

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOHN'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stafford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124297

Headteacher: Mr D. Rowley

Lead inspector: Mrs B. Iles

Dates of inspection: 2nd – 4th February 2004

Inspection number: 257721

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	442
School address:	Weston Road Stafford Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST16 3RL
Telephone number:	01785 251960
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D. Blake
Date of previous inspection:	24 th June 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Church of England school is much bigger than most primary schools with 442 pupils on roll. The large majority of pupils are of white ethnic origin, speaking English as their first language. A small proportion of pupils are from Asian, Caribbean and African backgrounds, a few of whom are at an early stage of speaking English. Fourteen per cent of pupils have identified special needs. Three per cent have a statement for special educational needs, which is above average. Attainment on entry is average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average but a much higher proportion of families receive entitlements. Twenty per cent of families are from the local RAF and hospital communities; consequently, the proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at non standard times is well above average.

The school received an achievement award in 2002 and an education award in 2003. The school has suffered significant turbulence in leadership and management over the last few years due to the ill health of staff and temporary staffing issues. The new headteacher has been in post for two terms. The deputy head joined the school at the start of this term.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
12000	Brenda Iles	Lead inspector	Foundation Stage, Science, Religious education
9545	Kevin Greatorex	Lay inspector	
6926	Greg Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics, Geography, History, Physical education
32304	Jane Banting	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, Art and design, Design and technology.
32431	Elizabeth Bancroft	Team inspector	English as an additional language, Information and communication technology, Music.

The inspection contractor was :

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school with many good features that provides a satisfactory quality of education and sound value for money. Teaching is at least satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and those who are more able are challenged and achieve well. The new headteacher is providing strong effective leadership.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is very good in the reception classes and children enjoy a very positive start to school
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's future and has made very good progress in addressing issues for development
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to learn independently and apply their skills and knowledge to new situations
- Attendance is good, pupils like school and behave well
- Staff and governors work as a committed team with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities
- Parents are not involved enough in the life of school

Serious weaknesses identified in the last report have been addressed and the school is making rapid progress under the leadership of the new headteacher. Governors have ensured all statutory requirements are met and standards are gradually improving. Subject coordinators understand their roles and responsibilities and staff work as a team. Links with governors are now good and the school improvement plan accurately identifies priorities. The pace of improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory but recent progress has been good.

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	C	C	C
Mathematics	C	B	B	B
Science	C	B	C	C

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.

In the Foundation Stage (FS), most children are on course to exceed the expectations in the areas of learning. The children are taught very well and achieve well. By the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing and science. By the end of Year 6, while standards are above average in reading, they are average overall in English, mathematics and science. A much higher proportion of pupils than average join and leave the school due to family relocation in the juniors and discontinuity in learning frequently has a negative impact on pupils' achievements. More pupils achieved the higher levels in the 2003 tests and the work seen during the inspection showed that more able pupils are usually challenged. Standards in information and communication technology are above average. **Overall, pupils now achieve satisfactorily.**

Pupils have positive attitudes to school. Attendance is above average. Pupils arrive punctually and are keen to learn. In lessons and at playtimes behaviour is good. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is good.** The school has a caring Christian ethos.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Years 1 and 2 and very good in the reception classes and in a small number of lessons in the juniors. Provision to support focus groups and pupils with special educational needs are good. Relationships are good. Teachers use assessment information to plan activities for different groups and to set individual targets for pupils to achieve. More could be done to provide pupils with opportunities to investigate problems independently and apply their knowledge and skills across subjects.

The curriculum is broad and balanced. A very good range of practical activities meets the needs of children in the reception classes very well. All subjects are taught regularly but activities are sometimes too teacher directed. The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents, which is improving. Links with the local community are very good. The school is aware that more can be done to ensure good communication between home and school and to strengthen the partnership with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is satisfactory. Management is good. During two terms in post the headteacher has provided very clear direction for the school's work. The serious weaknesses identified in the last report have been addressed satisfactorily. The new deputy headteacher and senior management team fulfil their roles well and there is a shared vision for the school's future. Recent progress has been rapid. Subject leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects and how to lead improvements. The headteacher and governors are committed to improving provision and raising standards higher. Staff and governors work as a committed team. Governance is satisfactory. Governors receive the information they need to support decision-making and to evaluate the school's work. They know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Day-to-day administration is good. The monitoring of standards by the headteacher and staff shows structured evaluation of information from tests. However, not enough is done to track the rates of progress of different groups of pupils. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage of learning are good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents are satisfied with the quality of education the school provides, although many would like better links with the school to enable them to better support their children's learning. Parents believe teaching is good overall and their concerns arise from inconsistencies caused through staff illness. Reports give parents good information about their children's learning. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are eager to learn.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

In order to develop the quality of education further the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to use their skills and knowledge across subjects and promote more investigative learning
- Develop tracking systems to support rigorous evaluation of the achievement of groups of pupils
- Develop links with parents

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of children in the Foundation Stage and infant classes is good. For pupils in Years 3 to 6 it is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good support. Standards in English, mathematics and science are average in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been an increase in the proportions of pupils achieving the higher levels in tests
- Reading is well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6
- Speaking and listening skills are above average
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply different writing styles and skills across other subjects
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school.
- Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT). Standards are above average.
- There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use and apply the investigative skills and knowledge learned in science and mathematics

Commentary

1. Teacher assessments show children's attainment when they start school is about the same as most children of their age. Because teaching is very good, most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1 in all of the six areas of learning.

