

INSPECTION REPORT

ROMILEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Romiley

LEA area: Stockport

Unique reference number: 106075

Headteacher: John Furse

Lead inspector: Eileen Parry

Dates of inspection: 24th – 28th May 2004

Inspection number: 257348

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:	335
School address:	Sandy Lane Romiley Stockport Cheshire
Postcode	SK6 4NE
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Anne Smith
Date of previous inspection:	22 nd June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a large primary school in the village of Romiley which is on the outskirts of Stockport. There are 335 pupils on roll; 49 of them are children in the Foundation Stage, who are in two reception classes. When they start the school, children have well-developed social skills and good speech and language. In other respects their skills and knowledge are typical for their age. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is average. The school has very few pupils from minority ethnic groups and none of them are at the early stages of learning to speak in English. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational need or on the school's register for special educational needs is below average. Classes are taught in mixed age groups in Years 3 and 4, and Years 5 and 6.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2615	Eileen Parry	Lead inspector	Mathematics; music; physical education; support for Foundation Stage.
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2626	Marion Thompson	Team inspector	English; geography; modern foreign languages.
33021	Kathy Thompson	Team inspector	History; design and technology.
11698	Anna Dawson	Team inspector	Art and design; Foundation Stage.
2616	Phil Cole	Team inspector	Science; information and communication technology; religious education.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Romiley Primary School is a good school that provides a good education and good value for money within a warm and caring ethos. The headteacher leads the staff very effectively in improving the quality of pupils' education. The management of the school is good, as is the governors' support for the school. Teaching and learning are good overall in Year 1 to 6 and satisfactory overall in reception classes. Standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science and music by Year 6. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Standards are above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science by Year 2 and pupils achieve well. Children make satisfactory progress towards the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is very good leadership from the headteacher and senior management team who are well supported by staff and governors.
- There is a good climate for learning that ensures that pupils enjoy their work.
- The proportion of good and very good teaching that keeps standards high exceeds the teaching that is satisfactory and occasionally unsatisfactory.
- There is a good curriculum and a very good range of extra activities for pupils in Years 1 to 6.
- There is a weakness in the Foundation Stage (reception classes) in provision for outdoor play.

The school has made good progress in tackling the issues from the previous inspection. The standards that pupils achieve in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) have improved, as has the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The proportion of teaching that is good or better has increased, although there is still a minority that is unsatisfactory. The school now makes very good links with the community. The accommodation has been improved through the building of a library and ICT suite. However, classrooms are still small, especially for the reception children and for those in Years 5 and 6 when they need to work on practical activities. Resources for outdoor play for reception children have not been bought, since the school is waiting for decisions on a school rationalisation programme in the area.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils in this school achieve well. Achievement is good overall in Years 1 to 6 although there is some variation between and within year groups. Achievement is very good in the mixed age classes in Years 5 and 6 because of the consistently high quality of teaching. In the reception classes achievement overall is satisfactory. Results in national tests in 2003 for pupils in Year 6 were well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. They were in line with those of similar schools in English and science and above in mathematics. The work of the current Year 6 suggests that these high standards are likely to be maintained. Pupils' skills in ICT are above average in what they do. They have not covered one aspect, control and monitoring events, due to a

previous lack of resources. A strength of pupils' work is that they speak well, use a wide range of vocabulary and can argue their case convincingly in all subjects. Pupils have good literacy skills. However, the use of writing structures, such as dividing a page into six sections, to help them to write, hinders pupils from showing the full range of their knowledge and understanding. This is especially so in science and history. ICT is used well to support learning in other subjects and pupils use the skills they gain in mathematics lessons effectively. The very good provision in music results in higher than average standards throughout the school and the brass band performs to a high standard.

Pupils' personal qualities are good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is above average. Pupils are keen to learn and often enthusiastic about what they are doing.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good overall, but there are a few inconsistencies. Lessons seen ranged from unsatisfactory to outstanding. Teaching is good in Years 1 to 4 overall. Lessons are well planned and use many different ways successfully to get pupils' interest. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and behave well and they do. Teaching in mixed age classes in Years 5 and 6 is very good and means that pupils make particularly good progress. The outstanding lessons in these year groups went at a cracking pace that kept pupils on their toes and made them enthusiastic to learn. Two lessons in other classes were unsatisfactory, one as a result of using the wrong type of resources and one because the opening explanations were not clear enough for pupils to follow in their own work. Teachers give pupils good guidance on how to improve during lessons, but do not do this as well on pupils' written work. Teaching is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. A good range of activities is provided during a day, but children's learning is restricted by the small size of the classroom and the lack of special playground space and equipment. The school provides a good level of pastoral care for all its pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and fully included in the life of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher provides very good leadership, and is supported very well by the senior management team and the governing body. The school is managed well and governors review what is happening regularly. At present the school does not provide a full curriculum for ICT in Years 3 to 6. Neither does it report on attendance in the reports on individual children that parents receive. Teachers with responsibility for their subjects set high standards in their own practice. They review what is happening in the school in different ways, but too often with insufficient emphasis on gauging the success of teaching in helping pupils to learn.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think highly of the school and offer excellent support in raising funds. A good number help in classrooms and provide their children with good support in completing homework. Pupils think it is a good place to be in, that teachers are great and that lessons are fun. They are keen to learn and to join in all the activities on offer.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- The ways in which staff monitor teaching and learning, to help teachers develop their practice and eliminate weaknesses.
- The curriculum for outdoor education in the reception classes

In addition the headteacher and governors should ensure the following statutory requirements are met:

- Implement the plans they have for ICT to ensure that all aspects are covered.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is good. Results in national tests in 2003 were well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Current work shows that standards achieved by the pupils are above average by Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. They are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science, music and those parts of the ICT curriculum that are covered by Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by Year 6 in English, and mathematics, science and music.
- Pupils in Year 5 and 6 reach high standards in learning to speak German.
- Pupils achieve well by Year 2 in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils achieve well in those aspects of ICT that they cover.

