

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST THOMAS' CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Warrington

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111318

Headteacher: Mr John Hankey

Lead inspector: Mrs Heather Evans

Dates of inspection: 12 – 14 January 2004

Inspection number: 257987

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary aided  
Age range of pupils: 3-11  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 232

School address: Parkgate Road  
Stockton Heath  
Warrington  
Cheshire  
Postcode WA4 2AP

Telephone number: 01925 268722  
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Appropriate authority: Governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Rev B Harris

Date of previous inspection: 20 April 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized Church of England Voluntary Aided primary school in Stockton Heath Warrington. Pupils attending the school are drawn from a number of local communities around the school. The new building programme that was completed at the end of 2003 has already been of benefit to pupils and teachers. Whilst many pupils live in privately owned houses, a number come from a large housing estate managed by a local housing association. There are 251 pupils on roll of whom 37 attend part-time in the Nursery classes. Whilst a few children are from mixed race backgrounds all of them speak English as their home language. There are 33 pupils listed as having special educational needs, which is about average but the number of pupils with statements of special educational need at 5 is above the national average. The percentage of pupils claiming their entitlement to free school meals is around five per cent and this figure is below the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry is assessed soon after starting school and it varies considerably with the prior experiences of children in each group. For the most recent intake to the Reception class attainment on entry was about average but in some years recently it has been above that usually found for children of the same age nationally.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21374	Mrs Heather Evans	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education English as an additional language
19741	Mr Trevor Smith	Lay inspector	
15236	Mrs Morag Thorpe	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Foundation stage
30559	Mrs Jennifer Taylor	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a very good school where pupils achieve very well.** Standards overall are well above the expected level and pupils make very good progress. Overall the quality of teaching is very good. As a result, pupils learn very well in most lessons and subjects. The school provides a rich range of opportunities for learning across the curriculum. It is firmly established at the heart of the parish community. The school is led and managed very successfully by an experienced team of people who are committed to seeking ways of working towards excellence. Finances are very well managed and the school provides very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The above and well above average standards in English, mathematics and science as shown by the results in the statutory tests for some years.
- Attainments and achievements in most other subjects of the curriculum are above expectations.
- The quality of teaching is very good and as a result pupils learn very well.
- Pupils' behaviour and their attitudes to work are very good.
- The curriculum for all subjects is rich and is very well supported by a range of additional opportunities for learning.
- The provision in the Nursery and the Reception class is very good.
- The overall leadership and management of the school and the work of the governors are very good.
- There is very good provision for and management of the work planned for pupils with special educational needs.

Since the previous inspection in 1998 the school has addressed all of the identified weaknesses with considerable success and has made good improvement. The work of the subject leaders has been strengthened in line with changes brought about by national initiatives. The recent changes in the accommodation and the new building programme have made it necessary to review the strategies that worked well in an open-plan environment but are less appropriate in the new classrooms. This work to modify practice is well in hand. The accommodation has been modernised to very good effect. The school's documentation has been refined and improved but still needs further attention to ensure that it fully meets statutory requirements.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	B	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	A	A	A	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**The achievement of children and pupils across the school is very good. Most children attain all of the expected learning goals by the end of their time in the Reception class.** A few who have special educational needs take longer to reach these targets. Children make very good progress and achieve very well. The standards attained in statutory tests at the end of Year 2 in all subjects tested are well above average when compared with all other schools and, in tests in writing, attainments are in the top five per cent of schools nationally. By the end of Years 2 and 6 for the past four years standards have been improving at a level that exceeds that in most other schools.

Standards in information and communication technology match national expectations by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6 many pupils are working within Level 5 at a level above that expected in schools nationally. Pupils' attainment exceeds national expectations in art and design, design and technology, physical education, history, geography and music by the end of both Years 2 and 6.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education including teaching, learning, curriculum provision and the care and guidance of children is very good overall.** The quality of teaching is very good because all of the staff understand the requirements of the National Curriculum very well. They are confident that their planned work and intended targets will match the pupils' prior knowledge and attainment. As a result lessons are interesting and pupils learn readily and achieve very well. Most pupils are successful in completing the challenging work that is set for them and recognise how well they are doing. The curriculum provides very well for all of the required subjects. There are strong links between subjects so that the structured steps for learning make practical links to work covered earlier. Pupils receive good care and guidance.

**Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.** Pupils like school and respect the established values. They arrive regularly and early, have very positive attitudes to school and are eager to learn. In lessons and around the playing spaces pupils' behaviour is very good. Pupils' respect for what the school is offering them is obvious in lessons and in the way they tell of learning experiences, residential visits and competitions with other schools. Pupils' good understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of life is enriched by the wide variety of opportunities to celebrate with artists and authors working in school, and in their description of sporting events. The school is very highly regarded by the community. These strong elements play an essential part in achieving the harmonious and well-balanced atmosphere that reflects the strong Christian ethos of this school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership, management and governance of the school are very good.** The headteacher leads the school by example and demonstrates a clear and positive vision for the school's future. His continued dedication and inspiration provide excellent and strong direction for the teaching and support staff as well as for the governing body. With the deputy headteacher and the senior management team they work together to ensure the continuing good of the school. Governors manage their areas of responsibility very well. They actively pursue the priorities set out in the detailed and structured school improvement plan. Subject leaders are very effective when monitoring the planning for intended work by their colleagues. During the extensive building programme the headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator have maintained their monitoring role. The school uses the various talents of the support staff very well. Everyone shares fully in the process of working to maintain the well above average standards across the curriculum.

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

Parents value the work of the school and most are actively involved in their children's learning. In conversations, at the meeting with parents and in the many replies in questionnaires the majority of parents expressed a high level of satisfaction with the school. A few parents would welcome a more formal structure for discussing their children's work and progress with teachers. This concern is recognised by the school and plans are in place to improve this aspect. Most pupils have very positive views of the good things that the school offers them. A few express concerns about the behaviour of others in the playground but they all state that teachers respond quickly to any aggressive language or behaviour that takes place. The behaviour seen by team members during the inspection was very good.

### **Recommendations to help to improve the school further**

This is a very good school with no significant weaknesses. A minor area for improvement that the governors and headteacher should consider is:

The completion of the planned review and development of the role of the subject leader in order to meet the changed requirements of all teachers brought about by the very pleasing alterations that have been made to the classroom provision.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

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

Pupils' attainments and achievements across the curriculum are **very good** from the Nursery to Year 6.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the subjects that have statutory tests each year have been maintained at an above average level for several years by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. These standards are most frequently well above the national average.
- Pupils' attainments and achievements in the humanities and in creative and physical subjects exceed national expectations.
- Standards in writing at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were in the top five per cent of schools nationally.