2. The 2003 test results for Year 2 showed performance was well above average in reading and mathematics with an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels in these subjects. Performance in writing was average. Pupils make good progress in the infants because teaching is good. Over time there has been a steady upward trend in performance. Speaking and listening skills are also above average. Pupils achieve well in science. Most attain average levels and the proportion that reach the higher levels is above average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.1 (16.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.0 (15.2)	14.6(14.4)
Mathematics	17.8 (16.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 69 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (27.1)	27.0 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.6 (27.6)	26.7 (26.6)
Science	29.0 (29.4)	28.3 (28.3)

There were 75 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, results were above the national average and the average of similar schools in mathematics and average in English and science. The results show an increase in the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in English and mathematics. The issues of underachievement of more able pupils raised in the last report have been satisfactorily addressed. Pupils have a good range of vocabulary by the time they are in Year 6 but this is not reflected well enough in their writing across subjects. Overall trends in performance are in line with the national trend.

4. The high proportion of pupils who join and leave the school at non-standard times has a depressing impact on progress and attainment in the juniors. Pupils who have attended several schools frequently have gaps in their learning which slows the rate of progress over time. The school manages this issue well and induction procedures ensure pupils settle quickly. Teachers adjust their plans and pupil groupings as a result of changes but pupils frequently miss work mates when they leave. More can be done to track the progress of these pupils to provide value added information.

5. The standards seen during the inspection are similar to those indicated by the test results. Pupils read fluently, have a very good knowledge of number and good understanding of the process of structuring investigations in science. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to independently choose how to apply their skills in problem solving situations. The school has already prioritised raising standards in writing and developing opportunities to support investigative learning following a thorough analysis of test results. Good teaching in ICT enables pupils to achieve above average standards by Year 6. Pupils competently word process, analyse and present data and use programs to create designs and pictures. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and standards in history and geography are average. Standards in other subjects were not judged on this inspection.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Their needs are supported well and individual education plans identify clearly what needs to be learned next. This leads to positive attitudes and high self esteem. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well in the infants and as well as other pupils in the juniors. Some stay for only a short period of time and most are bi-lingual.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values, behaviour and personal development are all good. Attendance and punctuality are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good.
- Overall pupils' attitudes to the school and their learning are positive. They are very good in the reception year.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- Relationships throughout the school are good.

Commentary

7. Behaviour throughout the school has been maintained well since the last inspection and continues to be good. Exemplified by the highly visible presence of the headteacher, behaviour management is good. Pupils rise to the challenge of high expectations set by the school and as a result their behaviour in lessons is good. When they come to school, in assemblies, in the dining hall, on the playground and even in the closely confined cloakroom areas pupils consistently achieve above average levels of orderly behaviour. There have been no incidents of exclusion from the school in the recent past.

8. As pupils enter the school in the nursery they are immediately involved in the activities. They are easily introduced into the routines and quickly accept the high expectations. From the earliest stages they come happily to school and are eager and ready to learn. They are fully prepared to work hard and participate fully in all activities. They show good levels of independence and persevere well with their tasks. This early enthusiasm continues throughout the school and, as they grow older, they become more articulate, confident and mature. Attitudes of a very few boys in Year 6 dip to satisfactory when teaching is unsatisfactory which detracts from the very good standards achieved in other classes.

9. The school provides many opportunities to promote the personal development of the pupils. Spiritual, moral and social development has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Themes and messages in assemblies are used well to promote the pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. Effective resources are available to celebrate the various festivals. Staff consistently promote social and moral development through their example and direction.

10. The pupils perform many jobs within the classroom and around the school. The school council and the Eco council are effective forums for airing pupils' views, and a number of initiatives have been introduced and implemented through them.

11. Relationships between the pupils have continued to be good throughout the school. The considerate attitudes of the headteacher and other staff provide good role models and all pupils show mutual respect and trust. From the earliest time in the nursery, all pupils constantly demonstrate a willingness to help each other and share resources. They work co-operatively and collaboratively together.

Attendance in the last complete reporting year

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.7%	School data	0.4%
National data	5.4%	National data	0.4%

12. Attendance has been maintained well since the last inspection. It is above the national average and is good. Punctuality has improved and is now good. Virtually all pupils arrive at the school on time and many are early, enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the school day.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and the curriculum meets the national requirements. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is very good in the reception classes, good in the infants and mainly satisfactory in the juniors.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Over two-thirds of the lessons seen were good or very good.
- Relationships are good.
- Planning is of consistently good quality and indicates clear learning objectives and activities for different ability groups.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in all age groups.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

- Teachers use assessment information to set individual targets for improvement.
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Published materials are not adapted well enough to meet the needs of large classes taught in small classrooms.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is often insecure in lessons that are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

13. The Reception staff have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. A varied range of teaching strategies encourages children to investigate across all the areas of learning. The use of language and role-play are particular strengths and children enjoy learning through practical play opportunities. The sense of fun and strong promotion of independence through personal, social and emotional development are further strengths. A broad range of activities effectively promotes the development of communication, language and literacy and mathematical skills. Very good use is made of support staff to ensure all children are fully included, supported and challenged. Very skilful questioning encourages children to give reasons for their ideas and decisions. Assessment and recording procedures are linked closely to the national profile guidance and the information is used well to set individual targets and plan activities. Staff have a very good knowledge of individual children and activities are matched well to their abilities. There is a high level of consistency between classes.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 56 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	11 (19%)	28 (50 %)	12 (22%)	5 (9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. Very good lessons were seen in the teaching of English in Years 3 and 6 and ICT and history in Year 4. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, for example in science, teachers adhered too closely to published materials and did not adapt investigations well enough to meet the needs of large classes in small classrooms. Minor weaknesses in subject knowledge are also being addressed through training and development.

15. Overall, there has been an increase in the proportion of teaching that is good or better since the last report. In lessons that are satisfactory there are many developing good and very good features. The interim HMI letter and local monitoring reports both indicate steady improvement. The work sampling also reflects steady improvement over time. Lesson planning is of consistent good quality and indicates precise learning objectives, structure and activities for different groups. Teachers follow consistent practices in assessing how well pupils have achieved against these objectives, a great improvement since the previous inspection. Day-to-day assessment of pupils' work is now satisfactory and teachers adjust their next few lessons in the light of what pupils have achieved. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils to plan work and set targets for them to meet over time. Activities are now matched to the specific needs of pupils. That higher attaining pupils are now challenged is reflected in the enhanced performance and achievement of the more able. However, more can be done to improve the quality of marking. At present there are few comments which indicate to pupils exactly what they need to do to improve and pupils are not involved enough in evaluating their own work and in setting their own targets. Progress weeks support assessment well and the developments in literacy, numeracy and science are good. This approach to ongoing assessment now needs to be extended across subjects.

