

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST MARGARET'S CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Orford, Warrington

LEA area: Warrington

Unique reference number: 131349

Headteacher: Mr J C Pegman

Lead inspector: Mr M Newell

Dates of inspection: 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> May 2004

Inspection number: 257786

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



© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior  
School category: Voluntary Aided  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 493

School address: School Road  
Orford  
Warrington  
Cheshire

Postcode: WA2 9AD

Telephone number: 01925 634207

Fax number: 01925 243342

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of Fr J Reed  
governors:

Date of previous June 1998  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Orford, just outside the town centre of Warrington, in Cheshire. The school gained the Investors in People Award in 2000 and the Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2004. The roll includes 60 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. There are more boys attending the school than girls. The school is much bigger than other primary schools. There is no significant level of pupil mobility. The vast majority of pupils are of white ethnic heritage and, although there are a small number of ethnic minority pupils attending the school, none are at an early stage of acquiring English. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs and the percentage of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need are both below the national average. The nature of special educational needs covers specific learning, moderate learning, severe learning, behavioural, speech, physical and autistic difficulties or disabilities. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals stands at just over 20 per cent and this is broadly in line with the national average. Attainment when children start school covers the full ability range with assessment data indicating that attainment overall is below average with a significant minority of children having well below average communication and speech skills.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10638	Mr M Newell	Lead inspector	English as an additional language English Information and communication technology Physical education
9981	Mr S Hussain	Lay inspector	
10911	Mrs C Deloughry	Team inspector	Special educational needs Foundation Stage curriculum
17543	Mr R Coupe	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music
32860	Mr K Bold	Team inspector	Science Geography History Personal, social and health education and citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

Altecq Education Limited  
102 Bath Road  
Cheltenham  
Gloucestershire  
GL53 7JX

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet *'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections'*, which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>36</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school where children and pupils achieve well. Much of this is due to the good quality of teaching, the leadership and management of the school, the vibrant range of learning opportunities on offer and the very positive attitudes of the pupils. This is a school that is always looking to improve and move on, with the headteacher knowing the school's strengths and areas for improvement very well. Taking all factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Years 1-6 achieve well and standards are above average in a number of subjects by the time that pupils leave school.
- Teaching and learning are good across the school with teaching assistants making a significant contribution to how well pupils learn.
- The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are very good and add significantly to the very good ethos of the school.
- The school is well led and managed, but the monitoring of teaching and learning by the co-ordinators is not always rigorous enough.
- Writing standards are not yet high enough.
- The provision made for pupils' personal and social development is very good with some outstanding features.
- The school provides an exciting range of learning opportunities, particularly in the Foundation Stage.
- Curriculum innovation is good, but the impact that new initiatives have on standards is not evaluated rigorously enough.
- Very good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs.
- The individuality of pupils is recognised and celebrated and pupils are involved very well in aspects of the school's development.
- Despite the best efforts of the school, attendance is below the national average and punctuality is unsatisfactory.

The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The key issues that were identified were tackled in a rigorous and effective manner. There have been improvements in the quality of teaching and in how well pupils achieve. Many of the previously identified strengths have been maintained and, in some instances, built upon. A strength of the school is that it is not complacent and continually evaluates the quality of education it provides and looks for ways to be even better.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

#### Year 6 Results

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



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

Children and pupils across the school are currently achieving **well** given their attainment levels when they start school. This is directly linked to the consistently good quality of teaching that is now a feature of the school and is leading to improvements in standards for this year and beyond. The above table shows that, on the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6, pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in mathematics and below the national average in English and science. When compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment, the school's performance was very low, in the bottom 5 per cent in English and well below average in mathematics and science. A far more positive picture emerges when results are compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals. Here, attainment is well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English, making attainment above average overall. Inspection findings show a continuing trend of improvement with standards above average in science and average in English and mathematics overall, although writing standards are below average. Standards are set to rise again in 2005. There are also strengths in other areas of the curriculum as standards in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and elements of physical education are above average and all pupils achieve well. Standards in all other inspected subjects are average and achievement of all pupils is satisfactory. Standards at the end of Year 2 are at an average level overall in English, mathematics and science, although writing standards are below average. Standards in art and design, design and technology and dance and gymnastics are above average and pupils achieve well. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and achievement is at least satisfactory and is good in information and communication technology.

Children get off to a flying start in the Foundation Stage. Attainment when children start at the school covers the full ability range and is below average overall. For a significant minority of children, speech and language and mathematical skills are well below average. The good teaching and high quality curriculum provision ensure that all children make good and, at times, very good progress, across all areas of learning. By the end of the reception year, attainment in personal, social and emotional development exceeds the early learning goals, whilst attainment is in line with the early learning goals in children's knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. As a result of their low starting point, attainment in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is below the expected level by the end of the reception year.

The school makes **very good** overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, with outstanding provision made for pupils' moral development and good development for pupils' cultural development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and add a great deal to the life and vibrancy of the school. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory, despite the concerted efforts of the school to promote the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided is **good** with some very good features. Teaching and learning are **good** overall and, at times, very good, with teaching assistants playing a pivotal role in how well pupils achieve. Assessment is good. The curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is exciting and makes learning fun. The curriculum on offer for pupils in Years 1-6 is good and enriching. Whilst the school is always looking to be innovative and bring other dimensions to how well pupils learn, sufficiently rigorous procedures are not yet in place to assess the impact that new learning initiatives have on standards. The school places a very high priority on the care and welfare of all pupils and pupils are given many good quality opportunities to help improve aspects of school life because their views are

consistently listened to, taken on board and acted upon. The good links that the school has established with parents, the community and other schools all impact positively on pupils' learning experiences.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Overall leadership and management of the school are **good**. The headteacher leads and manages the school well, has been instrumental in building a strong team spirit, is committed to raising standards and has a very clear and accurate grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He is very well supported by an able deputy. Although many subjects and aspects of school life are managed well, procedures for monitoring teaching and learning are not always rigorous enough. Governance of the school is satisfactory with some good strengths.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

The vast majority of parents are very happy and appreciative of the quality of education that the school provides and how well their children achieve. The school consults parents on a number of issues and their views are taken on board before decisions are made. Parents find staff to be very approachable. Many pupils thoroughly enjoy school and all it has to offer and find learning fun. Pupils appreciate the way in which their views are listened to and feel that they have a voice in helping to move the school forward. Although some parents felt that bullying was an issue, extensive discussions with pupils indicated that they felt it was not a major concern and, if it did occur, they were confident it would always be dealt with quickly but sensitively.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things that the school should do to improve the quality of education are:

- Ensure that writing skills are taught in a direct and systematic manner and capitalise on opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills across different subjects of the curriculum.
- Ensure that more rigorous and systematic procedures are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in subjects in which they are not yet embedded.
- Ensure that effective procedures are put in place to evaluate the impact on standards and learning of the good quality curriculum initiatives that are introduced.
- Continue to seek ways of improving attendance and punctuality.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Standards are **above average** in a number of subjects by the time that pupils leave school. Children achieve **well** in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1-6.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children make a good start to their educational lives in the Foundation Stage.
- Good teaching enables pupils in Years 1-6 to achieve well.
- Standards are above average in science, information and communication technology and some foundation subjects by the time that pupils leave school.
- Work is well matched to the needs of lower- and higher-attaining pupils and enables them to achieve well.
- Although improving at a good rate, writing standards are below average across the school.

