

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GEORGE'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) PRIMARY SCHOOL

High Peak, Derbyshire

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112889

Headteacher: Mr P Thomas

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 21st – 23rd June 2004

Inspection number: 257657

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Primary |
| School category: | Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 3 – 11 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 159 |
| School address: | Church Lane New Mills High Peak Derbyshire |
| Postcode: | SK22 4NP |
| Telephone number: | 01663 743222 |
| Fax number: | 01663 744512 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr D Wellens |
| Date of previous inspection: | 5 th May, 1998 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Church of England aided primary school is situated in New Mills and draws pupils from the locality. With 133 pupils (66 girls and 67 boys), and 26 children attending the nursery part time each morning, it is smaller than most other primary schools. The number attending the school is in decline. The large majority of the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The pupils live in an area that is socio-economically disadvantaged. There is a limited spread of attainment on entry; for most pupils attainment is well below average, especially in language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is average overall, but well above average in some year groups. An above average proportion of pupils have statements of special educational need. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (27 per cent) is above average. There have been significant staff changes since the previous inspection. The school has received an achievement award, the Basic Skills Quality Mark and an Artsmark. It is involved in the Healthy Schools Initiative.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| 20891 | Sean O'Toole | Lead inspector | Mathematics; Science; Information and communication technology; Personal, social and health education |
| 14178 | Patricia Willman | Lay inspector | |
| 20911 | Judith Dawson | Team inspector | Foundation Stage; Art and design; Design and technology; Music |
| 23566 | John Iles | Team inspector | Special educational needs; English; Geography; History; Physical education |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This satisfactory school, which has several good features, provides a sound education and good value for money. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and promote at least satisfactory achievement. Leadership and management are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils in the Foundation Stage and Year 6 benefit from good teaching and achieve well
- Pupils' speaking skills hamper their progress in some aspects of their work
- Pupils lack confidence in some aspects of science
- The headteacher provides a strong sense of purpose and direction
- Some lessons lack sufficient pace and challenge
- The school provides a good curriculum, which includes good opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- The school has good links with parents and very good links with the community

The good rate of improvement since the last inspection in May 1998 has been achieved against a background of high staff turnover. The school has been successful in tackling the issues raised in the last report and standards in English, mathematics and ICT have improved. Leadership, management and governance are now good. Teaching and learning are more consistent. There is good potential for further improvement.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | All schools | | | Similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2003 |
| English | C | B | D | B |
| Mathematics | E | C | D | B |
| Science | D | C | E | D |

*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.*

Pupils in the Foundation Stage achieve well, although few attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the end of the reception year. However, standards in knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development are average. Inspection evidence shows that, in Years 1 to 6, progress and **achievement for the different groups of pupils is at least satisfactory and is good in Year 6**. Inspection evidence shows that, although standards in English, mathematics and science are below average, pupils achieve well given their low attainment on admission. Although girls are generally more successful than boys in national tests at the end of Year 2, inspection evidence shows that the work set is appropriate for both groups. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Pupils' poor speech hampers their progress in several subjects.

National test results in 2003 show that by the end of Year 2, standards were average in mathematics, above average in writing but below in reading. Similar school comparisons showed that standards in reading and mathematics were average and writing was well above

average. The trend in improvement has been above the national average. Inspection evidence shows that standards this year are below average in reading, writing and mathematics because over half of the pupils have special educational needs. There was dip in performance in the national tests for Year 6 in 2003 as the cohort had almost a quarter of pupils with statements of special educational need. The school has been particularly successfully in raising the attainment of more able pupils in Year 6. Pupils achieve well in ICT and attain average standards. There are examples of good work in dance, art and design and geography.

The staff foster inclusion effectively and promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. The behaviour of most pupils is good, although some, mainly boys, lack self-discipline. Attitudes in lessons are positive and relationships good. There have been no exclusions. The pupils enjoy the part they play in making decisions through the school council and participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities. Punctuality is good and the rate of attendance is in line with national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory. Teachers plan effectively and organise most lessons to meet the needs of the different abilities in classes. However, some lessons still lack pace and challenge. Staff are consistent in their management of behaviour and good use is made of reward and praise. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and support staff provide skilful intervention and help. English and science are taught satisfactorily, though insufficient emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. Mathematics is taught well. Although there are opportunities for pupils to speak, teachers do not correct some common mistakes and insist on sufficient clarity. In some classes insufficient attention is given to good presentation of pupils' work. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The school's good curriculum is enriched well with a wide range of activities, visits and special events. The good provision for personal, social and health education, caring approach by staff and effective relationships with parents and the community help to prepare the pupils well for the next stage of their education. The school has sufficient staff, adequate resources and good accommodation.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

This inclusive school is led well by the headteacher. **Leadership is good.** The staff share common goals and a commitment to school improvement and provide a purposeful environment. This is reflected well in the good strategic planning, which includes sharply focused measures of success, based on rigorous analysis of data and focused target setting. The effective administration and **good management** contribute well to the smooth running of the school. Good use is made of funds. The governors carefully consider a variety of options before committing expenditure resulting in effective decision making linked to the school's good development plan. Performance management and best value principles are used effectively to support the school's initiatives. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils enjoy school and appreciate the good support of all staff. Parents are pleased with the quality of education provided and express confidence in the work of the headteacher and staff.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the pupils' speaking and listening skills through more effective teaching
- Develop pupils' skills of scientific enquiry
- Improve aspects of teaching especially the pace and challenge in some lessons and the presentation of pupils' work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is satisfactory overall and good in the Foundation Stage and Year 6. Although the results in national tests are generally below average the school has been largely successful in raising standards since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average and this affects their performance in reading and writing
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- More able pupils in Year 6 achieve well
- Many pupils are slow to develop their understanding of some scientific ideas and processes

Commentary

1. The school's performance is affected by several external factors that result in below average standards by the end of Year 6. Attainment on admission to the school is well below average. Very few pupils have average or better skills, knowledge and understanding when starting school and they are especially weak in communicating clearly and effectively. Many pupils lack confidence in new situations, and this has a detrimental impact on their learning. The school is in a deprived area with above average unemployment. In recent years there has been a high turnover of staff. The school compensates for these barriers to learning through effective leadership and management, a good curriculum and committed teaching.
2. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make a good start to school in the nursery and make effective gains in learning. Progress and achievement are good in the nursery and reception class because of well structured teaching and effective organisation. By the end of the reception year, the pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education, although few attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Because of a strong emphasis on practical work and opportunities to encourage independence many pupils are on course to attain the expected goals for their age in knowledge and understanding of the world and personal, social and emotional development.
3. Boys and girls of different abilities make at least satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. There is good support for those with special educational needs, including those with statements. These pupils make good progress and achieve well. The school has set good targets for performance in national tests and this is linked to objectives in performance management for the staff. One such target has been to increase the percentage of pupils attaining above average levels in national tests. The school has been successful in this and inspection evidence indicates that the more able pupils do well with about a third of all pupils on course to attain the higher levels this year in English, mathematics and science. Although national test results at the end of Year 2 show that girls are more successful than boys in reading, writing and mathematics the pupils' work show no significant variations and results generally even out by the end of Year 6.