Commentary

1. Many children start at the school with above average speaking and social skills, but their skills in reading and mathematics are broadly average. These are slightly lower outcomes than those at the last inspection. In their speaking and social skills, the majority of children are likely to exceed the standards expected for children of this age. Most children will have reached the other goals that are set nationally by the end of reception; a minority are likely to be working towards them and a small minority are likely to exceed them. The children achieve satisfactorily.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.6 (17.5)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (15.4)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.3 (17.7)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 38 pupils who registered in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In 2003, results in the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 were well above the national average and the average for similar schools, in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. The inspection finds a similar picture with the pupils currently in Year 2. They make good progress and achieve well by Year 2 as a result of teaching that is predominantly good in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils speak particularly well, and use a wide range of vocabulary and long sentences to answer questions, or to explain to each other and to adults what they are doing. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against their special targets because they are well supported.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.9 (28.8)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.1 (28.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.9 (29.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 48 pupils who registered in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have been sustained at above average levels for the last four years. In 2003 they were well above the national average in English and mathematics and above the average for science. Test results showed that between Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils had made as much progress in English and science as pupils in schools serving similar areas and better progress in mathematics. The school has looked hard at why boys achieve better than girls each year and its information shows that the gap starts when the pupils start at school. Its records show that girls make at least the same progress as boys. Inspection evidence would support that view, since there were no discernible differences in the way that boys and girls were taught and girls were doing just as well as boys in lessons.
- The headteacher and governors tackle issues effectively in order to raise attainment. For example, following the last inspection, when a criticism was that not enough pupils reached the higher levels by Year 6, the school introduced setting. It has, consequently, seen its results rise more than the national trend, with attainment at the higher levels being consistently higher than the national average in English, mathematics and science.
- Good achievement by Year 6 pupils was seen in English and science and very good achievement in mathematics and music. Pupils learn to speak German, answering questions with words, phrases and sentences that show very good understanding and convincing pronunciation. Pupils achieve well in ICT, but do not cover work in the area of giving instructions to make devices work and monitoring results. The school has only just acquired the resources to do this. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress towards their personal targets. This is due to generally good teaching and effective specialised teaching, which ensures that work is planned to take into account the individual needs of pupils. Various booster and 'springboard' classes target areas of weakness effectively, support learning and raise standards. Pupils work hard and achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is above the national average. Punctuality is good and pupils enjoy coming to school. In class, their attitudes to work are very good and match their behaviour both in class and around the school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes to work and their behaviour in class and around the school make a positive contribution to their personal development and to their learning.
- The school makes very good provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural attributes.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and this has a positive effect on their attendance and punctuality.

Commentary

- The headteacher and staff set very high standards for behaviour in school and all pupils are well aware of what is required. Class rules are displayed and are observed. The school rules have,

unusually, been set to music and are sung in assembly. Pupils clearly show respect for the staff and for each other and the whole school has a friendly atmosphere. In class, pupils work very well together in pairs or groups when required, share resources and take turns, without fuss. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They listen well and carefully to instruction, concentrate on the tasks they are given and try hard to please. They are happy to show their completed work and tell visitors how it has been done. Pupils behave very well outside the classroom, play well together, and display no evidence of any bullying or other form of harassment. There was a single permanent exclusion recorded for the previous school year. This was the first in many years and none are recorded for the current year.

7. Pupils' personal development is very good. Music and art are particular strengths and very well used to enhance pupils' spiritual and cultural qualities. The school band is very popular, both within school and within the local community. Assemblies, often taken by the local vicar, are lively, stimulating and enjoyed by the whole school. As part of the curriculum for religious instruction, the school provides very good displays and arranges for visitors in school and off-site visits that broaden pupils' awareness and understanding of other faiths and cultures. Pupils have gained good insight into their own culture. Their understanding of the faiths and customs of other cultures is good, but lacks depth on the impact of growing up in a multi-cultural society.
8. Pupils willingly take on additional duties in school, such as setting out equipment for assembly, taking care of the school office at lunchtimes and monitoring corridors. At the beginning of each school year, Year 6 pupils are assigned to helping and caring for the new children entering the reception class. Pupils are made aware of the needs of others and show good support for local and national charities.
9. Pupils like to come to school and this enjoyment is reflected in the good level of attendance and punctuality shown by the vast majority of pupils. Good attendance makes a positive contribution to their learning. Family holidays taken in term time are strongly discouraged. The school carries out regular monitoring of attendance and works closely with the educational welfare officer, to identify any parents who may require additional support. Useful home visits are carried out and parents are reminded of their responsibilities in this matter.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good education with a warm, caring ethos. Pupils' achievement is generally good, because of the substantial proportion of good teaching. The school has the confidence of parents, who work hard to help in school and raise funds. It offers a good curriculum with a very good range of extra activities.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 1 to 6 and satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Assessment is good and is beginning to involve pupils well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching in Years 1 to 4 is good and teaching in Year 5/6 classes is very good.
- Teachers employ good means of keeping pupils interested in their work.
- Teachers make sure that pupils know what they are going to learn and set them individual targets for improvement.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is good.

Commentary

10. Overall, teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. The curriculum is planned to provide a good range of indoor experiences, which interest and motivate the children to learn. Sound outdoor learning is planned to use the school, its grounds and the local village.

The children's need for outdoor play is difficult to meet, because the school has no dedicated outdoor area and no suitable resources. This is to some extent compensated for by the school hiring such equipment once a term. However, in one activity session, teaching was unsatisfactory, because there was not enough staffing to provide children with good direction and their learning was impeded as a result. There is a good balance between the activities children choose and those directed by the staff. The good quality of relationships means that children settle down quickly and are ready to learn.

11. A strong focus on teachers presenting learning in different ways means that, in the best lessons, teachers get pupils' interest quickly and sustain it very well. As a result, pupils in the school say that lessons are fun. Good examples of such successful teaching were seen in mathematics and literacy lessons and in all of the lessons in Years 5/ 6. Two of these were excellent and all of them had a thread of humour, to which pupils responded very well. Pupils in Years 5/6 classes receive high quality teaching in German, which ensures that they have a very good start in learning to speak a foreign language. Standards in music benefit from the skilled, committed teaching evident in the extra activities, especially the brass band, and in lessons from several teachers who are themselves competent musicians. Teachers have worked hard to improve the quality of pupils' writing by giving them a variety of writing frames. Whilst this has worked satisfactorily, there is now too much structure, when pupils write in subjects such as science and history. This constraint limits the amount and style of writing that pupils use to present their ideas.
12. Relationships throughout the school are very good and ensure that pupils have the confidence to give answers and to risk being wrong. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are taught in ability groups for English, mathematics and science and work is well matched to their needs, allowing pupils to make good progress. Lessons that were less than satisfactory included a mathematics lesson with resources which, though beautiful to look at, did not allow the pupils to explore right angles, the purpose of the task. A literacy lesson was unsuccessful, because it was insufficiently organised and led to too little progress being made by the pupils.
13. Sometimes teachers mark pupils' work well, telling pupils clearly what they need to do to improve or setting out what they are to learn at the start of the written work. In this way, there is a quick measure of success, as was seen in one way of marking mathematics. At other times, the marking does not advise pupils how to improve their work further. Assessment information is used well to measure what pupils know and how much progress they are making and to identify who needs more support.
14. Classroom assistants work very closely with teachers and are valued for the good contribution they make to pupils' learning. Teachers and support assistants work well together to set targets for pupils who have special educational needs and to monitor progress. Additionally, some pupils with special educational needs receive extra help from visiting specialists so that, overall, they are well supported.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 52 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3(6%)	8 (15%)	22(42%)	14(27%)	3(6%)		