#### **Commentary**

1. When children start school, attainment levels cover the full ability range and are below average overall. A significant minority of children start school with well below average speech and language and mathematical skills. The good quality of teaching and learning and the vibrant curriculum provision on offer ensure that all children make good progress and achieve well across all areas of learning. However, given their low starting point, not all children attain the nationally recommended early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development by the end of the reception year. Attainment levels in children's personal, social and emotional development exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Most children are on track to attain the expected learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development, and attainment is therefore at an average level in these areas of learning by the end of the reception year.
2. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils, standards were below the national average in reading and science and well below the national average in writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, attainment was average in reading, below average in mathematics and well below average in writing. The trend of improvement has been slightly below the national trend. However, the commitment that the school has to raising standards, combined with the good quality of teaching now prevalent, has seen standards improve significantly recently. Inspection findings show attainment to be at an average level in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. All pupils achieve well. Standards in writing are improving and pupils are currently achieving well, although standards are below average. Standards in art and design, design and technology and dance and gymnastics are above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Standards in information and communication technology are at an average level with good achievement for all pupils. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an expected level and achievement is satisfactory. There is no significant evidence of differing levels of achievement between boys and girls.

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.9 (14.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	12.8 (13.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	14.7 (15.5)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 71 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils, attainment was in line with the national average in mathematics and below the national average in English and science. When compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, attainment was well above average in mathematics, above average in science and average in English. The picture is not as positive when compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment because attainment is very low, in the bottom 5 per cent in English and well below average in mathematics and science. The trend in the school's improvement is below the national trend. However, the good teaching that is a strong feature of the school is now impacting most positively on standards which are improving rapidly and are set to continue to rise. Consequently, inspection findings are more positive. Standards are above average in science and average overall in English and mathematics, although writing standards are below average but improving well. This represents good overall achievement in these subjects given the pupils' starting point and standards are set to improve further in 2005. There are also strengths in other areas of the curriculum. Standards in information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology and swimming are above average, with all pupils achieving well. Standards in all other inspected subjects are at an average level and the achievement of all pupils is satisfactory. No significant evidence was found of differing levels of achievement between boys and girls.

### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.2 (26.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.1 (26.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.2 (29.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 73 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The progress and achievement of pupils with special educational needs are good because of the good quality of teaching, the matching of work to pupils' individual needs and because of the significant contribution of teaching assistants to the enhancement of pupils' learning. The higher-attaining pupils achieve well because work is generally sufficiently challenging and demanding, and only occasionally is work that is set too easy.

### Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Provision made for pupils' personal development is **very good**, including the **very good** provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are **unsatisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour in lessons help them to achieve well.
- Pupils form very good relationships with their peers and this supports learning very well.
- Pupils are developing excellent moral values because of the many chances for them to discuss important issues.
- There are many responsibilities on offer to promote pupils' social development.
- The low attendance of a significant minority of pupils adversely affects their learning and a lack of punctuality prevents a swift start to some lessons.

## Commentary

5. Pupils show very good attitudes to learning throughout the school. They are very enthusiastic, concentrate very well and take pride in their achievements. Pupils work together very well and many are only too willing to take initiative and responsibility for their own learning. Older pupils frequently jump at opportunities provided for them to undertake independent study and research, often carrying on at home tasks that were started in school. Pupils also enjoy after-school activities, such as sports, French and dance clubs. The quality of relationships across the school is very good and this adds a great deal to the very good ethos of the school. Behaviour is very good in the classroom, in assembly, in the playground and in the dining halls. The school has very high expectations regarding behaviour in and around school and staff uses praise and rewards very well to maintain high standards. Behaviour and personal development in the Foundation Stage is very good. Many of these strengths were identified at the last inspection and have been maintained or built on.

## Exclusions

### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White - British
White - any other background
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
Mixed - any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British-Pakistani
Parent preferred not to say

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
393	1	0
3	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

6. There was one exclusion last year when all other attempts to modify a pupil's behaviour proved ineffective. A number of parents raised concerns about bullying. Extensive discussions with pupils indicate that bullying is not an issue or a problem. Pupils state that there is very little bullying and if it does arise, it is always dealt with quickly and fairly.
7. The overall provision that is made for pupils' personal development is very good and a significant strength of the school. This high quality provision is enhanced in a very

positive manner by the school's overall very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is some outstanding practice in the provision made for pupils' moral development.

8. The provision made for spiritual development is good. Pupils are encouraged to explore storylines and characters in many texts and to examine the feelings and emotions the characters experience. Pupils are often asked to compare how they would feel in similar situations. Discussions with pupils confirm that their moral development is excellent. There are many high quality opportunities for pupils to consider school and world issues in a moral context and through these experiences pupils gain a real and meaningful insight into equality and fairness or the lack of it. Provision for social development is very good. Throughout the school, pupils are provided with many opportunities to undertake a wide range of roles and responsibilities that add to the smooth running of the school. The school council makes a major contribution to the life of the school. It provides a golden opportunity to enhance pupils' social awareness and sense of democracy. Pupils' cultural development is good because they have many opportunities to learn about their own culture and that of others in a multicultural society. School trips include places of local interest and museums, and pupils learn much about other cultures and traditions through lessons and first-hand experiences offered through visits and visitors.

#### Example of outstanding practice

**The way in which pupils are encouraged to consider social, moral and cultural issues is outstanding.**

For instance, in circle time, pupils have considered behaviour in school, bullying, discrimination, animal rights, crime and conflict. Themes in assemblies focus on care, respect and unselfishness. In religious education they learn not to prejudge others because of their religious values and beliefs. The depth of discussion sets this school's provision apart from others. For instance, Year 5 debated whether war against Iraq was morally acceptable. Pupils are able to appreciate both sides of the argument and are willing to argue their point of view with immense maturity. Regarding the war, pupils went on to make entries in their PSHE books as they wrote 'a recipe for a perfect world'. It is clear that they are able to apply their moral principles to situations such as capital punishment and again, are able to think on their feet to argue one way or the other, depending on their own viewpoint.

9. Attendance has improved over the last couple of years, but is still unsatisfactory. Despite the concerted efforts of the school, non-attendance is still an issue that affects the attainment of a minority of pupils. Lessons are sometimes disrupted by lateness and this detrimentally affects both teaching and learning because lessons do not always get off to a prompt start.

#### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/2003 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.7	School data:	0.6
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

#### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a **good** quality of education. Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **good**. The curriculum is **good** with **good** opportunities for enriching pupils' learning outside of the formal curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **good**. The school cares for pupils **very well** and provides **good** guidance. Links with parents and the community are **good**.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage provides children with a vibrant range of learning opportunities.
- Teaching in Years 1-6 is well targeted to the individual needs of pupils and enables them to achieve well.
- The direct and effective teaching of writing skills is helping to improve standards, but opportunities are sometimes missed to develop pupils' writing skills in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Although assessment is good overall, data is not used as sharply as it could be to guide target-setting for individual pupils.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to the quality of pupils' learning.
- Very good use is made of the interactive whiteboards.
- Good subject knowledge and direct teaching of key skills in some foundation subjects enables pupils to attain good standards.
- Time is not always used to best effect to have the biggest impact on learning.

## Commentary

10. Teaching is good overall across the school with some very good practice. Improvement in teaching and learning has been good since the time of the last inspection.
11. Teaching in the Foundation Stage enables children to achieve well. The quality of teaching is consistently good and, at times, very good. All staff work together very well. Lessons are taught in a lively, exciting and enthusiastic manner and capture and hold the interest and imagination of all the children. Activities are very well planned and there is a vibrant learning atmosphere in all classes. Every activity is seen as a learning opportunity, and children see learning as fun. The very good balance that is struck between children learning through practical, hands-on tasks and the direct teaching of key skills contributes a great deal to how well children achieve.
12. Teaching in the core subjects in Years 1-6 is good overall, and on occasions very good. In English, reading skills are taught well and many opportunities are provided for pupils to put their speaking and listening skills to the test. Over the last two years, writing skills have been increasingly taught in a direct and systematic manner, and this has led to improvements in standards, although they are still not yet high enough. Although there are good examples of pupils' writing skills being developed in other areas of the curriculum, this good practice is not as consistent as it should be. In mathematics and science, a good emphasis is given to the development of pupils' practical and problem-solving skills. As a result, pupils are becoming confident mathematical and scientific investigators. Pupils are often expected to put their numeracy and scientific skills to the test in challenging and demanding investigations. Pupils invariably rise to the challenge and take part with high levels of enthusiasm. From reception to Year 6, pupils are set in

ability groups for English and mathematics. This has had a positive impact on standards, because teaching ensures that work is accurately matched to the differing abilities of the pupils. Although, for example, a teacher may be taking the top set, work is still targeted at different levels to reflect the abilities of the pupils.

