

INSPECTION REPORT

ST GILES CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Cheadle, Staffordshire Moorlands

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124352

Headteacher: Mr J Smith

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th May 2004

Inspection number: 257662

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:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	250
School address:	Charles Street Cheadle Staffordshire Moorlands Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST10 1ED
Telephone number:	01538 753220
Fax number:	01538 757278
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Peter Lucas
Date of previous inspection:	18 th May 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Roman Catholic primary school is situated in Cheadle and draws pupils from a wide area. With 250 pupils (119 girls and 131 boys), it is about the same size as most primary schools and is oversubscribed. The large majority of the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. No pupils speak English as an additional language. The pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic groups and there is a wide spread of attainment on entry; for most pupils attainment is below average, especially in language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average overall but above average in some year groups. Six pupils have a statement of special educational need (above average). The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (seven per cent) is below average. The school has received several awards and taken part in a variety of initiatives in recent years. They include the Gold Activemark (2001), Achievement award (2002) and in 2003 an acknowledgement of its dyslexia friendly approach and involvement in the Healthy Schools Initiative.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20891	Sean O'Toole	Lead inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Personal, social and health education and citizenship; History.
13526	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
29989	Pauline Goodsell	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Mathematics; Geography; Physical education.
21858	John Pryor	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; Art and design; Design and technology; Music.

The inspection contractor was :

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This good school provides well for its pupils and gives good value for money. The teaching is mostly good and this enables pupils to attain above average standards at the end of Year 6. Overall, achievement is at least satisfactory and good in Years 4 to 6. The headteacher, staff and governors provide efficient and effective leadership and management.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Pupils attain good standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and their achievement in physical education is high
- Teaching and learning are at their best in Years 4 to 6
- The headteacher leads the school very well
- More able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently in Years 1 to 3
- Standards in writing are not as high as they should be
- The pupils have very positive attitudes and behaviour is very good
- There are exceptionally strong links with other schools
- The school has very good links with parents and the community

The good rate of improvement since the last inspection in May 1998 has resulted in improved standards at the end of Year 6. The school has successfully tackled the issues raised in the last report; standards in ICT have improved, the provision for special educational needs is now very good, and monitoring has helped to improve teaching. Leadership and management have become much more focused. 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	C	C
Mathematics	B	B	A	A*
Science	A	C	A	A*

*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 and most attain the expected goals for their age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development. Inspection evidence shows that **achievement for the different groups of pupils is at least satisfactory and is good in Years 4 to 6**. By the end of Year 2 standards are average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. National test results at the end of 2003 showed that standards in reading and writing were above average and average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools standards were average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. Over the past few years the trend in results has shown an upturn. Although current Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are generally lower than the 2003 test results, this is due to cohort variations with a high proportion of pupils with specific learning difficulties and low attainment on admission. Boys in this cohort generally lag behind the girls in writing. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 achieve satisfactorily although brighter pupils could be challenged more.

In Years 4 to 6, achievement and progress in English, mathematics and science are good. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress, benefiting from well focused support. In national tests in 2003, when compared with similar schools, the school's results were average in English and among the top five per cent in mathematics and science.

Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science. Throughout the school, pupils achieve less well in writing than other aspects of their work and there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to use computers to develop their drafting and editing skills. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved since the previous inspection and the trend shows most gains in mathematics and science. The improvements have been achieved through improved teaching, support from the high school in developing the science curriculum and well focused and increased classroom support. The school's targets are sufficiently challenging and pupils are on course to meet them. Pupils achieve very well in physical education because of the excellent provision. Standards in ICT are average. Some good work was seen in art and design, music, history and design and technology.

In this inclusive school, the **staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very well**, creating a climate in which pupils develop mature attitudes which stand them in good stead for the future. Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and pupils are attentive and hard working. There have been no exclusions. The school council plays an important part in representing pupils' opinions. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good, with some excellent and very good, but no unsatisfactory, lessons. Particular strengths include relationships, encouragement, support for pupils with special educational needs and the very effective classroom assistants. Overall, English, mathematics and science are taught well but more focus is needed in developing pupils' writing skills. The pupils are willing workers who rise to challenges, especially in Years 4 to 6. Some work in Years 1 and 2 is not presented well enough. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The school's good curriculum is enriched with very good extra-curricular activities and outstanding opportunities for pupils to take part in sport and the arts. Staff are very caring, having a thorough knowledge of individuals. The school's accommodation is very cramped and restricts some activities, especially in ICT. Resources are satisfactory overall but there are shortages in English, ICT and for outdoor play for the Foundation Stage. Very effective relationships with parents and the community and often excellent links with other schools contribute much to pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher plays a pivotal role in leading the school and inspires staff and pupils. **Leadership and management are good**. The school has a positive ethos and staff are keen to see the pupils succeed. The school runs smoothly and the hard-working team are committed to school improvement. This is reflected in their thoughtful consideration of new approaches and well organised subject leadership. Governance is good. The governors have a good overview of the school and ensure that it meets all statutory requirements. There is robust management of finance to ensure that funds are spent wisely and in line with the priorities in the school's good development plan. Careful consideration is given to ensuring best value when purchasing supplies and services.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils are very proud of the school and take part enthusiastically in all it offers. Most parents are very pleased with the quality of education provided although a few would like better information and to be more involved in decision making.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Accelerate the rate of pupils' progress in Years 1 to 3, especially by providing more challenge for brighter pupils and making better use of target setting
- Extend opportunities for writing and make better use of computers to draft and refine pupils' work

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement in the school is good overall and standards are rising. Progress is at its best in Years 4 to 6. Pupils leave school at the end of Year 6 with above average skills in English, mathematics and science. The sporting achievements of both boys and girls are outstanding.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the reception classes make good progress and attain the early learning goals
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- There has been a rising trend in standards in English, mathematics and science in national test results at the end of Year 6
- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 often achieve very well
- Pupils' writing skills should be better
- More able pupils in Years 1 to 3 are not as successful as they might be

