systematic use and most co-ordinators have had the opportunity to use these two approaches. Some governors visit the school frequently and work with subject co-ordinators to observe teaching and learning in classrooms. Most co-ordinators are linked with an individual governor and many reports to the governing body on particular subjects have been written – either by the co-ordinator or in some cases by the governor. However, judgements made are not rigorous enough. Teaching is frequently judged to be excellent in almost every respect and reports to the governing body are often descriptive and lack sharpness in evaluations. Although the procedures in place are good, they are not being operated with enough rigour to help co-ordinators in planning for the future development of their subject or to provide the headteacher and governors with enough information to help in planning the school's future development.
30. The school's finances are soundly managed. Spending exceeded income in 2002-03 in order to maintain staffing levels. There are sound plans to ensure the budget is balanced in the future.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	526,640
Total expenditure	538,840
Expenditure per pupil	2,438

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	24,656
Balance carried forward to the next	12,456

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Most children enter school with attainment that is below average, and a significant number have poorly developed speech, language and communication skills. The staff concentrate on the development of language and social skills and as a result children make good progress. Children learn and achieve well in relation to their attainment on entry. This is because teaching is good and children are provided with a wide range of challenging and stimulating activities that are well matched to their needs.

The Foundation Stage is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. She has a very good understanding of the needs of young children and of how best they learn. She acts as a good role model for others. The provision is well organised. All staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and work well as a team. Consistent and effective practices are in place to assess what children can do and how well they are learning. Staff regularly collect and record information on children's experiences and achievements in the six areas of learning. This is used effectively to plan future work. Provision is similar to that reported in the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff have high expectations of how children should behave and they respond accordingly and achieve well.
- The good teaching and interesting activities provided ensure that children quickly develop good attitudes to learning.

Commentary

31. Staff throughout the Foundation Stage ensure that the environment provided and their high expectations help the children to learn the right way to behave quickly. Most children achieve well and are likely to attain the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children are given lots of praise and attention for behaving well but, when needed, staff correct the children firmly but sensitively, thus supporting their self-esteem. They expect children to be responsible, taking every opportunity to encourage this. Equipment is well organised and labelled, which enables children to find the things they need and return them after use. Many examples were seen during the inspection where children concentrated for periods of time, behaving sensibly and sharing resources. The youngest children in the pre-reception class were engrossed in a variety of creative activities, busily exploring colour, cutting and sticking to produce a collage. A group of older children in the reception class co-operated well together to produce the first page of a class storybook. They followed instructions carefully and achieved the objectives well.
32. Activities are well planned to stimulate children's interest and curiosity and teaching is good. As a result, even at this stage many children show good attitudes to learning. They maintain attention and sit quietly, and are confident to try new things.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teacher's good subject knowledge ensures that children are provided with many opportunities to develop their literacy skills.
- Staff take every opportunity, both formal and informal, to develop children's language and communication skills; as a result, children make good progress.

Commentary

33. Although many children start school with below average speech and language skills. For example, they speak using single words or incomplete sentences, most achieve well and will attain the expected goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. Staff work hard to develop children's communication skills through all activities, but even so, many children do not develop sufficient skills to attain the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children are given good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through a variety of activities and role-play. Small group sessions provide other good opportunities for children to share their ideas with an adult and to extend their vocabulary. In this situation, they start to sustain attentive listening and to respond with relevant comments.
34. Staff plan well to cover all aspects of this area of learning. They provide well-organised and exciting activities that motivate them and help to develop their skills. Teaching and learning are good and children are achieving well. From an early stage, children learn to enjoy stories. The whole class shared reading of books such as "The Shark" help children to understand that words and pictures carry meaning. Most children know how to handle a book correctly and can recognise some familiar words. Higher-attaining children can read simple books confidently. Children make good progress with developing their writing skills. They learn to form letters correctly and higher-attaining children can write a simple sentence, starting with a capital letter and ending with a full stop.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff provide a wide range of interesting activities to develop children's mathematical understanding and, as a result, children achieve well.
- Work is very well planned to ensure children of varying abilities are learning at an appropriate level for their needs.