4. In 2003, pupils at the end of Year 2 attained above average standards in writing, average levels in mathematics but below average standards in reading. When compared with schools with similar intakes standards were well above average in writing, above in mathematics and average in reading. These results were the best on record for the school and were the culmination of a rising trend in performance since the previous inspection. The current Year 2 group are unlikely to attain as well as this. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average, although achievement is at least satisfactory. This group includes almost 60 per cent of pupils with special educational needs. Data about attainment on admission shows that only one of the pupils was working at the expected level for their age when the group started school. There are some differences in the performance of boys and girls in this group but these are linked to the pupils' natural abilities.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading | 15.1 (13.8) | 15.7 (15.8) |
| Writing | 15.3 (10.6) | 14.6 (14.4) |
| Mathematics | 16.1 (15.9) | 16.3 (16.5) |

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

5. Until 2003, test results in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 had risen at a good rate since the previous inspection. In 2003, there was a dip in performance due to the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and standards were below average in English and mathematics, and well below average in science. A quarter of pupils had statements of special educational needs. When taking into account pupils' prior attainment, and making comparisons with schools in similar contexts, standards in English and mathematics were above average, although below average in science. Inspection evidence shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are below average this year. However, given the pupils' very low performance in the Year 2 tests in 2000 and the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs (35%) in the group, pupils are achieving well. There have been slight variations in the performance of boys and girls over time but these fluctuate from year to year and are not significant.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 25.6 (27.8) | 26.8 (27.0) |
| Mathematics | 26.2 (27.5) | 26.8 (26.7) |
| Science | 26.4 (29.0) | 28.6 (28.3) |

There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. Throughout the school, the main areas for development in attainment are linked to pupils' communication skills. Most have a limited range of vocabulary and find it difficult to express ideas clearly and accurately. This weakness hampers their performance in reading and shows itself in lack of confidence when carrying out research and in independent work. The school works hard to compensate for this and adjustments have been made to the timetable to make lessons shorter and more effective. There are increased opportunities for speaking and listening and an extension of practical work in mathematics and science.

However, teachers do not always correct inaccurate and incoherent speech and insist on high enough quality in the pupils' verbal responses. Most success has been achieved in mathematics where standards, although below average, have improved at a good rate. More remains to be done to bring consistency to the teaching of science, especially in investigative work.

7. There has been very good improvement in the provision for ICT since the previous inspection and standards are now average. Computers are used effectively to support work in several subjects. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills satisfactorily in a range of subjects. Inspectors saw a range of work in art and design, geography, design and technology, music and physical education. Evidence shows that progress and achievement in these subjects are satisfactory and there are pockets of good work, which are reflected in the school's recent success in achieving an Artsmark.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Because the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, most pupils have good attitudes to their learning and behaviour is usually good. The pupils arrive at school in good time and attendance is satisfactory. These aspects of pupils' development have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are good
- Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are consistently encouraged and praised for making the right choices
- Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour
- Systems to promote attendance are very good
- A small number of pupils have difficulty in controlling their behaviour

Commentary

8. Good spiritual development is achieved through the strong Christian values promoted by the school and supported by many parents. Pupils learn about the lives and beliefs of others in their lessons and in assemblies they are taught to value and respect each other. Through their fundraising activities, they learn about others less fortunate than themselves, encouraging a sense of empathy. Pupils feel valued because teachers always listen to their responses and ideas in lessons and this encourages them to participate. Many pupils enjoy the creative aspects of their learning. They are proud of the poetry they have written and the pictures they have painted. Excitement was evident at the appearance of a television star to present the school with the Artsmark Award celebrating the pupils' artistic achievements. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and show good levels of interest in and enthusiasm for school life.
9. Moral and social development is promoted well. Pupils are expected to behave well and most do, thereby creating an orderly and happy environment. The behaviour of a small number of pupils does, however, sometimes disrupt lessons and pupils do not learn as much as they could. Pupils clearly understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and the majority willingly comply with the expectations of their teachers and become sensible and useful members of the community. They value the awards for good work and behaviour and comment that they try hard to earn them. They are encouraged to listen quietly to each other's ideas in lessons and, although they may not always agree, they learn to respect

different viewpoints. Because of the good and often very good relationships between many pupils, there are few concerns about bullying and pupils trust the staff to deal with any unkind behaviour fairly and effectively. The school council plays an important role in helping pupils who feel that they are being bullied. They check the bully boxes and have helped to develop the school's procedures to deal with this type of anti-social behaviour. Many of the Year 6 pupils keep an eye on the younger pupils, playing with them during wet playtime and reading with them. This plays an important part in developing a sense of community and giving the younger pupils an older and wiser friend to talk to. The residential visits undertaken by Years 5 and 6 pupils are very popular and help to promote pupils' self-confidence. There have been no exclusions.

10. The provision for cultural development is good overall and has a positive impact on pupils' personal development. They learn about the cultural and religious traditions of others through many of their lessons. The good range of visits out of school and the many visitors to school provide pupils with interesting experiences that enhance their cultural development well. The Arts' Week enables pupils to learn many new skills, for example, Indian Dance, and by taking part in community festivals and events, pupils learn about local culture and traditions. The school recognises that there are insufficient opportunities at present for first hand experience of life within multi-cultural Britain. The children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and their achievement of the levels expected for their age is satisfactory. They are encouraged to work and play constructively and happily together and learn to make sensible choices. They listen carefully to instructions and try hard to please their teachers and other adults who work with them.
11. The school has maintained a satisfactory level of attendance since the last inspection. Because of the very good systems for following up absence, there is no recorded unauthorised absence. Most of the absence relates to illness. Good attendance is rewarded and parents are reminded of the importance of regular attendance through the newsletters. As a result, most parents ensure that their children arrive at school each day on time and ready to start their lessons and advise the school promptly when their children are absent.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.5 | School data | 0.1 |
| 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 school provides a sound quality of education.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the lessons seen teaching varied between very good and unsatisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and Year 6 are consistently good