Commentary

1. Though there are variations from year to year in attainment on admission to the school, overall it has declined since the previous inspection and is generally below average, especially in communication, language and literacy. The children make a good start in the reception classes and achieve well in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the reception year most attain the early learning goals in these areas of learning. The children are prepared effectively for the next stage of their education and most are confident in mixing with older pupils and adults because of the school's effective "buddy system".
2. In spite of the falling level of attainment on admission the school's results have shown general improvement since the previous inspection, mainly because of effective teaching and the good leadership of most subjects. The school sets demanding targets for pupils' performance in national tests at the end of Year 6 and inspection evidence shows that it is likely to meet its targets. The trend in pupils' performance in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics has been above the national average overall. Given that attainment on admission has declined in recent years, the school's results at the end of Year 2 reflect at least satisfactory achievement. Test results at the end of Year 2 in 2003 showed that standards in reading and writing were above average and average in mathematics. When compared with schools with similar intakes standards were average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average in reading and mathematics. Few pupils achieve higher levels in writing. The variation from the results in 2003 is due to the much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this year's cohort. Most pupils read competently and accurately. However, writing skills, especially among more able pupils, are not developed enough. In this year's cohort boys are not as successful as girls, especially in reading and writing. Almost all of the pupils with special educational needs in this group are boys. Generally, there is little significant variation in the performance of boys and girls.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.0 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.5 (16.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 44 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Test results at the end of Year 6 have shown consistent improvement since the previous inspection. The rate of improvement has been better than the national trend, especially in mathematics and science. This success is attributable to teaching that is often very good, the support from the high school in developing and supporting the science curriculum, the enthusiastic introduction and development of the National Numeracy Strategy and successful monitoring and support of teaching. Test results in 2003 showed that standards were average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools the results were average in English and among the top five per cent of schools in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that this year standards in English, mathematics and science are above average and this represents good achievement for the pupils as an above average proportion have specific learning needs. Boys and girls are equally successful. The results are not as high as in 2003 because of the variations in the overall ability of the cohort.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.8 (28.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.4 (28.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	31.2 (29.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good and sometimes very good progress because they receive very effective support from all staff. Their targets are reviewed regularly and work is pitched at the right level to enable them to achieve well. They benefit much from in-class support as well as opportunities to work in small groups outside the classroom. More able pupils in Years 1 and 3 are not always stretched sufficiently as the work set for them is often similar to those of lower or average ability. In Years 4 to 6 there is sufficient challenge, and high expectations in the teaching produce good results for pupils of all abilities. Progress is at least satisfactory throughout the school. The pace of learning accelerates in Years 4 to 6 because of high expectations in the teaching.
5. Pupils achieve very well in physical education and standards are well above average. Pupils excel in games and sporting competitions because of high quality teaching, involvement in extra-curricular activities and opportunities to compete against other schools. The school's Gold Activemark is well deserved. Achievement in ICT is satisfactory with most pupils attaining average standards. However, their ICT skills are not used enough to promote writing skills, mainly due to lack of resources. Inspectors saw some good work in music in Years 1 and 2 where standards are above average due to specialist teaching. There are good pockets of work in art and design, history and design and technology. Many subjects benefit from additional input through extra-curricular activities, such as the art club, which has a positive impact on attainment.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well in lessons and around the school. Their personal development is very good due to the very good provision by the school for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is good. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are attentive and hard working

- They enjoy activities, especially sport, art and music
 - Pupils are very confident, mature and willing to take on responsibilities
6. Throughout the school pupils show very positive attitudes in lessons. In the Reception classes the pupils make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development due to the good support provided. As they move through the school they show an increasingly positive attitude towards learning due to good, interesting teaching and a developing thirst for knowledge. The pupils show particularly good attitudes when involved in practical work. Teachers value the pupils' input and listen to them; the pupils work hard and pay attention very well. This was seen in a Year 4 lesson in mathematics where the excellent interactions between the teacher and the pupils led to very effective learning about number patterns and a real enthusiasm and excitement about numbers. Pupils enjoy school and this is evident in the very good interest they show towards the life of the school and their excellent attitude to the range of activities provided outside lessons. This is having a significant impact on achievements in sport, music and art. There is a very high level of enthusiasm for the athletics club at the end of the school day as, it seems, almost every pupil from Years 3 to 6 heads for the field with great excitement. Pupils are very proud of their achievements, which are celebrated by the school at every opportunity. Talented pupils represent their school and county with great success in many sports. The love of sport and promotion of talent has led many former pupils to continue their involvement in later life, some to a professional level.
 7. The school builds well on pupils' positive attitudes through the very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils show high levels of confidence and responsibility. Their spiritual and cultural development is enhanced by the very good way in which the school celebrates its Catholic foundation. Pupils are very keen members of the school council, which gives them an outlet for their views on a range of school issues, for example developing playground activities, improving awareness of healthy eating and environmental issues. Encouraged by the highly inclusive approach of all members of staff, especially the support staff, pupils show very good attitudes to those with disabilities. Pupils are very keen to undertake a wide range of duties, providing valuable help to their teachers. They enjoy participating in local occasions such as music festivals and celebrations at the church. Pupils in Year 6 develop independence and confidence through participating in two extended residential visits. The "ECO" group contributes very well by helping to maintain the attractive and environmentally friendly grounds. Good citizenship is further demonstrated by pupils raising money for charity, especially pupils in Year 6 through the local town council. The school lives its motto emblazoned on the uniform "Caritas". The headteacher sets a fine moral role model; his view of "competitiveness but in the right way" rubs off on the pupils in their approach towards fairness.
 8. Behaviour in lessons, around the school and at playtimes is very good in spite of cramped conditions causing some mobility problems. Pupils and parents say there is no serious bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. This is confirmed by the lack of any exclusions over the last two years. Pupils know right from wrong and know what to do if minor squabbles or accidents happen. Very good systems are applied to deal with any potential problems or issues. Very good supervision and the provision of a good range of activities and quiet seated areas in the limited playground space contribute very well to the very good behaviour and relationships.
 9. Pupils co-operate very well with each other in pairs and groups, helping them to develop their learning skills very well. In a Year 2 physical education lesson pupils' very good co-operation in groups helped them to develop their skills in controlling a ball with feet very effectively as they take turns and help each other, working together closely.
 10. Attendance levels are above the national average with very few unauthorised absences. Punctuality is good and lessons start on time. Procedures to record and monitor attendance are good and parents follow them well, ensuring that there are very few cases of unauthorised absence. The close monitoring of attendance has ensured a significant increase in overall attendance rates in the current year compared to last year. The below average figures for last

year were caused by a small number of pupils whose very poor attendance was quickly picked up by the school and effective action was taken to deal with it. As a result attendance levels are above average for all classes in the current year, with the exception of the reception year where the usual pattern of sickness reduced levels later in the autumn term. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.9
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.0
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. The school has good procedures for assessment, although better use could be made of this information to set challenging work for more able pupils, especially in Years 1 to 3.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most of the teaching of English, mathematics and science is good
- Some lessons lack pace and challenge, especially for the more able
- Marking is not linked well enough to pupils' targets
- Teaching of special educational needs is good
- Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good

Commentary

11. In the majority of the lessons seen teaching was good or better; no unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The best teaching was seen in Years 4 to 6, although there were examples of good lessons in all age groups. Analysis of pupils' work shows that there are some areas for development in teaching relating to target setting and improving the productivity and presentation of pupils' work. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Good procedures assess and record pupils' progress and attainment, although this information is not always used well enough to pinpoint the next steps in learning and sometimes results in lack of challenge for the brighter pupils.
12. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is thorough and well focused. Individual education plans are well written and the staff make good use of the targets when planning lessons. Specific objectives are set and measured, and the guidance provided by the coordinator ensures that all staff are well informed of pupils' progress. There are many good examples of using apparatus to help pupils with special educational needs grasp new ideas. When pupils are withdrawn for additional help they work hard and achieve well because the teaching is very focused on specific skills such as improving pupils' knowledge of the sounds that letters make.
13. Children in the reception classes are keen to learn and they work hard. They benefit from a suitable balance between opportunities to play and to receive direct instruction from adults. Lessons are planned well and good observations ensure that the staff are able to track how effectively the children have understood new learning. Routines are well established and the children are keen to please their teachers. There is a good emphasis on developing the

children's skills in communication, language and literacy with regular opportunities to practise reading and writing. However, some of the reading books are in poor condition. The good teaching of mathematical development through a wide range of practical work helps children to improve their counting skills and also to understand the value of coins. The limited range of resources hampers progress in some aspects of communication, language and literacy, for example in role play. Staff know the children well and meet their personal, social and emotional needs, providing a good level of care which includes opportunities for the children to take responsibility for their own learning.

