

INSPECTION REPORT

St Mary and St Chad CE First School

Brewood

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124237

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Lunt

Lead inspector: Brian Aldridge

Dates of inspection: 10th – 12th May 2004

Inspection number: 257804

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	163
School address:	Newport Street Brewood Stafford Staffordshire
Postcode:	St19 9BT
Telephone number:	01902 850373
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Dottie Tipton
Date of previous inspection:	8 th June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Mary and St Chad CE First School for pupils aged four to nine is located in the large village of Brewood in Staffordshire. With 163 pupils (85 boys and 78 girls), it is smaller than most primary schools. The great majority of the pupils are from white British origin with a very small number of pupils from other ethnic groups, none of whom are learning English as an additional language. On entry, they are of broadly average attainment. The school has identified about 16 per cent of the pupils as having special educational needs of whom 2 have statements. Pupils' needs range from emotional, behavioural and social difficulties, to speech and communication, hearing impairment and autism. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, though generally below average, varies between year groups. Since the last inspection there have been many staff changes, and there were three temporary or supply teachers in the school at the time of the inspection.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17454	Brian Aldridge	Lead inspector	English as an additional language Mathematics Science Information and communication technology
9510	Christine Murray Watson	Lay inspector	
21235	Marjorie Graham	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Citizenship Design and technology Music Physical education
29989	Pauline Goodsell	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Religious education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The pupils and their parents hold this **good school** in high regard. The school is inclusive and, through effective teaching, a good curriculum and strong leadership and management, provides well for its pupils. The school offers good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a steady hand on the school's development
- Children and pupils of all abilities achieve well in most subjects
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good
- The good curriculum is very practical
- The pupils' behaviour, attitudes and relationships are positive
- Standards in religious education and information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory but not at the same high levels seen in most other subjects
- More thought needs to be given to the length of lessons and how teachers recap what has been learned

There is very good potential for further improvement because of the quality of leadership of the headteacher, and the highly committed staff and governors are continually looking for ways to help the pupils to succeed. The improvement since the last inspection, in June 1998, has been good but has increased significantly in the last two years. The school has worked hard to raise standards and measures the progress each year group makes very well. The issues raised in the previous inspection report have been dealt with and have brought improvements to the Foundation Stage, ICT and design and technology. Teaching and leadership and management have continued to improve and contribute much to creating a harmonious and purposeful school community.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	C	B	B	C
writing	A	A	C	D
mathematics	D	A	C	D

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Pupils achieve well throughout the school. There are several important barriers to learning, which the school helps pupils overcome. Generally children start school with average levels of attainment, although not all are well prepared to start learning. There is great variability between year groups in the number and degree of special educational needs, which largely accounts for annual variations in national test results. A higher than average proportion of pupils join and leave the school between the reception year and Year 4. The school compensates well for these factors and pupils develop positive attitudes to learning.

Most children will achieve the expected Early Learning Goals by the time they are ready to join Year 1. By Year 2 standards in reading, writing, number and science are above average. By Year 4 standards in English and mathematics are above average and in science they are well above average in some aspects. Pupils learn to read and write effectively and they accurately calculate mentally and when using pencil and paper methods. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with expectations and in religious education standards are in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Progress in information and communication

technology has been slow until the last year and there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn about other religions in the same detail planned for most other subjects. Standards in geography and history are above the expected levels because pupils use their well-developed literacy skills to good effect. Girls and boys achieve equally well because teachers make good use of assessment information to plan their work.

This school encourages pupils to believe they are authors, mathematicians and scientists. This has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning which are good. The procedures to help children to become independent learners are working very well in the Foundation Stage and are transferring to the rest of the school. **The school promotes pupils' personal qualities including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well**, successfully addressing an issue identified at the last inspection. Pupils' opinions count in this school and they all feel valued. As a result behaviour is good and attendance is in line with the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. This is because teaching is good throughout the school. Because pupils enjoy their lessons and are provided with lots of opportunities for practical work, learning and the curriculum are good. Teachers use assessment information well to focus pupils on the important next steps in their progress and to provide better learning opportunities. However, occasionally teachers neglect to reinforce learning as well as they should at the end of lessons and some lessons are too long. Care, guidance and support are good. In this school pupils trust the adults who work with them and they receive good advice about personal and academic matters. The school's partnerships with parents, the school and the community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Staff members at all levels of responsibility have very clear ambitions for the pupils in this school. The headteacher's **leadership and management are very good**; she is well supported by the leadership team and staff at all levels. The work of the governing body is very good. They have developed very useful systems by which they hold the school to account and get to know its strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher and subject leaders check on the work of the school well. Administrative systems run smoothly in the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents think highly of the school. They like the way pupils are cared for and how the school works very hard to involve them in their children's learning. Parents commented on how much the school had improved since the appointment of the present headteacher. Pupils, too, like their school a great deal. They are pleased to be involved in decision-making and take it very seriously.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- To further raise standards in religious education and information and communication technology to the same high levels seen in other subjects
- Give more thought to the length of lessons and how teachers recap what has been learned

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils of all abilities and in each stage of education achieve well and standards are rising. Pupils in all groups achieve equally well because teachers use assessment information well to set up accurate plans for improvement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and the majority will achieve the expected goals for their age by the time they join Year 1
- Standards of reading, writing, mathematics and science are above average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are above average, with examples of well above average attainment in investigations at the end of Year 4
- Standards in geography and history are above average
- In information and communication technology and religious education pupils do not reach the same high standards as in other core subjects
- Teachers help boys, girls, pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic backgrounds to do well

Commentary

1. Since the last inspection the school has made good strides in raising standards:
 - Assessment systems have improved a good deal since the last inspection and show the school which groups of pupils need more focussed help and how they should be supported
 - Pupils are given good advice about how to improve their work and make the most of their learning
 - There are many learning activities based on pupils solving problems. This has addressed well an issue identified in the last inspection
 - School leaders are very ambitious for all pupils and this helps pupils aim high in all areas of their development
 - The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
2. However, there are several barriers to the school attaining higher standards:
 - The proportion of pupils with special educational needs varies from year to year and in some year groups is higher than found nationally
 - Not all of the children joining the school are well prepared to learn
 - A substantial proportion of pupils join the school other than at the beginning of the Foundation Stage
3. The rate of progress is good throughout the school. National and school test scores vary a great deal from year to year but the careful tracking of pupils' progress and their rates of achievement shows that the school expects this variation and plans well to maximise pupils' achievement. There are more pupils who achieve what is thought of as the average rate of progress in every year group, even though in some classes there is a much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than seen in an average group of pupils.
4. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well. As a result of good teaching and learning about four-fifths of the children will achieve the Early Learning Goals in all aspects of learning. Boys and girls and children with special educational needs make equally good rates of progress. The assessment of learning is particularly good in the Foundation Stage.