#### Commentary

1. Children enter the Nursery with attainments that have been assessed as being below those expected for children of the same age nationally. There has been a review of practice in this part of the school since the last inspection and all of the systems in place including the curriculum have been significantly improved. From the slightly below average level of attainment on entry, children make very good progress and achieve well. Attainment levels of the present Reception class are average in terms of the areas of learning assessed for the children's profiles. The changes and improvements in the facilities and therefore the provision in these classes since the last inspection are proving to be very successful. Most of the children in the present Reception class are well placed to achieve all of the expected learning goals before they move into Year 1. The fluctuation of attainment levels on entry and the variation in the numbers of pupils with learning difficulties means that it is difficult to establish a consistent pattern but the stringent assessment procedures used are acted upon in a sensitive way that successfully meets the needs of every individual child.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.1 (16.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	17.6 (15.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.0 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.9 (29.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.1 (29.6)	26.8 (26.7)
science	29.6 (30.4)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The standards attained in statutory tests in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well above the national average and in writing they were very high and in the top five per cent of all schools. Standards in reading were like those in similar schools where few pupils claimed an entitlement to free school meals. They were well above in writing and in mathematics they were above those in similar schools. By the end of Year 6 in 2003 standards were well above the national averages in English, mathematics and science. When compared with the attainment of that group of pupils when they were in Year 2 there has been improvement that was well above that of pupils in similar schools in English and mathematics and above that level in science. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 but many pupils exceed the expected level by the end of Year 6. In all other subjects standards are above the expected levels. Overall pupils do better than might be expected as a result of the interesting work provided for them, the high level of challenge and expectations, the high quality teaching and the hard work put in by pupils with the support of their families.
3. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are on course to exceed the expected standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are making very good progress and many in Year 3 are already achieving the standards expected by the end of Year 4. These pupils are making especially good progress in reading and writing and all of the initiatives to increase the opportunities for extended writing are working well. In lessons the challenge for pupils of all attainment levels is great. Those capable of working at a higher level are supported very well and are encouraged to succeed. In these classes those pupils with learning difficulties usually achieve their individual targets because of the carefully modified work and the dedication of the skilled teaching team with the well-organised support staff.
4. Pupils are on course to achieve standards by the end of Year 6 that are well above the expected levels for pupils of their age. At this early part of the school year most pupils are already working at a level above that expected nationally in English, mathematics and science. The average attaining pupils and those capable of higher attainment are on course to greatly exceed the national expectations by the end of the year. To achieve these standards pupils learn very well and make very good progress because of the industry and commitment of all of the teachers. In the present Year 6 there are an above average number of pupils with special educational needs. This group does well in lessons because of the specially modified work that is provided but their average results may have an adverse effect on the overall test grades. The work of these pupils will not damage any of the individual results of others in the class. In other subjects pupils' skills and achievements in reading and writing and in mathematics help to lift levels to above those expected nationally. A strength of the school is the way in which pupils of all backgrounds and attainment levels are very well supported in lessons. Pupils are helped to learn particularly well by being constantly encouraged to extend their learning by pursuing their own interests through independent research and personal study. Across the school achievement is very good; pupils are prepared very well for each new step and the concept of learning for life is part of all of the planned work.
5. Pupils listen well to teachers and to one another. They speak, read and write at levels that are above and often well above the national average. In mathematics too standards are well above expectations, pupils learn very well and they use their knowledge and understanding of number without hesitation. They manipulate numbers using multiplication and division, confident that their understanding of the rules of mathematics will help them to find the easiest way of solving a problem. Pupils endeavour to reach an acceptable solution as quickly as they can, always trying to beat their own personal best. The setting of personal and group targets through ongoing assessment by teachers enables pupils to plot their own way to success through personal endeavour.

6. Standards in science are also above the national average because the work to help them to be scientists and learn through investigation is very well organised. Pupils' skills and confidence in planning, conducting and recording the findings of investigations were seen to particularly good effect in all classes. Pupils show good scientific knowledge by the end of Year 6. Across the school the completed individual and independent work in books, as well as that that displayed in classrooms, shows good levels of presentation and achievement in all of the areas of the curriculum for science.
7. Work in information and communication technology (ICT) is interesting and challenging, as a direct result of the improved facilities. Since the last inspection, the increased skills of the teachers have enabled pupils to make good progress. The standards of pupils in Year 2 match the expected level. In classes for older pupils, many of those who have computers at home have skills that are better than those regularly found in primary schools. More than half of the pupils in Year 6 are working within Level 5. All of the pupils are confident when using computers for word-processing, to enhance work in other subjects. The school has done well in building on the good foundation identified at the time of the last inspection and, despite practical difficulties over the past year, standards have been maintained and improved in most years with pupils developing well as rounded individuals in all subjects.
8. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Progress is measured against the targets set in pupils' individual education plans and as part of the school assessment procedures for all pupils. Individual education plans are reviewed each term and parents are invited to participate. Targets are clearly stated and are attainable and measurable. Teachers adapt work to match the needs of less able and the gifted and more able pupils. There is a link between the targets specified in individual educational plans and lesson planning. Teachers liaise very closely with learning support staff. When pupils are working in activity groups some pupils are withdrawn for basic skills tuition by specialist teachers and learning support assistants. This work has resulted in very good gains being made in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

Pupils' attitudes to school and learning, their behaviour in lessons and around school and their attendance and punctuality are **very good**. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and its effect on pupils are also **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance levels are very good and are better than in most schools nationally.
- Pupils' enthusiasm for learning is very good.
- The school's expectations for behaviour and pupils' response to the opportunities and challenges are very good.
- The teachers' work to develop and support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is interesting and imaginative and results in developing well rounded youngsters.
- Pupils' acceptance of the many opportunities for responsibility and initiative are very good.
- There are very good relationships between adults and pupils across the school.