13. Teaching in information and communication technology is good. Key skills are taught in a direct and rigorous manner. Pupils are then provided with good quality and relevant learning activities where these newly learnt skills can be tested out. Good use is made of computers to support and enhance pupils' learning across many subjects of the curriculum. A particular strength is the use that teachers make of interactive whiteboards. The skilful way in which teachers use the boards makes learning visual and stimulating. They are often used in a focused and relevant manner, which helps to bring learning to life.
14. Teaching across different foundation subjects is never less than satisfactory, and often good. There are strengths, for example, in art and design and design and technology. In these subjects, all aspects of the curriculum are covered in depth and pupils are provided with opportunities to work with a range of different media. Teachers encourage flair, creativity and imagination, but also provide pupils with key techniques and skills that enable them to produce work that is of a good standard. In these subjects and in other subjects, teachers teach with a high level of enthusiasm and not without a good level of subject knowledge. This heightens the interest and motivational levels of the pupils, and it is evident that pupils thoroughly enjoy much of what teaching has to offer. A weaker element of teaching, however, is the fact that time is not always used as effectively as it could be. There are lessons which do not start on time because expectations are not always high enough as to how quickly pupils return to class after break times or simply break times are longer than the timetabled slot. These factors at times prevent learning from being even stronger.
15. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is generally good with very good teaching by the special educational needs co-ordinator in the withdrawal groups in Key Stage 2. Another strength is the role played by teaching assistants. Across the school, teaching assistants play a pivotal role in supporting pupils' learning and make a significant contribution to the progress that pupils make. Teaching and learning for the higher-attaining pupils are usually good and effective and only occasionally is work presented that is too easy or not demanding enough.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 64 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	16 (25%)	35 (55%)	13 (20%)	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; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

16. Assessment is good overall. Assessment procedures are good in the Foundation Stage. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' progress and attainment in the core subjects with satisfactory and improving procedures in the foundation subjects. Information that is gained from these assessment procedures is analysed well to look for particular strengths and areas of weakness. The school is making increasingly effective use of the data for setting targets for individual pupils, but recognises that there is still more work to be done in this aspect of assessment and in clarifying to pupils what is needed to attain at a particular level. Pupils' work is marked



regularly. There are some very good examples of marking, which clearly indicate what is needed to improve or why a piece of work is good. Although this very good practice is not always present in all classes, the overall quality of marking is good.

### **The curriculum**

The curriculum provision is **good** and **very good** in the Foundation Stage. The enrichment of the curriculum is **good**. Accommodation and resources are **good** overall.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Foundation Stage curriculum provides children with a wide range of exciting learning opportunities.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and makes a significant contribution to how well pupils achieve.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- A good curriculum is on offer in Years 1-6 and is enhanced by a good range of learning opportunities outside of the formal curriculum.
- The school is innovative in terms of bringing in new ideas to enhance pupils' learning, but the impact on standards and learning of newly introduced initiatives is not evaluated sufficiently rigorously.
- Numeracy skills are promoted well across the curriculum, but more needs to be done to promote writing skills in other subjects.
- The quality of the accommodation and resources, particularly in the Foundation Stage, adds much to pupils' learning experiences.

## Commentary

17. The curriculum has improved well since the last inspection. The school teaches all subjects in depth and pays good attention to the core subjects' curriculum and fully meets statutory requirements. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are embedded in school practice, and teachers are adapting them well to meet the individual needs of pupils. This is impacting positively on standards. Opportunities are provided and developed well to enhance pupils' numeracy skills across other areas of the curriculum. However, more opportunities need to be planned for pupils to develop their writing skills in different subjects. Computers are used well to support pupils' learning in other subjects of the curriculum. The curriculum offered to children in the Foundation Stage is very good because it meets the needs of young children very well. It offers children the chance to achieve well through very well planned activities, which are exciting, vibrant and challenging. Learning is made enjoyable and a very good balance is struck between practical learning experiences and the direct teaching of key skills.
18. The overall provision made for pupils with special educational needs is very good, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3-6. Very good early identification procedures are in place. The support and provision on offer enable pupils to take a full and inclusive role in all that the school has to offer. Individual education plans contain excellent, detailed targets and a programme of action, both of which are evaluated and reviewed every six months. The co-ordinator ensures that when the pupils are withdrawn for two hours a week for literacy and numeracy, their work matches very closely the curriculum topic being taught to the rest of their year group. The school makes good provision for the higher-attaining pupils and for pupils identified as being gifted and talented.
19. The school organises a good range of visits from people such as artists, musicians and sportspeople to enhance pupils' learning experiences. A variety of visits are undertaken to enhance pupils' educational experiences and to support pupils' learning in subjects such as geography, history, and art and design. This good range of visits and visitors help to bring learning to life. A good range of extracurricular clubs, including a good range of sporting activities, and the opportunities for pupils to play musical instruments add much to the quantity and quality of educational experiences on offer.

20. The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal, social, health education and citizenship. The curriculum makes pupils very aware of the responsibilities and challenges of social living and of their role in the school and wider communities. The school council plays an important role in the decision-making processes of certain aspects of school life and pupils recognise and value the role they can play in the democratic process.
21. The school has embraced a number of good quality curriculum initiatives recently. These include a writing project, the increased use of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approaches to teaching and learning, the increased use of computers and technology as a teaching tool, and a move towards a more skills-based curriculum. However, the school has not yet put in place rigorous procedures to assess the impact of these initiatives on standards.
22. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum, and the individual skills of all staff are used well to enhance the quality of learning. Accommodation and resources are good overall and very good in the Foundation Stage. Buildings across the school are well maintained and contribute much to an attractive learning environment. The Foundation Stage outdoor and indoor areas are very attractive and stimulating, are very well resourced and provide an ideal learning environment for young children. The school grounds are spacious and are well used. Information and communication technology resources are very good. Interactive whiteboards are used regularly and very well, especially in Years 3-6, to enhance teaching and learning. Resources are good in many other subjects and very good for pupils with special educational needs, with a good range of specialist materials, including a recently acquired series of reading books specifically designed to capture the interest of the boys.

### **Care, guidance and support**

Pupils are cared for **very well** and are provided with **good** support, advice and guidance. The provision made for seeking and acting upon pupils' views is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are introduced to school life very well.
- Pupils feel valued and cared for because of the very good arrangements to ensure health and safety.
- They achieve well because their progress is monitored well.
- Pupils form very good, trusting relationships with adults because of the school's very strong family ethos.

### **Commentary**

23. The care, guidance and support provided for all pupils are strengths of the school and have improved well since the last inspection. Arrangements for child protection and giving support to children in public care are very good. There are three fully-trained child protection officers, including the designated officer. The Local Education Authority's procedures are followed fully and the school works very closely with other agencies. General health and safety risk assessments are carried out well to ensure a safe school environment and safe school trips. Three staff are trained in undertaking risk assessments. There are very good procedures for first aid. The school nurse regularly leads activities to promote healthy lifestyles and also contributes to sex and relationships education.