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. Percentages are rounded and two lessons were observed for too short a time to make judgements therefore percentages do not add up to 100% and figures of lessons do not match the numbers in the box.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum for pupils in Year 1 to 6, and that for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There are sufficient resources. The accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good curriculum is enriched by a very good range of extra activities.
- The lack of outdoor accommodation and resources restricts the curriculum for children in reception.
- The school has not delivered the control and monitoring part of the ICT curriculum due to lack of resources.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good so they achieve well.

Commentary

15. The curriculum for children in the reception class is satisfactory. Small classrooms pose restrictions on what can be offered, but staff do their best to ensure that children have a balanced experience. There is no outdoor area or outdoor play equipment. This particular aspect of play is only offered on one day per term, which is unsatisfactory for developing children's skills. Some other good outdoor learning is provided through using the school grounds and the local community.
16. The quality of the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 has improved since the last inspection and is now good. More pupils are reaching the higher levels throughout the school than was noted in the previous inspection. This is because the setting from Year 3 to Year 6 in English, mathematics and science enables pupils to work at precisely suited levels. The curriculum is enhanced by a strong partnership between pupils, teachers and support staff. Pupils are motivated and learn well, because the provision is generally stimulating and varied.
17. The classrooms throughout the school are small and restrict practical activity, particularly with older pupils and larger classes. The new library and ICT suite, built through parents' financial help and matched funding from various sources, are both improvements since the last inspection that help to raise the standards that pupils reach.
18. Good emphasis is placed on the key areas of literacy, numeracy and science. The ICT curriculum does not fully meet statutory requirements. The section on controlling models and monitoring events has not been delivered in Key Stage 2, since resources to do this have only recently been acquired. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are fully implemented and the school offers good programmes for sex education and for learning about the impact of drugs.
19. The school takes great care to include all pupils fully in the curriculum, regardless of race, gender and aptitude. Pupils with special educational needs have access to the full curriculum and achieve well, because of the good level and range of support they receive. Individual plans for these pupils are good. They clearly identify how specific tasks will be structured to take into account pupils' specific needs.
20. A very good range of extra-curricular activities, including sport, dance and the arts, enriches the curriculum. Clubs, such as football, cricket, ICT, and craft, are very well supported and greatly appreciated by the pupils. The school has created a strong brass band tradition and the players have the privilege of observing and working with the Hallé Orchestra once a year.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of the pupils and involves them very well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good, trusting relationships with staff and have very good access to advice and guidance.
- The school involves pupils very well in discussion of aspects of school routines and gives them an opportunity to suggest how improvements can be made.
- The school's systematic approach to health, safety and welfare matters provides a safe environment, conducive to learning.
- Well-planned induction arrangements ensure that new pupils feel secure.
- Marking of work is inconsistent and does not provide clear information on how pupils can improve.

Commentary

21. This is a very caring school, where the staff know each pupil as an individual with individual needs. Relationships and trust established between the staff and their pupils give the pupils complete confidence to go to an adult if worried, or in need of help or advice. Ongoing assessment of pupils' academic work and their personal development is carried out well and enables the staff to give good guidance. The school does not, however, provide consistency in this aspect to ensure all staff follow examples of best practice. Pupils with special educational needs and those of lower ability are well supported by classroom staff and by the visiting specialists who regularly attend. The school provides booster sessions to help some pupils make better progress. Pupils with special educational needs have individual educational plans that are agreed with parents and regularly reviewed to check progress.
22. The school uses annual questionnaire surveys and pupil focus groups profitably to test pupils' opinions and find out how they feel about the life and work of the school. The trust evident in relationships has been confirmed by one such survey. Pupils' earlier opinions of the inconsistency of homework have been addressed. The topics currently being considered relate to the adequacy of the school's accommodation. Subject co-ordinators have issued their own questionnaires to pupil groups, to obtain their perception of the easy and difficult parts of the curriculum. This process is designed to help teachers in their future lesson planning. This systematic approach and the comprehensive range of topics covered mean that pupils have a very effective voice in their own education.
23. The school's caring attitude is well supported by the governing body and both work well to ensure the pupils work in a safe environment. Regular inspections of the premises are carried out and risk assessments are prepared and documented. The required annual testing of equipment is carried out and fire drills are regularly held. First aid arrangements are good and pupils' medical needs are properly met. The school's arrangements for child protection, including Internet security, are fully implemented and staff have received good, relevant training. Pupils are well supervised throughout the school day.
24. The school provides good arrangements for the induction of new children into the reception class. The reception staff visit local nurseries during the summer term, to introduce themselves and the school to prospective parents. The reception class operates an open door policy and welcomes parents at any time. Children are given a home/school diary to help parents teach or check any key words that are being learned. Parents also use it for requesting additional work for children to do at home. Once on roll, the children are carefully assessed, to identify as soon as possible any additional support they may require.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has maintained its very good links with parents. There are very good links with the community. Links with other schools and colleges are well developed and make a positive contribution to learning

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A significant number of parents help in school and make very good contributions to learning.
- Very good links with the community provide support and help, which broaden the curriculum.
- The school actively seeks parents' views and acts upon their requests and concerns.
- Good links with other schools and colleges provide training and support for staff in the classroom.
- There are good transfer arrangements for Year 6 leavers.