Commentary

35. Teaching and learning are good and most children are likely to attain the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1; some children will exceed them. Although children enter the pre-reception class with below average attainment, they make good progress because suitable emphasis is placed on teaching mathematical skills through a wide range of practical activities, songs and games, which is relevant to children's needs. For example, a group of children were cutting out a given number of petals each and sticking them onto a flower and in this way, by the end of the session, they were developing a clear understanding of how to combine two numbers together to make 14. Another group of younger children was moving toy frogs on and off two lily pads and by the end had a good understanding of "one more" when working with numbers to 6. Staff are skilled at questioning children whilst they are engaged in games and activities in order to develop their mathematical understanding and to develop mathematical language. Work is very well planned to cater for children's varying needs. In a very good lesson observed, whilst the majority of the class were working with the teacher on number patterns, higher and lower-attaining children were working with teaching assistants on work adapted to their particular needs. This ensured all children achieved very well.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards. However, an analysis of the teacher's planning shows that all aspects of this wide area of learning are well thought out. This provides children with suitable opportunities to develop their learning in order to achieve the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1. Work in this area is sometimes well linked with other areas of learning. During the inspection, linked with their work in literacy, children in the reception class were learning about the properties of water in order to describe it to an "alien". Children have drawn a map of Goldilocks' route to the house of the three bears. Children are making good progress in developing their information and communication technology skills. For example, a group of older children were learning how to word process their writing for a class storybook. They were able to copy their sentences using the appropriate keys on the computer and use the mouse accurately to alter the font size.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many opportunities are provided for children to develop their skills and most will attain the expected goals by the end of the reception year.
- Children are well prepared before they start physical activities so that they can start promptly when they reach the hall.

Commentary

36. Staff use the outside play area well, which enables children to develop their co-ordination. There is an appropriate range of outdoor equipment, which is used effectively to develop children's climbing and balancing skills. During the inspection, children in the pre-reception class moved confidently and manoeuvred a variety of wheeled toys with satisfactory control and without bumping into each other. In more formal physical education sessions, the older children in the reception class enter the hall sensibly and are able to find a space quickly, in order to start the lesson with no time wasting. They listen and respond to instructions well and can throw and catch balls with satisfactory control. Staff are well aware of the need to improve children's fine manipulation and they provide them with good opportunities to develop their skills, such as by handling small toys, a variety of tools and a range of construction materials. Overall, teaching and learning are good and most children achieve well and are likely to reach the expected goals by the time they enter Year 1.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

It was not possible to make an overall judgement of provision or standards in this area of learning. However, in a short session observed in the pre-reception class, the youngest children were enjoying exploring colour and texture whilst making collages of fish or of different shades of the sea. They showed good attitudes to learning and concentrated well. An examination of work on display and in their books shows that children are given suitable opportunities to experience a range of techniques and a variety of media. They enjoy singing and older children know a number of songs and rhymes by heart. The singing of number songs, such as "Five Little Speckled Frogs" and "Ten in a Bed", supports work in mathematics and develops children's understanding of mathematical terms, like "more" and "less". Children have appropriate opportunities to develop their imagination through participating in role-play. During the inspection, children were busy buying and selling flowers in the class flower shop, linked with work in mathematics. Sometimes work in literacy is effectively linked with creative work. For example, a group of children in the reception class was using flour dough to model sea creatures, related to their study of "The Shark".

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 3 - 6 is good.
- Standards have continued to rise, especially in writing.
- Effective subject co-ordination, with support from the LEA, has identified areas of under-achievement and positive strategies are improving standards.
- Developing assessment and target setting procedures for writing in the Years 3 and 4 classes has helped to raise standards.
- The new library area is not used to enhance teaching and learning in the subject.
- Handwriting skills are taught but pupils do not apply these routinely; opportunities to write with pens are limited.