16. Literacy and numeracy are mainly taught well and the national strategies are effectively supporting raising standards and the achievement of groups. Provision for pupils with SEN is good. These pupils are fully included in all activities and achieve well because teaching assistants

provide good support and are deployed effectively. This shows improvement from the last report. Reading skills are taught particularly well and this leads to high performance by Year 2 and above average standards in Year 6. There are too few opportunities for pupils to apply their writing skills in a range of contexts through other subjects.

17. Relationships are good and learning objectives are clearly linked to the curricular programmes of study. Lessons start and finish promptly and in many lessons the pace is good. In some satisfactory lessons teachers did not tell pupils how long they had to complete a task and this was a minor area that can be improved further. Staff responded positively to advice and acted upon suggestions for improvement during the inspection, reflecting the commitment to raising standards and their capacity for further improvement.

18. In very good lessons teachers are confident, knowledgeable and bring creativity and fun to learning. They draw well upon pupils' experiences and model language very precisely. In a very good English lesson in Year 3 the teacher very skilfully encouraged critical analysis of text and his own excellent use of language and precise timing ensured that pupils progressed at a fast rate.

19. There are sufficient examples of very good teaching to enable the school to begin to be self-supportive.

20. Teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to extend their learning by undertaking personal research and applying the basic skills to other subjects. Overall there has been satisfactory progress since the last report.

The curriculum

The curriculum is of satisfactory quality overall. There is a good range of enrichment activities. The quality of the accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall. However the temporary classrooms are old, deteriorating and have no water facilities. In addition some classrooms are small for large classes of older pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage curriculum is of very good quality and in Years 1 and 2 it is good.
- Activities to support reading, speaking and number through the national literacy and numeracy strategies are effective
- Clubs, educational visits and community links enhance the curriculum
- There are not enough opportunities for older pupils to undertake independent research and apply their learning in problem solving situations

Commentary

21. The literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented effectively with many opportunities for pupils to speak, listen, read and write in a range of situations, for instance in history and religious education. A particularly effective example was seen in a Year 6 class worship session where pupils reflected, wrote their thoughts and then presented their ideas to the class for discussion. A weakness, particularly in the juniors, is the lack of opportunities for pupils to decide how to use their skills and knowledge independently.

22. The good range of extra-curricular activities caters for pupils of different ages and interests, including gymnastics and sport, dance, drama and music (the 'MADD' club), ICT and mathematics. The clubs are open to pupils from Year 3 onwards. They are popular and well attended. Younger pupils have the opportunity to participate in the 'Monkeys' physical activities club specifically for Years 1 and 2.

23. The school successfully provides a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant to all its pupils through planning cross-curricular topics based on national guidance from the Qualifications

and Curriculum Authority and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. This effectively guides teaching. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is satisfactorily covered. This includes sex, relationships and drugs education. Visits and visitors make a useful contribution to learning.

24. Provision for special educational needs is good. The school has a small number of pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL), many of them staying for a relatively short time. Using LEA advice, the school has begun to develop systems to assess these pupils in order to provide them with the appropriate teaching. As a result, pupils with EAL make similar progress to other pupils in the school, particularly in Years 1 and 2 where the majority of the pupils are placed. However, the school has not yet extended its systems to establish consistent practice throughout the school. The school also ensures the curriculum is accessible to all pupils regardless of their gender, race, background or ability. The school is committed to inclusion for all and there is an expectation that all pupils should have full access to all activities.

Care, guidance and support.

Provision is satisfactory with good features. The school takes proper care of the children's personal needs. It promotes the pupils' welfare in a safe and caring environment. Appropriate support and guidance is provided. Processes for seeking pupils' views are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements are very good.
- Pupils are consulted about their views and feel that their voice is listened to.
- Pupils trust members of staff who provide sensitive support for pupils' personal needs.

Commentary

25. The very good quality induction procedures enable the pupils to feel comfortable from the moment they join the school. The Foundation Stage policy clearly details the arrangements for care and support for the children during the early days and the links with parents. The information provided by the school enables parents to be reassured and in turn to reassure their children.

26. Pupils know that their views matter. Staff listen to what pupils say and act accordingly. Pupils take their responsibilities on the school and Eco councils seriously. Their views are listened to carefully and over recent times they have been involved in a number of initiatives.

27. Relationships have been maintained since the last inspection and continue to be strong. Staff have a clear picture of the pastoral strengths and weaknesses of the pupils. In turn, pupils show high levels of trust in members of staff who provide sensitive support for their personal needs. Pupils confirm that they know whom to approach if they have a problem.

28. Although some of the school's policies are under review and in need of ratification proper practice ensures the health and safety of the pupils. Risk assessment has been completed in most areas of the school's operations. Child protection issues are handled properly. All staff are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with community, good links with other schools and colleges but only satisfactory links with parents.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits and visitors are used very effectively to enhance the pupils' learning.
- Information to parents about pupils' progress is good.

- Parents are not sufficiently consulted about the work of the school.
- The school has strong links with other schools. They make a valuable contribution to the effectiveness of the curriculum
- The Friends of St John's School is successful in supporting the school.

Commentary

29. Members of the community contribute very effectively to pupils' learning. Local businesses such as Asda and Perkins Engines provide useful labour and resources to supplement those of the school. Educational and residential visits are both used regularly and effectively to further extend the range of community support.