Commentary

25. Parents are highly supportive of the school and greatly appreciate the efforts staff make in the education and care of their children. Some 18 parents regularly attend and give valuable help in classrooms, particularly in the infant classes. The Friends of School group have raised a very considerable amount of money to help provide the new computer suite and the library. These new facilities are very popular and make a good contribution to learning. Parents are kept well informed about school events and what is to be taught each term. The prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents are comprehensive. Pupils' annual reports do not include details of absences, however.
26. The school is a focal point within the community and the premises are used frequently by a wide range of voluntary and other groups. This helps to promote the school and also provides additional funds that supplement the school budget. Links with local business have been effective in providing equipment for the new computer suite. Links with the local professional football team provide coaching for the pupils. The school also uses the community very well to stimulate pupils' interest and help broaden the curriculum. Visits are made to local shops and a local farm. Pupils regularly visit the local church for special services. These include Harvest Festival, after which pupils accompanied by parents, distribute produce to elderly residents in the community. The school band and choir are ambassadors for the school and their public performances are very well known, very well attended and very much appreciated by the community.
27. The school consults parents on an annual basis, by issuing questionnaires and arranging focus group meetings for parents of the Year 6 leavers. The focus group representatives meet with the senior staff for 90 minutes, discuss a wide range of issues and explore ways to make improvements. Notes of previous meetings indicate various items, such as encouraging more parental support and behaviour management training for mid-day supervisors. Parent consultation evenings are provided each term and are very well attended.
28. The school has good links with the local secondary schools and the local college. It works within a family or cluster of schools and meetings between the headteachers are used well to discuss matters of mutual concern and provide opportunities for joint training. The school provides effective support for groups of Year 10 and Year 11 secondary age pupils, for help on community projects and to the local university for training new teachers
29. The school has a long-established relationship with the local high school and uses this well to provide effective arrangements for transfer of the Year 6 leavers. These pupils benefit from visiting days, when they take part in a science challenge and sample other lessons in the secondary school. Discussion between staff members and efficient transfer of pupil information combine with these visits to ensure that transition to secondary education is well planned to meet pupils' needs.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A clear vision for the school and very good leadership by the headteacher have led to improvements in standards and an effective, inclusive climate for learning.
- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses
- Governors are fully involved in the school's development
- Other key staff provide good support, but monitoring by them is insufficiently rigorous.
- Financial management is very good and closely linked to priorities.
- Statutory requirements are not met for the control strand of ICT

Commentary

30. The headteacher provides the school with purposeful leadership, based on a belief in education for life, close links with the community and a strong commitment to raising standards. Pupils, staff, parents and governors work together to create an effective, inclusive climate for learning, based on open relationships and mutual respect. The headteacher provides good leadership of the curriculum. The introduction of setting pupils by ability in Years 3 to 6 for English, mathematics and science has been a contributory factor in raising standards. The ethos of collaboration is shared by senior and middle managers, who work as effective teams. They meet regularly and play a key role in the strategic management of the school. Developments from Reception to Year 2 are behind schedule due to the long term absence of the co-ordinator. Overall, leadership and management have remained good, as they were at the last inspection.
31. The quality of planning is good, although recently a number of key areas of strategic planning have had to be put on hold, because of uncertainty about the long-term future of the school. The process begins with a thorough, detailed analysis of the school's performance in national tests. Information from the planned monitoring programme, undertaken by the headteacher, senior team and subject co-ordinators, is also taken into account. A wide range of monitoring strategies is used, such as the scrutiny of pupils' work and classroom observation. In practice, however, some monitoring by subject co-ordinators lacks rigour and provides too little information, which does not help to raise standards. Subject management is good and co-ordinators carry out their work diligently. Provision for all aspects of the professional development of staff, including performance management, is good and is linked to planned priorities.
32. The governance of the school is good. Governors have a good awareness of the strengths and areas for development of the school. They are fully involved in development planning and shaping the future direction of the school. The committee structure works well and committees meet regularly to make key decisions. Together with parents and friends of the school, governors provide good support. They have, for instance, raised substantial sums of money to build an ICT suite and buy library books. Individual governors commit considerable time and expertise to the school, many on a day-to-day basis. Governors fulfil most of their statutory requirements well. They have not, however, ensured that the control strand of ICT is delivered.
33. Financial planning and management are very good and are linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan. The headteacher and governors have a good grasp of funding and finance issues. Effective use is made of the relatively low budget and careful consideration is given to ensure that best value is obtained. Governors provide a good level of challenge to the school, when necessary, for example by insisting on a change of library provider when they felt they did not get value for money. Governors consider that low numbers in infant classes are a priority and this makes a significant contribution to the good quality of teaching and learning. The school is an effective school that has a good quality of education and provides good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	710116
Total expenditure	699544
Expenditure per pupil	2088

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	8231
Balance carried forward to the next	14984

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

34. Children enter one of two reception classes in the September of the year they will become five. There are many children who start with above average speaking and social skills but the skills of the majority in reading and mathematics are broadly average. The overall attainment of the children entering the school is lower than at the time of the last inspection. Most children have attended a nursery or a pre-school playgroup before entry into school. Provision for children in the reception classes is generally satisfactory. Teaching and consequently children's achievement are satisfactory. Most children are expected to attain the expected Early Learning Goals for children of this age in all areas of learning by the end of their reception year. A minority are likely to be working towards them and a small minority are likely to exceed them. In their speaking and social skills, the majority are likely to exceed the standards expected for children of this age. However, there is weakness in the provision for children's physical development. The outdoor learning resources are unsatisfactory and there is no dedicated outdoor area for children's day-to-day activities. The classrooms are cramped and inhibit children's work. However, staff work hard to provide a balanced curriculum for the children. There is a good partnership with parents, most of whom support their children's learning at home. A good number of parents and governors come into school and help the teachers by working with small groups of children. This eases the transition from home to school and most children settle in easily and quickly. Planned developments are behind schedule owing to the long term absence of the co-ordinator. Nevertheless, leadership and management are satisfactory and there is satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in the development of the curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Positive relationships help the children to become confident in choosing their activities.
- The staff hold high expectations of the children's behaviour.

Commentary

35. Most enter the reception classes with good skills. The children achieve well. By the end of their reception year, the majority of children are likely to have exceeded the Early Learning Goals expected of children of this age. The children are happy and feel secure. There is a consistently good approach to building children's confidence and self-esteem. Once in school, the children quickly get to know the routines. Expectations of good behaviour are shared and good relationships are promoted, both of which promote good learning. The children know what is expected of them. They are independent in choosing their activities. They listen and follow instructions well, for instance when lining up to leave the classroom. Most try their best to achieve the learning objectives and work together well. However, a small minority find it difficult to share their resources with others or take turns fairly.

36. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers and teaching assistants hold high expectations of the children. They generally praise good behaviour and calmly explain why selfish behaviour is not acceptable. This helps the children develop their social skills. Occasionally, however, staff overlook opportunities to develop children's skills, for example in the role-play area.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's speaking skills are good for most children of this age.
- Teachers develop children's writing skills well.
- There is a positive partnership with parents which supports children's reading well.