Commentary

37. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and, in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, they are good. The good teaching in Years 3 – 6 classes has enabled pupils to overcome previous gaps in their learning. Pupils are now able to write for a wider range of purposes and audiences and are beginning to produce extended texts. Pupils enter Year 1 attaining in line with national expectations, they achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards in all aspects of English by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, standards are also in line with the national average, which is an improvement since the last inspection, and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in Years 1 - 6 as a result of the good support they receive from the teachers and teaching assistants.
38. Speaking and listening skills are average, which reflects effective teaching and role modelling by teachers and teaching assistants. Open-ended questions give pupils opportunities to respond and develop their oral skills. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use role-play areas to practise oral skills, which gives them confidence and skills to speak in different situations.
39. Subject co-ordination has been effective in helping to raise standards. The subject co-ordinator's work with the LEA advisory team, through monitoring of teaching, scrutiny of work and use of assessment, has brought about improvements in the provision and standards of English. In particular, the use of individual writing folders to track the progress of individual pupils has contributed to raising standards in writing. Close attention is paid to checking pupils' progress in the different skills of reading and writing. A range of assessments is used, including non-statutory test scores. Teachers use this data effectively to inform their planning; it has been fundamental to raising standards by exposing gaps in learning, enabling these to be addressed and pupils' progress tracked.
40. Pupils are now given opportunities to write using a wider range of text types and develop their creativity in writing. Focused planning of tasks well matched to pupils' needs supports this. For example, when writing instructions, the older, higher-attaining pupils in a Years 1 and 2 lesson, used complex sentences and varied vocabulary, while those with special needs used simple instructions and line drawings. In Year 6, pupils write with humour and discuss the appropriateness of different genres (reports, diaries, and letters) for a writing task on Shakespeare. The high profile of writing is reflected in extra-curricular provision of a lunchtime writing club using ICT, which gives pupils opportunities to practise and extend their writing skills. Pupils use word processing for some of their writing in all classes. Pupils are taught to use joined handwriting from Years 1 and 2, but many pupils' handwriting is immature at Year 6 and writing in ink is not standard practice. The system of awarding "pen licences" restricts pupils' opportunities to develop fluent handwriting using ink, as most write using pencil.

41. Pupils have individual targets for reading and writing, but many are not clear about their target and what they have to do in order to improve. Most targets are not written in language which pupils understand and frequently there are too many of them. This is not the case for writing targets in the Years 3 and 4 classes, where a different assessment and target setting procedure has recently been introduced. The pupils from these classes each have two targets for writing; they understand their targets and what they have to do in order to achieve them. Samples of work show that this process is effective in supporting learning and is having an increasing impact on raising standards.
42. In Year 3 – 6, teaching is good. Lesson content is now more varied; assessment is more widely used to inform planning and teachers are using a range of skills and resources, both of which have contributed to improvements in teaching quality. The positive impact of the new assessment and target setting process in the Year 3 and 4 classes has also contributed significantly. Tasks for writing have widened from the previous emphasis on writing stories and informative texts. Teachers often do not make pupils' learning objectives clear at the start of some lessons, or review what pupils have learned at the end of these lessons. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 make good use of pupils' individual learning targets in lessons so that their knowledge of how pupils are progressing is good. In Years 1 and 2 classes where teaching is satisfactory, pupils are often not sure what they need to do to improve because of the large number of targets and the way they are written.
43. Each class has a dedicated book corner or reading area with a wide range of fiction books, reference books and some non-fiction (usually linked to topic work). Pupils are encouraged to become readers and not just learn to read. The class reading areas are widely used by the pupils. Pupils in a Years 1 and 2 class are encouraged to share books and read aloud, which they enjoy and which improves their skills. By Year 2, they use a variety of clues to read unfamiliar words. Year 6 pupils read confidently, have a range of strategies to read unrecognised words and are able to infer from text. The newly established library area holds most of the non-fiction book stock and has computers to enable pupils to develop research skills using the Internet. At present, there is no catalogue of the school's book stock to promote teachers' awareness of the range of books in the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. There is good provision for developing and practising language skills through cross-curricular activities in mathematics, science and other subjects. Books within classrooms include non-fiction books relating to cross-curricular topics, which are extended by the non-fiction stock in the library. This helps pupils to use their reading skills. Writing tasks cover all subjects, which give the pupils' opportunities to write using different text types and for different audiences.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are gradually rising across the school and pupils are achieving satisfactorily, though higher-attaining pupils do not do as well as they should by the end of Year 2
- Pupils have good attitudes to their learning, though assessment does not provide them with enough guidance on how to improve
- Leadership of the subject is good and provides a clear sense of direction, though monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough
- Pupils lack confidence in their work on shape, space and measures by the end of Year 6