5. The rate of progress in Years 1 and 2 is good and pupils achieve well. Standards in speaking, listening, reading, writing and number are above average. Pupils enjoy talking and they generally listen well. Pupils read with enthusiasm and are accurate readers. They use good levels of expression and have a good understanding of how to use a library and gather information using computers and other electronic storage devices. Teachers ensure pupils have lots of opportunities to practise their number and their mental calculations and this work is carefully planned throughout each mathematics lesson. In science, pupils are very enthusiastic and the plentiful practical work encourages pupils to think of their own solutions to problems. All groups of pupils, however quickly and effectively they learn, make good progress. Brighter pupils have taxing work set for them and pupils with special educational needs have well prepared materials which help them keep pace with the topics being learned by other pupils.
6. The rate of progress in Years 3 and 4 is good and pupils achieve well. By the end of Year 4 standards in English, mathematics and science are above average and elements of science, such as investigative work, are well above average. Pupils continue to make above average levels of progress in these year groups and this is due to consistently good teaching, good use of assessment information and clear subject leadership that focuses on improving standards. Pupils speak clearly and succinctly with above average levels of understanding about important ideas. They give reasons for their preferences and think beyond the scope of their lessons. Their handwriting develops satisfactorily and, by the time they are in Year 4, most pupils are writing complex sentences using accurate grammar and spelling. They calculate and solve problems well and use their mathematical knowledge across the curriculum.
7. In subjects that use English as a vehicle for learning and recording, such as geography and history, standards are above the expected levels. Standards in information and communication technology, religious education, art and design, design and technology and physical education are at the expected levels.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.7 (16.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.1 (15.6)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.7 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 36 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

8. Test results vary from year to year and within years between subjects. This is the result of the varying number of pupils with special educational needs in each of the groups and the proportion of pupils who change schools in each year. The careful tracking of pupils shows that pupils make at least satisfactory rates of achievement and many make good progress. Assessment results are also used to identify specific areas of difficulty. The predictions the school makes are correct and the assessment information is used carefully to guide teaching and the curriculum to fit pupils' needs. Teachers adapt their approach to effectively encourage pupils to develop their areas of weakness by setting exacting targets for improvement. This works particularly well in science where targets are used frequently and for each individual according to their rate of progress.
9. The trend for the school is above the national trend and the assessment results maintained by the school show that pupils with special educational needs progress at the rates expected of average achieving pupils. Higher attaining pupils also make good rates of progress and this, along with progress in information and communication technology, design and technology and creative development in the Foundation Stage, have been addressed well since the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils have good attitudes to school. They respond well to the good spiritual, moral, social and cultural values promoted by the school and their personal development is good. Levels of attendance are in line with those found in primary schools nationally.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils behave well and work well together
- Personal development at the Foundation Stage is very good
- Unauthorised absence is higher than average

Commentary

10. The pupils are well behaved and polite, showing pride in their school and enthusiasm in the way they make visitors welcome. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In lessons, they respond quickly to instructions and take due care of the books and materials they are using. While a few individuals find it hard to match the standards of behaviour shown by their peers, careful management means that they rarely distract others in the class.
11. The pupils work hard and concentrate well, even during some of the very long lessons where they are required to sit and listen for extended periods. Well-directed questions keep them focussed and their response shows a keenness to learn and to display what they already know. They work well together, sharing ideas and skills in a mature way. Pupils think well of their school. There were no exclusions in the last academic year.
12. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Through their religious education lessons and assemblies they gain an understanding of the beliefs and lifestyles of others and learn the need to respect and tolerate those who are different. Pupils learn about their own culture through their lessons and on interesting visits. Pupils' response to the school's provision for cultural development has improved since the last inspection. They are well prepared for life in a culturally diverse society through their work in geography, art and design and music and in the way the school embraces and encourages pupils to think about how people live in Britain today. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
13. A very small number of pupils have a higher than average level of unauthorised absence and this results in regular poor attendance. The school and local authority officers are working together to address this problem. Families taking more than the authorised number of days for holidays during term time also affect the overall figure for unauthorised absence.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	5.0
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.4
National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, learning and assessment are good. The proportion of good quality teaching has increased since the last inspection and there was no unsatisfactory teaching observed in any stage. Teachers set high expectations for pupils and they react well to these challenges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned to meet pupils' diverse learning needs and, as a result, pupils learn well and remember what they have learned
- Questioning is good and this adds to the high quality assessment procedures
- Teachers use an interesting range of methods to help pupils learn
- At times teachers do not draw the lesson together by recapping what learning has taken place

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (10%)	23 (76%)	4 (13%)	0	0	0

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

14. Lessons are planned to ensure pupils have a suitable balance of practical activities in which they can practise the knowledge and skills they have learned. This is a very important aspect of learning in this school as many pupils find this way of learning to be most effective. This is particularly the case for boys. At the beginning of the lessons, pupils are reminded about what they are expected to achieve by the time the lesson finishes. Pupils are often reminded about the learning objective and this keeps the focus in mind. Where work is practically based pupils throw themselves into their tasks and their enthusiasm and commitment helps them to absorb information and retain what they have learned.
15. Teachers encourage pupils to work together frequently, often asking them to come up with solutions in short order. This occurs across the curriculum and pupils can often be seen discussing intently with a partner, a topic or a problem set for them by their teachers. In their group work in science pupils share resources, compare their ideas in an enthusiastic yet mature manner and literally jump with excitement when they have managed the taxing challenges set for them.
16. Pupils are very positive about their teachers and support workers. Parents are equally supportive and feel that members of staff work hard for their children. Pupils have a wide range of learning styles and needs and support is provided to ensure all pupils including pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and pupils with special educational needs are taught and supported in an appropriate manner. For example, those pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties have access to calm yet stimulating classrooms. They are given lots of support to help them see where they could improve their behaviour. Classroom management by teachers is good and, as a result, pupils work hard. They are given clear guidance about how they should behave and react with enthusiasm to their work. They make sensible suggestions and try hard to curb their excitement when learning so that they do not disrupt the learning of other pupils.