Commentary

37. Most children enter the reception classes with good speaking skills, but with average reading skills. The children's achievement is satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, most are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals in reading skills. A small minority are likely to be working towards them and a minority are on course to exceed them. Most are likely to exceed the expectations in speaking skills. However, some lower attaining children are likely to be working towards the expected goals. The children enjoy looking at books and most are beginning to read. The children know their letter sounds and most have begun to recognise and read simple words. The most able are reading simple stories. The majority make a good attempt at writing and a significant minority write a recognisable sentence unaided. Most attempt to write three-letter words, while a minority are working towards writing some words with help.

38. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The children are confident in speaking skills which are developed by the staff through frequent conversations with the children. However, they too often miss opportunities, in the role-play area for example, to develop the vocabulary and speaking skills of lower attaining children. The staff place a good emphasis on the development of writing skills. Nearly all children know the letter sounds that have helped them to read and write several simple words and phrases. Teachers have a good partnership with parents, who make a good contribution to their children's learning, as they listen to them read at home.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in children's mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum presents a wide range of activities that promotes children's learning.

Commentary

39. The children achieve satisfactorily. Most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals expected for children of this age by the time they reach the end of their reception year. A minority are on course to exceed them and a minority are likely to be working towards them. There are good opportunities presented for children to develop their mathematical understanding through a wide range of interesting activities, both indoors and outdoors. The children learn numbers to ten and beyond and know basic mathematical vocabulary such as 'more than' and 'less than'. The majority identify and make a repeating pattern using two criteria. They recognise the names and values of the most commonly used coins, some achieving this easily. However, some find it difficult to solve simple mathematical problems of addition and subtraction. The children know some well-known rhymes and songs that help them to remember number sequences and patterns.

40. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The children are encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary when answering questions. Teachers use visual resources well, when giving explanations and instructions. They also take children regularly on shopping trips into the village to help them to understand money.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good variety of interesting activities are planned.
- ICT is used well to help children learn.

Commentary

41. The children achieve satisfactorily. Most children are likely to achieve and a minority to exceed the expected goals in this area by the end of the reception year. A small minority are likely to be working towards them. The teachers plan an interesting range of activities that helps children deepen their understanding and widen their vocabulary through investigative work. The children use their senses to investigate the properties of materials. For example, children observe changes when making bread, as they mix dough and after it is cooked. They enjoy tasting different types of bread and describe its texture using words such as 'soft' or 'chewy'. The children learn how to take care of living things. For example, they have planted sunflower seeds and kept a careful diary of their growth. The children have good access to computers and develop their mouse control successfully, as they drag and drop symbols and pictures to complete simple programs. Children take part in discussions and develop a satisfactory awareness of their own traditions and those of other cultures. They celebrate Christmas and other festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. This helps the children to respect the views of others and raise their awareness of the importance of belonging.

42. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. The staff use questioning and discussion well to help the children develop vocabulary and knowledge. A variety of activities to the local area and visitors such as a baker into school enrich the curriculum. ICT is used well to promote discussion. For example, children watched a slide show of when they made bread, to consolidate their understanding and knowledge of the vocabulary and processes involved.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in children's physical development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy physical activities, but some find it difficult to manipulate and control small apparatus.
- There are not enough resources for outdoor activity.
- Teaching and learning are occasionally unsatisfactory.

Commentary

43. Children generally develop their physical skills satisfactorily. By the end of the reception year most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals and a minority are likely to be working towards them. Children are developing a satisfactory awareness of space, when controlling wheeled toys, with a growing awareness of safety and the needs of others around them. Children frequently use a range of small apparatus and resources during their daily activities. For example, they use glue sticks, paint brushes and scissors. These activities provide children with satisfactory opportunities to develop co-ordination skills. Most children are developing increasing control in throwing and catching balls and quoits. They are less confident when using their feet to control a football along a given path. Most children achieve satisfactorily and their skills in co-ordination are

what are normally expected of children of this age. However, some children, mostly girls, lack confidence and have underdeveloped skills in control and co-ordination.

44. The provision for children's physical development outdoors is unsatisfactory. There is neither a dedicated outside area for children to develop physical skills, nor large outdoor resources for children to develop skills of balancing, pedalling or climbing. The teachers do their best to overcome this, by hiring large play equipment for one day each term. This poses problems in staffing the activities during the day that the equipment is on site. In several activities, the adults supervising children are inexperienced in managing them and developing their physical skills. When this is the case, or when too many children are involved in one activity, children's learning is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Planning lacks rigour, since activities are not organised in sufficient detail to develop the children's skills consistently.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in children's creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff successfully develop children's language skills through creative activities.
- Some children find it difficult to sustain concentration and work imaginatively.

Commentary

45. By the end of the reception year, most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals expected for children of this age and a minority are likely to achieve them. A small minority are likely to be working towards them. There is a good range of creative activities for children to explore. For example, children work with salt dough, rolling and shaping it into different kinds of bread. Children use paint, recycled materials and textiles to make collages, painting and models. The children enjoy role-play in the baker's shop. The staff are skilled in using discussion and questioning to promote children's thinking and learning. However, in the role-play area, during the times when there is no direct adult intervention, a minority of children find it difficult to use their imagination to take on a role effectively.

46. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff develop children's language and social skills well, as they work with them in small groups. They teach the correct vocabulary and astutely question children. The staff do not monitor children's work carefully enough during the activities that they choose themselves.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGE

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout school.
- Pupils in all years have very good speaking and listening skills.
- Pupils enjoy their work and their good attitudes contribute to their progress.
- Teaching is good, and very good in Years 5 and 6, so learning is rapid and enjoyable.
- Good leadership and management have led to very good improvement.
- Marking of pupils' work does not provide enough guidance on how to improve.