- Some lessons lack sufficient pace and challenge
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good
- Improving pupils' speaking and listening skills is still not emphasised enough
- Support staff contribute much to learning

Commentary

12. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Changes to staff, objectives in performance management and regular monitoring and support have led to greater consistency through the school. Nevertheless, there remain some areas for development, which include sharpening up on teachers' expectations of the presentation of work. In some classes pupils revert to printing their work having previously used joined script and some of their work is rather untidy. In some lessons, the pace is rather slow and this leads to occasional unsettled behaviour and inattention, which results in some low level and unproductive work. The school has worked hard to add challenge to the teaching of more able pupils and this is successful in some classes, notably Year 6, but requires further development elsewhere. Pupils and their parents comment positively about their teachers and other staff. Inspection evidence shows that teaching meets the needs of most pupils satisfactorily, although there is scope for further improvement in extending pupils' skills in speaking and listening and some aspects of science.
13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Staff are clear about how young children learn and provide a good balance of practical opportunities for them to work on their own or in groups of different sizes. This does much to promote personal, social and emotional development. The development of basic skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development receives high priority and the staff plan well to move learning on. There is a good range of methods, which includes opportunities for the children to listen to stories and rhymes, learn songs and poems and practise early reading and writing skills. The children are enthusiastic about these opportunities. The teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Children experiment and explore scientifically and become interested and careful observers. Staff keep good records of progress and use the information when planning work to meet the needs of different abilities. The friendly and caring atmosphere contributes well to the children's self-esteem and confidence and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.
14. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory with some good features. Overall, the teaching of English is satisfactory. Teachers recognise that pupils' communication skills hamper some aspects of their work, and in most lessons there is a short discussion time to encourage conversation. However, there is insufficient attention given to correcting inaccurate and incoherent speech. Basic skills in reading and writing are mostly taught well, although in a few cases in Year 2 the reading books are too hard for the pupils. There is a good balance of teaching the sounds that letters make and learning new words, and this is extended through homework.
15. The teaching of mathematics is good and staff have a good grasp of national guidelines and use them effectively to plan work which challenges the different abilities in the classes. These lessons have good pace and a balance between teacher direction and exposition, and opportunities for the pupils to practise their skills. Staff have good mathematical knowledge and plan lessons which incorporate the use of resources and opportunities for the pupils to improve their mental arithmetic skills and to complete good quantities of work. Objectives are made clear and the pupils know what is required. Science teaching is satisfactory overall. Although some science lessons lack pace, others are very challenging

and move learning on briskly. In mathematics and science the staff emphasise correct subject vocabulary although many pupils struggle to grasp new terms and this has an impact on their learning and the quality of their written work.

16. The school has improved assessment since the previous inspection and there is a good bank of data to guide teachers on what to plan. Initiatives in marking pupils' work are followed consistently, although comments do not always make it clear what the pupils need to do to improve. The introduction of target setting in English and mathematics is popular among the pupils and most are able to describe their targets.
17. Teaching of the other subjects observed was at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers plan lessons well and support staff are briefed fully so that they take a full part in lessons. These staff contribute much to learning, especially when supporting pupils with special educational needs. The teaching of these pupils is well focused and the carefully constructed individual education plans are used to identify each step in the pupils' learning and to provide guidance on assessing their understanding. Because they use assessment effectively, the staff are good at pitching their questions at the right level to involve pupils with special educational needs in all activities. In most lessons, behaviour is managed effectively and the use of praise and reward as well as sanctions ensures that pupils understand what is expected of them. With few exceptions pupils respond well to discipline.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 0 (0%) | 2 (6.1%) | 16 (48.5%) | 14 (42.4%) | 1(3%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |

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

The curriculum

The good quality curriculum is enriched well with a wide range of opportunities to stimulate learning. The school benefits from good accommodation and sufficient resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The support for pupils with special educational needs is good
- The school's participation in sport and the arts is good
- Visits, visitors and special events enhance the curriculum

Commentary

18. The school has built well on the good practice identified in the previous report and prioritises the inclusion of all pupils. An agreed approach to planning meets the learning needs of different groups well through the adaptation of tasks. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school ensures every pupil receives curriculum entitlement and adapts planning to meet the specific requirements set out in well written individual education plans. Good partnerships between teachers and teaching assistants ensure there is consistency and continuity in provision.
19. The provision has improved since the previous inspection. The curriculum is relevant and there is an emphasis on connecting knowledge and understanding across learning areas. This promotes interest in subjects and enables pupils of all abilities to engage in lessons. Pupils in the

Foundation Stage have a rich and interesting curriculum that prepares them well for the next stage of their education. A new computer suite and the completion of staff training have enhanced confidence in the delivery and application of information and communication technology (ICT) across subjects. The school improvement plan is a useful document that identifies subject priorities and guides new development. The plan is monitored and amended as new improvements are identified through the staff's evaluation of its effectiveness. This work has resulted in good continuity between the different stages of learning. The roles of the subject leaders, many of whom are only recently in post, are not yet fully embedded. The school is aware of this and is successfully working to address this issue.

20. The school is justly proud of achieving an Artsmark award. The school promotes art, drama workshops and dance and work is of good quality. Pupils also take part in numerous events, for example, a children's festival that was organised by the local education authority to promote writing. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. A strong Christian ethos of support and care for others permeates the curriculum. The policies for sex education and drug awareness are of good quality. A good range of after school clubs, including music and sports, support learning. Activities are changed on a seasonal basis to ensure variety and introduce pupils to a wider range of interests. Educational visits to centres of interest extend pupils' experiences within and beyond their community. Visitors to the school share experiences with pupils and this enriches learning.
21. Well qualified teachers are supported by committed classroom assistants and make learning enjoyable and effective. Staff are trained effectively and have good opportunities for professional development. They form an effective team. The accommodation is good and used well. The stimulating outdoor area for the Foundation Stage contributes much to the pupils' physical development. The school has an attractive library and a good range of books to support the teaching of English. Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for the care and welfare of all pupils who receive consistently good quality personal and educational support and guidance. Pupils have good opportunities to be involved in school life and their views are taken into account. The quality of this provision is better than at the time of the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The kindness and commitment of all staff ensures that parents and pupils feel confident that any problems will be handled fairly and effectively
- The needs of individual pupils are recognised and supported well
- Good quality policies and procedures ensure a safe and healthy environment

Commentary

22. There is a good awareness of health and safety issues. Fire drills are carried out regularly and records are kept. There is very good provision for first aid. Regular checks of the premises ensure that the school provides a safe environment. Risk assessments are carried out rigorously for all visits out of school. The teacher responsible for child protection receives regular training and keeps up-to-date with developments. All staff are aware of their duty of care in this aspect of pupils' welfare and procedures follow recognised guidelines. Pupils learn about the benefits of a healthy diet through their science lessons and older pupils are given appropriate information about sex and drugs in their personal,

social and health education lessons. Teachers emphasise the safe use of resources in lessons and playtimes are well supervised.