17. In subjects where the pupils can develop their own ideas and investigate problems, such as science and mathematics, the older pupils in particular display a lively approach to the task in hand. They are willing to experiment and draw confident conclusions from what they have found. For example, in all of the science lessons observed pupils contributed very well and made connections beyond the scope of the lesson's content – if an adult mammal has 206 bones and immature mammals have over 300, is this the same for baby elephants and baby mice? There were further examples of these high level learning skills in the very good teaching seen in mathematics in Years 3 and 4. These lessons were conducted very briskly and pupils were set demanding activities which required them to think hard and solve problems.
18. Teachers collect lots of high quality information about what pupils have learned. They are assisted in this by the skilful work of learning support assistants, who often note pupils' immediate reactions and evidence of learning. Regular assessments of how well pupils are achieving within the National Curriculum are carried out. In turn, these results are analysed to indicate where pupils' learning needs to be reinforced and perhaps a different range of learning opportunities offered. Alongside the assessment of pupils' academic ability sits assessments of pupils' personal development. Teachers are skilled at linking these two aspects of pupils' capability and finding solutions to learning needs. The profiles of children's learning maintained in the Foundation Stage are very good and comprehensive. Teachers throughout the school use the information well to plan the next stages of learning. In those subjects where assessment was weak during the last inspection, improvement has been brisk and now pupils' progress in all subjects is assessed.
19. The one area of comparative weakness concerns the final stage of lessons. In the great majority of lessons, teachers structure learning opportunities so that pupils learn new information or ideas and have lots of occasions in which to practice their new skills. They are gathered together frequently to review what is going on in the lesson and to allow the teacher to point out incorrect ideas. However, at the end of some sessions pupils retell what they have done but are not encouraged to restate what they have learned as a result of their work. This misses opportunities to reinforce what has been learned and thus chances are lost to the teacher to promote further learning.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and provides a wide range of opportunities to promote learning for all of the pupils. It provides good opportunities for enrichment, including extra-curricular activities and support for learning outside of the school day. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are good and meet the needs of the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is well planned and good links are made between subjects
- The children in the reception classes get a good start to school
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- There is good provision for the personal, social and health education of pupils
- There has been a good improvement in the provision of resources for teaching and learning in information and communication technology
- On occasions, lessons or parts of lessons are too long and the pace of learning slows

Commentary

20. The school carefully plans the work that each year group is to cover and makes sure that work is matched to all the pupils' needs. This ensures that good progress is made and that when the pupils revisit topics they are studied at a higher level. The school is developing good links between subject areas providing pupils with opportunities to use skills learned in one area in other subjects.

21. Careful curriculum planning supports the good provision for education of the youngest children. Teachers carefully construct learning opportunities based on very good assessments and include plenty of practical activities for children to learn about the world and acquire the skills and knowledge they will need to learn successfully in the next stages of education.
22. The pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage. Their individual education plans contain short-term targets, particular teaching strategies to be used and criteria to identify progress and success. The older pupils take part in reviewing their progress and in thinking about what and how they would like to improve. These arrangements and the regular reviews of the plans help them to make good progress and achieve well throughout the school.
23. The school has a comprehensive and developing programme to promote the pupils' personal, social, and health education. It includes sex and relationships education and attention is given to providing clear information about safe and unsafe drug use. The school often integrates these areas into topics being studied in science. The teachers are confident in teaching personal and social education both through taking informal opportunities to promote the area of learning and in lessons that deal with a range of issues. The school is following careful guidelines on what to teach and covers topics such as considering how energy resources can be protected or renewed and taking responsibility for our own actions. The good work done in this area effectively promotes the good behaviour and attitudes to learning of the pupils and their personal development.
24. The school regularly organises special weeks that focus on different topics but link areas of the curriculum. A recent success has been the 'Africa' week when the pupils enjoyed making artwork and listened to African tales told by a Ghanaian storyteller. Many visits are arranged to support areas of the curriculum, such as to Tamworth Castle, and to experience theatre productions. The school often welcomes visitors who provide further stimulating and interesting learning experiences for the pupils. These include governors and friends of the school together with professional groups. For example, following a visit to see a performance, a member of the cast of Tom's Midnight Garden came to develop speaking and listening skills through a drama workshop with pupils.
25. Since the last inspection the school has developed good resources for teaching and learning in information and communication technology by establishing a dedicated suite and providing training for adults to become more confident in using computers. This has resulted in pupils gaining appropriate skills and knowledge of how to use information and communication technology although it is not yet fully used across the different subjects of the curriculum to enhance learning.
26. In some instances, whole or parts of lessons are too long and this means that the learning focus is lessened or the pace of the learning slows. In addition, on a few occasions opportunities are missed to plan a good end to a lesson where teaching points are effectively reinforced and pupils have clear opportunities to reflect on what they have learned and think about what they need to do next.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for the pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. Effective support, advice and guidance for pupils are based on clear assessment of their gains in knowledge and appropriate monitoring of their personal development. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a strong and developing team approach in risk assessment and health and safety provision
- The recently formed School Council is much appreciated by the pupils as a means of involving them actively in the life of the school.
- Older pupils are successfully encouraged to look after younger ones
- The induction arrangements for Foundation Stage pupils are particularly good

Commentary

27. With the appointment of a new health and safety co-ordinator, the school is promoting a team approach to health and safety that brings together staff from different subject areas to share expertise. Clear and simple policies, that provide explicit and easily understandable guidance on safe practice and first aid also support good understanding of the issues involved. The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education within the curriculum.
28. Good relationships between staff and pupils, ensures that pupils know that someone will help them if they are unhappy about something. Older pupils have a very responsible attitude towards the well being of their younger friends. They consider it part of their responsibilities to ensure younger pupils are well cared for and looked after; for example, escorting them back to classrooms after activities. Personal, social and health education lessons provide good opportunities for teachers to monitor and support pupils' personal development and to identify any issues that may be troubling them.
29. The recently formed School Council has already improved playground facilities by overseeing the purchase of small play equipment for use at break times. The pupils saw this as a major priority and are enthusiastic about their involvement in this new provision. While council members take their responsibilities seriously, other pupils also feel involved, through class discussions, and feel that their voice is being heard.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school works hard and successfully to involve the parents and carers in their children's education. Good links are maintained within the pyramid of local schools. Good provision is made to involve the pupils in the life of the village and the local parish church. This maintains the picture seen at the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school actively seeks parents' views
- Parents enjoy many opportunities to come into school
- Information for parents is abundant and of good quality
- There is a very active Parent Teacher Association
- The school is at the heart of its local community

Commentary

30. The headteacher has established a pattern of inviting parents and carers into the school for workshops and discussions whenever major innovations are planned or new policies are under review. In this way, the parents feel that they understand what is happening in the school and feel their views are represented. Families are given a good range of opportunities to come into school to see the work their children are doing through open days and appointments held throughout the year. General information is conveyed through an attractive weekly newsletter and a newly created website.