Commentary

47. Standards at Year 2 are above average. Pupils talk and listen confidently, using a wide range of vocabulary. In Year 1, pupils retold a story about a rainbow fish accurately, using excellent vocabulary, such as 'camouflaged' and 'shimmering'. From Year 1 onwards, pupils use and understand grammatical terminology, such as full stops and capital letters. They appreciate and create simple poetry, and begin to explore their responses. They present well to their peers, with higher attaining pupils beginning to adapt their language to their listener. They usually listen carefully to each other and comment on what they hear, although occasionally they do not settle down quickly enough.
48. Reading is above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Most pupils read texts accurately and express opinions about them clearly. They answer questions, summarise the plot, comment on characters and predict what might happen next. They use a range of strategies to decode text and read aloud, confidently and well. In Year 2, some pupils read books that are too easy for them. Attitudes to reading are positive and pupils choose books they enjoy reading at home. Pupils' writing skills are slightly above average but not as strong as other skills. No differences were observed between boys' and girls' writing. By the end of Year 2 the higher attaining pupils write short paragraphs, using a variety of appropriate joining words, including 'first' and 'next'. Pupils use capitals and full stops accurately in producing factual writing, like 'Making Musical Instruments', or in adapting traditional stories like 'The Three Little Pigs'. Handwriting is clear and well formed. However, the standards of presentation expected in different classes are varied, since some teachers have higher expectations than others. Spelling is above average.
49. Standards at Year 6 are well above average and pupils are achieving well. They make particularly fast progress in the mixed age classes in Years 5 and 6 due to very good teaching. Higher attaining pupils read fiction and non-fiction books fluently and at sight. They have the skills to tackle words they do not know, for example by breaking down and rebuilding difficult words like 'amphibian'. In lessons such as history, they occasionally skim and scan passages successfully. They enjoy reading and choose books for pleasure. They enjoy reading aloud and do so confidently and well, with good expression and awareness of audience. They access information from books competently, using indexes and glossaries, as well as contents pages. They use the Dewey system to locate books in the library and use the scanner to record the borrowing and returning of books. They are aware of how to use different sources of information, for example ICT, select facts and present them orally.
50. Pupils in mixed age classes in Years 3 and 4 write well with a good understanding of punctuation and grammar. Speaking and listening skills are well above average. Pupils discuss and refine their ideas on discursive topics, such as whether children watch too much TV. Pupils' vocabulary is very wide, so they use formal words and specialist vocabulary very well. They qualify and rationalise their points of view, for example about school rules, giving opinions and using formal language very well. They make presentations to others well.
51. Teaching and learning are good overall. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are taught in ability groups and work is well matched to their needs. Teachers plan together continuously, so there is consistency across year groups. Rightly, teachers have placed a strong emphasis on the development of writing that has led to improved standards. All teachers have good subject knowledge and teach speaking and listening skills well in all lessons. Pupils understand what they are learning, because teachers explain the purpose of lessons very clearly and check what pupils have understood at the end. Good planning and organisation lead to lively lessons with a range of activities covering all language skills, which keeps pupils engaged in effective learning. The best lessons use a range of learning styles and maintain a cracking pace, where not a second is wasted. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils in these lessons, regardless of ability. In a lower ability Year 5/6 class for example, pupils identified dramatic conventions in a single, very challenging lesson. They successfully adapted a descriptive text to compose a script, with some pupils including stage directions. Where additional support is available, it is used effectively. Assessment of pupils' work is good, but marking does not provide enough

guidance on how to improve. Some teachers do not model good writing well in their corrections. Pupils are lively, enquiring and confident learners, who really enjoy their lessons. There was one unsatisfactory lesson in Year 2 because the teacher did not make it clear to the pupils what they were going to do and only the higher attaining pupils had sufficient understanding to manage the tasks well enough.

52. Leadership and management are good. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, with higher standards, particularly in higher order reading and writing skills, throughout the school. Teaching and learning have improved, as a result of good monitoring which has led to effective interventions.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Literacy skills are used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, pupils produce persuasive writing to advertise goods in a multi-media presentation in ICT in Years 5/6, and draft accounts of Vikings in history. The use of writing frames gives structure to what pupils do, but also prevents the more able from showing the full capacity of their skills and knowledge. Teachers encourage the development of speaking and listening skills in all lessons. They consciously emphasise specialist vocabulary in subjects such as ICT, mathematics, music and science.

German

54. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are fortunate in having the opportunity to learn German on a weekly basis, by arrangement with a local secondary school. Provision is excellent. The focus of lessons is mainly on the development of speaking and listening skills and pupils reach standards that are well above expectations. Pupils respond to common greetings and classroom instructions in German. They have memorised securely numbers one to 30 and colours. They understand numbers up to 99. They give simple descriptions of peoples' hair colour and respond confidently to questions about it. Pronunciation is very authentic. Teaching and learning are excellent. The teacher sets a very challenging pace, using a wide range of games, songs and fun activities that amuse and enthuse the class. Pupils choose whether to answer questions with words, phrases or full sentences, so all take part and most pupils opt to challenge themselves. Pupils are excited by their learning and make rapid progress. Well-chosen resources, such as soft toys, further engage their interest, so they are reluctant to stop at the end of the lesson.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in all years achieve well because of good teaching.
- Pupils enjoy their work and their good attitudes contribute to their progress.
- Marking of pupils' work does not provide enough guidance on how to improve.

Commentary

55. Results of national tests have usually been above average at Year 2. They have been consistently well above average at Year 6. Current work confirms that this pattern is likely to continue. By the end of Year 2, standards in mathematics are above average. Pupils make good progress and achieve well, due to teaching that is secure and mostly good. Year 1 pupils are able to add and subtract numbers to ten, with many going beyond this. All pupils use a number line with confidence when adding and subtracting. Their skills were demonstrated in a lesson where they were able to locate numbers using a metre stick as the number line. From an early age, pupils are encouraged to present their work well. Year 2 pupils are competent in calculating

money and solving monetary problems. They can order numbers effectively and identify the properties of two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. They are beginning to learn about angles and were able to find examples of right angles in the classroom.