Commentary

45. Prompt, effective action taken by the previous and present mathematics co-ordinators since 2002 has led to improvements in planning, teaching methods, resources and systems for tracking pupils' progress, all of which are now satisfactory. These have led, in turn, to gradually rising standards across the school. The declining trend in Year 2 standards is being reversed and most pupils are now on course to reach average standards at the end of the year. Current Year 6 pupils are also on track to attain average standards. In Years 1 – 6, pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons and achieve well.
46. Year 2 pupils have a sound grasp of tens and units. Most add and subtract quite accurately, although lower-attaining pupils work with numbers up to 20 or so and often need help in order to find the correct answers. Higher-attaining pupils solve a range of simple problems, they measure and weigh accurately and they use simple charts to record data. However, higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged appropriately and this does not help them to attain the standards of which they are capable.
47. Pupils in Year 6 know an appropriate range of mental and written methods of calculation for whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages and higher-attaining pupils have sound understanding of the properties of shapes. However, pupils are generally less confident in their work on shapes, spaces and measures and they are not very swift in mental mathematics. Although mental strategies are often taught soundly, there is no clear expectation of how rapidly they should be able to calculate. They draw and interpret a range of graphs and present data in various forms of charts. There were several examples in workbooks of appropriate problem-solving strategies and mathematical investigations, but evidence suggests that these aspects of the work need further development.
48. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good teaching in all years. In the best lessons, teachers' subject knowledge and skilful questioning enabled them to adapt the National Numeracy Strategy in ways to suit pupils of different abilities. Teachers plan lessons appropriately, but there are some shortcomings when the needs of all pupils are not fully met. Higher-attaining pupils, in particular, are not always given more demanding and challenging work to extend their mathematical skills. Relationships are usually good in lessons, pupils' attitudes to their work are good and teachers are committed to helping pupils. The sessions at the end of lessons are not sufficiently evaluative, and, as a result, do not provide teachers with a clear picture of pupils' progress during the lesson. The use of ICT is underdeveloped in mathematics. Assessment procedures are developing appropriately, but the information gathered by teachers is not always used well to diagnose areas of further learning. Procedures for checking pupils' progress and target setting are at an early stage of development. Marking is frequent, but it does not consistently indicate steps for improvement.
49. The mathematics co-ordinator is providing good leadership. She has a secure grasp of existing strengths and areas for development and she provides a good level of support for her colleagues. Staff have received a high level of training to enable them to teach mathematics appropriately and this is helping to raise pupils' standards in the subject. The school engages in a sound analysis of test results to highlight strengths and weaknesses, and these findings are used appropriately to inform the curriculum, and to help teachers focus their planning on areas of need. Monitoring is developing soundly, but it is not yet rigorous in its evaluation of teaching and learning. There is a detailed action plan for the development of the subject and the subject is resourced appropriately. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. Evidence from science during the inspection indicates that numeracy skills are being deployed satisfactorily. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 use mathematical and graphical skills to record and analyse data from various investigations. However, although this aspect of the school's work is sound, insufficient monitoring takes place to ensure that opportunities are exploited to the full.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards have improved, attainment is currently below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory
- Leadership is firmly rooted in a drive to raise standards, though monitoring of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough
- More able pupils are not sufficiently challenged by the work provided
- A few teachers are not secure in their understanding of scientific principles and processes
- Skills of scientific enquiry and investigation are under-developed