23. Because there are good relationships between pupils and the adults who work with them, pupils are confident that someone will help them if they are unhappy or worried about something. Staff are knowledgeable and sensitive to individual pupils' needs and there are good systems to support those with difficulties of both a personal and educational nature. The team of mid-day supervisors work consistently to reinforce the school's expectations and this provides a continuity of care throughout the day. In many lessons, assessment is used effectively to identify individual strengths and weaknesses and target appropriate work to improve achievement. However, this is not consistent throughout the school. There are good induction arrangements for children joining the Foundation Stage and this ensures that parents are confident that their children will be well cared for. The school council is a very effective forum for communication between pupils and staff. Their discussions and decisions have a positive impact on the day-to-day life of the school. For example, their useful input into the way the school deals with bullying has ensured a clearer understanding of this type of behaviour and how to handle it.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents is good and this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school has very good links with the local community and links with other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents have very positive views about the work of the school and are fully supportive of the Christian values promoted by the school
- There are good opportunities for parents to be involved in shaping the future of the school
- There are strong links with the local church, parish and village community

Commentary

24. The parents who took part in the consultation before and during the inspection expressed positive views about the work of the school. They are very pleased with how the school involves them and always feel welcome to speak to teachers or the headteacher if concerned about anything. They are provided with good information through the prospectus, the annual governors' report and the regular newsletters. The annual reports on the progress of children are good overall. Some reports give parents a very clear idea of how well their children are achieving in comparison with national benchmarks, but this is not consistent in all year groups. The consultation evenings are well attended and parents comment that these give them additional useful information about their child's particular strengths and weaknesses. Teachers are very willing to arrange to see parents should they need more information or have a concern. Each term parents have an opportunity to come into school to find out what their children will be doing in the term and how to help them. This is backed up with a written description, which gives those parents unable to attend the same information. A course for parents of Foundation Stage children is available to help them to learn skills to help their small children at home. Most parents encourage their children to complete their homework and many willingly volunteer to help with visits. A few parents also help regularly in classes, reading with the children. The events organised through the parents' association are well supported and the funds raised have helped to

provide books for the library and computers for the ICT suite. Parents are formally consulted about aspects of the school's work by way of a questionnaire and their views are taken into account. The headteacher is always available in the playground at the beginning and end of the day to listen to parents and takes their views and concerns very seriously.

25. The school has very good links with the local community. Pupils visit the church and local clergy are regular visitors to the school. Events taking place in the school and the achievements of pupils are reported in both the parish newsletter and the local press and this enhances the good reputation the school has in the community. Pupils take part in many local festivities and this makes a good contribution to their personal development. They visit a range of local amenities in support of their learning and many businesses generously support the work of the parents' association by providing raffle prizes. There are good mechanisms for pupils transferring to the next stage of education and educational links with other schools are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very clear vision for school improvement and leadership is effective. The school is managed well and runs smoothly. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school development plan is sharply focused and includes good targets
- Data is used well to pinpoint areas for improvement in staff and pupil performance
- The staff work together effectively and are committed to raising standards
- Financial planning and management are good
- Governors provide good support

Commentary

26. The leadership and management of the school face particular challenges in raising attainment because of the barriers to learning that exist in this school. Pupils' well below average attainment on admission and low level language skills, high staff turnover and the impact made by the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are all significant. The school compensates well for these drawbacks through determined and well focused leadership and clear vision shared by the headteacher, staff and governors. As a result, good headway has been made since the previous inspection in tackling the issues. The school now provides a purposeful environment with a shared commitment to improvement. This is reflected well in the good strategic planning, which includes sharply focused measures of success, based on rigorous analysis of data and focused target setting for staff through performance management. Parents and pupils speak positively about the developments at the school and comment favourably about the leadership and management and staff.

27. The headteacher has very good skills in analysing and using data. With the deputy headteacher, he has developed an effective system of monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and this has led to improved consistency in teaching and the curriculum. The changes in staff have been managed very well and the effective systems to support staff new to the school and the profession have led to improvement. Adjusting the organisation of the school day to make good use of time has led to an increase in pupils' productivity and is contributing to their achievement. Leadership of the subjects is satisfactory overall and good in ICT and mathematics, which have received good attention in recent years that has resulted in improved attainment. The school development plan is reviewed regularly

and monitored by the governors who are well aware of what the school needs to do to improve.

28. The governors ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements and have agreed good policies for racial equality, access for the disabled and equal opportunities. These policies work well in practice and underpin the school's work and ethos. Governors are involved in setting and reviewing priorities and keep a check on how well the school is doing. They provide good support to the headteacher and staff. They play an active and considered role in decision making. A good example of this has been the use of funds to maintain small classes in Years 1 and 2 because of the specific needs of the pupils. This has enabled the school to target individuals and their needs and has resulted in much improved performance.
29. Day-to-day management and administration work effectively and help ensure that the school runs smoothly. Finances are managed efficiently and used effectively to raise standards. Financial planning and monitoring are robust and lead to good use of funds for specific purposes such as creating the ICT suite. Prudent decisions have been made to take account of the falling numbers at the school in order to minimise the effect of reduced staffing levels on the quality of education provided. This forward thinking planning linked to the good use of best value principles means that the headteacher and governors are careful in linking spending to the school's educational priorities.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 445,452 | Balance from previous year | 24,826 |
| Total expenditure | 451,843 | Balance carried forward to the next | 18,435 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,442 | | |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The oldest three-year-olds are admitted to the morning nursery in September and others join them in January. They join the reception class in two stages so all have three terms in the nursery class. Many children join the nursery with skills, knowledge and understanding well below those of other three-year-olds but make good progress in the Foundation Stage. Almost all children in the reception class have attended the nursery. This gives them a good start to the rigours of a whole school day, and effective transition arrangements enable a smooth continuation of learning as children work towards the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. Both classrooms are interesting and stimulating with plenty of opportunities for the children to learn through practical experiences as well as direct teaching. The teaching is consistently good across all areas of learning and the teaching assistants and nursery nurse are fully involved in extending the children's learning. The accurate assessments of the children's achievements are used well. The teachers plan work that is carefully matched to individual stages of development, enabling each child to make good progress and to achieve well. Children with special educational needs make good progress because the adults understand their needs well and consistently help them work towards their targets.