56. By the end of Year 6, standards of work are well above average, with pupils demonstrating good achievement. This is a good improvement on the last inspection. Pupils have good mental skills and measure accurately. A substantial proportion of pupils reach the higher level. These have a very good understanding of how to solve word problems and produce good work in all aspects of mathematics. The majority of pupils are able to convert fractions into decimals and percentages. They show competence in calculating area and perimeter. They show a good understanding of probability. Pie charts and graphs are used to interpret data and higher attaining pupils are able to plot co-ordinates in all four quadrants. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, work hard to achieve their targets and the presentation of their work is good. They respond very well to interesting, challenging work, their keenness and interest being contributory factors.
57. Teaching is good overall, although it ranges from outstanding to unsatisfactory. Teaching is very good in Years 3 to 6 and of particularly high quality in Years 5 and 6 where there was an example of excellent practice during the inspection. Lessons are well planned to take account of the various needs of pupils, including those taught in sets in Years 3 to 6. Most teachers are very secure in their knowledge of the subject. They provide pupils with a good range of strategies for calculating and checking their findings that develop pupils' thinking and understanding. Teachers throughout the school use mathematical language well in lessons, so pupils become accustomed to using it themselves. Higher attaining pupils are particularly confident. One Year 6 pupil explained his thinking as he worked out a mathematical problem in the following unprompted words: "It looks as if the divisor should be an odd number and could well be a prime number or a palindrome." The one lesson that was unsatisfactory was due to the teacher choosing inappropriate resources that made it too difficult for the pupils to do what they were supposed to do. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, mostly with ticks and positive comments, but less often with guidance on how to improve. The best practice ensures that pupils identify the learning objective at the start of each piece of work, so that it is easy to see how well they have done in achieving it. The enthusiasm of many teachers is reflected in the high level of interest that pupils have for this subject. Teachers have high expectations of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, and pupils respond well to tasks that are invariably challenging.
58. The two subject leaders provide good leadership and management. They have looked hard at what is happening in their subject in a variety of ways, including observations of lessons. Lesson observations focus more strongly on what teachers do than on what pupils learn and need to be more sharply focused on learning, in order to promote even higher standards. Arrangements for tracking the progress of pupils as they move through the school are particularly strong. Regular assessment clearly identifies areas of weakness that are then corrected through careful planning of future work. Pupils are placed in sets on the basis of assessments in Years 3 to 6. The school has successfully introduced initiatives to improve standards, such as booster classes and springboard mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to use and develop their numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum. In history, pupils are familiar with time lines and the sequencing of events. In geography, pupils use co-ordinates to pinpoint specific areas on a map. Systems of counting and grouping are used in music. Measurement features regularly in science and pupils collate their information in a range of graphs, including pie charts drawn by Year 6. ICT contributes significantly to the development of pupils' numeracy skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- The marking of pupils' work provides them with little help to make it better.
- Pupils' understanding and skills in carrying out scientific investigations are good but their ability to record and present what they have found out is underdeveloped.

Commentary

60. Teaching is good and ensures that pupils make good progress in all the strands of science. Lessons are planned carefully and have clear goals for learning that add systematically to what pupils know and can do. Teachers provide good levels of challenge that enable brighter pupils to be stretched and to achieve well. This is an improvement on what was found during the last inspection. The needs of lower attaining pupils are met effectively, so they also achieve well. Teachers use practical work well to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding and to consolidate and extend their skills. With a higher attaining Year 6 set, for example, the teacher skilfully and successfully encouraged pupils to use Newton meters to measure the weight of objects in water accurately. This enabled them to test the effect of upthrust and to look for ways of predicting its effect. A common weakness found across the school was the use of worksheets for pupils to record what they found out. These limit the development of pupils' skills in recording and presenting their findings. This weakness is most noticeable in Years 5 and 6, where pupils clearly have the ability to plan and produce their own reports. Teachers' ongoing assessments of pupils in lessons, achieved through observing and questioning, are effective. This process helps them to ensure that all pupils understand what they are learning. However, the marking of pupils' completed work is mostly superficial and provides individual pupils with very little guidance on how they could make their work better.

61. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The subject leaders have successfully raised standards and improved provision since the last inspection. A good range of strategies is used to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. The information is not, however, used rigorously enough to identify patterns or specific strengths and weaknesses in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills or in the effectiveness of teaching. As a result, too little is being done to bring about improvements systematically.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The statutory requirement for teaching monitoring and control is not being met in Years 3 to 6.
- Standards in the other strands of ICT are above national expectations by both Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils are achieving well.
- Teaching is good and pupils are making good progress.

Commentary

62. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are learning well about giving instructions to devices such as programmable toys, to make them follow routes for example. This secure start is not built upon in junior classes, however, because the school does not have the equipment needed. Similarly, the pupils are not learning how to use computers to monitor and record events, such as changes

in temperature, because the school does not have the necessary sensors and software. This weakness has been identified and there are plans to tackle it in the near future.

63. Resources in the new ICT suite and in classrooms for the other strands of the subject are good. These are consistently and effectively taught. Teachers have clear objectives for lessons and they purposefully and skilfully explain, question and encourage pupils to improve their existing skills and to develop new ones. Lessons systematically build on what has already been taught and this ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning over time. Teachers' planning provides purposeful contexts for pupils to develop their skills in ICT. Most of the work in ICT is closely linked to other subjects, such as literacy, history and geography. This enables pupils to understand the relevance of ICT to their wider learning and its use in real situations. Teaching is often very good in Years 5 and 6 and enables pupils to produce work of high quality. This is the case, for example, in the *PowerPoint* presentations pupils have produced on activity centres. These include sophisticated visual and audio effects and have enabled the pupils to present imaginatively the effective, persuasive writing they have produced in literacy lessons.
64. The subject is effectively led and managed. Significant improvements have been achieved since the last inspection. Resources are now very good, teachers are confident in teaching the subject and standards have shown marked improvement. The plans for further improving the subject are sound and include, for example, the development of assessment practices. Not enough is done, however, to monitor or evaluate teaching and learning, so as to inform the planning of future developments.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. ICT is used well to support learning in all subjects, but particularly in English, mathematics and science. There are also good examples of work in other subjects, such as art and design. Pupils' musical skills in composition are very well supported by the use of a special program.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

66. Art and design, design and technology and physical education were sampled during the inspection. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on provision in these subjects. Evidence from teachers' planning, work on display and in photographs was considered, as well as a sample of lessons.
67. Pupils achieve well in **art and design** throughout the school and attain above average standards. Pupils' observational drawing is a strength. By Year 6, pupils use line, tone and colour to good effect. They understand the techniques of a range of well-known artists well and apply their skill imaginatively in their work. For instance, from their study of Picasso, pupils created studies of figures or familiar surroundings such as a bedroom. Art and design is often successfully linked to other subjects such as history, ICT, music and religious education. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 listen to and reflect on the music of Frank Bridge to create bold, bright patterns. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson, the pupils deepened their knowledge of Islamic pattern and its religious significance. Pupils enjoy art and design. They enjoy expressing their feelings and emotions and find their work relaxing. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and a satisfactory vision for the development of art and design across the school. However, the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work are in the early stages of development. The subject is enriched by visits to art galleries and visiting artists. Some Year 6 pupils attend an extra-curricular art club, which makes a good contribution to their personal development and subject skills.
68. Evidence from pupils' work, displays and planning indicates that pupils are receiving a satisfactory curriculum in **design and technology**. The small physical capacity of the building limits the amount of space available for displaying work, but there was some on making chairs, done by Year 3/4 classes. This suggested that pupils have sound skills in making objects, but that planning and evaluating are less well developed.