31. There is a very active Parent Teacher Association (PTA), which raises valuable funds for the school and organises a range of fund raising and social events for pupils, families and the local village. PTA contributions have recently supported work in information and communication technology, amongst other things.
32. The school makes good use of the wealth of experience on offer from friends and relatives to enrich the curriculum and provide valuable support throughout the school day. For example, someone who had been a child evacuee during World War Two visited school to take part in a history lesson, giving the children valuable insights into a period of modern history. Parents and friends of the school help with hearing pupils read, provide practical help and assist regularly on school trips.
33. The pupils are encouraged to contribute to a range of local activities and to enter competitions sponsored by local businesses and village organisations. They are actively involved in special church services, such as the annual Christingle service, and the local vicar regularly leads worship in the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is very good and she is well supported by the leadership team. Governance is very good. The rate of improvement has been good since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has brought a sense of optimism and determination to the school's work
- The governing body is a very effective advocate for pupils
- Team work is very good; teachers and support assistants share a commitment to improve pupils' learning
- The school's collection and analysis of information is very good
- Subject leadership in the core subjects is a strength

Commentary

34. The headteacher has been in post for just under two years and in that time, in the words of a governor, she has 'galvanised' the rate of school improvement. Over much of the school's work, including the very important aspects of teaching, learning, assessment and the curriculum, she has developed a strong school impetus to use information and data to provide better learning opportunities for all of the school's pupils. As a matter of course, the headteacher encourages participation in these developments by all members of the school's community. She has forthrightly tackled the need to improve teaching and this has been very successful. She has not shirked difficult decisions. As a result, the rate of pupils' achievement has increased, leadership at all levels, including governance, has improved and the issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed successfully.
35. Teachers who lead subjects and aspects do so well; they are conscientious and share with the headteacher and governors the tasks of keeping the school's work under review. There are many good quality systems that collect information, and the analysis of this data is key to the school's continuing success. The information gathered by leaders is shared openly and much thought is given to how to improve standards and learning. A particular strength is the use core subject leaders make of assessment information. There is continuing and careful analysis of how pupils learn and what steps should be taken to increase achievement.
36. All of these systems and the hard work of staff, governors, parents and pupils ensure that not only is the rate of achievement increasing but, in addition, the curriculum is broader and more

balanced that at the time of the last inspection. Compared to the picture found at the last inspection:

- the school's curriculum now meets statutory requirements
- the governing body's work is more assured in securing improvement
- the management of the school, including high quality administration, ensures systems maintain the pace of improvement
- the school community is made of teams which take a real responsibility for moving the school forward.

37. A prime example of how all of these skills, systems and commitment come together to secure improvement is the work to refurbish the central courtyard. Staff and governors have taken dynamic and well thought out steps to develop the courtyard in the manner which would best suit the needs of pupils, rather than a stock solution which may have missed the mark. The school is open to suggestions but is not deterred from a line that will bring about improvement. At the parents meeting, there was a chorus of agreement that the school had taken great strides forward over the past two years. The school's potential for improvement is very good.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	390,520
Total expenditure	412,660
Expenditure per pupil	2,531

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	18,818
Balance carried forward to the next	2,500

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. The children are admitted to the pre-reception class (Foundation 1) on a part time basis in the term following their fourth birthday. They transfer to the mixed reception and pre-reception class (Foundation 2) or the mixed reception and Year 1 class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. There is a very wide range of ability but, on the basis of assessments carried out soon after they start, the children's attainment is judged to be broadly average. Standards amongst boys and girls are similar. All the children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well in all areas of learning. By the time they transfer to Year 1 about four-fifths of them are likely to attain the early learning goals in all the areas of learning. These standards are the result of consistently good teaching and learning opportunities.
39. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well and the children are provided with a welcoming, supportive and well ordered environment with rich and stimulating experiences. The Foundation Stage leader and the Foundation Stage teacher are knowledgeable about the children's stages of development, their individual needs and their styles of learning. Planning and assessment procedures are good and all the areas of learning are carefully linked. The teachers and support staff work well together, value all the children and have created the ethos and conditions to enable them to become effective learners. The teaching is good in all the areas of learning. The teachers' explanations are clear, their questioning skills are good and they use the children's answers effectively to assess their understanding. The teachers provide work that is suitably challenging and the children's progress is continually tracked. They focus on what the children are learning and this enables them to assess what has been achieved and to plan the next steps that have to be taken. The children are given opportunities to talk about what they have been doing but they are not always given opportunities to talk about their learning.

Personal, social and emotional education

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching and support staff value the children, understand their individual needs, promote their self esteem and develop their confidence
- There are carefully planned opportunities to develop the children's independence

Commentary

40. The children achieve well in all aspects of this area and most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. Before they start school there is a thoughtfully planned programme of visits and talks for parents when the routines and activities are introduced and explained. This helps the children to become more confident about embarking on this very important stage of their life. They settle quickly into the carefully organised routines because they are secure and know that the staff will support them. There is a range of systems such as 'plan, do, review' which require the children to make decisions and to take responsibility. This is an effective feature of the organisation and management of the Foundation Stage as it supports the development of the children's independence and raises their self-esteem. They are encouraged to voice their likes and dislikes, share and take turns. The children respond very well and develop positive attitudes because the staff are consistent in their approach and show them that they are valued. The children learn to work together,

become aware of other children's feelings and in understanding the consequences of their actions.

Communication, language and literacy

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff encourage and develop the children's spoken language, listening and early reading and writing skills well
- Sharing and using books are linked well to the different activities

Commentary

41. This area of learning is managed well with carefully planned and supervised activities as well as opportunities for independence. The children achieve well and most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1. When they start Foundation 1 many of the children play alongside their classmates rather than being involved in conversations with them but their skills of speaking and listening are developed well in adult directed activities. This is evident in discussion times when the children are encouraged to ask and answer questions about topical and personal issues. They listen carefully to the adults and the other children. During imaginative play they adapt their speech and mannerisms to the characters they are portraying. The children are keen to learn to read and their early reading skills are developed through the sharing of books and stories. The staff provide advice for the parents about how they can use books at home to support their children. The children handle the books carefully. When they share the reading with adults they predict the events and at the end they recount the sequence of the story. They explain that they can get information from the words and the pictures and through the phonics sessions they learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds that they make. Some use this information when they read unfamiliar words or when they are writing and need to decide how to spell. This was evident when they were reading about and then writing the story of Daisy Duck in preparation for their farm visit.