Commentary

51. The 2003 results in Year 2 and Year 6 indicate that standards of attainment were well below average. However, the school is working hard to improve standards of achievement and the inspection findings confirm that there is a steady improvement in pupils' work. Currently, standards of attainment are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils' achievement is still unsatisfactory. At the last inspection, standards were reported as average.
52. Pupils in Year 2 have a reasonably secure knowledge of materials and they conduct simple experiments to test their hypotheses. They experiment with toys to see how fast they will move along different types of surfaces and they roll different types of materials, such as playdough, to see how the forces of push and pull affect their shapes. They are enthusiastic in lessons and they are eager to explain their investigations to visitors. However, pupils do not listen well enough in lessons and this often affects their standards of achievement. Skills in scientific enquiry are under-developed and higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
53. In Years 5 and 6, pupils talk about their scientific activities and clearly enjoy doing investigations, though their skills in these are not yet good enough. There are appropriate links with literacy as pupils are beginning to acquire a more secure grasp of scientific language. Their workbooks show opportunities to study such topics as micro-organisms, health hazards, natural habitats, gases and liquids as well as life cycles and the orbits of the earth and moon. However, higher-attaining pupils are not consistently challenged and this restricts opportunities for these pupils to achieve higher standards. Lower-attaining pupils are usually well supported and these make satisfactory progress.
54. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good lessons and one judged to be unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, teacher show confident subject knowledge and ask questions that promote pupils' understanding soundly and make them think carefully about the work they do. The lessons are stimulating and challenging and the teachers are secure in their subject knowledge. Generally, teachers prepare the lessons appropriately and often give clear explanations, but the pace of work is sometimes too slow and a few pupils are not always sufficiently engaged and concentrating on tasks. On occasion, some teachers' lack of scientific knowledge and understanding has a negative impact on teaching and learning. In some lessons, teachers tend to accept too much noise and movement in their classrooms and pupils' listening skills are often immaturely developed. In one unsatisfactory lesson, the pupils spent too much time in the afternoon working on a fairly undemanding task and, as a result, their concentration levels were soon affected adversely. There is scope to use ICT more in science lessons. Assessment procedures are being developed appropriately, but the information gathered is not yet used rigorously to target improvements.
55. There have been changes in the leadership and management of science in the last year. Building on the work started by the former co-ordinator, the current postholder demonstrates an appropriate vision for development in her detailed action plan. She focuses well on the current

strengths and weaknesses in the subject area and she has a clear and enthusiastic determination to improve standards and achievement in science. The use of time needs to be reviewed to ensure that science lessons are not over long in some classes. Resources are unsatisfactory in science and this has a negative impact on attainment.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement in Years 3 – 6 is now satisfactory, as underachievement has been successfully addressed.
- The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership.
- There is no easy means of demonstrating the use of ICT to a class of pupils.

Commentary

56. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with expected standards and achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The new co-ordinator has provided good leadership and worked hard to support her colleagues, purchasing more equipment and software and improving planning to remedy gaps in pupils' learning. Training for staff has increased confidence and common assessment procedures have been introduced, though these are at an early stage in their development. ICT is used appropriately to support pupils' learning in most subjects of the curriculum and a teaching assistant with skills in ICT contributes well, supporting pupils using the small computer area. As a result, pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 has improved since the previous inspection. It is now satisfactory and attainment is in line with national expectations. There is little evidence of pupils using e-mail, although use is indicated in planning.
57. Teaching and learning in Years 3 –6 are good. A notable feature in lessons observed was the well-planned sequences of activities which were carefully designed to develop pupils' skills systematically. Staff had good knowledge and asked good questions to develop understanding. Pupils respond well to these features and their learning is good. They show interest and a desire to complete tasks set. It was not possible to observe teaching in Years 1 and 2. The Computer Club makes a good contribution to the knowledge and skills of those attending.
58. The pupil-to-computer ratio has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Computers are located in classrooms, although those in mobiles are not connected to the school's network, in the new library and in the computer area. There are others in a currently unused classroom, although it is anticipated that this room will be required again in September. As a result, there is no facility for teaching a whole class at one time and classes have to be split. Staff work hard to counter the effects of this in slowing progress and in the additional challenges in monitoring pupils' learning. The school has a digital projector but this is not permanently mounted to support staff in demonstrating software and pupils in showing their work to the rest of the class. There are plans to address this by installing the projector in the library area and purchasing the school's first interactive whiteboard to accompany it.