30. A few parents expressed concerns about the frequency and quality of information provided by the school. In response to the frequency issue the school has arranged for consultation meetings for the parents to meet the teachers on a termly basis. The school accepts that the consultation process with parents could be improved. Information provided for parents in the annual reports is good. Reports contain much detailed information about what the pupils know, understand and can do. In addition they tell parents about the progress the children have made and also contain clear and attainable targets for improvement.

31. Many parents are actively involved in the life of the school. As well as helping in the classroom and around the school, they also help out on trips and visits. In addition, the Friends of St John's School are active in fund raising and social activities. The school values highly the contributions of parents, visitors and other members of the community to the quality of education and the children's learning.

32. Links with other schools have been maintained and continue to be good. Very good links with a local nursery school support an early learning partnership with parents. Links with the nearby secondary school contribute effectively to developments in mathematics and the promotion of individual subjects through special initiatives. Information on pupils is transferred efficiently when they move on. Induction arrangements are supportive and assist the smooth transition. Staff are encouraged to exchange information and observe good practice in other schools, enabling them to improve their own performance levels.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance

The leadership of the school is now satisfactory. Management is good. Governance is now satisfactory and strengthening rapidly.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The recent pace of improvement to address the issues identified in the last report has been good. The school is now capable of sustaining its own improvement
- The expertise and clarity of vision of the headteacher have brought about good improvements in all areas of the school's work in a very short space of time
- There is a strong partnership developing between the new headteacher, deputy head and senior staff
- Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and work together well as a team
- Subject leadership is now at least satisfactory in all areas of the curriculum. Leadership is good in English, ICT, religious education and the Foundation Stage
- The governing body offers good support and is better informed. They are now starting to challenge the school in a professional way
- Tracking systems to support school evaluation are not sufficiently well developed to enable the progress of specific groups of pupils to be measured over time

- Financial monitoring procedures are good

Commentary

33. The recently appointed headteacher has already demonstrated a very clear vision for the development of the school and how it can best serve its pupils. The senior management and leadership teams have provided good support and work closely with the headteacher to bring about improvement to all areas of the school's work.

34. The governing body now work closely with school management to ensure an appropriate ethos of high expectations for all teachers, staff, pupils and parents. Governors now know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are becoming increasingly more involved in all aspects of its work. They take an active interest in financial, premises, health and safety, staffing and curriculum issues which enables them to fulfil their role. Overall, governance is now satisfactory and improving rapidly. The governing body is aware of its strategic role and has a good understanding of how to improve the school further.

35. School improvement planning is now good and drives the school forward. The priorities of developing the skills of middle management and working to improve standards in the subjects of mathematics, science and in particular English are starting to have a positive effect on standards, particularly in Reception and Years 1 and 2.

36. Self-evaluation procedures applied to subject development are now satisfactory. In the core subjects good quality planning and ongoing assessment enable teachers to meet the needs of pupils. However, not enough is done to track the progress of groups in order to measure their rates of progress over time.

37. Performance management provides a good structure for professional development and is linked well to individual needs and school priorities. The school has provided training of good quality at different levels for staff, and targets for improvement are closely linked to school issues.

38. The work of subject leaders is at least satisfactory with some good examples seen in English, ICT and religious education. There is now a much better understanding of the role and subject leaders are aware of what they need to do next to bring about further improvement. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage of learning are good.

39. The leadership and management of SEN are satisfactory. The special needs coordinator is organised and systems for monitoring progress and updating paperwork are usually effective. Good use is made of support from outside agencies and teaching assistants are well deployed.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1011, 927
Total expenditure	1007, 437
Expenditure per pupil	2180

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	39,655
Balance carried forward to the next	44,950

40. Financial management is good. The last audit report was very positive. The secretary provides information of good quality to the headteacher and governors. Funds are linked to the priorities in the school plan and there is a sound understanding of best value principles and how these should be applied to tenders and pupil performance. The Chair of Finance is particularly well briefed and makes very regular contact with the school in order to keep well informed.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The leadership of the Foundation Stage is good. The assistant headteacher and her team ensure children make a very good start in their early learning. The curriculum offered is very good. Sessions are planned creatively to provide exciting opportunities for role-play and investigation across the areas of learning. There is a very good balance of adult direction and opportunities for children to develop their own ideas. The very good quality of teaching and support of teaching assistants enables children to make rapid progress and achieve well. The close partnership between the three classes ensures all children benefit from the same range of experiences. The needs of individual children and groups are identified and supported well. Resources have improved since the last report and the classrooms provide a bright, interesting learning environment. The outdoor play area has improved significantly and now offers exciting opportunities for learning beyond the classroom. However, there is no canopy to enable the area to be used in wet weather and this continues to be a disadvantage.

Children start school at the beginning of the autumn term prior to their fifth birthday. The well-planned induction procedures enable parents to prepare their children for school and encourage a close learning partnership. Very good links have been made with a local nursery to support family learning. Parents feel the provision is very supportive and value the warm welcome and open door policy.

Assessment and recording procedures are detailed and thorough, linking children's achievements to the Early Learning Goals (the national targets for learning in the different areas of learning). Children's successes are celebrated in lessons, through photographs, records of achievement, reports and diaries. Children regularly take books home to share with their families and delight in retelling favourite tales at school.

The management of the Foundation Stage is good. Local advice has supported the good progress made since the last report. Curriculum planning and monitoring and evaluation responsibilities are shared with the teaching team and teaching assistants. All classrooms are well organised and there is a very good level of consistency between classrooms. Parents recognise the provision in this stage of learning is a strength of the school. There is a very good understanding of how young children learn. The ethos is caring and expectations are high. There is a clear vision and enthusiasm to develop the provision further.

Personal, social and emotional development

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good and children achieve very well
- Classroom routines are well established and most children are confident, enthusiastic learners
- Personal, social and emotional development is effectively integrated in all activities

Commentary

41. Children enter the Reception class with skills in personal and social development that are broadly average. These are extended through a wide range of play and language based activities that support collaboration. Children achieve well. They know the classroom routines, listen carefully to instructions, respect the ideas of their friends, share toys and take responsibility, for example, tidying up at the end of activities. They enjoy very strong relationships with adults and each other. Children come to school eagerly and enthusiastically talk about their targets for achievement and what they plan to do next.