24. Children new to the school are gradually and sensitively introduced to school life and all that it has to offer. They are given very good chances to experience the learning routines before they start school, for instance, by borrowing learning games and books before they start. Good procedures are in place to facilitate the smooth transfer of older pupils to feeder high schools and these also include good quality bridging projects between Year 6 and Year 7, which are effective in further developing pupils' confidence and self-esteem before they transfer to high school.
25. There are good procedures to assess the academic progress and personal development of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Staff use information well to provide good personal support, advice, and guidance. This makes a strong contribution to the achievement of all pupils. The school works well with the Local Education Authority in providing additional support to pupils who have special educational needs. For instance, a specialist teacher attends the school regularly. This is a good example of the school's inclusive approach to learning.
26. The school has a very strong family ethos, underpinned by very good, trusting relationships between pupils and staff. This gives pupils confidence in talking to any member of staff should they have any worries or concerns. There are many opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff in lessons, circle time and in assemblies. The school council is very well established, respected by pupils, parents and staff, and a very good vehicle for pupils to develop as young citizens. For instance, the council gave a presentation about their role to the governing body recently. The provision of better playground equipment, outdoor seating and "friendship stops" all came through the school council and are indicators of how willing the school is to take on board the views and suggestions of the pupils.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has **good** links with parents. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are also **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have good opportunities to express their views and make suggestions to the school.
- Parents are kept well informed about the school and their children's standards and progress.
- Although parents generally give satisfactory support to their children's learning at school and at home, a few parents do not encourage their children's attendance and punctuality enough.
- Strong community links help to enrich the curriculum and support learning well.

### **Commentary**

27. The school welcomes parents as partners in their children's education. Parents are often consulted on particular topics and aspects of school life and, where appropriate, their views are taken on board. Parents have recently been consulted on drugs education and computer usage in school. Their views helped to shape the content of the drugs education workshop and the school policy on computer usage.
28. Parents are kept well informed about the school through the good quality prospectus, nursery brochure, annual reports, newsletters and the 'curriculum overview', which

outlines what pupils are to learn each term. Pupils' annual reports provide parents with good information about their children's academic and personal development and set clear targets for improvement. Parents are kept fully informed about the progress their children with special educational needs are making. Parents are provided with opportunities to discuss their children's individual education plans, how they are progressing and to help formulate new targets.

29. Parents are made welcome in the school and they find staff very approachable. The vast majority of parents are pleased with and appreciative of the quality of education that the school provides and how well their children achieve. A small number of parents help out in school and a very active "Parents' and Teachers' Association" organises many successful fundraising events for the school. Many parents support their children's learning at home in an effective manner. However, a small number of parents do not support the school's efforts to improve attendance and punctuality, and this adversely affects their children's learning.
30. The good links that the school has established with local schools and the community impact positively on pupils' learning experiences. Good links with the community include strong links with St Margaret's Church. The parish priest leads assemblies in school each week and special services throughout the year, which contribute well to spiritual and moral development. The school has good links with many welfare and support agencies. For instance, a local family advice and counselling service is available. Links with the groups in the community, such as "Power Kids" sports group, provide free coaching in school in many sports, such as football, netball, athletics and self-defence. Many local visitors support learning well, including a local artist who has done much good quality and enjoyable work with pupils. There are good links with local secondary schools. Staff from a local high school often lead coaching sessions, and links between schools have led to improvements in computer provision.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership and management of the school are **good**. The leadership and management of the headteacher and the senior management team are **good**. Governance is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher's good leadership has helped create a very positive ethos for learning in which teachers and other adults work together as an effective team.
- The headteacher has a strong commitment to raising standards and a very clear grasp of what the school needs to tackle to improve.
- The contribution of the deputy headteacher contributes much to the work and success of the school.
- Many good innovations have been introduced, but strategies to monitor their effectiveness are not sufficiently rigorous.
- Many subjects and aspects of school life are managed well, but the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning by some subject leaders is not always sufficiently rigorous.
- Financial planning and monitoring are good.
- There are very good procedures for supporting newly qualified teachers.

### **Commentary**

31. The headteacher leads and manages the school well. He has a very clear educational vision and a very accurate grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development.

He has played a significant and influential role in moving the school forward well since the last inspection. He values the contributions of all staff members and his collegiate style of management means that all staff have had ample opportunity to contribute to the good quality school development plan which accurately and succinctly shapes the direction the school is heading. The headteacher is very well supported by an able deputy. They are good role models and have deservedly earned the respect of all the staff. Through this they have built an effective senior management team and whole-staff team that are committed to raising standards. In response, pupils are well motivated in a fully inclusive school, and are very appreciative of what it has to offer.

32. Many initiatives have been introduced into the school. They are innovative and aimed at improving teaching, learning and standards. They include the introduction of different teaching styles, writing development and learning through the greater use of computers. Whilst these approaches are to be welcomed, the school has not yet put in place procedures that could accurately and formally measure and evaluate the impact on standards.
33. Many subjects and aspects of school life are managed well. The Foundation Stage is managed well as it ensures that provision is well matched to how well young children learn and that there is a high level of continuity in learning between the nursery and reception classes. The management of special educational needs is very good because the co-ordinator's organisational skills and knowledge are very strong and she ensures that pupils benefit from well targeted and high quality support. However, her influence is stronger in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 and her expertise could be more widely disseminated to the benefit of the younger pupils. Whilst many subjects are well managed and good procedures are in place for monitoring planning, leadership of subjects could be stronger if more opportunities were provided for co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. This would give them a greater insight into the quality of provision, tackle any weaknesses that occur and disseminate good practice. Good procedures are in place for analysing test and assessment data and the information is used well to set whole-school areas for development. The school has already identified the need to make better use of the data for informing target setting for individuals and small groups of pupils.
34. There are very good procedures for supporting teachers new to the school, including those who work in the school as part of their professional training. In particular, newly qualified teachers benefit from the very good guidance and practical help they receive from the school and their colleagues.
35. Financial management is good. The governors and headteacher have a good overview of the school's financial management. The school constantly seeks to ensure that it gets the best value for money from agreements and the purchase of goods and services. Long-term financial planning strategies are securely in place, spending is closely linked to the school's action plan and grants are used for their designated purposes. The financial administrator manages the budget in a highly effective manner and, together with other office staff, conducts her administrative duties in a very pleasant, courteous and helpful manner. This helps the school to run most smoothly. Taking all factors into account, the school provides good value for money.

## Financial Information

### Financial information for Year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1 168 122
Total expenditure	1 120 472
Expenditure per pupil	2 122

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to the next	47 649

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

36. The school has nursery provision for 60 children who attend on a part-time basis. Most of the nursery children move on to full-time education in one of the three classes that cater for reception-aged children. There is parity of provision, teaching and learning across all three reception classes.
37. When children start at school, attainment levels cover the full ability range and are below average overall. A significant minority of children start school with well below average speech and language communication, speech and mathematical skills. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children benefit from good and, at times, very good teaching in all areas of learning, and as a result make good progress and achieve well. However, due to their low starting point, not all children attain the goals that children are expected to reach by the end of the reception year in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. Attainment in children's personal, social and emotional development exceeds the expected goals by the end of the reception year. The majority of children attain the expected early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.
38. Foundation Stage provision has improved well since the time of the last inspection. The well-structured rotation of activities in the nursery, and the effective planning and organisation of the open plan accommodation in the reception class ensure all children benefit from the wide range of curricular opportunities and resources available. Children in the reception classes are set according to ability for literacy and numeracy, an arrangement that is accepted favourably by parents and teachers and used to good advantage in planning lessons to match the needs of the children. Resources and accommodation are very good overall, particularly the four very attractive and well-equipped outside playing areas and the stimulating and vibrant classrooms, which together help to provide an ideal learning environment for young children.
39. Induction procedures are very good and these help to ensure that children make a smooth transition into both nursery and full-time education. Parents are kept well informed and are comfortable about approaching any member of staff if they have any concerns. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are good and ensure that curriculum provision and planning are monitored well and that there is a high level of continuity, progression and parity in learning as children move through nursery and into the reception classes.
40. The quality of teaching in all classes is never less than good and is frequently very good, which is the main reason why children achieve well, make good progress and learn well. Staffing levels are generous and very good team relationships have been established, which is of major benefit to the children. The skills of the high-quality classroom assistants, who are fully involved in the planning and observation of the children's progress, are used very effectively in supporting small groups of children, including those with special educational needs. Procedures for assessing and tracking children's attainment and progress are good, but better use could be made of the information to guide and inform planning so that activities always match the needs of individuals.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**