Mathematical development

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are carefully planned opportunities for the children to solve practical problems and to begin to calculate.

Commentary

42. Most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. The range of opportunities for developing mathematical skills is good and includes numerous opportunities for the children to explain how they work things out as register and snack times are used effectively to calculate totals and differences. The children learn the correct mathematical vocabulary in stories, rhymes and games and enjoy using it as they count, match, sort and order objects according to shape, size, weight and colour. When they pour out their milk and weigh and measure in the sand and water trays they use the correct language for capacity and weight as well as describing shape and size. The role-play activities in the 'farm shop' and in the 'gingerbread house' are exploited effectively to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of length, mass and volume and the identification of shapes and of positional language. When they program the computer equipment such as the 'Roamer' they use the correct mathematical vocabulary for distance and direction.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

The provision is **good** and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are carefully planned opportunities for the children to explore, experiment and use their senses.
- There are good opportunities for the children to learn about their environment.

Commentary

43. The children take part in a wide range of carefully planned sensory experiences. They make good progress in learning about why things happen, how things are made and why changes occur and most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. There are well thought out opportunities that give the children the confidence to investigate the grounds and the local area. The forthcoming farm visit is being used effectively to support all the areas of the learning. The children are investigating the changes that occur to the taste of milk when various fruit flavours are added. Through these investigations and during the daily 'snack time', they also learn mathematical language when they discuss the shape, size and number of the beakers and plates. They develop an understanding of past and present by looking at photographs and observing the changes to the appearance of people and places that occur over time. Through taking part in events such as Christmas and the Chinese New Year the children begin to appreciate the variety of religious and cultural beliefs and celebrations. During the inspection the purpose of 'Christian Aid Week' was used effectively to develop the children's understanding of their own circumstances and the circumstances of children in other parts of the world. The children solve simple problems by making and modifying models. They use a variety of construction kits to make decisions about the ways of joining parts. When they create collages and models they are sensible about the safety rules for using scissors and glue. When they use the computer they operate the mouse and become increasingly confident in clicking on icons when using programs. The teachers are skilled at questioning and they use the children's answers effectively to assess their understanding and to move the learning forward. All the staff are skilled at giving the children the support they need to develop the confidence to question and to think for themselves.

Physical development

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for the development and extension of the children's physical skills.
- The children use tools and equipment carefully and with developing skills.

Commentary

44. The activities are planned carefully and the children are challenged effectively. They make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals. The children develop their manipulative skills when they use small equipment such as scissors and brushes and when they connect and assemble jigsaws and construction kits. They have the physical skills to control the computer cursor, the Roamer' controls and the switches on the listening centre. The quality of their drawings demonstrates that they develop the hand-eye co-ordination and pencil control needed to write letters and numbers. They use tools carefully as they dig and fill containers in the sand and water trays. From the mixed

reception and Year 1 classroom there is direct access to a courtyard with a good range of wheeled toys and container gardening. Plans are in-hand to resurface this area so that climbing equipment can be installed. In the meantime the staff are compensating effectively for this through carefully organised sessions in the playground and in the school hall. The wide range of equipment is well organised for the children to gain control of their bodies. The children learn to run, climb, push, pull and balance. When they use the wheeled toys they demonstrate control as they change speed and direction. The children learn to be aware of space and of their own safety and the safety of others. They develop the skills of throwing, catching and kicking and they also use mathematical language as they talk about speed, shape, size, direction and the position of their bodies and the equipment.

Creative development

The provision is **good** and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good opportunities for role-play to stimulate and develop the children's imagination.
- A good range of materials is available and easily accessible for the children to use to explore with all their senses.

Commentary

45. The children develop their observational skills through what they see, hear, smell, touch and taste. They make good progress by expressing their feelings in activities such as drawing, painting, modelling, role-play and music making and the teachers value their imagination and creativity. By the time they transfer to Year 1 most are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals. The activities are worthwhile and carefully planned and supervised. The teachers ensure that the children learn how to use and control the materials well and this helps them to gain an awareness of shape, pattern and colour. They enjoy the opportunities for imaginative play and they are provided with a good range of small world equipment and costumes for the farm shop and the gingerbread house. When they use the small world equipment they create conversations and these activities are a rich source for language development as the children adopt the voices and mannerisms of the characters. There are frequent opportunities to sing and music is often chosen to support other areas of learning such as number and action rhymes. Their studies of the music and art of Africa also developed their knowledge and understanding of the life and culture of children in another part of the world.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 2 and Year 4 the pupils attain above average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing
- Teaching and learning are good, assessment is thorough and well used so that pupils know what they have to do to improve
- The subject is well led and managed
- There are good opportunities for the pupils to use literacy skills across the curriculum
- On a few occasions, lessons or parts of lessons are too long and the pace of learning slows

- Standards in the presentation of the pupils' work vary and they are not always provided with a very good model of handwriting