14. In Years 1 to 6 basic skills are mostly taught well and this is resulting in improving standards, although more remains to be done to lift the quality of pupils' writing. Teachers have good subject knowledge in the teaching of English and mathematics and make good use of suggestions from national strategies and guidelines to plan lessons. The teaching of these subjects in Years 4 to 6 is often very good because activities are matched very well to the pupils' abilities. There are good examples of the effective teaching of writing in Year 4 as pupils write persuasively to the headteacher and governors about the reorganisation of the afternoon session to include a playtime. The approach in Years 1 to 3 is not as challenging and the more able are not always given sufficiently difficult work. Some teachers do not set clear time limits for the completion of work and productivity rates fall. In some classes, pupils, especially boys, do not show enough pride in presenting their work well. There have been improvements to marking and there are some good examples, although pupils' targets are rather general. Throughout the school, marking is accurate and often includes positive comments but rarely links with targets to provide sufficient guidance for pupils on how they might improve.
15. Although there are limitations in resources, the staff are often imaginative in bringing lessons to life through the use of anecdotes and resources from a wide range of sources. In a very interesting science lesson in Year 5 the pupils carefully observed salamanders and drew comparisons with their life cycle and that of frogs. Stimulating teaching in personal, social and health education encouraged participation of the whole class in expressing their views and sharing ideas to be put forward by the school council.
16. Lessons are planned and prepared thoroughly. Classroom helpers are briefed well and take a full part in lessons, often supporting the less confident and encouraging them to participate. Staff use a variety of approaches to motivate and enthuse the pupils. Staff are busy about the room checking on any problems and providing good support. Lessons usually start with a review of what has already been taught and a quick but effective assessment of the pupils' understanding. Rapid question and answer warm up sessions are a good feature of most lessons in mathematics. Teachers usually make objectives clear to the pupils so that they know what to do and these objectives are reviewed at the end of lessons. The teachers and other staff have very good relationships with the pupils and offer much praise, encouragement and support. Discipline is firm, friendly and effective and results in orderly lessons.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (4%)	15 (31%)	21 (44%)	10 (21%)	0 (0%)	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 curriculum is good. Staff provide very good opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences. The school has appropriate levels of staffing. Resources are generally satisfactory but the accommodation is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with other schools have a significant impact on some aspects of the curriculum
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- There are excellent sporting activities
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good
- The restricted accommodation hampers progress in some aspects of the curriculum
- The school is short of resources for ICT, English and outdoor play for the Foundation Stage

Commentary

17. The curriculum is very inclusive. It meets the needs of pupils and fulfils statutory requirements well. The curriculum has developed well since the previous inspection. The staff plan effectively, making good use of national guidance to provide broad and balanced opportunities for learning. All staff follow an agreed planning format which provides good continuity between year groups. The good provision for personal, social and health education contributes well to the development of pupils' attitudes and values. Education about sex and relationships and the use and misuse of drugs is provided well. The overall planning of the curriculum ensures that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught consistently and that pupils are prepared well for the next stage of their education. The good curriculum in the Foundation Stage enables pupils to achieve well and to attain the early learning goals in the areas of learning. The school is developing links between subjects and this approach has worked well in expanding pupils' awareness of the use of literacy and numeracy skills in a range of subjects. ICT is used satisfactorily to support most subjects although there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use word processing skills in English lessons.
18. Most staff are involved in the extensive range of clubs for pupils and these activities contribute much to the pupils' enthusiasm for school. The outstanding opportunities to participate in sport within school, between schools and in representing the county enhance the pupils' skills and achievements. A large number of pupils join in these activities and the school's inclusive approach ensures that all participate, including those with special educational needs and physical disabilities. Other enrichment opportunities include educational visits which are linked well to projects to broaden pupils' experiences in subjects such as history, geography, science and physical education. Pupils also have very good opportunities to take part in creative and musical activities.
19. There is a good focus on providing equal opportunities. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs and those with statements. This has improved much since the previous inspection. Individual education plans are well focused and used very effectively alongside skilful support and guidance. Classroom assistants are involved in planning and work very closely with teachers, pupils and parents to ensure there is consistency and continuity in provision. The school analyses data showing the performance of boys and girls and has introduced different approaches to tackle any underachievement by boys.
20. The staff are experienced and well qualified. Training and support form an integral part of the school's drive to improve the curriculum. Coordinators take their responsibilities seriously and ensure that each subject is covered effectively. The school has very good support staff who play a key role in learning. The school's resources are adequate in most subjects but unsatisfactory in ICT and this limits the use of computers in some subjects, especially English. Many reading books are in poor condition and the library is inadequate as a tool for research. The outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage is inadequate. In science the school supplements its resources very well through its links with the high school and there are very

good resources for physical education. The school has made good efforts to improve the accommodation but several classrooms are cramped and the space available for ICT restricts some aspects of learning and access for those with disabilities. The school has good plans to improve the accommodation.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good steps to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Good support, advice and guidance are provided for each pupil. The school involves pupils very well in its work and development. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures and awareness are very good
 - Staff provide very good care and promote personal development very well
 - Induction arrangements are good
 - Assessment procedures are good but not fully used to set individual targets
21. The school plays close attention to all aspects of health and safety and child protection. Staff ensure that pupils work in a safe and healthy environment. Parents and pupils agree that the school takes very good steps to provide a very safe and caring environment in which children flourish. Governors have introduced very thorough and effective measures to cover all aspects of health and safety at the school. Very good care is taken of the pupils, especially the younger ones, at the end of the school day. All members of staff have a thorough knowledge of the needs and backgrounds of individual pupils. The strong family caring ethos ensures every pupil feels valued and cared for. This has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and high standards of personal qualities.
22. Pupils feel that members of staff listen to what they say, for example in improving playground facilities. Older pupils are trusted and treated with the respect that their maturity deserves. The school council provides a very good forum where pupils can express and share their views with the headteacher and governors. Pupils say they are very confident about approaching adults if they need help and this is evident as interactions between adults and pupils throughout the school are very friendly and mutually supportive. There are good induction arrangements for children both as they join the reception class and for the few who join later. This enables pupils to settle quickly and form positive relationships and make good progress. Educational support and guidance is good. Pupils are very well prepared for, and are confident about, their move to secondary education. Advice and guidance is based on good assessment information but this is not always used effectively to give pupils individual specific targets to improve their achievements. A strong feature is the prominent display of pupils' targets in classrooms.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very effective links with parents, the community and other schools that have a very positive impact on supporting children's learning. Standards have improved on those described in the previous inspection report.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents provide exceptional financial help to the school and very good support of children's learning
 - The school provides very good information to parents
 - Very strong partnership with local schools contribute much to learning
23. Parents attach a high value to their children's education and, consequently, offer a very high level of support to the school. The great majority ensure their children attend regularly and promptly. Parents' financial contributions through the PTFA have been crucial in buying many

resources, such as library books, playground equipment and art materials. Teachers feel that art materials bought by the PTFA have played a significant part in pupils' achievements in the subject. The small group of committed PTFA regulars also run an excellent range of social events for both pupils and the school community. Parents also provide very valuable help in the classroom and with clubs.