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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Relationships are very good and help to promote very positive attitudes to learning.
  - High expectations are set in terms of developing children as independent and well-behaved learners.
41. The children achieve well in this area of learning and many will exceed the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are good overall and often very good. Throughout the Foundation Stage, all adults set a very good example and, through good relationships, promote a high level of mutual respect. Good parental relationships are maintained and the very good induction arrangements prepare the parents and children well before entry into the nursery, so the children feel confident and keen to begin their schooling. The high quality of teaching makes sure that classroom routines are consistent and the high expectations of adults ensure very good behaviour and create a safe and secure atmosphere in which the children grow in confidence and independence. The teachers all present their lessons in a lively, exciting and enthusiastic manner, so the children discover that learning is interesting and good fun and as a result develop very good, positive attitudes towards their schooling. Teaching ensures that opportunities are provided for the children to work and play independently without specific adult direction throughout the day. They generally do this well and are encouraged to share equipment and materials and to wait patiently for a turn. Circle times are utilised well to discuss particular interests and moral issues that arise and are a very useful means of helping the children to take turns and learn to listen to one another.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of opportunities that arise to enhance children's speaking and listening skills, although more focused activities are not specifically planned.
  - Good emphasis is placed on teaching phonic skills through structured schemes.
  - Role-play is used well to enhance learning.
42. Many of the children, on entry to school, experience difficulties in communicating and listening. The teaching is good and, although the children make good progress and achieve well, a significant minority will not attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The teachers make very good use of the opportunities that arise throughout the day to talk and listen to the children, either in whole-class discussions or when working with a small group. These opportunities cover a very wide range of experiences, which effectively broaden the children's vocabulary.
43. Teaching is effective in providing role-play opportunities which motivate the children to use emergent writing, such as in the doctor's surgery or the post-office and they are given more formal practice using writing patterns and learning correct letter formation. Nursery children hold their pencils correctly and are making marks on paper, which are often in the form of individual letters. Most of the reception class write their own names. Well-focused time is used to teach and encourage the children to progress from copy

writing to writing independently. This is done well and, as a result, a minority of children are able to write short sentences unaided, applying their knowledge of letter sounds well.

44. There is a good range of attractive books in the classrooms and the children take books home from the library. As part of the Firm Foundations pre-reading skills programme, nursery children take home selected books, games and activities to accelerate their development in this area. Children listen well to stories and soon learn that print conveys meaning and is read from left to right. Reception children understand that books have named authors and illustrators and are reading the early books in the reading scheme during their guided reading sessions. They enjoy practising their letter sounds through a commercial phonics scheme, which is impacting positively on their progress in reading and writing.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good quality of teaching places a high priority on learning through practical activities.
- Adults make good use of opportunities, which occur during the day, to focus on mathematical ideas and vocabulary.

### **Commentary**

45. The good teaching and careful planning of lessons enables the children to make good progress and achieve well. However, given the low starting point, attainment is below the expected level by the end of the reception year. A particular strength in the teaching is the way the pace of the lessons is matched to the attention span of the children and the concepts are reinforced in a variety of ways, so that interest and motivation remain high and good learning occurs. All adults make very good use of the opportunities that arise throughout the day to reinforce the children's mathematical understanding and mathematical vocabulary, for example, nursery children, practising throwing and catching a ball count as they do so. They gain plenty of hands-on experience when they play in the sand and water and participate in practical activities involving colour, shapes and numbers. Number rhymes, games and songs are a frequent and popular method of learning counting, addition and subtraction facts throughout the Foundation Stage. In the reception classes, the children, especially the higher attainers, begin to record this information in a variety of ways, but they too are taught well through practical experience. They gain a good understanding of measurement by experimenting with non-standard units, such as paper clips, before being introduced to tape measures and rulers. In all classes there is a good range of mathematical resources, which not only makes the learning of mathematics good fun but also contributes very positively to the children's understanding.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching provides a wide range of experiences for children to discover the world around them.
- The curriculum is enriched by a good range of visits and visitors.

### **Commentary**

46. Children achieve well and make good progress and most children are on track to attain the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are good because a wide range of stimulating, structured and experiential activities are provided, which are very well matched to the children's interests and stages of development. Visitors and visits often enrich these experiences as an integral part of specific topics, such as "The People Who Help Us", or when making thematic studies of the park, farm or zoo. The good use that adults make of the opportunities that arise during these activities is not only broadening the children's experience and extending their knowledge, but is also impacting positively on their language development. The home corners are changed regularly to encourage imaginative play and to deepen the children's understanding of a particular topic. This might be a post office, a café, a doctor's surgery or, in the nursery, an exciting area converted into a jungle. Good practical experiences in growing plants in the nursery garden and studies of subjects such as "from seed to sunflower" in reception prepare the children well for science lessons in Year 1. Posting letters to their home addresses and building models using a wide variety of construction toys, which allow the children to experiment and adapt their ideas as necessary, are activities which also provide a very good basis for later studies. Children make a good start in acquiring computer skills and soon become competent when using the mouse. Many reception children, with some support, are beginning to use the word processor, and are able to save and print their own work. Teaching ensures that children are provided with opportunities to discuss their feelings and they already are developing an early awareness of different cultures.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Excellent, secure outdoor facilities for both nursery and reception classes enhance children's learning very well.
- Teaching enthuses and motivates children very well.

### **Commentary**

47. The children thoroughly enjoy making the most of the excellent outdoor facilities and their physical development lessons in the school hall, so they make good progress and achieve well. Most will, as a result, achieve the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year, with a minority going beyond this. Teaching and learning are good. Children play confidently on the outdoor adventure climbing frame and slide, balancing well, and making good use of the space when using the wheeled toys. They are energetic and demonstrate good control when running and stopping, throwing and

catching and guiding a ball around cones. All staff make good use of the indoor and outdoor sessions to encourage the children to improve their skills, to talk about what they are doing and to help them towards becoming more inventive. Fine motor skills are practiced well, with plenty of opportunities provided to use malleable materials and tools. Frequent use of scissors and glue enables the children to learn to cut and stick neatly.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are encouraged to be creative and imaginative whilst also being taught specific skills directly.
- Teaching provides a good range of exciting learning opportunities.