42. Their achievement is shared with parents regularly and this supports development well. The majority are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Communication, language and literacy

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good and activities challenge children well
- Children make very good progress in developing speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. They achieve well

Commentary

43. Children's achievements are about average at the start of the reception year. Because teaching is very good they make very good progress and achieve well. Strong emphasis is placed on developing speaking and listening skills. Children listen carefully to staff and to each other and eagerly contribute to stories and discussions. In one lesson a child retold the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' to the class with confidence and expression. The teacher very skilfully posed questions to extend the story and involve the listeners. They delighted in taking on the roles of the wolf and the pigs. Many children articulate their views clearly. Teachers plan many role-play situations to engage children's interest and maintain a high level of motivation. They model language precisely. Instructions are clear and vocabulary is structured to extend the range children use. Very good links are made between spoken English, reading and writing. Speaking is developed skilfully, for example, by giving encouragement to use words such as 'delicious' and 'gorgeous' instead of 'nice'. Children quickly learn to love books, await story-time with enthusiasm and take a book home every night to share with their family. They know the pictures and words tell the story and recognise some initial sounds and words already. Most children are beginning to match sounds and shapes and their early attempts to write recognisable shapes show good perseverance. Very good attention is paid to holding pencils and forming letters correctly. The majority of children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1.

Mathematical development

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is consistently very good and children make rapid progress.
- They achieve well
- Basic number skills are developed and reinforced through a broad range of activities
- There are very good links between mathematical development and the other areas of learning

Commentary

44. Children enter the Reception class with mathematical skills that are expected average for the age range. Through very good teaching they make rapid progress. Activities encourage debate and decision making, for example when children decided which vegetables would be heavier or lighter than others and used scale pans to check their accuracy. Skilful questioning supported independent discovery. Children's ideas are valued and they are confident to try out ideas. They enthusiastically explore their ideas, discovering which containers hold more or less sand, counting numbers and matching them to objects using the computer and repeating number rhymes which reinforce sequences well. Most count and recognise numbers to five and more able children are already familiar with numbers to ten. Vocabulary is used well and children are developing good

understanding of terms such as more, less, bigger and smaller. Practical play activities support the extension of mathematical knowledge and understanding well. Children identify patterns and thread sequences of beads independently and describe the patterns they have created. They locate shapes in their classroom and use the terms circle, square and triangle accurately. Almost all are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year and a significant proportion will exceed them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good
- Good use is made of the outside environment

Commentary

45. Most children enter the Reception class with a sound general knowledge of their local environment. A good range of experiences extends their understanding, for example, there are regular discussions about the changing seasons and opportunities to talk about special occasions and celebrations. They make good use of computers, manipulate the mouse, word process individual letters and change font size. More able children also changed the font colour. The teachers celebrate their achievements well. Pupils share each other's work and show an appreciation of successes. Children with special educational needs are well supported and achieve task objectives. Good use is made of community visitors to help children understand the roles of others. In their outdoor play children learn about the weather and clothes suitable for different seasons. Through stories such as 'The Three Little Pigs' they learn about the suitability of material to make houses and then have the opportunity to make their own. Children explore how things work through constructing models and adding wheels to make vehicles move. There are very good links with literacy and knowledge and understanding, for example, children learn how icing sugar changes when water and colour are added and decorate biscuits to represent the story characters they have discussed in literacy. This helps learning to be meaningful and enjoyable. Almost all children are likely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year1 and a high proportion are on track to exceed them.

Physical development

Provision is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good
- Exciting play opportunities ensure children develop their physical skills through practical activities

Commentary

46. Children enter school with the physical and creative development expected for their age range. The staff encourage independence and consequently children expect to dress and undress independently and most manage fastenings well. Routines are well established and children expect to prepare areas and clear away themselves. Consequently activities are maintained well, ready for new groups to explore. The time given to encourage independence in the early days enables children to take responsibility and make choices. They manipulate scissors, brushes, and pencils well. They take great care when painting, cutting and forming letters and numbers. They eagerly describe how they have mixed colours, drawn story characters and used materials such

as straw to make a picture to illustrate their class story. Outdoors, the new climbing equipment supports physical development very well. Children climb confidently, and develop sequences of movements as they play 'Follow my leader'. The area is used well, but the lack of a canopy means it cannot be used during bad weather. There are additional plans to enhance the outdoor provision to offer a quiet garden area. Construction materials and the computer also help children develop control over finger and hand movements.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good
- Role play is used very well to develop language and encourage collaboration

Commentary

47. Creative activities are frequently linked to the other areas of learning. Staff engage children in painting, collage, drama, story, music-making and construction activities to ensure they express themselves in a range of ways. Exciting play opportunities ensure children develop their creativity through practical activities. They provide a very good balance of direct guidance and time for children to formulate their own ideas. The home corners enable children to act out stories and personal experiences. Most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in these areas of learning by the time they enter Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are confident readers and enjoy reading a variety of books.
- Speaking and listening skills are well developed across the school and pupils listen well to each other and to their teachers.
- There are strong links with other areas of the curriculum and ICT is used well as a tool to support writing and research.
- Planning is well informed by ongoing assessment and tasks are adapted skilfully to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Subject leadership is good and there is a clear focus on improvement in writing skills.
- Marking is accurate but could be improved to help pupils know how to improve their work.
- Challenge for more able pupils, although satisfactory, could be improved in writing.

Commentary

48. In reading, standards are well above average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. In writing they are average for both year groups and could be higher. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in the juniors. However, there were some good and very good lessons seen in Years 3, 5 and 6. Teachers' subject knowledge is usually good and work is adapted to meet the needs of pupils. However, the school is prioritising raising standards in writing to enable more pupils to achieve higher levels. Assessment information is used to plan and adapt lessons to meet pupils' needs and oral marking is supportive. The written comments are consistent and tell pupils if they have met the lesson objectives. There are some good examples of written comments that tell pupils how to improve. The next step is to extend this

good practice across all classes. Planning is clear and teachers take time to ensure that pupils understand what they need to do and make use of their ongoing assessments to adapt lessons as necessary.