24. The school builds on parents' interest and enthusiasm very well by supplying them with very good information about their children's progress and encouraging them to be involved in their education. Annual reports are very informative about progress and standards and also indicate areas for development and how parents may help. Further useful information is provided in an interim report and at consultation sessions. The regular weekly newsletters are very informative and very good class letters each half term keep parents well informed about the curriculum and future topics. Inspection evidence shows that the concerns of some parents about information are unfounded. The school is open to parents who have concerns. Staff make themselves readily available at the start and end of the school day.
25. The school plays a key part in the life of the community, especially the Church, and supports, and is supported by, the local community very well. Pupils are involved in a range of community and church events and the school uses the local area well to support learning. The partnership with the local high school provides excellent links in science and other subjects ensures pupils are well prepared for their move to the next stage of education. The local cluster of schools is very effective in providing an excellent range of sporting opportunities, both competitive and participatory, and music activities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are good. Leadership by the headteacher is very good. The school has effective management systems. Governance of the school is good. These aspects of the school have improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's enthuses the staff and shows much ambition for the pupils
- The governors are very supportive of, and knowledgeable about, the school
- The school's priorities are clearly stated and rigorously monitored
- Data could be used more effectively to identify challenges for more able pupils
- Administration, financial planning and management are good

Commentary

26. The leadership has dealt well with the issues raised in the previous inspection report and this has brought improved standards and teaching, a better curriculum and more focused provision for special educational needs. The headteacher leads an effective team of staff and governors and there is a sense of purpose and drive to improve. The school is in a strong position to build upon its achievements. The headteacher provides determined leadership and with the support of senior staff and subject leaders has created a purposeful environment in which pupils thrive. The very good management of behaviour and relationships underpin the school's positive ethos. The management of pastoral care is particularly strong.
27. Subject leaders work hard to fulfil their responsibilities and there has been a good programme of monitoring to iron out any inconsistencies in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. However, this programme of monitoring teaching and learning has not always been sharp enough in identifying the progress of more able pupils and sometimes these pupils are not challenged sufficiently. The leadership of the provision for special educational needs contributes much to well focused support, effective teaching and very good procedures that are used effectively to promote learning. The school complies very well with the requirements for special educational needs and monitoring of these pupils' progress is very effective.
28. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Several are involved in checking on the school's work and have monitored lessons and had meetings

with subject leaders to determine action plans. The governors participate well in strategic planning and monitoring the school's success in meeting its objectives. The good school development plan provides a useful focus on raising standards and is clear about ways in which these objectives will be met. Governors ensure that funds are distributed in line with the school's priorities and keep a check on the effectiveness of spending. They have kept an eye on current legislation and ensured that the school meets statutory requirements by establishing good policies and practices for inclusion, equal opportunities and racial discrimination.

29. The school benefits from effective management and administration. The headteacher and administrative staff work well to ensure that funds are spent for their correct purposes and the financial systems are robust and effective. Funds for designated purposes are used well. Additional resources for sport and major building projects have been overseen well and have contributed to the improved quality of education provided. The governors take appropriate account of best value principles when purchasing supplies and services. Day-to-day management and administration work well and parents comment favourably about the approachability of staff. An area for development in management is the use of data to pinpoint particular strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance. There is a well established system of performance management which is understood and monitored by the governors. Rigorous targets for performance are set and the headteacher and staff held to account. Subject leaders are called to account for their spending on resources.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	521,451
Total expenditure	502,191
Expenditure per pupil	2,137

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	6,782
Balance carried forward to the next	26,042

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

30. The quality of provision, including teaching, for each of the areas of learning is good and has improved since the last inspection. When the children enter the school, the baseline assessments made show that overall the children are below average attainment, although there is a broad range. Most of the children in the Foundation Stage achieve the early learning goals in most of the areas of learning. The organisation and delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum is well led and managed. The teachers work well with the teaching assistants to promote the good provision of the curriculum for the reception children. She has a clear vision as to how it can be further improved, through, for example, the development of a dedicated and purpose built outdoor learning area and the improvement of resources for some areas of learning.
31. The teaching of the reception children is consistently good and strong features were evident in the lessons that were observed. As a result, the children make a good start to school, making good progress and achieving well. The teachers plan the learning activities to ensure that there are opportunities for the children to have access to all six areas of learning and especially to the literacy and numeracy strategies. The teaching of basic skills is well planned and organised and this results in the good progress seen in learning to read and in number work. The teaching assistants very effectively support individual and group activities and make a significant contribution to helping the children to behave well and concentrate on the carefully planned and challenging learning tasks. All the adults who work in the reception classes help the children to feel secure, gain confidence and communicate well with others. Good arrangements check what the children know, understand and can do and the information is used to plan the next steps children need to take in their learning. Some opportunities are missed to provide a more vibrant and stimulating visual environment. Number lines and alphabet charts are confined to the areas used for the main teaching of literacy and numeracy skills and are not fully used to support learning at other times of the day. Resources are limited in some areas, for example many of the reading books are outdated and in poor condition.
32. No lessons were seen in **physical development** but it is evident that there are good opportunities overall to develop fine and gross motor skills. The children use paintbrushes, pencils and scissors with care and precision and have good opportunities to develop good physical control through joining together pieces when completing jigsaws, using construction sets and building models. There are a number of space hoppers and wheeled toys for the children to use in the playground. The small outdoor area is limited in its provision for physical activities but the teachers plan the learning activities well to cope with this lack of a dedicated outdoor area. The school hall has facilities for the children to climb and balance and there are regular lessons to promote the children's physical development indoors.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children develop a good understanding of how to behave and look after themselves in school and most attain the early learning goals in this area of learning
- There are high expectations that the children will concentrate, persevere and try hard to complete tasks

Commentary

33. The children settle quickly and happily when they come into school because the adults make sure that the children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. As a result the children develop positive attitudes to taking care of themselves and to learning. They know the routines well on entering the classroom, for example putting their reading folders away and organising their dinner boxes. Good relationships quickly develop between the adults who work in the school and the reception children. The teachers and their assistants have high expectations that the children will behave well and be thoughtful towards each other. The children speak confidently to adults and to each other. Their personal and social skills are developed well because they are provided with good opportunities to work and play together and to reflect on the effect of their actions on others. Independence is promoted effectively as children are expected to make choices. The children behave well and persevere well with tasks.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well in learning the basic skills of listening and speaking, reading and writing because the teaching is consistently good
- Most attain the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the end of reception year
- The teaching assistants provide very good support for the children working in groups and individually