### **Commentary**

48. The good teaching and range of stimulating activities enable the children to make good progress in this area and achieve well, so that by the time they reach the end of their reception year most have attained the expected goals. Children are provided with opportunities to experiment with different materials but are also systematically taught the necessary skills to maximise their progress. They are, for example, shown how to carefully observe an object before drawing and how to use brushes and mix paint before being left to experiment. They are introduced to marbling and printing techniques and have produced some very effective animal silhouettes in the nursery, using stencils and sponges. Three-dimensional skills are developed using malleable materials, such as clay and dough, and children discover the possibilities of combining a variety of materials to create colourful collage displays, which often enhance the learning in other curricular areas. The very well equipped and varied topic corners are an excellent source of imaginative role-play. They also derive much pleasure from their music sessions where they quickly learn the words of the songs, joining in with great gusto as they learn to maintain a steady beat by accompanying their singing with the percussion instruments or performing the actions.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well, particularly in reading, speaking and listening.
- Writing standards are improving well but are not yet high enough.
- Key literacy skills are taught well and through the setting process work is well matched to the differing abilities of pupils.
- Very good use is made of interactive whiteboards in some classes to enhance pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants make a powerful contribution to how well pupils learn.
- The subject is managed well, but procedures for monitoring teaching, learning and target setting could be more rigorous.

## Commentary

49. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was below the national average in reading and well below the national average in writing. When compared to similar schools, attainment was average in reading and well below average in writing. The 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed attainment to be below the national average and very low, in the bottom 5 per cent, when compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment. The picture is more positive when comparisons are made with similar schools on the basis of free school meals, as attainment here is at an average level. Inspection findings show attainment to be at an average level overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although writing standards are just below average. Pupils throughout the school are currently achieving well because of the consistently good teaching that is now prevalent across the school. Standards are set to rise again in 2005. There is no significant evidence of differences in achievement between boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
50. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, most pupils listen attentively and respectfully to adults and classmates. Across the school, discussions and debates are an integral part of many lessons and teachers use these well to enhance pupils' speaking and listening skills. Although across the school pupils are confident at speaking, their vocabulary is not particularly expansive or expressive. Reading standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2. Pupils are taught different reading strategies well and this enables them to tackle unfamiliar words with confidence. Pupils read accurately and fluently, although a number of pupils lack expression. Many pupils locate information in a satisfactory manner. By the end of Year 6, reading standards are at an average level and are improving. More pupils than in previous years are leaving the school as confident and competent readers because of the manner in which early reading skills are systematically fostered. Pupils are expressive and accurate in their reading and able to locate required information quickly. The weaker aspect is that too few pupils are able to read for inference.
51. Writing standards are improving at a good rate, but are below average overall by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 as initiatives for improvement have not yet had sufficient time to make the biggest possible impact. The improvement is due to the good teaching of specific writing skills for different purposes and the provision of formal writing frames and structures. Although pupils across the school are competent writers technically and write satisfactorily using correct grammar, writing lacks sparkle and a sense of expression. Too few older pupils in school write extended pieces of writing well, as stories fizzle out after a lively and entertaining opening. There are also occasions when teachers do not set high enough expectations as to the amount of writing pupils are to complete.
52. Teaching and learning are good across the school with particularly good teaching for the older pupils at Key Stage 2. In these classes, the lessons often zip along at a fast pace, texts are well chosen to enthuse the pupils, and expectations as to the quality and quantity of work pupils are to produce are high. Early reading and phonic skills are taught well for the younger pupils in school. Throughout the school, pupils are set in ability groups. This has proved to be a successful initiative in helping to raise standards. Even in these ability groups teachers go the "extra mile" to ensure that there are different tasks provided which match very closely to the individual needs of pupils. Only occasionally is work presented that is too easy. Many teachers make very effective use of interactive whiteboards. They are used as meaningful and relevant teaching aids, which bring teaching and learning to life and help keep pupils' levels of interest and motivation high. The teaching assistants across the school play a

significant and pivotal role in supporting pupils with special educational needs and ensuring that they achieve as well as their classmates. The marking of pupils' work is good overall as it makes clear to pupils what they need to do to improve.

53. The management of the subject is good and the leadership satisfactory. The co-ordinators provide good guidance and information for colleagues and monitor planning closely. Good systems are in place for assessing whole-school and class attainment and the information is used well to identify strengths and weaknesses. However, the use of the information for more individual target-setting purposes is not yet sufficiently rigorous. Although there has been some monitoring of teaching and learning, the co-ordinators are not provided with enough opportunities to directly monitor teaching and learning across the school.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

54. The promotion of pupils' language and literacy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory and improving. Pupils are encouraged to listen well, to carry out research and to read out loud on many occasions. Although there are some very good examples of writing skills being developed in different subjects of the curriculum, there are too many missed opportunities where writing skills could be enhanced in a relevant, meaningful and fun manner.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils are achieving well.
- Teaching is placing a good emphasis on developing pupils' investigative and problem-solving skills.
- Teaching assistants support pupils' learning very well.
- Information and communication technology is used very well to enhance pupils' learning.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet rigorous enough.

### **Commentary**

55. On the basis of the 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 2 pupils, attainment was well below the national average and below average when compared to similar schools. The 2003 National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils showed that attainment was in line with the national average and well below average when compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment. A different picture emerges when the school's performance is compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, as attainment is judged to be well above average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and that all pupils are currently achieving well. There is no significant evidence of differing achievement between boys and girls. The consistently good and at times very good teaching, the achievement of pupils and the challenging curriculum that is on offer indicate that improvement since the last inspection has been good.
56. By the end of Year 2, pupils' numeracy skills are satisfactory and teaching provides good opportunities for pupils to put these to the test in a good range of practical and

problem-solving activities, although some pupils still find some difficulty in tackling problems that are presented in word formats and in choosing the correct mathematical operation. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of shapes and their properties. Pupils' ability to draw and interpret graphs and tables is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, pupils' numeracy skills are good and pupils are becoming increasingly confident at solving mental calculations quickly. Some pupils still find a little difficulty in tackling problems that are presented in unfamiliar formats, but good teaching ensures that pupils are increasingly being taught the techniques and skills to tackle them more successfully. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in their knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes, calculating area and perimeter, and are secure in their understanding of probability and interpreting data.

57. The curriculum offered is challenging and exciting and the overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Several very good examples of teaching were seen during the inspection. The teachers use the interactive whiteboards very well to provide pupils with a good range of visual experiences to teach concepts, methods and procedures in a variety of ways, leading to pupils' better understanding. Pupils also have become adept in its use and are keen to demonstrate their knowledge. Teachers' planning is good, as is the pace of lessons, and the opening mental agility sessions at the start of lessons are challenging, lively and fun. Learning is usually organised into small, effective steps so that pupils often move effortlessly, within lessons, from one stage of development to the next. The setting of pupils into ability groups has proved to be an effective tool in helping to raise standards. The teachers work closely with very good support staff so that teamwork is a strong feature of teaching. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They behave very well, and show good concentration and really enjoy their lessons. Most willingly accept responsibility for completing their homework and returning it to their teachers.
58. The subject is well managed and leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning and there has been some formal monitoring of teaching. However, not enough opportunities have been provided for co-ordinators to consistently monitor teaching through lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work. Good procedures are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and the information is used effectively for highlighting any major areas of weakness. The school has rightly identified the need to use this information more effectively in setting targets for individual pupils and for making pupils more aware of what they need to do to improve. Resources are good and used well to enhance pupils' learning.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

59. Teachers are conscious of the need to promote numeracy across the curriculum and do this well. In design and technology, pupils are expected to put their estimating and measuring skills to good use. In geography, there are good links through the use and interpretation of co-ordinates, and in art through the creation of geometrical patterns.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching places a good emphasis on learning through practical and investigative work.

- By the time that they leave the school, pupils demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of science, and have developed good investigative skills.
- Whilst improved assessment procedures have recently been introduced, better use needs to be made of the information for target-setting and tracking pupils' progress.
- Very good use is made of information and communication technology to enhance teaching and learning.