The spacious and attractive classrooms and good area for outdoor activities give the children in both classes good opportunities for independent learning. Although the teachers liaise frequently, there is no overall coordination of the Foundation Stage and teachers plan separately for each class. This means that some opportunities for fine-tuning the children's learning to guide them towards higher achievement are lost.

Lessons focussing on the children's physical and creative development were not observed during this inspection but inspectors looked at the teachers' planning, photographic and other evidence and observed children in the classroom and outside. In **physical development** almost all the children manipulate tools accurately, using spreaders and scissors with care. Some children have less well developed control of writing tools and some drawings are immature. There are good opportunities for children to use climbing apparatus outside and there is a range of wheeled vehicles that are used regularly. In **creative development** the children in the nursery know a good range of songs and rhymes and the reception children sing in assemblies and infant singing sessions. The school provides some good opportunities for independent role play and photographs of dance and physical education lessons as well as the teachers' planning indicate that there is a good curriculum, clearly planned to enable the children to work towards the early learning goals for creative and physical development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children and adults have very good relationships
- The adults teach children to take turns, share and care for each other very well
- The environment contributes well towards opportunities for independent learning

Commentary

30. The children quickly settle into the nursery because they are well supported by all adults. The children form friendships and some show a pleasing care for others, although one or two children still find interacting with their peers difficult. Most children in both classes work amicably alongside each other, sharing equipment in role play. In the reception class, for example, children sit in the “airliner”, one as the pilot, the other with her suitcase, while others busy themselves in the “travel agents”. In both the nursery and reception classes, children have a strong sense of community and are beginning to understand that they are part of the school and Christian communities. Assemblies, acts of worship and singing with older pupils support this aspect of the children’s personal development well. Photographic evidence shows children have an understanding of the traditions and beliefs of others and celebrate major festivals, including Diwali and Chinese New Year. The children have a secure understanding of right and wrong and a simple knowledge of how to keep themselves and others safe as well as how to care for the environment other creatures. Children make good progress and most achieve the early learning goals for personal development because of the consistent high expectations of all adults and the good teaching.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading is taught well
- Technical vocabulary is taught effectively but communication skills are not developed sufficiently
- There are good opportunities for children to write independently

Commentary

31. Although children make good progress overall, their poor communication skills have a negative impact on their attainment in all aspects of communication, language and literacy, and few achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Most children leave the reception class with a limited vocabulary and many find it difficult to order words accurately when speaking and speaking skills are well below those expected. The staff are conscientious when teaching the children new words, especially technical vocabulary such as “author” and “illustrator”, “introduction” and “phoneme”. Children use this vocabulary with appropriate accuracy and understanding. Generally, however, the children rarely use complete sentences when speaking. They often use tenses incorrectly and fall back on a very limited general vocabulary in day-to-day speech. Although children have plenty of opportunities to speak, the adults do not do enough to help them improve their communication skills on a day-to-day basis. Children in the nursery are encouraged to delight in books and stories. The share books with adults and, during the inspection, a parent governor provided a rich and stimulating book session with the children who were in the book corner. Children are taught to recognise letters and the sounds they make. Reception class children take books home regularly and learn new words from their reading books. The recent improvement in the provision for reading in the Foundation Stage has had a positive impact on the children’s progress.

32. Teaching is good. Writing skills are taught well. Children are encouraged to see writing as an important means of communication. They “write” independently regularly and their efforts are valued. In the reception class, the most able children make rapid progress, moving from jumbles of letters without spaces to writing in sentences. Letter formation and spelling are taught conscientiously and children apply these skills to their independent work. The literacy lessons are well matched to the children’s abilities although some aspects of the lessons in the reception class are too long for some children to sustain concentration, while others complete their tasks within the time available and occasionally are not sufficiently challenged.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Mathematical skills are taught methodically and build on previous learning
- There are good opportunities for children to learn through practical and relevant activities
- Children are acquiring a good understanding of mathematical terms

Commentary

33. Mathematical development is taught effectively in both classes and children achieve well although the majority will not achieve the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. In the nursery class the adults take every opportunity to involve the children in counting and matching. The children sing counting songs to consolidate the order of numbers and most have some understanding of “more” and “less”. More formal learning where children match objects to the number of the week consolidates their understanding of numerals and quantity. Children recognise common shapes and this knowledge is applied to other areas of learning such as shape pictures. By the end of the reception year, some children add and subtract within 10 while others are still insecure when matching objects to numerals. The teaching is good, with thoroughly planned lessons that are matched very well to the children’s needs. Much of the work is based on problem solving, making the children think about the processes they use rather than just completing “sums”. The oral sessions echo this, with questions such as; “How did you know there would be 8 cookies left?” encouraging children to explain their methods. However, the teacher often interprets the response rather than helping the child explain more clearly, missing opportunities to improve speaking skills. A good range of equipment and practical activities support mathematical development. In a lesson about mini-beasts, for example, children compared the lengths of worms and discussed if the holes in mesh were small enough to keep ants in captivity for the lesson. In spite of this, there are too few opportunities for the children to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in practical activities.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The interesting curriculum provides a good range of experiences

- Teachers promote learning effectively through practical tasks and the good use of resources

Commentary

34. The good teaching and interesting curriculum and environment enable most children to achieve the early learning goals by the end of their reception year, having made good progress in the Foundation Stage. Although many children join the nursery with a limited knowledge and understanding of the world, the rich learning environment and the well-planned activities enable them to extend their learning beyond their own experiences. For example, the topic about the seaside, with its shop, shells, water toys and sand provides children with knowledge of a different environment, even though many have not been to the seaside. The children discuss their families, pets and plants and are involved in growing flowers in the garden. The good range of materials available give children an understanding of their properties and most understand how to join materials together with glue or tape. In the reception class, children design playgrounds and have “met” a range of pets brought into school by members of the community. A world map is available in the “travel agents” and children have an understanding that some places are so far away they need to fly there. Children have made gingerbread men, cakes for a Christmas fare and Chinese food when celebrating Chinese New Year. They make Diwali cards as well as divas and shadow puppets. The provision for developing the children’s scientific understanding is very good. Children explore aspects of their senses, sound insulation and the characteristics and habitats of mini-beasts. They experiment to find safe colours to reflect light at night. The adults ensure that children use scientific equipment effectively and safely. Information and communication technology (ICT) skills are taught well and almost all children control the mouse accurately and have a sound understanding of basic tools and programs. Children use computers to create patterns, pictures and labels and to play games support learning in English and mathematics.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The standards attained in national tests are below average but pupils achieve well
- Good quality teaching in Year 6 is driving standards up
- There are weaknesses in the teaching of speaking and listening

Commentary

35. Over time the school has successfully raised standards in English, although there was a dip in 2003 due to the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the cohorts. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading and writing at the end of Years 2 and 6 are below average. This is because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in relatively small cohorts. Nevertheless, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve at least satisfactorily given their low levels of skills, knowledge and understanding on admission to the school. Girls achieve better than boys, particularly by the end of Year 2.