49. Throughout the school, standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers, and to each other when working. They offer contributions to lessons confidently and explain themselves well. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils held strong views about whether they preferred the poem 'The Jabberwocky' to a modern alternative and could argue their case, showing respect for different points of view.

50. Reading is an area of strength in the school. Pupils read with evident enjoyment and offer opinions about authors and stories. They enjoy both fiction and information books and the older pupils confidently use the contents and index pages in their research. The better readers discuss how characters in books interact with each other and predict how chapters might end. They have very clear favourites and talk about the characteristics of books by Roald Dahl, JK Rowling and Tolkien.

51. Standards in writing are satisfactory overall, and there is evidence of improvement in Years 1 and 2 which, in time, should have a positive impact on standards in the juniors. Pupils are writing for a variety of purposes and can convey their ideas appropriately. In a Year 2 lesson links to a geography topic, 'An Island Home', led to pupils writing about the key differences between life on an island and in Stafford, and to discuss the issue of loneliness of living in an isolated area. Work shows improvement year on year and is well presented, but use of punctuation is sometimes not developed as well as it could be. Many pupils often forget to use simple punctuation in pieces of writing, and full stops and capital letters are often missed. Similarly, older pupils often fail to use more complex sentence structures, which would help them to achieve higher levels. More can be done to encourage pupils to apply their skills and knowledge independently, self correct and to encourage personal responsibility for selecting the style of writing best suited to record their work.

52. The subject is well led and this is leading to improvements in standards, particularly at the younger end of the school. There are good levels of resources and the income from book fairs enables the coordinator to provide a good range of books for the pupils to use. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified in the subject and the coordinator has the skills necessary to ensure that standards in the subject improve.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

The literacy strategy is implemented effectively and pupils have planned opportunities to discuss, read and write for different purposes across subjects. However, not enough is done to encourage pupils to independently use and apply their descriptive and exciting vocabulary and technical skills to new situations.

MATHEMATICS

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 2 are well above average
- Pupils in Year 6 are not good enough at using mathematics to investigate and solve problems
- Teaching is generally good although there are inconsistencies in Years 3 to 6
- Teachers use resources well to help their teaching

Commentary

53. Standards in Year 6 are average and results this year are likely to be slightly lower than in 2003. Pupils in Year 6 have made steady progress overall to reach this level, given their standards at the end of Year 2. Standards in Year 2 continue to be high. Pupils throughout the school are good at working with numbers mentally, and can calculate well in their heads. A weakness in pupils' mathematics is their lack of skills in solving problems and investigating mathematics for themselves. The school has recently improved its work on this aspect across all year groups and this now needs to be established as a routine part of mathematics teaching and learning.

54. Teaching throughout the school is generally good. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy as the basis for their work and this has helped to raise pupils' levels of achievement. There are weaker spots in the pace of teaching in Years 3 to 6 and in the lack of opportunities pupils have to apply their knowledge and understanding in problem solving situations. These are points for improvement. A particular strength of mathematics teaching is the way teachers use a variety of classroom resources to make topics interesting and understandable. For example, in a Year 5 lesson pupils used mirrors, tracing paper and a computer programme to learn about symmetrical shapes; in Years 1 and 2 pupils learned about money through large model coins that teachers used to demonstrate the different values. In a good lesson with more able pupils in Year 5 the teacher excited pupils by introducing new vocabulary to describe shapes and investigate reflective symmetry. Oral work was strong and pupils competently identified lines of symmetry in multi-sided shapes such as heptagons and decagons by the end of the lesson. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is also good, for example, in Year 6 the teacher's very calm approach and good use of practical resources to support learning about fractions ensured pupils' success.

55. The leadership and management of the subject have improved recently and are satisfactory. The closer analysis of standards with senior staff and subsequent action taken is leading improvements. A number of initiatives have been started that will help pupils to achieve higher standards in the future, including a useful link with the secondary school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Pupils apply their knowledge of number in science, their understanding of shape and space in ICT and their skills in handling data in geography. However, the school could be doing more to link mathematics to other subjects in order to help pupils to learn to use what they know in real contexts.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher levels in the standard assessment tasks in Years 2 and 6 was above average
- Pupils have a good understanding of the process of scientific investigation
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to plan investigations and fair tests independently
- Not enough use is made of assessment information to track the rates of progress of individuals and groups from stage to stage

57. The standards achieved in science in Years 2 and 6 are average but more pupils now achieve the higher levels than at the time of the last report. Teachers plan work which provides challenge for more able pupils. Satisfactory progress has been made in addressing the underachievement of this group of pupils. Taking account of the lessons seen and the work sampling, teaching is satisfactory. A small number of unsatisfactory lessons were seen. In these lessons there was an over reliance on scheme materials which had not been adapted to meet the needs of the large classes and small classrooms. Staff illness was an additional contributory factor. Discussions with pupils and the analysis of their work shows the quality of teaching is at

least satisfactory with good features. For example, in two good lessons seen in the infants and juniors, teachers had good subject knowledge and enabled pupils to construct hypotheses and give reasoned evidence for their predictions and conclusions.

58. The science curriculum is based on the QCA scheme of work and teachers' planning clearly identifies learning objectives and the expectations for achievement of different groups of pupils. However, the over reliance on teacher directed investigations does not allow sufficient opportunities for pupils to consider how to solve problems independently and apply the skills and knowledge they have acquired creatively to new situations. Pupils know how to plan and investigate a hypothesis and interpret a range of data. They are not yet deciding for themselves the evidence they need to collect and the materials to use. This is an area for improvement.