## Commentary

60. On the basis of teacher assessments in science in 2003 for Year 2 pupils, attainment was below the national average. On the basis of National Curriculum tests for Year 6 pupils in 2003, attainment was below the national average and well below average when compared to similar schools on the basis of prior attainment. When the school's performance is compared to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, attainment is above average. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment by the end of Year 2 is at an average level and above average by the end of Year 6. Throughout the school, pupils are achieving well and there is no significant evidence of differences in the achievement of boys and girls. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
61. By the end of Year 2, the good emphasis that teaching places on practical work results in pupils having a satisfactory understanding of the factors that might influence fair testing. They are encouraged to evaluate their practical investigations and to identify why things may or may not have worked. Pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of life processes, electricity and materials. Pupils' knowledge comes through stronger orally than in their written work, where their ability to express their understanding is sometimes inhibited by their below average writing skills. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed a good scientific knowledge across the different aspects of the subject and use an appropriate scientific vocabulary when talking about their work. They have a good knowledge of the requirements of fair testing and know how variables should be managed. As in Years 1 and 2, pupils' ability to record accurately and to write their conclusions clearly is not as secure as their ability to talk knowledgeably about their work. The frequency of practical work has improved pupils' observational skills and these are of a good standard.
62. Teaching and learning are good overall. However, teaching is very good for the oldest pupils in school because lessons are very well structured, challenging and pupils are expected to put their knowledge to good use in informing predictions or setting up hypotheses. Teachers across the school plan lessons thoroughly and provide good quality resources for the pupils. Great emphasis is placed on developing pupils' investigative skills. Pupils with special educational needs are given good additional support, which enables them to participate fully in lessons and achieve well. In most classes, higher-attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged, with the older pupils expected to instigate and evaluate their own investigations. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and collaborate very well when performing experiments. The very effective use of interactive whiteboards and the use of computers for research and recording purposes stimulates and informs pupils, and contributes much to their enjoyment of science lessons.
63. Management of the subject is good and leadership is satisfactory. Whilst there have been some limited observations of teaching, co-ordinators have not been provided with opportunities to do this or the scrutiny of work on a more regular and systematic basis. However, co-ordinators monitor planning on a regular basis, are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and provide much guidance to colleagues. Improved and good quality assessment procedures have been put in place during the year, which enable pupils'



attainment to be assessed more thoroughly. These assessments are not yet used rigorously enough to set targets for pupils and to monitor the progress of individuals.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils achieve well with many pupils being good all-round computer users by the time that they leave school.
- Good use of interactive whiteboards and the use of computers across many subjects of the curriculum enhance pupils' learning.
- Key skills are taught well and the subject is very well resourced.
- The attitudes of the pupils, together with the good subject knowledge of many staff, help bring learning to life.

### **Commentary**

64. The subject has a high profile in school and is an increasingly integral element of pupils' learning. Throughout the school, pupils achieve well because of the good and, at times, very good teaching and the very enthusiastic pupils who show a fervent desire to do well. Standards are at an average level, and constantly improving, by the end of Year 2 and are above average by the end of Year 6 because of the longer access that these pupils have had over time to good quality learning opportunities. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
65. Pupils in Years 1-2 are now acquiring skills at a good rate. They know how to save and retrieve work, how to change font size and are starting to merge text and pictures with increasing confidence. Pupils talk about their work animatedly, although they do not always use a good technical vocabulary. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to control a programmable toy and are already developing a satisfactory understanding of how to use a database. Pupils continue to make good progress in acquiring a good range of computer skills in Years 3-6. By the end of Year 6, pupils present good quality PowerPoint presentations, use control procedures to operate a fairground ride, know how to use hyperlinks, are confident researchers and e-mailers, set up spreadsheets and interrogate databases well and are very effective at presenting information in a plethora of different formats.
66. Teaching and learning are good overall and at times very good. The school has invested a lot of time and money in providing good quality resources and training for all staff. These investments are paying good dividends. The good subject knowledge and the good use of interactive whiteboards are playing an important role in enthusing already keen and eager pupils who show a thirst for new knowledge and skills. The result is that learning takes place at a good pace, is visually stimulating and any minor technical problems can be dealt with speedily with no time wasted. A particular strength of teaching is that different computer skills are taught in a direct manner before allowing pupils to put these skills to the test in challenging, relevant and enjoyable activities. Just occasionally, there is too much teacher talk when it is clear that pupils know exactly what they need to do. Then there are groans of disappointment from pupils as the lesson time in the computer suite runs out.
67. The subject is well managed and leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinators have played an instrumental role in developing the quality of provision in the subject and in introducing different initiatives into the school. The co-ordinators monitor planning but

although some opportunities have been provided for them to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning across the school, these opportunities have not been regular or systematic enough to have the biggest possible impact on the subject. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and developing well. The subject is very well resourced and computer clubs where parents as well as pupils attend do much to strengthen the partnership between home and school.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

68. The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good and improving all the time. Teachers are creative in how they use computers in many subjects to help bring learning to life. Pupils use computers for research purposes in many subjects such as history, geography and art and design. Results from scientific investigations are presented in different formats such as text, tables, graphs and pie charts. Pupils are expected to use computers for drafting and editing their work and there are some good quality software programs that are put to good use to support learning in subjects such as English and mathematics. Digital cameras are used very well to record work in many subjects. A particularly creative example was when pupils' performance in physical education was recorded and then analysed back in the classroom.

## **HUMANITIES**

Timetable constraints meant that insufficient teaching was observed to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of the provision in **history**. However, work in the subject was sampled.

69. Evidence from pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicates that standards in **history** are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning shows that all aspects of the subject are covered in sufficient depth. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory knowledge of the periods of history they have studied. They have a secure understanding of chronology and are aware that different things may tell us about the past. By the time that pupils leave school, their historical knowledge about different periods of history is satisfactory and they have developed a good sense of chronology. They are aware of primary and secondary sources of evidence and that different people may interpret historical events differently. Pupils have really enjoyed learning about British history and ancient civilisations. Visits to historical sites such as Little Moreton Hall, visits by actors in period costume and the use of artefacts, enhance the pupils' learning and help to bring the subject to life. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Assessment procedures are in place and are satisfactory.

## **Geography**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers use good questioning to assess pupils' learning and enable pupils to make good use of computers for research purposes.
- Work is not always recorded in depth.
- Pupils are eager to find out more about the world in which they live.
- The subject is used well to enhance pupils' personal development.

## Commentary

70. A scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning, some lesson observations and discussions with pupils indicate that attainment in geography is at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is satisfactory for all pupils. Improvement has been satisfactory since the time of the last inspection.
71. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of their locality and identify various landmarks. Pupils' mapping skills are satisfactory as is pupils' awareness of different places around the world. Pupils acquire knowledge and skills at a satisfactory rate as they move through Years 3-6. Year 6 pupils demonstrate a good range of research skills, including effective use of the Internet when compiling information brochures on European countries. Pupils have a good knowledge of the locality of the major cities, rivers and mountains of the British Isles, and a satisfactory knowledge of the wider world. Pupils' mapping skills are satisfactory.
72. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. Teachers' planning indicates that different aspects of the subject are covered in sufficient depth over the course of the year, but this is not always reflected in the recorded work in pupils' books. Pupils' oral knowledge is at times stronger than work in books indicates. Pupils enjoy the subject and show a real desire to find out as much as they can about the wider world. Teachers encourage pupils to be inquisitive and to carry out research tasks using computers and books. The good discussion of topics such as conservation and pollution enhances pupils' personal development as well as strengthening their geographical knowledge. Within lessons, teachers have secure subject knowledge and use this well to question and assess what pupils already know before developing new skills and knowledge.
73. Leadership and management of geography are satisfactory. The co-ordinators work well together and are enthusiastic about the subject. They monitor teachers' planning, but there are not rigorous enough procedures in place for the direct monitoring of teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are in place and are satisfactory.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Not all subjects were taught in depth during the week of inspection and the limited amount of evidence in design and technology and music meant that it was not possible to make a judgement on provision in either subject.