Commentary

46. The pupils enter the school with a broad range of attainment in gaining literacy skills but overall at an average level. The good standards attained in English by the pupils in Years 2 and 4 have been well maintained since the last inspection, and the pupils in all classes, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The school places a high priority on teaching the pupils to read and is successfully working to further raise standards in writing. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the work taking place, and she ensures a consistent approach to the teaching of the basic skills of speaking and listening, reading and writing.
47. Standards in speaking and listening are above average overall. The pupils respond well to the many opportunities for them to ask and answer questions, offer opinions and listen to others in the discussions in literacy sessions and lessons in other subjects, and their development is further fostered through opportunities for role-play. The standard of reading is above average at the end of Years 2 and 4. Good attention is given to developing the basic skills of reading and the pupils are taught well. Good home-school reading partnership arrangements and the good support from home that pupils have to practise their reading have a positive effect on their progress. The pupils have very positive attitudes to reading; they read accurately, confidently and with expression; they enjoy talking about their favourite authors and books.
48. The teachers have a good knowledge of how pupils develop their literacy skills and have recently focused on teaching the pupils the strategies they need to improve their writing. Regular learning and systematic testing of spellings means that the pupils accurately spell a good range of basic words and often make very good attempts at more complex and technical language such as 'fluorescent'. Teachers have high expectations of what the pupils are capable of achieving, and provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to write in a number of forms. This results in the pupils using clear and lively language. For example, a Year 2 pupil giving a description of a character from a traditional tale writes; "Baby bear is a cheeky little bear. He is brown and small and doesn't do what he is told to do..." By Year 4 the pupils confidently and imaginatively work as a group to compose a poem using a cinquain form, quickly gathering phrases and words to depict a river delta at night time such as "tide water glimmering" and "dark beach". They then go on to work independently producing good quality results.
49. A strength of the teaching is the way in which the teachers gather good information about how well the pupils are doing. Although the systems are newly developed they are clearly manageable and the teachers are using the knowledge to set challenging group and individual targets. The pupils are made aware of what they have to do to improve and what they need to learn next. Pupils of all abilities receive appropriate support and challenge, take a full part in lessons and make good progress. A number of programmes, such as the Early Literacy Support, the Family Learning Initiative and being a 'Dyslexia Friendly School', provide effective extra support .
50. In some English lessons, the whole or parts of lessons are too long and this means that the learning focus is lessened or the pace of the learning slows. Occasionally, opportunities are missed to plan a good end to a lesson where teaching points are effectively reinforced and pupils have clear opportunities to reflect on what they have learned and think about what they need to do next. The school is working towards establishing a high standard of presentation. However, the pupils are not always provided with good models of handwriting. The necessary skills are taught systematically, but the pupils do not all consistently use the joined up script they have been taught.
51. The subject is well led and managed. A particular feature of leadership is the good use made of an analysis of assessment information. Assessments are accurate and the subject leader ensures teaching and the curriculum are adapted ensuring pupils receive learning opportunities which match their needs. The co-ordinator ensures pupils' literacy skills are used in other subjects by keeping a careful eye on teachers' planning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Good use is made of the pupils' literacy skills in other subjects. This has a positive impact on the pupils' achievement in English and on the progress they make in other subjects. There are many opportunities for them to read a variety of texts, non-fiction books and when finding information on the Internet. Pupils respond well to the good opportunities to write at length, including reports and accounts in subjects such as science, history and geography. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are well promoted through the discussions and question and answer sessions at the beginning of lessons in other subjects. By the time the pupils leave the school their library skills are very well developed, they understand how to use an index, glossary and contents section to find information and are competent when researching on the Internet and CD-ROMs.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well throughout the school and standards are above average in Years 2 and 4 and have improved since the last inspection
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment are good
- There are many opportunities for pupils to investigate and apply their learning in new situations
- Some lessons are too long and others are not rounded up with a recap of what has been learned
- The subject is well led and managed

Commentary

53. The results of national tests show that standards vary from year to year but an analysis of the school's records shows that pupils achieve well in each stage of learning. Often pupils with special educational needs make the progress expected of average attaining pupils. Standards in Years 2 and 4 are above average. Pupils acquire a good working knowledge of number and how they can use their skills and understanding to solve problems. All pupils, whatever their rates of learning, are given challenging activities which stretch them and make them think about how to solve problems. Higher attaining pupils do well and pupils with special educational needs are given good support, enabling them to participate fully in lessons; all groups achieve well. This is particularly the case of pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. Work in classes shows that there is no significant difference or trend between the achievement of boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic groups.
54. Achievement is good and at times very good because the quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers base their plans for lessons and for each term on a meticulous and well-researched analysis of the assessments set in each class. The quality of teaching was generally good and was very good in Years 3 and 4. Mental arithmetic sessions introduce lessons well and help pupils to think about the work to follow. Learning is so successful because teachers base much of their teaching on offering pupils practical tasks that require them to think hard and come up with their own solutions. There were good examples of brisk and challenging starts to lessons in each year group, with teachers showing an interesting variety of methods to enthuse pupils. The problems set extend pupils' thinking, encourage them to work together well and answer real life problems. Teachers explain well; they take care to show pupils each step of a method and question classes carefully to ensure all pupils understand what they are doing before moving to the next step. Teachers are skilled questioners and use their answers pupils give to adapt the lesson structure to meet pupils' need. Teaching is very good in Years 3 and 4 where subject knowledge is high and the pace of lessons is very brisk. Good use is made of learning support assistants. These skilled workers

support pupils with special educational needs, help higher attaining pupils understand more complex problems and assist quiet pupils to make effective contributions. Some lessons are too long, particularly for younger pupils and this leads to the pace of learning drifting; in addition, the end of lessons at times recap what has been covered rather than encourage pupils to rehearse what has been learned.

55. Teachers use assessment skilfully to match work to pupils' learning needs. Regular assessments are made of how well pupils manage a particular topic, how well they solve problems and how well they apply important mathematical ideas. These assessments support good quality planning, which includes opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in their mathematics lessons. Learning support assistants help teachers keep good records of how well pupils are doing.
56. The subject is managed well and the co-ordinator leads from the front. Support for other teachers is good and the very high quality analysis of assessment links pupils' academic performance with their attitudes and personal development. Data is analysed frequently to identify strengths and weakness in the curriculum and to identify groups of pupils who are not achieving the expected standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Pupils have many chances to use mathematics in other subjects. In science this helps them when measuring the results of their experiments. They use graphs to show their results. Their work is neatly presented and they understand the conventions of presentation. Pupils read circular and linear scales and parents talk of how well their children use their mathematical skills in and out of the home.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average and have improved since the last inspection
- Investigation skills are well above average by the time pupils reach Year 4
- Teaching is of good quality and the analysis of work shows that pupils make good progress
- Subject leadership is good
- There are good links with other subjects especially literacy, numeracy, information and communication technology and geography

Commentary

58. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 4 are above the national average and the analysis of pupils' work last year indicates pupils achieve well, with more able pupils making particularly good progress. Discussions with pupils and the analysis of work indicate good understanding of all areas of science. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and learning support assistants to enable them to participate fully in investigations and experiments.
59. The quality of teaching is consistently good with some very good features. Teachers allow pupils to construct their own investigations and experiments. They clearly explain tasks in an interesting way. Resources are plentiful and always at hand to help pupils investigate. Pupils are excited by the lessons and bubble with enthusiasm. The recording of work is good with pupils completing charts, tables, diagrams and graphs as well as good quality independent writing. Pupils with different abilities are given different levels of support but are encouraged to aspire to high standards. As a result all pupils achieve well. There is good emphasis on new

vocabulary and teachers consistently use the correct scientific terms to describe effects. Pupils are encouraged to use these terms to discuss their findings or try to explain results in a scientific way. This results in above average levels of knowledge of how animals develop, how forces and materials behave and very good understanding of the scientific process. Pupils react well to the high level of practical work; they collaborate and plan their experiments in groups, sharing ideas and enthusiasm for the subject.