Commentary

34. When the children enter the school they have a broad range of skills in communication, language and literacy, but overall their attainment is below average. They achieve well and make good progress because they are given good opportunities to respond to events in stories and adults extend children's vocabulary well through question and answer techniques. There is a range of role-play opportunities for the children to use and develop speaking and listening skills. Adults frequently make good quality interventions to promote the children's progress. For example, when the children retell the story of 'The Bad Tempered Ladybird' they follow work on sequencing the events by making up their own parts of the story. The adults use many opportunities to engage children in conversations so that they begin to explain how things work and their reason for choices. Working with a teaching assistant the pupils discuss in some detail the prices they will put on items in their garden centre.
35. The children's early reading skills are developed and built on systematically through the sharing of books and stories and the clear teaching of the sounds that letters make. In a group reading session the teaching assistant guides the children to use a range of strategies to help them read the factual books about breakfast time. By the end of the reception year many of the children read simple books fluently and are able to retell stories they have read. The children are well supported by the home school reading partnership and have very positive attitudes to books and reading. Writing skills are taught so that children learn to form letters correctly as well as learning to write and spell a basic vocabulary of key words. They confidently 'have a go' and some are developing independent writing skills trying to spell words for themselves. The children are provided with good opportunities to write for different purposes such as retelling stories, sequencing events, and writing captions to go with pictures.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of numeracy skills is good
- The children achieve well in learning the basic skills of counting and using numbers and most attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year

Commentary

36. The children make good progress and achieve well in acquiring basic numeracy skills because the teacher provides a good range of activities and resources to make learning interesting. The children learn through practical experiences, for example ordering and comparing by height and length, as when they use plastic cubes to measure their teddies. An emphasis on the correct use of language enables children to acquire new words to use in number activities and this helps to ensure that they make good progress in gaining mathematical understanding. Most of the children can count and order numbers to 20. The more able children are beginning to add using small numbers. The children practise recognising coins and using money whilst visiting the café. By the end of the reception year children have a good vocabulary to describe mathematical features such as the properties of a range of two-dimensional shapes and are beginning to tell the time in hours.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources for teaching and learning are well prepared
- Most attain the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start in Year 1
- This aspect contributes much to the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Commentary

37. The children make good progress and achieve well because the teachers plan the learning activities carefully to ensure that there are opportunities for the children to have access to all of the different strands within the learning area for knowledge and understanding of the world. The children are given good opportunities to use computers. They confidently use the mouse to draw, point and click and fill areas in different colours. They know how to use a program to choose colours, characters and objects as when they make pictures of a garden with plants and insects. There are regular visits to support the topics they are learning about such as visiting the garden shop to choose and buy seeds to plant for their garden centre back at school. The children have a good sense of their own identity as part of a family, a class and a school. They have regular opportunities to reflect and think about things, for example, the times that are happy or sad.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of activities develops the children's creativity well overall

- By the end of the reception year most children have attained the early learning goals
- Occasionally opportunities are lost to develop creativity independently because of the limited outdoor play area

Commentary

38. The children enjoy art, story and imaginative play and music. In a very good lesson by the peripatetic music teacher the children were very well motivated to participate; their level of attainment was high as they sang expressively and used actions to portray a thunderstorm. The children know a good range of colours and they paint with enjoyment, confidence and skill. Materials such as water, garden compost and clay are available for children to use and explore regularly. The children enter imaginatively into acting out stories both under the guidance of an adult and also independently in the role-play areas such as the café. However, there are more limited opportunities for them to develop independent scenarios in outdoor play where the area is limited by its size and the difficulties of access in very hot or wet weather.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

The provision for English is **satisfactory** with good features in Years 4 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most of the teaching is good
- Pupils in Years 4 to 6 achieve well and standards are above average by the end of Year 6
- The quality of pupils' writing should be higher, especially in Years 1 to 3
- Standards of reading are good throughout the school
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they achieve well
- The library is inadequate and some reading books are in poor condition

Commentary

39. There has been steady improvement in standards in English since the previous inspection. The school has been careful to seek and follow advice for improving the quality of English from a variety of sources, resulting in improvements in standards and the pupils' achievements. This has been more successful with the older pupils than with the younger ones. Pupils enter the school with lower than average attainment in speaking and listening skills. Many, but not all, achieve the nationally expected levels of language and literacy for entry into Year 1. They are supported well and by the end of Year 2 attain standards in line with national expectations. However, the pupils with greater potential are not challenged enough and so their achievements, though satisfactory, are more modest than they should be. This is particularly the case with writing, less so with reading. The school's analysis of results identified a difference between the boys and girls in writing and they are successfully addressing the issue. In some classes it is noticeable that the girls take more pride in their work and achieve better results as a consequence.
40. All the teaching of English is at least satisfactory, most of it is good and some is very good, especially that of the older pupils. All the teaching is carefully planned and, where it is good or better, teachers are imaginative in their presentation and choice of topics. This leads to good levels of achievement and steady, progressive learning. Much of the writing is concerned with real issues, such as the letters to the governors concerning an extension to play time. Good use is made of humour so that pupils enjoyed playing with words and ideas, happily extending their vocabulary and writing skills without realising it. The use of information and communication technology in writing is restricted so that pupils' experience in drafting and

editing their work is limited and this affects the quality of their writing overall. Older pupils are made familiar with a wide range of styles of writing and use these when they write for a variety of different purposes. However, in some classes there are not high enough expectations of high quality writing and more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Where the teaching is good, targets are set for the pupils to achieve and the marking of work is informative and challenging as well as being supportive. However, these targets are not identifiably related to national standards. Homework is regularly set and is checked well so that it is an important feature in the pupils' learning as well as being a good link between the school and parents.

41. The weakness in providing support for pupils with special educational needs, especially in English, noted in the previous report has been overcome. The provision for these pupils is now a strong feature in the teaching of English. This is as a result of the appointment of a dedicated part-time coordinator for special education needs, the extensive training of staff, both teachers and classroom support assistants, and the very good level of cooperation between them in the classroom. Very good use has been made of support offered by external agencies, for example during work to become a "Dyslexia Friendly" school. As a result of these efforts pupils with special needs are identified early, the support they receive is well targeted and they achieve well, often being removed from the register of pupils with special needs because of the degree of their improvement. In lessons the work is well planned to cater for all the different levels of attainment within the class, but with the focus more often on those who most obviously need to improve, rather than challenging those who are already doing "well enough" to do even better.
42. The subject contributes significantly to the pupils' very good spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of British authors, and enriched by visiting authors from their own and other cultures. The resources for English are, with the exception of the library, adequate to meet the current needs of the curriculum, though some reading books, especially for the youngest of the pupils, are in need of renewal. The library, sited in a mobile classroom, is inadequate for the needs of the pupils. It is not inviting for the pupils to read in, and it is not set out in a way that would encourage the older pupils to use it for researching their topics of work. The provision of books around the school elsewhere is satisfactory.
43. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory but lacks the drive and breadth of vision found elsewhere in the school. There has been regular monitoring of teaching and learning. The planning is securely based on national models and the teaching is consistent throughout the school as a result. Staff changes involving the coordination of English have inhibited innovation but the school is ready for a renewed emphasis on English in the whole curriculum.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. Links between English and other subjects are satisfactory. Some topics and themes from other subjects such as history are used to broaden the base of teaching in English and to add breadth to the reading and writing that is undertaken. This is not as extensive as it might be, and the written work in some other subjects relies too much on short answers and simple worksheets which do not allow sufficient scope for writing.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics are above the national average at the end Year 6 and pupils achieve well
- The rate of progress in Years 1 and 2 is slow for some of the more able pupils because work is not always matched to their needs
- Teaching is mostly good
- The subject is well led and managed