59. Pupils have positive attitudes to science and many say it is their favourite subject. They recall previous learning enthusiastically. The links with personal, social and health education are woven into the study units. Pupils are aware of the dangers of the abuse of substances such as drugs and alcohol, and have good awareness of the impact of abuse on family life. This was evident during a discussion with pupils when they argued cogently and sensitively the moral implications of privileged celebrities who continue to abuse following transplants. Debate is used well and has a positive impact on pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

60. By Year 6 pupils know about the structure and functions of parts of a plant and the human body, they recognise the differences between substances such as solids, liquids and gases and make good use of scientific vocabulary. Links with mathematics are evident as data is presented using line graphs and tables.

61. Good progress has been made in developing the role of the subject leader since the last report. Leadership is now satisfactory. The coordinator provides good support to staff, leading staff training initiatives and monitoring the quality of provision within available time. While regular assessments are undertaken and the information is used to support future planning there is awareness that tracking procedures are embryonic. Not enough is done to analyse in detail the rates of progress of groups of pupils from stage to stage to evaluate the effectiveness of provision, for example, for pupils who join the school at non standard times. Management is good. The thorough subject audit has identified strengths and weaknesses in provision. There is a clear overview of how the subject can be improved further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good
- The leadership of the subject manager is good
- Resources are good
- The assessment system is not yet applied consistently throughout the school

Commentary

62. Standards in ICT are above average in Year 6 and have improved since the last inspection. The quality of teaching of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good overall and sometimes very good. For younger pupils teaching is satisfactory. Overall progress is good. Pupils achieve well, with a significant proportion exceeding the expectations for their ages in Years 2 and 6.

63. Pupils of all ages work enthusiastically with sustained focus. They display high levels of interest and good co-operation when working in pairs. They develop their skills through a broad range of activities, many of which link learning in ICT to work in other subjects. In Year 1, higher attaining pupils write at the computer independently to produce simple two sentence labels for their

toy museum, using correct punctuation. Other pupils confidently create and read sentences on screen using 'Clicker' software. In Year 2 they use money calculations in the program 'Toy Shop' in support of numeracy, and successfully program a simple robot, 'Roamer' to move around the floor following the route they have planned. From Year 2 onwards pupils draft and re-draft, select and change fonts and import pictures with increasing skill. By Year 4 pupils use a search engine to undertake research in history when studying the Ancient Egyptians and by Year 5 demonstrate how to model effects on screen, programming a list of commands that produce a drawing. By the time they are in Year 6 they employ a wide range of editing and drawing skills, import information researched on the Internet and create graphs and spreadsheets and to calculate their tuck shop takings. They understand the need to be accurate, and explain the value of using a spreadsheet to portray information.

64. Teaching and learning have improved following the installation of the school's computer suite. Teachers' planning is clear and addresses the learning needs of children of all abilities. Subsequently, pupils enjoy success and achieve well. Resources are used effectively and consistently high expectations of pupils' behaviour ensure they concentrate and achieve well. Most teachers have good knowledge of the subject and are confident. They encourage pupils to work at a lively pace making them aware of the amount of time available to complete tasks. Teachers make good use of other adults to support learning. Assessment in lessons is effective. Teachers offer praise for achievement and identify the next steps needed to improve.

65. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and conscientious and the quality of both leadership and management is good. He attends co-ordinators' meetings and courses regularly, has very good subject knowledge and supports and informs staff well. A detailed audit of provision, including opportunities to monitor the teaching and learning, has enabled him to develop a detailed action plan for improvement. The designated ICT governor is well informed about developments in the subject and gives good support.

66. Assessment has only recently been developed and, although a good system has been adopted, it is only just beginning to be implemented. Some self-assessment by pupils takes place but overall assessment is not yet well enough established. The co-ordinator is providing effective support and leadership to improve this.

67. Resources for ICT are good. The computer suite is well equipped and the range of software supports a range of activities across the curriculum. The timetable maximises the use of these facilities. The large screen is used effectively for whole class demonstrations and 'Roamer' floor turtles are well used to deepen children's understanding of control technology. Pupils also have the opportunity to use a digital camera and scanner to extend their skills.

ICT across the curriculum

68. The application of ICT skills in subjects across the curriculum is now satisfactory and is an improvement since the last inspection when it was below average. For pupils in Years 1 and 2 the application of ICT is mainly restricted to supporting literacy and numeracy. From Year 3 onwards pupils use ICT to support their learning in other subjects more widely.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some very good history teaching in Year 4 enabled the pupils to achieve well

- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge in independent research

Commentary

69. Only two lessons of history were inspected. Judgements have been made on the analysis of work and discussions with pupils and staff. The QCA schemes of work are used to good effect to ensure that pupils receive a balanced programme of study. The school enhances the provision through residential visits and study days based on historical periods such as the Victorians.

70. Standards are average. In the small number of lessons seen the teaching was very good in one lesson and good in the other. The teachers' use of replicas of objects from Ancient Egypt created a real buzz in the classroom and the pupils went on to research the topic for themselves with interest. Analysis of pupils' work shows that in Year 4 they are given very good opportunities to research for themselves and to develop the skills of historical enquiry. Teachers are beginning to link history to literacy and numeracy, giving pupils the chance to develop the basic skills through the study of these subjects. Pupils need more opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge in this way. The subject coordinator is providing good leadership and manages the subject well. Resources to support learning are good and the subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

GEOGRAPHY

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good geography lesson in Year 1 enabled the pupils to achieve well
- Pupils do not have enough opportunities to apply their skills and knowledge in independent research

Commentary

71. Only two lessons of geography were seen. Judgements have been made on the analysis of work and discussions with pupils. The use of QCA schemes of work ensure that pupils receive a balanced programme of study. The school enhances the provision through educational visits, visitors and study days.