### **Commentary**

9. Pupils enjoy school, are well motivated and pursue all challenges offered to them with purpose and determination. Overall, they are confident, articulate learners, fully capable of independent study. In lessons they listen carefully when their teacher, or others, are speaking and contribute sensibly in discussions. Pupils take great pride in their work and standards of presentation in their books are very good. The school offers pupils a wide and interesting range of opportunities to take on responsibilities and to show initiative. These are

readily accepted, and the duties carried out well. For example, Year 6 pupils manage the telephone desk at lunchtime. They also organise and run their own tuck shop at break-time in order to raise money for their residential trip to the Isle of Man. Pupils are very involved in the extra-curricular activities that are on offer. These present learning with fun and support the curriculum very well.

10. The school's expectations for pupils' behaviour are very high and firmly underpinned by six 'Golden Rules'. Pupils respond well to these and, as a result, their conduct both in and of class is very good. They are self-disciplined, polite and considerate of others. The school has a harmonious and relaxed atmosphere where effective learning takes place. The attitudes, values and personal qualities of pupils with special educational needs are developed very well. Exclusions are almost unheard of, with only one half-day exclusion in the past 25 years. Effective procedures are in place to deal with any instances of bullying. These are used properly whenever necessary, but are rarely needed. In discussion pupils spoke of 'naughty' children who sometimes pushed or called people names but were insistent that everyone knew and understood the rules, and that these rules were always applied fairly.
11. Attendance remains very high in relation to the national norm and unexplained absence is very low. Punctuality is good. Almost all pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly. The school does not have any specific measures to promote attendance as in the present circumstances it feels these are not necessary. Registers are monitored regularly and parents are discouraged from taking holidays during term time. The high attendance levels indicate that families co-operate very well with the school.
12. Pupils' spiritual development is very good and is promoted strongly throughout the curriculum, particularly in art and design, music and English, as well as during collective worship. Pupils' moral development is very good. Teachers are good role models and foster caring attitudes. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong, show due respect for one another's feelings and for the school environment. From the youngest children to Year 6 they accept full responsibility for their own actions. Pupils' social development is very good. They work well together in class and relationships generally throughout the school are very good. Residential visits each year offer pupils in Years 4 and 6 opportunities to live together and develop strong understanding of shared ideas and values. Team games where boys and girls compete together with teams from other schools add to the sense of community. Generous support for charity raises pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. Pupils' cultural development is also very good and is very well promoted through subjects such as religious education, art and design, music and the humanities. Each year the school joins in local events that celebrate the traditions and culture of the local churches within the community.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (96.5%)**

Authorised absence	
School data	3.2
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

**Exclusions in the last school year**

No of pupils on roll
237

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0

White – Irish	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	6	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

This is a very good school with many very positive features. The quality of education including the quality of teaching is very good overall. Curricular provision is very good and is enriched by an interesting range of opportunities for reinforcing work learned in class and in the community. The school is at the heart of the community and it serves the pupils' and their family's needs very well.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **very good** overall across all phases.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach and have very good relationships with the pupils.
- Teachers have realistic expectations that are increasingly high and that regularly challenge pupils' thinking.
- The pace of lessons is good and very good use is made of time.
- The planning is very thorough, detailed and precise; teachers select from a good range of methods.
- The rate of learning for all pupils is very good.
- The strategies for assessment are very effective; these are incorporated into longer and short-term planning and information gathered is used very well.
- The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are good and are working well.

### Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons.