74. In **design and technology**, evidence from work on display, teachers' planning, pupils' design books, discussions with pupils and from some lesson observations indicate that standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above average and all pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made moving toys, puppets and other finished products that are of a good standard. Pupils have a good understanding of the designing and evaluating processes as well as the making element. Pupils suggest reasonable and mature suggestions as to how they can improve their work. Across the school, planning is good. Work is arranged in concentrated blocks of time. This provides pupils with the opportunity to design, make and evaluate their work through a continuous process and without unreasonable interruption. By the end of Year 6, pupils continue to produce finished products that are of a consistently good standard. For example, pupils had made good and, in some instances, very good models of battery-powered fairground rides, based on thoughtful designs. Good teaching emphasises the need for high expectations and to elicit pupils' own critical, yet evaluative, comments on how they could improve their work. Pupils really enjoy this aspect of the curriculum.

They work well together, display their knowledge through their products and have a good knowledge and understanding of how to use tools, such as saws and hot glue guns to cut and join materials. Resources are good and add to the quality of learning.

75. Discussions with pupils, scrutiny of teachers' planning and limited lesson observations indicate that standards in **music** are at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Planning indicates that all aspects of the subject are covered in sufficient depth. Across the school, pupils sing well in assemblies and do so with a good sense of enjoyment and gusto. Younger pupils name different instruments of the orchestra and recognise that different pieces of music can evoke different feelings. Older pupils in school are aware of musical terminology and have a satisfactory knowledge of the names, if not the works, of different classical composers. Pupils are provided with opportunities to play a range of different instruments through tuition provided by visiting peripatetic teachers. The teaching is often of a high standard and brings out pupils' musical talents well. An example of this was seen in an assembly when a group of about 15 pupils displayed their considerable musical talents through the piano, guitar, violins and cellos when performing for their peers. Pupils benefit well through the visits of different musical groups who perform concerts and workshops in the school hall. Resources are good and add to the quality of learning experiences on offer.

## **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and produce a variety of work that is of a good standard.
- Pupils are provided with opportunities to work with many different materials and to study artwork from different cultures.
- Artistic skills are taught well.
- Not enough use is consistently made of sketchbooks for experimentation.

### **Commentary**

76. Standards are above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and all pupils achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
77. By the end of Year 2, pupils produce observational art that is of a good standard and three-dimensional work that is both imaginative and creative. Pupils already have a good knowledge of the work of famous artists. Pupils evaluate their work and that of others and do so with great maturity. Pupils continue to develop artistic skills well as they move through Years 3-6, and many pupils leave school as accomplished and creative artists. Pupils have a good knowledge of the work of famous artists and appraise artwork well. Pupils continue to show good levels of observational and still life art. Pupils have a well developed battery of artistic skills and techniques which they put to good use in a range of activities, including printing, weaving, modelling and use of pastels, watercolours, clay and modelling material. The wide choice of materials that are on offer for them to work with heightens their enthusiasm for the subject and contributes much to the finished products that are often of a good standard.
78. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers often use the work of famous artists as a starting point. In lessons in Year 1, for example, pupils studied the work of Andy Goldsworthy. Good questioning and sharing of pupils' ideas led them to have a good understanding of his sculptures and then to produce compositions of flowers, trees and

other clearly recognisable objects to a good standard, but which had pupils' own stamp of originality. Throughout the school, artistic skills are taught well and pupils are encouraged to be creative and imaginative in their work. Display throughout the school is good. It is stimulating and encompasses the art of different cultures, such as Islam, and countries, such as Africa, as well as some very good examples of the work of a local artist which was completed with the pupils and based on local landmarks. Art is often used well to support learning in other areas of the curriculum such as history. Pupils in many classes have art sketchbooks. However, they are not encouraged enough to put down original ideas, to return to them and modify them for use in future compositions. Teaching resources are good and add to the quality of learning.

79. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory with some strengths. Co-ordinators are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and have played a key role in the high profile the subject has in school. Good examples of pupils' work are maintained and teachers' planning is regularly monitored. The co-ordinators have not been provided with sufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning across the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Key skills are taught well, although at times pupils are not encouraged to be sufficiently active in lessons.
- Pupils put a lot of effort into physical activities and this contributes much to their achievements.
- Over the course of the year, pupils are provided with good opportunities to experience a wide range of different sporting activities.

### **Commentary**

80. Not all aspects of the curriculum could be observed during the week of inspection. However, inspection evidence indicates that standards are at least at an average level by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and aspects of the subject are above average. By the end of Year 2, for example, standards in gymnastics and dance are above average and swimming standards are above average by the time that pupils leave school. Achievement is never less than satisfactory and good where standards are higher. Improvement has been good since the time of the last inspection.
81. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good awareness of space and move around the hall with good levels of agility. Pupils put together sequences of movements well and hold balances with some degree of poise and elegance. Pupils interpret music well and put together sequences of movement that reflect the rhythm and tempo of the music. By the time that pupils leave school, many are good swimmers who can swim well beyond 25 metres. Pupils throw and catch a ball confidently and hit a ball with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Pupils' games skills overall are satisfactory, although there are a minority of pupils that are accomplished athletes.
82. Teaching and learning observed was satisfactory overall with some good and very good practice. Teaching often ensures that specific key skills, such as how to jump or land, how to hold a hockey stick or how to hit a backhand, are taught in a direct manner and then pupils are provided with opportunities to practise and refine these newly learnt

skills. This leads to improvements in pupils' performance. In the best teaching, high expectations are set and pupils are encouraged to be adventurous, inventive and imaginative. Pupils rise to the challenge. On occasions, pupils are not kept physically active throughout the lesson, but in most instances activity levels are high due in part to the pupils' enjoyment and enthusiasm for the subject and for pupils' desire to do well. Evidence clearly indicates that over the course of the year, pupils take part in all aspects of the curriculum, including orienteering and outdoor pursuits. Pupils' learning experiences are enriched by sports coaches who visit the school and by the good range of extracurricular activities.

83. The subject is led and managed in a satisfactory manner with some strengths. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has a secure overall view of the quality of provision in the subject. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, but there have not been enough opportunities provided for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning across the school.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

The provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- This aspect of the school curriculum is given a high profile.
- Teaching deals with a range of issues in a challenging yet sensitive manner.

### **Commentary**

84. The commitment and provision that the school makes for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship are very good. All staff, including teachers, teaching assistants and non-teaching staff contribute positively to the promotion of a welcoming and supportive ethos in which all children are valued. Through lessons, circle time, assemblies and through the school council, pupils are consistently encouraged to express their views, to listen respectfully to those of others, to take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning and to contribute fully to the school and wider community.
85. Overall, the teaching of this area that was observed was good and at times better. Teachers use circle time very effectively to explore issues raised by pupils or planned by teachers. A very good lesson in Year 1 further developed the pupils' understanding of the benefits of using the friendship stops in the playground. Year 5 pupils used role-play well to demonstrate which strategies are appropriate to resolve playground conflicts. In another Year 5 lesson, pupils debated whether war against Iraq was morally acceptable. Pupils were able to appreciate both sides of the argument but were more than ready to argue and justify their viewpoint in a very mature and convincing manner.
86. The school council is very effective as a forum for airing pupils' views and for giving pupils a good grounding in how democratic processes work. Good provision is also made to inform pupils about healthy lifestyles
87. The co-ordinator has been successful in promoting this aspect of the curriculum. Training has been provided to enable staff to use circle time effectively to promote very good personal, social and health skills amongst the pupils.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	3
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3

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).*