Commentary

45. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection. As the pupils move through the school their rate of progress increases and by the time both boys and girls leave the school they have made good progress and achieve well against their prior attainment. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 having achieved broadly average levels by the end of their reception year. At present in Year 2 there is a large proportion of pupils with special educational needs who are given very good quality support by the teaching assistant. In Years 1 and 2, although the teaching of basic skills is well organised and systematic, some pupils, especially the more able, are not challenged sufficiently. Pupils' work is not always carefully presented, for example erratic use is made of squared paper resulting in the pupils not keeping numbers in the correct columns. Throughout the school all the pupils have enthusiastic and positive attitudes towards their mathematics lessons and they work hard.
46. The sound foundations are built on well as the pupils move through the school because the teaching of mathematics improves and the pupils are consistently challenged by the lessons. The teachers particularly foster the pupils' confidence in their ability to calculate accurately and this results in the pupils achieving high standards by the end of Year 6. Year 5 pupils work confidently with all four operations and competently use decimal fractions. The teachers have high expectations of how the pupils should approach their work and expect them to explain their thinking and working out. In Year 6 pupils have a good grasp of mathematical processes; they understand and use brackets, and calculate and recognise the roots and squares of numbers. Pupils cover a good amount of work and all elements of the National Numeracy Strategy are addressed. Good use is also made of homework to support, reinforce and extend the learning.
47. The leadership and management of mathematics have contributed well to the raising of standards especially among older pupils. The coordinator has ensured that teachers have attended relevant in-service training sessions to improve their knowledge and understanding of the mathematics curriculum. She has a clear vision of how the subject can be further improved through tracking pupils' progress and setting more precise targets for improvement. The school makes thorough and regular assessments of the pupils' progress and uses the information to group pupils and to set overall targets although the teachers do not always make the pupils aware of what they need to learn next or what they need to do to improve. Work is now underway to track pupils' progress through the school and to make sure their achievement is more consistent.

Mathematics across the curriculum

48. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their mathematics in other subjects and they develop an appreciation of the practical uses of the skills they have learned. In science, Year 5 document the data from testing using heat and light sensors, and, in Year 6, pupils complete charts to record the swing of pendulums. In Year 1 pupils use information, communication and technology skills to support the mathematical learning by making patterns using a range of two-dimensional shapes. When Year 5 pupils learn about minus numbers they apply it to temperatures found in different regions of the world. Throughout the school the pupils are helped to develop a sense of time through the use of time-lines in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and often very good in Years 4, 5 and 6
- Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6
- The subject is led and managed very effectively
- Links with other schools contribute significantly to the pupils' achievement

Commentary

49. The provision for and standards in science have improved since the previous inspection. Evidence from lessons, talking to the pupils and looking at their work, indicates that attainment is in line with the national expectations in Year 2. This is a similar picture to the teacher assessments in 2003. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. There has been a rising trend in attainment since the previous inspection. Although standards are not as high as in 2003 this is due to cohort variations and the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs this year. The good achievement through the school is the result of effective teaching, support from the high school and very effective subject leadership. Progress is at its best in Years 4 to 6 where the teaching is often very good because of the high levels of challenge set and the very effective links made between planning scientific experiments and investigations and imparting knowledge. Pupils are highly motivated learners who rise to a challenge and work hard. They make good use of their literacy and numeracy skills to present work. Pupils enjoy using computers as part of their science work and are involved well in using sensors and data handling when recording experiments. Boys and girls are equally successful although girls often present their work more attractively.
50. Lessons are underpinned by the teachers' good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject which are powerful forces in motivating the pupils to learn effectively. The teachers plan lessons thoroughly and make very good use of resources. The practical approach enables pupils of all abilities to participate well and to grasp new ideas. In addition, the very good support from classroom assistants working with pupils with special educational needs means that these pupils have good access to investigations and learn effectively. Teachers emphasise scientific vocabulary well and in Years 4 to 6 pupils use these terms with a good level of understanding, writing clearly and accurately. Lessons begin with carefully crafted explanations and a review of previous work and teachers are skilful in using these times to assess pupils' understanding. Objectives are made clear and the pupils are left in no doubt about what they should do. The teachers' questioning skills are good and they use the pupils' answers effectively to assess understanding. The learning is enlivened by interesting lessons. In Year 5 the pupils were held spellbound as they observed salamanders and went on to research their life cycle successfully comparing them with the life cycle of the frog. A challenging lesson in Year 6 on forces raised pupils' understanding of pendulums and they used their mathematical skills to measure and time the swings, comparing the effect of different weights. The ensuing discussions with pertinent contributions from the adults enabled pupils to grasp a difficult concept.
51. One of the strengths in the teaching and learning is the emphasis on the development of the skills of scientific enquiry. The pupils are given opportunities to think creatively about a problem, to consider what kind of evidence they need to collect and what materials they need to use. They plan investigations giving thoughtful consideration to accuracy and reliability. In Year 3 pupils compared different growing conditions and drew accurate conclusions based on observation, handling the plants with care. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through studies in natural science. Pupils gain a good appreciation of technology through their work on physical processes and materials.
52. The science curriculum is broad and challenging and the subject leader has contributed much to raising standards through support, guidance and monitoring. Good systems record pupils' achievements, although this information could be used more effectively in Years 1 to 3 to set more challenging work for the brighter pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and standards are average

- There are insufficient computers
- The subject is led and managed well

Commentary

53. The school has made good headway in improving the provision for ICT and raising standards since the previous inspection. The subject now meets statutory requirements. The subject leader, supported well by her colleagues and the governors, has produced a good action plan for the subject. Additional training and good guidance from the subject leader have had a beneficial impact on standards. Although the cramped accommodation and limited resources have an effect on the use of computers in classrooms, the staff have worked hard to ensure that pupils have access to all aspects of ICT. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress in acquiring new skills and techniques. Boys and girls are equally enthusiastic and competent in ICT. The school provides good support for pupils with special educational needs.
54. By the end of Years 2 and 6 pupils have an appropriate grasp of all aspects of ICT. They competently access a variety of programmes. Skills are developed consistently. Pupils become increasingly competent in cutting, pasting, editing and formatting their work using a good variety of the computers' tools. Skills in data handling and using spreadsheets are average. Pupils in Year 6 make sound progress in creating multi-media presentations and pay particular attention to making their work interesting and eye-catching to an audience. Pupils have average skills in using ICT systems to control events and this work links well with that on space and shape in mathematics. Although pupils have a secure grasp of word processing techniques they rarely draft, refine and edit their work.
55. The quality of lessons observed during the inspection varied between satisfactory and good. The impact of teaching over time is satisfactory because of the restrictions of resources and opportunities for pupils to extend their learning. Teachers have benefited from training and are confident in using computers to support most subjects and to develop basic skills. Pupils enjoy working in the computer suite and cooperate well, although some lessons are rather noisy as the lack of space causes problems. Teachers and support staff work well alongside the pupils and are quick to intervene with advice. Planning is satisfactory and the school uses national guidelines to give continuity in developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The system of recording and assessing pupils' performance works satisfactorily. The subject leader has a clear picture of what needs to be done to raise achievement and the school is committed to improving its resources; the good action plan provides a focused way forward.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. Staff make good use of ICT to support pupils' work in most subjects although there are insufficient opportunities for boys and girls to use their word processing skills in drafting, editing and refining their work in English. Some good work was seen in musical composition using computers and pupils excitedly recorded their own notes and adjusted their compositions to blend sounds effectively. Most year groups use the Internet for research and this enhances their work in history, science and geography. In some good work in Year 5 pupils investigated light and heat using sensors and produced graphs and charts to show variations which linked very well to their work in science and mathematics.