36. The school is taking significant action to improve attainment. The subject action plan is detailed and clearly indicates priorities. Initiatives include seeking local authority advice to improve planning, subject leadership, targeting of teaching and learning and restructuring the school library to provide good quality books in an area where pupils can use facilities for research. The school has identified speaking and listening as a priority to improve pupils' competence in English. Opportunities for pupils to discuss issues flourish across the whole curriculum and pupils are developing increased confidence to explore and develop their spoken language. This work is improving pupils' application of language in a range of subjects. However, teachers are not critical enough of the pupils' speech and sometimes mistakes of unclear speech are uncorrected.
37. Although standards in reading are below average at the end of Years 2 and 6 there has been good improvement in resources and teaching and the pupils make good progress. The extension of the library provision is effectively supporting the development of skills and positive attitudes to reading and to books. Pupils are interested in the new books that are attractively displayed to interest inquisitive pupils. In discussion, pupils enjoy talking about the stories they have read and the more able pupils refer to text to exemplify how characters contribute to the excitement of stories. Pupils have good word attack skills to decode words causing difficulties. A wide range of strategies to support reading has been identified, for example, reading buddies, timetabled reading workshops and story sacks. Families are encouraged to share books with their children but pupils report that there is reluctance with some families to follow up this very important and enjoyable work.
38. Progress in writing is at least satisfactory and good in Year 6. There are pockets of good work throughout the school but pupils' limited vocabulary impacts on their overall performance in national tests. There is some good teaching of writing skills. Pupils' work on display includes self evaluation and promotes a sense of achievement and provides opportunities to celebrate success. Pupils understand that writing is an important tool in all subjects and not limited to the literacy lesson. Standards in handwriting and presentation of work are variable. There is inconsistency in pupils' using pencils or pens in their work. Some pupils experiment with writing styles and these inconsistencies detract from good quality presentation.
39. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with good teaching in Year 6. Good teaching is underpinned by effective classroom relationships and high expectations. Work is carefully planned to challenge different ability groups and marking clearly indicates what pupils have to do to improve their work. Pupils' interest is maintained through well paced lessons that engage listening and thinking skills. Teachers show respect for pupils' writing through good quality displays that celebrate achievement. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by classroom assistants and achieve well in relation to their targets. Care is taken to monitor and review progress with class teachers and modify provision accordingly. The school encourages parents to share in their children's education and welcomes opportunities to discuss progress.
40. The school has appropriate systems to measure and check on pupils' progress. Lessons are monitored and evaluated by the headteacher and subject leader and all staff are clear about the priorities in the subject action plan.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

41. There are some good examples of links developing between literacy and other subjects. For example, speaking and listening is a priority that permeates the curriculum. The school took part in a range of initiatives, for example, "Hills, Holes and Homes" that included poetry

and drama workshops. However, more use could be made of drama in lessons to extend learning in an exciting way. Good links with history produced pupils writing based on the contribution of the Victorian engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well, especially in number
- Many pupils struggle with problem solving
- Most of the teaching is good

Commentary

42. National test results at the end of Year 2 have shown good improvement over time although inspection evidence shows that the current cohort are working at below average levels. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 dipped and were below average following several years of improvement. Standards remain below average this year although pupils' work in Year 6 shows good progress and achievement. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Years 2 and 6 has a significant impact on overall standards. The school has made good headway in recent years in raising standards in Year 6 and the focus on more able pupils has been especially effective, resulting in a much better performance than seemed possible, given their low attainment in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2000. Effective target setting for staff and pupils has sharpened up teaching and learning. Although there are differences in the performance of boys and girls, which are more pronounced in Year 2, these variations are due to the pupils' natural ability. The work done by boys and girls shows little significant difference although girls are generally more confident in using mathematical vocabulary than boys.
43. Progress in mathematics is good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and skilful questioning and intervention by teachers and other staff enables these pupils to achieve well. Their understanding is helped through the use of apparatus to help them solve simple problems. When planning activities the teachers take good account of the needs of more able pupils who have been identified through the staff's good use of data. Work is sufficiently challenging for these pupils and they achieve well. Throughout the school, pupils make the most progress in basic skills because the teachers develop pupils' competence in using a good variety of strategies when calculating. This was seen to good effect in Year 2 as the teacher introduced different ways of multiplying which extended the pupils' knowledge of a variety of strategies. Pupils have a secure grasp of shape, space and measures although some are confused by technical terms. Progress is good in data handling and the teachers link this work effectively to ICT so that pupils learn the importance of collating information accurately. The weakest aspect of mathematics is in solving problems as the pupils' limited understanding of technical vocabulary hampers their progress. Lack of confidence in trying a variety of solutions sometimes inhibits pupils from attempting complex problems even though many have the basic skills needed.
44. Teaching and learning are good; the staff have benefited from additional training and the use of the National Numeracy Strategy as the basis of planning. Teachers plan conscientiously and lessons are well balanced, with opportunities to introduce new skills

and to provide time for the pupils to practise. Pupils take part enthusiastically in the introductions to lessons, and carefully explain how they found the answer. Pupils concentrate well and produce appropriate quantities of work, but this is sometimes marred by untidy presentation. Teachers and support staff work effectively alongside the different groups in lessons and use good questions to check on pupils' understanding. Explanations are clear and unhurried, and this helps pupils to grow in confidence. The teaching is brought to life through everyday meaningful examples. In Year 6, the pupils made good gains in understanding and using percentages because the teacher provided recent advertisements to illustrate how pupils would need to use their knowledge when shopping for bargains. Marking is accurate. In the best examples in Year 6 there is a link between targets so that pupils are able to identify how much progress they have made and what they need to do next in order to improve.

45. There is a new subject leader who is beginning to make an impact. Good headway has been made in raising standards in the subject since the previous inspection as the headteacher and subject leader have made effective use of data, training and a well written action plan to influence staff in raising standards. Staff keep appropriate records of the pupils' progress and assessment is used satisfactorily to plan the curriculum to include sufficient challenge.