72. Standards are average. In the small number of lessons seen the teaching was good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. The teachers' focus on the local environment engaged Year 1 pupils' interest and good use was made of homework to research leisure activities. Good use of maps, plans and pictures supported learning well and pupils delighted in finding familiar landmarks. Analysis of pupils' work shows that more opportunities are needed to enable older pupils to research for themselves and apply their knowledge and skills independently to new situations. Teachers are beginning to link geography to literacy and numeracy, giving pupils the chance to develop further the basic skills. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. While links to cultural development are satisfactory more can be done to enhance understanding of life in a culturally diverse society.

Religious education

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils develop a good understanding of a range of religions

- The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' personal development

Commentary

73. The standards attained in RE are broadly in line with local and national guidance in Years 2 and 6. Pupils explore a range of religious beliefs with a strong emphasis on Christian values. This promotes the distinct Christian ethos and ensures that the school aims are met in full. Pupils show enthusiasm for their learning and describe their studies of a wide range of religions, for example, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and Christianity. They retell stories from the old and new testaments and compare them to those in Hinduism. They name artefacts, describe and demonstrate different forms of prayer and understand the importance of holy books such as the Bible and the Koran. Pupils have a good understanding of the importance of religious ceremonies and how these vary between religions, for example differences in the garments worn for different ceremonies. They have a good knowledge of events in the Christian calendar. Regular visits by local priests and celebrations in the local church support pupils' learning well. However few pupils have visited places of worship beyond the Christian community. This is an area for development.

74. Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Assemblies make a good contribution to learning providing time for reflection, celebration and developing values. For example, in one assembly, pupils learnt about the importance of sharing and valuing others. The teacher engaged them in opening specially chosen family gifts and skilfully developed the theme to consider the presents they could give to God. Pupils chose the gifts of kindness, care and love and recognised the importance of rules that promote happiness. Good links are made to work in History where pupils consider the religious beliefs of past cultures such as the Romans and Egyptians. The links with geography, while satisfactory, are not developed in the same depth.

75. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. Discussions with pupils and the analysis of pupils' work shows that teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Pupils make steady progress and their achievements are satisfactory.

76. The school has started to include pupils in decision making initiatives and is involving them in projects to promote citizenship. Pupils are proud of the responsibility they take on the school council and the links they have with local businesses that have supported developments of the school grounds.

77. The subject leader is knowledgeable and supports staff well. Her role has developed significantly and there is clear understanding of the responsibilities of a subject leader. Work sampling is undertaken regularly and there is good awareness of the effectiveness of oral work, for example, discussions, debates and drama to judge pupils' understanding. This shows good improvement since the last report. Resources are managed effectively and there is a good understanding of the progress made and the priorities for development. More can be done to support the ongoing assessment of pupils' learning and the monitoring and evaluation of subject teaching to ensure consistency and continuity. Further links can be made to support learning in subjects such as geography and music to promote more strongly cultural diversity. The school has made satisfactory progress in this area since the last inspection.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about provision or standards in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Inspectors saw samples of pupils' work, displays, photographs and curriculum planning and held discussions with staff and pupils. A small number of lessons were sampled. In all four subjects, teachers' planning is linked to national requirements and provides appropriate coverage. In general pupils have positive attitudes to creative and physical subjects, and teachers have a satisfactory level of subject knowledge and explain tasks clearly to pupils.

In **art and design** the work seen on display was of generally good quality though the artwork seen in Year 5 was satisfactory. Pupils worked industriously to design and make boxes for 'wishes'. Some designs were quite complex but the pupils were well supported by the teacher and teaching assistant. They measured carefully and then chose appropriate decoration. In a Year 2 **design and technology** lesson all pupils enjoyed making wheels to fix on axles. They were clear about the difference between fixed wheel and free wheel constructions and worked together very happily. The teacher managed the lesson well. The teaching assistant gave good support to a group of pupils, helping them to paint from a design plan. Around the school there were good quality examples of shelters built by Year 6 pupils. These were thoughtfully designed and made with care, allowing the pupils to be creative. The art and design policy is not developed as well as the design and technology policy, which includes much more helpful detail.

There are frequent opportunities for pupils to sing, in lessons, assemblies and by taking part in the school's regular performances. However, insufficient emphasis is placed upon developing the quality of singing further by improving teaching of vocal skills as well as the current acquisition of repertoire. Visiting peripatetic teachers enable a good number of pupils to learn an instrument, and there are also extra-curricular activities that support regular **music** making, both vocal and instrumental. The subject co-ordinator has developed an effective monitoring system sampling recorded work from class lessons and giving useful feedback to teachers on how to improve and extend the activities taught.

In the **physical education** lessons (PE) seen the teaching was generally good. Pupils' movements are well controlled and they achieve reasonable standards in ball skills. Links with local sports clubs and with the secondary school remain strong. The coordinators have undertaken useful audits of their subjects in line with the school's newly established procedures. This has resulted in action plans that lead developments in the subjects. For example, in PE it identifies accurately the need for pupils to be given more opportunities to evaluate their own performance in order to improve their skills. The leadership and management of these subjects are satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision is **good**. In the Foundation Stage of learning it is **very good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The strong emphasis on PSHE in the reception classes supports early learning very well
- The school's council enables pupils to take responsibility and take part in decision making
- Very good links with the local community help pupils to understand the contributions they can make to their community

Commentary

78. Opportunities for PSHE, including sex education and relationships and drugs abuse are planned into the curriculum. Teachers develop confidence and responsibility in pupils by encouraging them to think about their community, learn from personal experiences and to recognise how their individual strengths can support others. Through topics in science, drugs abuse, sex education and relationships are taught sensitively. Pupils also develop good awareness of the effect of exercise on the body in physical education. They develop an understanding of responsibility and citizenship through the decisions made at school council meetings and working with local firms to support projects they have debated which improve school life.

Pupils have a good awareness of how their behaviour affects others. Adults provide good role models and project positive values. The good relationships between staff and pupils promote confidence and self-assurance. Educational visits begin to develop awareness of life outside

school and the importance of rules. More can be done to extend pupils' knowledge further of cultures beyond their own.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