HUMANITIES

57. Inspectors observed two lessons in history and one in geography. They looked at samples of pupils' work, examined teachers' planning and talked with the subject leaders and pupils about the school's work in humanities. Analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils show that **geography** receives sufficient coverage and that pupils make satisfactory gains in knowledge of key geographical skills. The lesson seen in geography was of good quality. The school follows the national guidelines for what is to be taught in geography and appropriate links are made with history topics being studied. At present limited use is being made of information and communication technology skills to support learning in geography. Literacy skills are increasingly used as the pupils move through the school. The pupils write

accounts, answer questions and explain their preferences, as when they contrast their own church with Liverpool Cathedral. They label diagrams, charts and maps and make lists. Skills are well developed in map reading. The youngest pupils mark traffic controls on maps of the local area and in Year 3 the pupils make clear plans of the town showing land use in important streets. The good work on mapping continues in Year 4 and by the time the pupils leave the school they have learned to use six-figure grid references and scales. Opportunities are given to the pupils to explore the differences and similarities between their local environment and other places. Visits enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of geographical features such as the Year 5 expedition to Liverpool to see the Albert Dock and Cathedral. Good attention is paid to environmental and recycling issues; Year 4 pupils investigate ways of recycling to reduce the amount of rubbish to be disposed of, and in Year 5 the provision of clean water is studied in some depth. Geography makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural education and to their personal development. Year 6 pupils independently produce and maintain a lively and interesting display of maps and photographs showing the holiday destinations of pupils. Pupils show positive attitudes to geography and a growing understanding of environmental issues locally and further afield.

58. Inspectors saw some good work in pupils' **history** books. There is a good emphasis on developing research and enquiry skills and lessons are often brought to life with anecdotes and artefacts. In a good lesson in Year 2 the teacher captured the pupils' imagination in a study of the Titanic. Through the use of newspaper cuttings pupils grasped the use of sources of evidence. The pupils worked hard and made good gains in framing questions and sifting evidence. In the lesson in Year 5 on Ancient Greeks, the pupils assessed information about Marathon from a video and worked in pairs imagining they were the protagonists and describing their feelings. The pupils' historical studies are enhanced by detailed local studies related to the church and locality. Pupils have a secure grasp of the work of several historical characters and events. In Year 2, pupils show a sound knowledge of the events around the Great Fire of London and use the computer to draw imaginative pictures of the burning city making good use of a variety of the computers' tools. The teachers use the subject to extend pupils' literacy skills effectively; there is some very imaginative and creative writing in which pupils' explore ideas and combine sources of evidence, as in their work in Year 4 on Tudors. The subject is taught comprehensively and meets requirements. It is well organised and led effectively. Teachers keep adequate records of the pupils' progress.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

59. Inspectors observed one lesson in art and design, two in music and design and technology and seven in physical education. They looked at samples of pupils' work, examined teachers' planning and talked with the subject leaders and pupils about their work. Evidence of the work seen in **art and design** indicates that standards by the end of Year 6 are higher than those generally found, and pupils achieve well. The pupils experience a wide range of media and acquire a good set of skills for use in both two and three-dimensional art. Good use is made of an art program in information and communication technology to make the pupils familiar with the work of prominent artists such as Jackson Pollock and Piet Mondrian, and pupils create their own pictures in those styles. Art is also used well to support other subjects in the curriculum, especially history and religious education, which provide topics for illustration and artistic exploration. The pupils use sketchbooks to try out new ideas and to keep a record of what they have done. In this way they also record their progress and personal achievement. This adds both to their enjoyment of the subject and to their awareness of how well they are doing. Within the programme of study pupils develop sound critical skills and the appropriate language in which to comment on their own creative efforts as well as those of other pupils in the class. Pupils are introduced, especially through work with other schools, to a good range of artists from the European as well as other traditions. For example, they made African clay masks in sessions arranged in conjunction with the secondary school, being stimulated by a visiting African artist. This makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development and awareness of the wider world. The school's aim of promoting the pupils' personal development is well supported by the programme in art and in its range of extra activities. An important feature of the provision for art is the well attended series of art clubs held at lunchtime involving

pupils from all classes in turn. The pupils are introduced to new techniques and interesting media appropriate for the particular project planned. At the end of the project another is chosen for a different group of pupils. This club is financed by the PTFA and high quality materials are used. Art is led by an energetic and committed coordinator who takes a pride in what the pupils achieve, supports her colleagues and promotes the subject throughout the school.

Design and technology

The provision for design and technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average and pupils achieve well
- Close links are made between design and technology and other subjects
- Support staff contribute much to the good quality of teaching

Commentary

60. The teaching of design and technology is good and successfully encourages the pupils to try hard and to learn well. The teaching is supportive and, with the close cooperation between teachers and support staff in planning and delivering the lessons, pupils achieve well whatever their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to feel a pride in what they do and their self-esteem is enhanced. The pupils' skills are developed well through the imaginative selection and presentation of projects include researching materials, cooperative planning, designing, testing and evaluating as well as technical skills used in making the articles. The balance maintained between these techniques is a significant reason for the higher than average standards and achievement of the pupils. Throughout the school, pupils work together very well and are generous in sharing good quality resources and supportive of each other with advice and shared skills. These factors promote good learning across a wide range of skills; they also provide enjoyment and a source of pride in achievement.
61. Projects are interestingly linked to work in other subjects. Pupils who make models with electrical circuits incorporated in them, or create monsters with moving parts actuated by syringes or squeeze bottles demonstrate a better than average scientific understanding of circuits and forces. The links with other subjects also serve to give the projects a sense of reality. In Year 6 a project on puppet making used not only a good range of textile skills involving sewing techniques, but gave a particular edge to the work in English in which the pupils wrote a puppet play for them to present to the children in the Reception classes. The planning involved research into appropriate stories for younger children, the right register of language as well as research into the sorts of figures that would help to tell the story to the audience and the materials with which to make the puppets. Another very practical project involved designing, making and evaluating musical instruments upon which the pupils played their own compositions. The subject is enthusiastically and capably led. It is monitored adequately and support is readily available for colleagues who seek it. The subject is well resourced. It plays a significant part in enabling a broad range of pupils to achieve success and contributes to their personal development well.