Mathematics across the curriculum

46. Pupils apply their mathematical skills satisfactorily in other subjects. Younger pupils use their knowledge of symmetry and tessellation well in producing patterns in art and design. Throughout the school, pupils use graphs in a variety of contexts to present information and this contributes well to pupils' understanding of data in recording science experiments such as measuring sound, light and temperature. In their geography work, pupils use co-ordinates when reading maps. They measure accurately in design and technology and make reasonable estimates when planning and when making models.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in Years 1 and 6 is very good
- Pupils lack confidence in explaining and using scientific principles and ideas
- Some lessons lack sufficient pace and challenge

Commentary

47. The provision in science has improved since the previous inspection, but more remains to be done to raise standards further. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teacher assessments in 2003 at the end of Year 2 showed that most pupils attained average standards, but few achieved higher levels. Test results at the end of Year 6 showed standards to be well below average. The rate of improvement in science has generally fallen behind that in English and mathematics. However, standards are showing signs of improvement due to the school's recent emphasis on developing pupils' skills in using and applying scientific terms and processes in their work. The initiatives have met with varying degrees of success. Most impact has been made in Years 1 and 6 where the teaching is strong and staff forge good links between providing opportunities for pupils to improve their

subject knowledge and the challenge of an investigative approach which enables pupils to plan their own experiments.

48. The science curriculum covers all aspects of the subject and pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge of life and physical processes and have an appropriate grasp of materials and their properties. However, they lack confidence when explaining processes using scientific vocabulary precisely and accurately. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from good teaching with some very good features; they enjoy science as the teachers provide a good balance between experiments and recording work. Pupils work hard and improve their scientific knowledge well. Clear explanations and diagrams linked to useful worksheets provide stimulus and interest to the learning. Teachers are knowledgeable. The extra support of classroom assistants is used effectively to provide help for those with special educational needs. In Years 3 to 6 the teaching varies between unsatisfactory and very good and is satisfactory overall. Sometimes lessons are brisk and purposeful with challenging tasks, as in Year 6 when pupils studied a variety of solutions. The pupils made well founded predictions about which materials would dissolve or react and recorded their work effectively using simple diagrams and charts. However, in some lessons the pace is too slow and pupils' attention wanes, resulting in some disruption and limited learning. Most teachers make good use of scientific terms, although many pupils are slow to grasp new words and need much reassurance about their use. Teachers mark the pupils' work but there is little guidance included in the comments to show pupils how to improve. Homework is used occasionally to reinforce lessons. Staff make good use of ICT in some lessons and this enables pupils to grasp the importance of accurate measurement when recording data when using sensors to measure sound. Older pupils make appropriate use of the Internet to extend their learning. Pupils use their literacy skills satisfactorily in recording their work but presentation in some classes could be better.
49. The subject benefits from satisfactory leadership and management. The headteacher and subject leader have analysed the pupils' performance and set good targets for improvement. The monitoring of pupils' work and teaching has been used to identify training needs. There has been good support from outside agencies and the additional training is raising teachers' expectations and skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in all aspects of the subject
- Most of the teaching is good
- Good leadership and management is helping to lift standards

Commentary

50. There has been very good improvement in the provision, teaching and standards in ICT since the previous inspection. Pupils enjoy using computers and the successful balance of opportunities to use the computer suite and use technology in lessons in the classroom has meant that pupils grow in competence and confidence in using a variety of programs and hardware. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Staff offer good support to pupils of all abilities and lessons are suitably challenging. Pupils attain appropriate levels of competence in word processing, control technology and data handling. The use of these skills in other subjects reinforces learning successfully. There are good opportunities for pupils to use of the Internet and most are

competent in sending and receiving electronic mail. Pupils understand the advantages of using technology when compared with manual methods. They compare methods of collecting and collating data in mathematics and understand the importance of ensuring that the data is correct. Pupils have secure skills in word processing but do not always make use of the spell checker to correct their mistakes. They make attractively presented posters, poems and cards using a good range of techniques, which include changing colour, font, shape and size.

51. The good teaching enables pupils to achieve well. Most pupils are enthusiastic learners and work hard in lessons, willingly cooperating and sharing ideas and equipment. Occasionally a few boys fall short of this good standard and their behaviour interferes with learning. Lessons are planned well and most have good pace. Time is used effectively to maximise the opportunities for the pupils to practise their skills and techniques. Introductions are brisk and well focused and teachers take account of the pupils' levels of understanding when setting tasks so that all are challenged sufficiently. In a good lesson in Years 3 and 4 the pupils used a variety of tools and techniques to create Aboriginal drawings showing an imaginary journey and developing a good appreciation of signs and symbols. Most teachers have benefited from additional training and are secure in developing pupils' skills. They make good use of national guidelines for the subject to ensure continuity in learning.
52. The subject is led and managed well and this has resulted in greatly improved standards and provision. The leadership ensures that all staff are clear about what is to be taught. The school has recently introduced a good system to record and measure pupils' achievements and this provides useful information on pupils' progress and guidance in planning the next course of work.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

53. Computers and other technology are used effectively to support the pupils' work in most subjects. The staff ensure good access to the Internet in a variety of subjects to help the pupils to develop their research skills. Good links are made with data handling in mathematics and science and pupils competently include graphs and charts in their work. In music there is evidence of pupils using computers to compose tunes and in art and design the pupils make good use of a variety of tools to create impressive pictures. Pupils have a secure grasp of word processing skills and edit and refine their poems and stories using fonts and colour effectively.

HUMANITIES

54. Inspectors observed four lessons in geography but none in history. Other evidence was drawn from discussions with staff and pupils, analysis of the pupils' work and teachers' planning. Subject leadership of **history** is good. Through good links with literacy, the school encourages an investigative approach to teaching and learning. The curriculum is of good quality and is enhanced through the school's use of the locality to heighten pupils' awareness of their role in society. Visits to the nearby Heritage Centre, Chatsworth and to museums in Manchester are highly valued and make significant contributions to learning. Pupils are interested in their work, and in discussion they speak enthusiastically about what they have enjoyed, for example, learning about the Tudors. There are good links with history and literacy. Writing opportunities are planned and are an important extension of developing writing skills. Good research skills are evident in pupils' investigations of life in the sixties. Pupils are pleased to extend their learning beyond the classroom and

demonstrate a growing independence towards learning. The school arranges for visitors to speak to pupils about a range of topics, for example, the contribution made by the local community to support children who left their homes in vulnerable cities during the war to make temporary homes in the town. This link with literacy prepares pupils to listen carefully to speakers and consider ways in which they can most effectively frame their questions.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The local environment provides a rich source for teaching and learning
- Geographical studies are closely linked in the area where pupils live
- The curriculum is well organised