69. Only one short lesson of **physical education** was seen. Here, Year 2 pupils displayed average skills in climbing on equipment, balancing, dismounting and in movement from one piece of equipment to another, around the hall. Pupils go swimming between Years 3 and 6 and information provided shows that they achieve the standards for their age. The programme of extra-curricular activities over the year includes a good range of sport.

Music

Only two lessons were seen, both in Years 3 to 6, so judgements are confined to the provision in these years. Additionally, pupils' performance skills were shown in assemblies and extra-curricular activities.

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A number of teachers have good subject expertise and teach with confidence.
- There is a good contribution to pupils' learning from extra music activities.

Commentary

70. Standards are above average by Year 6 as a result of skilled teaching. The pupils' learning benefits from the good number of teachers who are themselves musicians and who therefore teach the subject with confidence based on their own good knowledge. In an excellent lesson in Year 5/6 in the ICT suite, the teacher moved swiftly through an essential introduction to necessary ICT skills and revised key music vocabulary, such as texture and ABA form. His questions showed that pupils had a good understanding of these elements. Pupils then applied that knowledge effectively in their work, as they produced rhythmic patterns with four parts. Most of the pupils worked in pairs and did so very well. They were reluctant to stop and all were keen to show what they had achieved. At the end of the lesson, several pupils demonstrated their compositions, while others evaluated the work, in response to the teacher's questions.

71. The school has a large number of pupils learning to play brass band instruments and ocarinas, with a few who choose recorders. All play with skill and are confident performers. The decision to focus the school's attention on brass band work, rather than a variety of wind and stringed instruments, has resulted in a brass band that plays with an unusual degree of skill for primary pupils. This high quality stems principally from the skilled, committed teaching that these pupils have. They very regularly perform in school, in the community and in local events. Once a year, the 'big band' has the privilege of being with the Hallé Orchestra for a day. Through this rare experience, they learn about the commitment that is needed to be a professional musician and enjoy being on the Bridgewater stage with the orchestra during rehearsals.

72. The subject co-ordinators provide very good leadership and management, an example of which is the singing assembly which one of the co-ordinators takes for pupils in Year 3 to 6. It goes much further than fulfilling the requirements for collective worship and the more usual teaching of hymns. It is a high quality music lesson, where pupils learn to improve the quality of singing through simple vocal exercises. They read graphic scores, in addition to practising known hymns and learning new ones. Improvement in the subject since the last inspection is good.

HUMANITIES

73. In **geography**, no lessons were seen, so it is not possible to form any overall judgement about the standards and provision in the subject. From teachers' planning and pupils' work, it is evident that pupils follow national guidelines in the subject at particular points in the year. Good links are made with the teaching of history.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lesson planning identifies the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils are expected to acquire.
- Pupils enjoy learning about the past and talk knowledgeably about their experiences.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and work well together but do not have sufficient time to work alongside colleagues or monitor their subject.
- Pupils are not always enabled to show in their written work what they know and can do.

Commentary

74. Standards in history are good. Pupils are able to recall historical facts and are developing a sense of chronology. Year 2 pupils learn about life in Victorian Britain, study Florence Nightingale and compare life then with now. Year 5/6 pupils are able to describe how children in Victorian times lived and compare that to life today, displaying understanding and empathy. They relish recalling facts about mummies related to their work about Ancient Egypt.

75. The quality of teaching is good overall, and pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Teaching assistants provide pupils with good support, enabling them to undertake such tasks as using photographic evidence in a Year 2 class and supporting pupils with special educational needs in Year 1. Planning identifies the learning objectives needed to develop the key historical skills of chronology, interpretation and enquiry. Pupils have well-developed skills in sharing their knowledge through speaking and listening. They use photographic evidence, books and videos, as well as drafting questions in preparation for interviews or research. They examine artefacts, as sources of information. Timelines used in most classrooms provide pupils with a good sense of chronology.

76. The school has sought to develop further the effectiveness of learning experiences in history by linking it with other subjects and with prior learning. For example, in a Year 3/4 class, pupils write accounts of a Viking raid from the perspective of a character of the time, using their subject knowledge, good levels of understanding of the conditions at the time and their well-developed skills in writing. A Viking ship model helps children's visualisation and supports observational drawings. The experience of sitting a metre apart and simulating rowing gives an idea of the size of long-boats and of the difficulties encountered in using them as transport. First hand experiences, such as visits to the Victorian schoolroom and visitors to the school who talk about their life, are used to help pupils to gain deeper understanding and enable them to develop their enquiry skills. Pupils' good recall demonstrates their understanding of the past and their enjoyment of the subject, while demonstrating how teaching in this way provides good learning experiences for all pupils. The way that pupils write about their work is restricted when they use writing frames that limit how much they can put down.

77. Subject leaders work well together. They are enthusiastic and energetic in their desire to develop the subject and its teaching further through cross-curricular links. They are introducing a method of assessing and recording that informs planning for the next steps in learning. They support colleagues informally and have begun to monitor planning and learning in a systematic way. They hope to influence the development of history further, as they devise ways of working alongside colleagues and establish good monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' achievement.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities for pupils to reflect on issues are supported by effective links with personal, social and health education.

Commentary

78. The school's curriculum is balanced and lessons are satisfactorily taught. These enable pupils to develop effectively their knowledge and understanding of the nature of religion, together with the features and teachings of major world faiths. Since the last inspection, teachers have planned more ways for pupils to think about the meanings of religious stories and their relevance to their own lives. This was clearly demonstrated in the lessons about the Good Samaritan in Years 5 and 6 and the teachings of Solomon in Years 3 and 4. Pupils responded well in these lessons and discussed issues sensibly and thoughtfully. However, their completed work shows that they too rarely refine their thinking by writing about them. This is because worksheets have often been provided for pupils to use for recording their ideas. These have restricted what older pupils in particular have been able to write.

79. The subject is led satisfactorily by keen subject leaders, who have sensible plans for introducing the new agreed syllabus and for improving further the resources, such as artefacts, that are available for teachers to use. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are not sufficiently well developed to provide clear information on strengths and weaknesses that can be used to improve provision further.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

80. There is too little evidence to make overall judgments in this area because of inspection priorities. However, it is clear that the school involves its pupils well in making decisions. The provision ensures that pupils are confident and articulate. They are lively, enjoy humour and are caring of each other. They learn about issues relevant to them through special lessons as well as through other subjects such as science. The general ethos of care and concern in the school supports pupils' personal development well.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).