Music

The provision for music for Years 1 and 2 is **good**; there is not enough evidence to make a judgement about the provision for Years 3 to 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of music is very good, supported very well by a specialist
- Pupils enjoy music, and the quality of singing about the school is good

Commentary

62. The quality of singing for collective worship and in Year 6 during the end of day prayer is good. The pupils sing competently and with obvious enjoyment. They learn to sing in parts and even the youngest pupils keep the tune and tempo during the singing of rounds very effectively. The quality of their unaccompanied singing is also good. During the inspection, all of the teaching seen was very good, the pupils learnt quickly and achieved well. The pace of lessons is swift and the pupils find themselves swept along by the infectious enthusiasm of the teacher. As a result behaviour in lessons is very good and the pupils are eager to learn. They work together well, for example when the story of *Peter and the Wolf* was retold, with Year 2 pupils playing various instruments identifying the characters in the story. Almost all the pupils followed the story carefully and played when it was their turn. A good rapport is maintained between the visiting teacher and the pupils, who are accompanied by a classroom assistant. This also ensures that pupils with special educational needs are supported well and enabled to play a full part in the lesson.
63. All the music lessons and the lunchtime music clubs, a recorder group and an instrumental group take place on the one day of the week when the visiting specialist teacher comes. This is a very economical use of specialist tuition. However, there is no formal system to enable class teachers to follow up the music lessons at other times during the week and increase their impact, though the music teacher does try to relate the lessons to the topics being taught in other subjects. Overall, the concentration of music into one day means that the musical life of the school is not as strong as it might otherwise be given the enthusiasm and abilities of the pupils. Where a link is made between music and other subjects the results are good. A class of Year 3 pupils used a computer program to create music. This was based on work on patterns in poetry undertaken in English. The pupils were enthusiastic and, because of their competence with the computers and their understanding of music, they created satisfying musical sequences. As well as composing competently, the pupils evaluated what they had done and improved on their compositions. The class teacher took this lesson very effectively. There was little evidence of pupils listening to a range of music so that the subject's impact on the pupils' cultural development is limited. The subject is well resourced to meet the needs of the planned curriculum and allocated a satisfactory, but not generous, amount of space on the timetable.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in physical education are well above those expected nationally by the end of Year 6 and all pupils achieve very well
- Teaching is consistently very good overall and often excellent
- Sporting links with other schools and extra-curricular opportunities are excellent
- The subject benefits from high calibre leadership and management

Commentary

64. Standards throughout the school have risen since the last inspection. By the end of Year 2 the pupils show above average standards overall and by Year 6 boys and girls have achieved standards well above those expected nationally. This very good improvement since the

previous inspection is due mainly to the innovative way the leadership and management by the curriculum leader and the headteacher, together with other staff and friends of the school, have provided for extended opportunities for pupils to take part in physical activities.

65. Overall, the teaching of physical education is very good, and during the inspection two excellent lessons were seen. In all the lessons seen the teachers show that they have very good expertise in teaching physical activities, which they use to ensure consistently high standards. The stimulating and challenging teaching helps pupils to competently review their own skills and understand what they need to do next to improve. The teachers' enthusiasm and very good subject knowledge inspires pupils and helps them to produce examples of high quality work. Very well planned and structured lessons meet the needs of the pupils, challenge them, provide opportunities for them to learn new skills and improve their performance. The teachers engage the pupils very well in the activities and consequently the pupils gain the confidence to try their very best and to fully participate in the lessons. The teachers use a very good range of methods, such as small group games, demonstrations and evaluations of the pupils' work and how it can be improved.
66. Pupils are very keen participants in sport and very proud of their success against other schools in cricket, football, netball, rounders and athletics. Those with physical disabilities and other special educational needs are supported very well and are able to take a full part in the school's programme. The particular talents of pupils are very well fostered and enable pupils to participate and compete at high levels. Pupils also achieve very well in gymnastics and swimming. Year 4 and 5 learn to swim and almost all reach the expected standards and many exceed them. Gymnastic skills are promoted well through the school's new scheme of work and participation in the locally held festival. In Year 6 pupils used different apparatus to create a sequence of actions demonstrating a good range of balances and speed of movement.
67. The school provides a full range of activities, gymnastics, games, athletics and dance, at different times of the year. It makes excellent use of the hall, playgrounds, leisure centre and the large field of a neighbouring school. Older pupils have the opportunity to take part in more adventurous activities such as rock scrambling and climbing during the visits planned for them. An excellent range of after-school sports clubs extends opportunities further and the take-up for these clubs is enormous. All of these activities make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, and to their personal development. An excellent feature of the subject is the links forged with other local schools and organisations enabling the pupils to participate in a greater range of sports and games both competitively and in a spirit of friendliness. The staff, governors, and parents see the provision of physical education opportunities as a significant aid to raising standards of fitness and developing a healthy lifestyle.

Example of outstanding practice

The school's excellent creation of opportunities for pupils to participate in games and sport develops their physical skills and has a significant impact on their attainment, achievement and personal development.

The school seeks and takes every opportunity to extend the range of sporting opportunities and activities through lessons, out of school clubs, sporting links with other schools and local organisations. It holds the Activemark Gold Award, demonstrating provision and standards that compare with the highest found nationally - in fact the school was the first primary school in the county to achieve this. All the pupils have opportunities to participate and those with particular special needs or talents are fully supported to achieve at the highest possible level. Pupils who excel are encouraged to use their capacities fully and are representing their county, clubs and associations. Teachers give generously of their time in lunch hours and after school to provide an extensive programme of sports and games outside of lessons. The school is fully involved in an innovative initiative linking local schools enabling the school to draw on expertise from a wider range of sources. The CADSSA (Cheadle and District School Sports Association) provides excellent opportunities for pupils to take part in an extensive range of sports, coaching sessions, and competitions. Pupils speak with eagerness and enthusiasm of their enjoyment in the lessons and other activities. The older pupils keenly help younger ones to take part by, for example, helping at the athletics sessions and umpiring lunchtime netball games.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

68. Two lessons were seen in **personal, social and health education**. The school has improved the provision for the subject since the previous inspection and is good at involving pupils in decision making and especially in making good choices regarding health and personal development. The pupils are very good at sharing their ideas and views through the well organised school council. The headteacher and governors are represented at these meetings and take good account of pupils' views. Pupils learn much about the democratic process through elections to office, regular times to discuss opinions with their classmates and opportunities to write formal letters to express their views to members of parliament, the governing body and the headteacher.
69. Involvement in the Healthy Schools Initiative and the provision of a wide menu choice, healthy snacks and the provision of water encourage pupils to look after their bodies. The school's excellent provision for physical education also promotes a healthy lifestyle and fitness. Health education is promoted well through science lessons where pupils investigate different food types. The school has sought parents' views about sex and relationships education and this provision is highly regarded. Parents are kept well informed of the content of these lessons. Through their work on medicine, tobacco and alcohol in science the pupils gain appreciation of the benefits and dangers of drugs and the staff are extending this provision in consultation with parents. Their attendance at "Crucial Crew" did much to enhance their understanding of health and safety.
70. The school's wealth of extra-curricular activities includes opportunities for pupils to gain an appreciation of their role in society and to develop their commitment to the school and other organisations that contributes much to their social development and positive sporting attitudes.
71. Pupils develop their social skills effectively in class, particularly in 'circle times' when they take turns, listen to others and share their ideas and concerns. These opportunities often link the school's religious values with social and moral responsibilities helping pupils to gain an insight into the impact of faith on some people's lives. Pupils are taught well to consider the wonders of the natural world and to care for the environment. Through science and geography lessons they develop an awareness of the environment and humankind's impact on it. In a good geography lesson about the environment in Year 3 the pupils' made good gains in understanding the beauty of the natural world, exploitation of resources and the way in which recycling can make a positive impact. The school has worked hard to improve the provision since the previous inspection.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
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	4
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	2
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	2
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).