Commentary

55. The standards achieved in geography by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average and similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Geography is taught in blocked units in Years 3 to 6 to avoid repetition of topics in mixed aged classes.
56. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Effective use is made of the very good examples of source material that is available in the area served by the school. In discussion pupils understand how the use of community resources is changing, for example, the importance of water in enhancing leisure facilities. In a good lesson in Year 1, pupils were encouraged to describe their journeys to school. The teacher successfully modelled her daily journey and emphasised the importance of the correct use of directional language and the correct sequencing of key features.
57. Pupils work together to prepare short presentations of their work and this important link with literacy makes a valuable contribution to pupils' language development. Good emphasis is given to promoting geographical vocabulary and processes. Pupils in Year 6 used good quality resources to identify and name important coastal features. The teachers make successful links with mathematics and pupils use graphs well to present data. Pupils enjoy their work in geography. They talk enthusiastically about projects in which they are involved and proudly share the additional work that they have researched using the Internet. Good quality presentation of work reflects the value they attach to their efforts and this makes a significant contribution to the development of independent learning. An annual residential visit to an outdoor centre extends opportunities for learning. This initiative provides valuable links with pupils' personal and social education as they take increasing responsibility to contribute to the success of the experience. Communication skills are extended as pupils explain aspects of their work and negotiate with other pupils how to achieve successful outcomes to their enquiries. This is a good example of the priority the school gives to a broad and interesting curriculum designed to make learning interesting.
58. The subject leader is enthusiastic and provides good support for staff. After the end of each topic assessment profiles are completed and used to track the pupils' performance and progress. The subject leader provides good support and encourages a creative approach

to teaching and learning and has achieved a good degree of success in linking geography with other subjects.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

59. Inspectors observed two physical education lessons, and one lesson each of design and technology and art and design. They observed separate infant and junior singing sessions. In addition, inspectors looked at teachers' planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects and scrutinised a range of work. The planning for all the subjects meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and there are regular opportunities to study each subject. The school has schemes of work based on government guidance and skills, knowledge and understanding are developed consistently. The school has recently been awarded an Artsmark award and have participated in a good range of dance and drama. There are pockets of good achievement in artwork around the school. Overall evidence from the work observed shows that boys and girls are working at similar levels, which are appropriate for their age.
60. Pupils enjoy **music** and sing enthusiastically in their combined singing sessions. There are good opportunities for the pupils to take part in musical productions and to join with pupils from other schools in musical festivals. Pupils listen to an appropriate variety of music from a range of cultures and styles. There is some specialist music teaching provided by a teacher from the secondary school. A few pupils play woodwind or brass instruments and the music club provides opportunities for pupils to play recorders and other instruments. There is a seasonal choir to support festivals and other productions.
61. The staff provide well-planned opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills and techniques in **art and design**. Pupils know about the work of several famous artists and produce good work in the style of Picasso. In the lessons observed, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used Aboriginal symbols and a range of techniques to produce drawings of journeys using earth colours and symbols. This linked effectively with an earlier ICT lesson and work in geography. The teaching was good, encouraging pupils to evaluate the effectiveness of a range of techniques. Support staff were used very effectively, knowledgeably extending pupils' skills and encouraging them to discuss their work. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have opportunities to join in an art club and there are examples of good quality artwork around the school. The pupils enjoy art and the subject contributes well to their spiritual and cultural development.
62. In their **design and technology** lesson, pupils in Years 4 and 5 used different techniques to create pop-up cards. The teacher gave clear explanations of different methods and pupils showed an appropriate understanding of assembling and disassembling mechanisms. However, although girls made appropriate progress, several boys did not achieve as well as they should because of inappropriate behaviour. The teaching was satisfactory overall, but lack of pace and rigorous behaviour management prevented pupils achieving well. Pupils' work and discussion with pupils in Year 6 shows that they have had an appropriate range of experiences in the subject and are familiar with the principles of planning, designing, making and evaluating their work.
63. Standards were not judged in **physical education** but evidence shows that pupils are provided with a good range of activities that includes all elements of the appropriate curriculum. There are good facilities to support physical development in the school and the good range of extra-curricular activities for sport enhances them. The school works closely with other primary schools to identify gifted and talented players, gymnasts and dancers.

These high achieving pupils work together to enhance their skills under the direction of a specialist teacher. During the period of inspection it was only possible to observe lessons in dance. These lessons were taught with enthusiasm and pupils made satisfactory progress in developing and refining their movements. Most pupils move with grace and confidence, and boys and girls are equally hard working. Teachers have appropriate subject knowledge and plan lessons well to include a balance between opportunities to learn new skills and to practise and refine their own sequences. Pupils are enthusiastic and thoroughly enjoy the opportunities they are presented with. The school uses the facilities of the local leisure centre to teach swimming. Records show that pupils achieve good outcomes in swimming with all pupils achieving at least the minimum swimming qualification on leaving the school. This very important life skill has a high priority at the school. Pupils benefit from the use of two large indoor play areas to learn a good range of gymnastics and games skills.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

64. Insufficient lessons were observed in **personal, social and health education** to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. Evaluations are based on pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers. Parents speak highly of this aspect of the school's provision and pupils also value the opportunities provided for them to make decisions and develop positive and healthy attitudes. From starting school, personal, social and emotional development is encouraged and the staff work hard to encourage the pupils to value themselves and others through providing opportunities for pupils to make decisions and take responsibility. The school is part of the Healthy Schools' Initiative and pupils have opportunities to learn how to care for themselves and the environment in specific lessons in citizenship and through subjects such as science and geography.
65. Practical guidance and good levels of support for individuals underpin the work of the staff. Around the school there are helpful displays which include guidance about how to cope with bullying. The pupils comment very favourably about this aspect of the school's work and report that incidents are rare and that any problems are dealt with quickly. Older pupils receive good guidance and teaching about the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs. There is a good programme of sex and relationships education. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and to respect the views of others. This works well and older pupils are proud of the opportunities to support younger and less confident children. The school council introduces pupils to the notion of democracy and the representatives take their responsibilities seriously. Some extra-curricular activities include opportunities for pupils to learn about the environment in the countryside club. In a good lesson in Year 1 the teacher carefully led the pupils in a discussion about using and caring for local amenities such as the park; the pupils showed a good understanding of how they could make this environment safer and more attractive.

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 | 2 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 3 |
| Overall standards achieved | 5 |
| 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 | 4 |
| The quality of teaching | 4 |
| How well pupils learn | 4 |
| The quality of assessment | 4 |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs | 3 |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities | 3 |
| Accommodation and resources | 3 |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety | 3 |
| 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 | 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 | 3 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| 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).