ICT across the curriculum

59. ICT supports learning soundly in most subjects of the curriculum, though there is scope for greater use in mathematics and science. In Years 1 and 2, pupils present and organise information and share ideas in various forms using ICT, including text, tables and graphics. In English, they write letters, for example to Father Christmas. Pupils can create pictures using graphics software and use the Internet for research, for example when finding out about bears in science. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use software to help them develop their understanding of angles in mathematics. Most pupils use word-processing software effectively, for example

editing text when writing poetry in English, and can present projects on the computer, combining text and graphics, such as in work on rivers in geography in Years 5 and 6. They use CD ROM encyclopaedias and the Internet to find information for their work in history and science in Years 5 and 6. They use a control box to control devices such as traffic lights and sensing equipment to record changes in temperature in science.

HUMANITIES

Religious education and history were inspected in full and are reported below. Geography was sampled.

60. In the Years 3 and 4 **geography** lesson seen, teaching and learning were satisfactory. The teacher focused on features of the climates of particular localities around the world and placed a suitable emphasis on developing geographical vocabulary. She supported pupils in considering what they could tell from graphs showing rainfall and temperature. One group of pupils was using a relevant education website appropriately. Pupils showed sound attitudes to their work. Planning for geography is sound and makes suitable use of national materials.

History

Provision in history is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority materials are used, supplemented and adapted well to provide planning for the subject
- Teachers focus appropriately on developing pupils' historical skills and understanding as well as their factual knowledge of periods of the past
- Teachers' marking does not give enough guidance to pupils on how to improve

Commentary

61. Pupils' attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is broadly in line with expected standards and their achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. There was no opportunity to observe history lessons in Years 1 and 2 classes and judgements here are based on examining samples of pupils' work and on a scrutiny of planning. Pupils have a sound knowledge of the lives of famous people, such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. Most show some knowledge of hospitals at the time of the Crimean War and the seaside in Victorian times and can make some simple comparisons with similar aspects of life today. Some pupils can provide explanations of various stages in the development of the Great Fire of London, though others struggle to do this.
62. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a sound knowledge of features of life in ancient Greece, such as the gods, democracy in Athens, the Olympic Games and Greek theatre. Pupils can interview older people about aspect of their lives during World War II and provide explanations of features such as evacuation and rationing. Samples of work show that opportunities are provided for pupils to use and develop their literacy skills, such as persuasive writing about the Elgin Marbles. Most pupils are developing a sound grasp of the nature of historical evidence, the different forms it can take and the care needed when making deductions from it. While pupils throughout the school can generally sequence events in a narrative, there was little evidence available of a wider sense of chronology.
63. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the two lessons observed, teaching was good. There was a strong focus on making pupils think carefully about evidence and the device of inviting pupils in a Years 3 and 4 class to consider whether the evidence supported prepared statements about Boudicca worked well. In a Years 5 and 6 class, the teacher made good use of source material provided on the Internet by the LEA about a local girl imprisoned for theft

during the Victorian period. The device of “hot-seating” a pupil as the girl was handled well and involved the pupils effectively. As a result of the engaging approaches, pupils in both lessons made good progress in their learning.