60. Assessment is very good in science. A high quality feature of this aspect of the school's work is the regular and frequent target setting which in turn lead to teachers setting new and demanding challenges for pupils. This pushes learning on at a very brisk pace. Since the previous inspection the school has made many improvements that have had a positive impact on teaching and learning and achievement. They include much greater emphasis on providing opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations, emphasis on extending pupils knowledge of scientific vocabulary and use of language and consistent planning throughout the school with very clear objectives.
61. Subject leadership is good. Staff training has had a positive impact on the subject and pupils' rates of achievement. There is a sharp grasp of the priorities and needs and this has resulted in the consistent development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Monitoring is effective and resources are well chosen. Generally good use is made of ICT because teachers plan these experiences to enhance learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a good rate of improvement since the last inspection and particularly good in this school year
- The rates of achievement are particularly good for younger pupils but satisfactory overall
- Teaching and learning are good
- Subject leadership is good

Commentary

61. Standards in information and communication technology have improved since the last inspection. At that time the school was found not to be meeting statutory requirements in the curriculum. This situation has been addressed well and, with good leadership and a clear and direct steer from the headteacher and governing body, the school has made good progress in meeting pupils' needs in this area of their learning.
62. Standards are now at the expected levels in Years 2 and 4. This is because teachers are now planning for the subject and teach specific skills well. Younger pupils, who have had less ground to make up, are ahead of the levels expected of them. For example, pupils in Year 1 control a floor robot well, instructing the device to manoeuvre around a map and predicting where it will end its journey. Older pupils understand how many machines and devices are controlled by giving instructions and talk knowledgeably about how these devices support modern life. They understand that technology helps them present information in a variety of ways and how to use the Internet for research purposes.
63. Teachers plan well for this subject. They encourage pupils to use computers to practise their numeracy and literacy skills. For example, pupils with special educational needs use regular practice sessions to reinforce their knowledge of number and spelling. At other times, pupils are required to solve problems. For example, how to use a paint program in the style of Pointillism, using a design program to devise wrapping paper and how databases are used to sort fruit and vegetables. In the final year of the school, pupils use software to compose a

piece of music in the Baroque style, to match the compositions of Henry VIII. Skilful links between subjects, careful preparation and good support from learning support assistants help pupils to make steady progress.

64. The subject is well led and there has been an impressive amount of work tackled in the last two terms to bring the school's policies for planning and assessment up to a useful standard. The subject is now on a sound footing and the school has appropriate plans to continue the improvement made in provision of resources and standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

65. ICT makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning in other subjects. Computers are used for research purposes and pupils talk knowledgeably about using search engines to identify the sources of particular information. Pupils understand how to use computers to devise graphs and to show information in tables and charts.

HUMANITIES

66. Few lessons were seen in geography and history. However, from these lessons, the teachers' planning, the previous work of the pupils, conversations with pupils and the evidence of the good enrichment of the curriculum, it is clear that standards are higher than the level expected and pupils' achievement is good. The curriculum opportunities in both subjects are good and they make a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development. Good use is made of literacy skills in history and geography but opportunities to use information communication and technology skills are limited.
67. In both geography and history, lessons are well planned and carried out. When possible, good cross-curricular links are made. For example, there are good opportunities to use English through written accounts in history, mathematics in measuring, mapping and data handling in geography. Art is frequently used in a variety of drawing and illustrative ways to extend learning in both geography and history. The teachers regularly mark the pupils' work and add constructive and helpful comments. Both subjects are well led and managed and make a positive contribution to the social and cultural education and personal development of the pupils. A particular strength of the subjects is the planning for special weeks of events around a broad theme such as 'Africa', visits to places of interest and visitors to the school; these further enhance and broaden the good learning opportunities already provided by the teachers in school. The pupils enjoy their lessons and the subjects have a secure and valuable place in the school's curriculum.
68. In **geography** the Year 1 and 2 pupils describe their journeys to school. The youngest pupils think about changes they would make to the playground. Year 2 pupils carry out a traffic survey and make suggestions as to how the roads around the school could be made safer. This work on the local area is extended in Year 3 as the pupils discuss ways of improving the environment. The oldest pupils investigate weather forecasting and symbols. They link the formation of clouds and reasons for rainfall to the work they are doing on condensation in science. They have a good understanding of how to use maps and have begun to look at an overseas contrasting locality to the one where they live. They are discovering that life in the Indian village has both similarities and differences to their own.
69. The pupils show a keen interest in and enjoy the **history** topics they cover. An understanding of chronology is developed well throughout the school. Features of historical enquiry are explored throughout all the topics studied and pupils have a good understanding of different sources of evidence and information. The work in the pupils' books shows that teachers are skilled at encouraging the pupils to pose questions about a historical topic or person and to suggest where the evidence to answer the questions may be found. In Year 3 as part of their topic on World War II the pupils have an opportunity to question a lady who was evacuated to the country. They listen enthralled to her living memories and ask her good quality questions to

extend their knowledge and understanding. They are waiting with great anticipation for the imminent visit to Cosford Air Museum for which they are carefully preparing. The older pupils have just completed an extensive topic on the Tudors. They compile 'important facts' from books and consider the reasons why Henry VIII wanted to divorce Catherine of Aragon and why she didn't want a divorce. They make comparisons between rich and poor homes in Tudor times and as part of their design and technology construct models of Tudor houses.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of literacy skills in religious education
- Standards in religious education meet levels set out in local authority guidelines but do not reach the high levels seen in other core subjects

Commentary

70. Standards are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education, which is a similar picture to the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress and their achievement is satisfactory. The pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of the stories, customs, signs and symbols of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. The younger pupils learn about bread as a Christian symbol and they hear the Parable of the Sower. They have opportunities to think about what makes a good friend and consider ways to deal with frightening happenings or feelings of anxiety. The older pupils develop an understanding of what it means to be a Jew as they learn about the Exodus and Pessach.
71. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory. It is planned according to the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education and pupils complete a lot of work that promotes their knowledge and understanding of Christianity. In a good lesson seen the teacher imaginatively links the story of Jesus getting left behind in the Temple to how the children might feel if they got lost. Useful development of word-processing skills is made as the pupils use computers to record their work. The work in religious education lessons makes a good contribution to the pupils' achievement and the progress they make in developing their literacy skills. For example, they have opportunities to retell stories and explain ideas in their own words and writing when they compare their own childhood with that of Jesus and write about Holy Week and the Creation story.
72. Visits out of school to the local church, and visitors to the school, enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christian ideas and customs. Through such events, the work in lessons and assemblies the pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to this area of their personal development. The co-ordinator is ensuring that the latest guidance from the Locally Agreed Syllabus is implemented and she has plans to extend the multi-faith experiences of the pupils and further improve the range of artefacts available to use in school.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

73. No lessons were observed in **design and technology** and one lesson observed in each of **art and design, music and physical education**. It is not possible to make secure judgements on overall provision although the teaching was good in the lessons observed. Evidence was gathered from talking to the pupils, the teachers responsible for the leadership of the subjects,

the planning files and work on display, in sketchbooks and portfolios. These subjects promote the pupils' personal development well by providing them with the opportunities to explore values and interpret and express ideas. All the subject leaders are relatively new in the posts but they all have clear ideas about how their subjects can be developed and standards raised further. They check on the quality of what the school provides and how the pupils perform by looking at the plans and work samples and there have been a few opportunities for them to observe lessons. There are informal assessments of the pupils' progress and the school is developing a whole school system to record their acquisition of key skills.

74. Although no **design and technology lessons** were seen the evidence of the work indicates that the pupils make satisfactory progress and that standards are in line with those expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The other evidence indicates that all the National Curriculum requirements are now met. The pupils learn to generate ideas and plan what to do next and this is based on their experiences of working with a range of materials. They use models, computer models, pictures and words to describe their designs and by Year 4 they research in books and on the Internet and use the information to create detailed sketches and explanations to communicate alternative ideas. There are examples of this in the designing and making of winding mechanisms, books and cards with moving parts and a coat of many colours for Joseph.
75. In **art and design** the evidence indicates that the standards are similar to those expected nationally. All the pupils make satisfactory progress and standards amongst boys and girls are similar. The teachers give the pupils a wide range of experiences to develop their knowledge and their skills and to explore and develop their own ideas. The pupils investigate and use a variety of tools, techniques and media such as pencils, paints, clay, weaving, printing and fabric collage to communicate their ideas. They use their skills to illustrate their work in other subjects such as English, history, geography, science and religious education. The pupils develop their observational skills by drawing and painting portraits, landscapes and buildings. They develop their knowledge of colour, texture, pattern, line, tone, shape and form and how to combine them in different ways. They show increasing attention to detail and experience a widening range of media. They have investigated printing techniques to produce silk wall hangings and clay to create tiles. The pupils are developing their knowledge of the possibilities and limitations of different types of paints and techniques. Their sketches demonstrate their understanding of proportion and perspective. The work displayed around the school often supports the pupils' work in other subjects such as the African masks connected with their geography lessons and the tiles in connection with their studies of the Tudors. The teachers make appropriate use of art and design to promote the pupils' cultural development. Much of this is through studying the work of famous artists such as Paul Klee and producing their own pictures and collages in their styles.
76. In **music** the evidence indicates that the standards are similar to those expected nationally. All the pupils make satisfactory progress and standards among boys and girls are similar. The pupils were heard singing in assemblies and in one lesson. They increase the repertoire of songs they have learned from memory and practise to help them improve the quality of their singing. In the lesson observed they sang with clear diction, accurate pitch and gave attention to phrasing and expression. They follow a beat and respond to changes in rhythm. This was evident when they were creating a percussion accompaniment to a traditional song. Throughout the school the pupils listen to the music chosen for assemblies and they become confident when answering questions about what they hear. They are learning about music created by a range of composers and the ways in which mood and atmosphere are created. Although only one lesson was observed the plans show that, throughout the school, there are a variety of approaches and appropriate activities to support the pupils in developing their skills in singing, playing and appraising their own work and the work of others. The teachers make appropriate use of music to promote the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Much of this is through studying the work of famous composers and linking with other curriculum areas such music from other times and other places in history and geography studies. Information and communication technology is used to enhance provision through the use of tape recorders,

CD players and computers. Pupils use computers to compose music inspired by their studies of the Tudors as the village has well documented links with Queen Elizabeth 1. There is a newly formed choir and all pupils have the opportunities to perform in the Christmas celebrations and school assemblies. Some parents pay for their children to have tuition from specialist violin and guitar teachers.

77. In the one **physical education** lesson observed the standards were in line with those expected nationally. The plans indicate that the pupils are offered a balance of activities that encourage them to reflect on and discuss their own performance. There are planned opportunities for activities that involve co-operation and teamwork and those that provide an element of competition such as the school sports day and links with neighbouring schools. During the lesson the pupils used the bowling, throwing, catching and fielding skills developed in a 'rounders' lesson to develop their skills in playing cricket. The teacher demonstrated the correct techniques and showed the pupils how they could improve. Through the 'Healthy School' campaign, pupils are aware of the need for warming up and cooling down sessions and the concern for safety in the use of space and equipment. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have swimming lessons and the school offers after school clubs for a rolling programme of sporting activities, including table and short tennis, rugby, cricket, football, athletics and basketball. Some parents pay for their children to take part in sessions with visiting coaches.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good start made in the Foundation Stage is developed well throughout the school.
- The good relationships and ethos support the pupils' personal development.
- There is a good range of opportunities for the pupils to express their opinions and to contribute to life in the community

Commentary

78. The teachers and support staff encourage the pupils to care for each other and to consider the effect of their words and actions. The pupils have a good understanding of the need for rules and maintain them well. There are planned opportunities for them to take part in discussions and to develop social skills such as learning to take turns, share, work and play together and help each other. The teachers use circle times appropriately to provide opportunities for the pupils to discuss their thoughts and feelings and share their anxieties and concerns. Through science and physical education lessons the pupils learn about the importance of personal hygiene, diet and exercise. Sex education and awareness of drug and alcohol abuse are dealt with through science lessons and informally with pupils' questions answered sensitively. The school is encouraging the pupils to develop an awareness of the responsibilities of citizenship with the establishment of the school council. Through studies of organisations such as Christian Aid the pupils are learning about some of the social, economic and environmental issues of the world.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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