64. The subject co-ordinator provides sound leadership. Good use of national planning materials supports teachers in building skills and understanding as well as knowledge and makes a positive contribution to the quality of teaching. Lessons have been observed and pupils’ work has been monitored, though more rigour is needed in evaluating standards and the quality of teaching. There is a firm commitment to broadening pupils’ experience through relevant visits, such as to Chester for the Romans in Years 3 and 4. The local history society helps support the school’s history club. Appropriate assessment procedures have been developed, but, in work sampled, few comments from teachers indicate how pupils might improve their work in this subject.

Religious education

Provision in religious education (RE) is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong commitment to helping pupils to learn from religion and to relate this learning to events and issues in their own lives.
- Pupils respond well to these opportunities.

Commentary

65. Standards are in line with the expectations of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus at the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils’ achievement is satisfactory. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. There were no opportunities to observe RE in Years 1 and 2. Pupils’ work indicates that they understand key stories from the Christian faith, such as the Good Samaritan and the Christmas story, as well Rama and Sita from Hinduism. They relate ideas from these accounts to features of their own circumstances. By the end of Year 6, pupils describe and distinguish some key practices in Christianity and other beliefs, such as when comparing different positions for prayer. They understand the importance of moral codes such as the Ten Commandments, the Five Ks of Sikhism and the Precepts of Buddhism. They understand the importance of ceremonies such as the Bar Mitzvah in the Jewish faith. Pupils also relate stories such as the Prodigal Son to life today and have considered situations where loss is faced and special journeys are made, beginning to be aware of their own questions and choices.
66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. In the two lessons observed, teaching was good. In a Years 3 and 4 lesson, useful links were made with previous work and simple but effective approaches promoted pupils’ understanding. After considering the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, pupils responded well to opportunities to talk to a partner about when they had been tempted. Helping pupils in relating issues raised in RE to their own lives was also evident in a Years 5 and 6 lesson. Pupils were invited to consider any personal failings they would like to try to address in response to discussion of Christian attitudes and behaviour during Lent. Pupils responded well to the engaging approaches used in both lessons and made good progress in their learning.
67. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and has clear priorities. He has supported his colleagues in planning to promote good attention to pupils relating their own experiences to those of others as well as building their knowledge of different religious traditions. Although pupils’ work has been monitored, no lessons have been observed recently; this is planned for next term. There is a commitment to developing regular visits to assist in building pupils’ understanding but so far this has largely involved visits to the local church. It is intended that a visit to a mosque will take place next term. Suitable assessment procedures are in place, but

few comments from teachers in work sampled show pupils how they might improve their RE work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology were sampled. No report is made on music and physical education.

Art and design work was examined during the inspection and a discussion with the co-ordinator took place, but no lessons were seen. In the work seen, standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. The art curriculum is satisfactory and is enriched through the focused Art Week. Pupils' work shows how they combine different materials to produce tactile and visual effects in their images and artefacts. The work of contemporary and classical artists is used to inspire and stimulate pupils. During an Art Week, pupils mixed and arranged visual and textile effects of their choice to create paintings and collages in the style of Georgia O'Keeffe. Most of the art work displayed was two-dimensional and showed how pupils' skills and experience are gained during their time in the school.

In the work seen, standards in **design and technology** are average by the end of both Years 2 and 6 and the subject is managed satisfactorily. Pupils in a Year 1/2 class were able to make plans for glove puppets and were developing cutting and sewing skills to enable them to make these. The work was appropriate to the needs of individual pupils as they were given tasks well matched to the stages at which they were working or received extra help. As part of their work on the Romans, Years 3 and 4 pupils had designed and made replicas of Roman artefacts using paper and string. This showed that they can use tools to cut and pierce and are able to experiment with joining techniques, such as tying and lacing. The scheme of work ensures pupils build on and, extend their skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education was sampled.

68. Planning for personal, social and health education is good. Much is covered in "circle time". In the one session observed, pupils settled quickly into established routines and enjoyed the opportunity to engage in role-play about the environment. The teacher and other staff helped pupils to understand the relevance of the issues explored to their lives.

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	3
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
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	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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