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5 (13%)	23 (61%)	10 (26%)	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.*

13. The quality of teaching in English, mathematics, science, music and in work with pupils with special educational needs is particularly good. As a result, pupils learn well and make clear and measurable gains in their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of work that they study. The good teaching seen at the last inspection has been maintained and strengthened.
14. The proportion of excellent lessons is above that usually found in most schools. In all lessons teachers' knowledge of the subjects taught is very secure and the objectives set are clearly explained to pupils. Whenever possible teachers link their expectations to earlier work or to practical experiences that pupils remember. This is a particular strength of work in mathematics and science, which is linked to investigations and practical experiences whilst providing opportunities for revision and consolidation. Lessons are very well organised and

teachers' planning is very good. The methods chosen and the available resources are always suitable. Teachers are at pains to engage pupils' interest at the start of lessons; work is interesting and the pace of learning is brisk. Challenging work is evident in all classes and, as a result of the very positive relationships, there is a shared sense of joy in learning as well as delight and achievement in learning. The quality of teaching is maintained at a consistently high level across the school.

15. Subject leaders offer very good support for colleagues and manage their work very well. The procedures for assessing pupils' progress, attainment and achievement are clear and manageable and are very good. All teachers follow the agreed marking policy well as an important strand of the shared assessment procedures. Teachers and subject leaders together make very good use of all of the information gathered. The systems in place provide a clear focus for the analysis of strengths and weaknesses and for setting relevant, measurable targets for improvement. As a result, work is well matched to the abilities of all of the pupils. Since the last inspection the use of assessment to promote work matched to pupils' ability has improved in leaps and bounds. The success of this work is one of the reasons for the above and well above average levels of the pupils' standards of achievement.
16. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is very good. Teachers use pupils' individual education plans well and incorporate stated targets into their lesson plans. Pupils with learning difficulties are fully included in all classroom activities although some pupils are withdrawn during the time planned for group activities for additional tuition in basic skills. Teachers ensure pupils of all ability levels are constantly and appropriately challenged so that they work to the very best of their ability. Assessment and tracking procedures of pupils identified as having difficulties in learning are very good and are used well to ascertain the rate and levels of achievements. There are strong links with the local authority SEN support service and the behavioural support team. There are regular team meetings between the professionals involved with pupils deemed to have special educational needs that are attended by the school's educational psychologist. These outside agencies provide very effective support and advice for the teachers who are responsible for these pupils. There is also support from the speech and language therapy service. An additional part time teacher provides very high quality specialist teaching.
17. The use of the trained support staff in lessons is invaluable in the work to maintain the rapid rate of learning. Their skilled intervention when pupils experience any difficulties enables lessons to move at a brisk pace where everyone builds well on the sense of success. Similarly, when they work with the pupils capable of higher attainment, their skills and initiative enable imaginative and innovative experiences to be shared. The support, that enables pupils who have barriers to learning to achieve alongside their friends in lessons, will not be available to them in tests. In these circumstances, for this group of pupils, attaining at the same level as the average and above average attaining pupils will prove more difficult. The very well developed partnership between the teachers and the support staff makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos of the school and to the superb working atmosphere in all classes. Homework is set at suitable levels each week with time allowed to complete it. During the inspection the review of marked work indicated that homework in its different forms was proving to be a positive aid to learning.

## The curriculum

The school provides a **very good** curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils. Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are **very good**. The accommodation is **very good** and supports learning. There is a **very good** and plentiful range of high quality resources.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum enrichment is very good through the wide range of clubs and activities, visits and visitors to school.

- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and for their personal, social and health education.
  - The very effective procedures for reviewing the curriculum enable teachers to take positive actions through the skilful leadership and management of the headteacher.
  - The accommodation is very good although there has been insufficient time to complete the planned work for the development of the new library.
18. The curriculum meets legal requirements. All subjects of the National Curriculum are covered very well, as well as personal, social and health education. The recommendations of the revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are fully implemented. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are included in all subjects and aspects of school life. The effectiveness of the curriculum is monitored and developed according to the changing needs of the pupils, parents and community.
19. All pupils' benefit equally from what the school has to offer including the interesting extra-curricular activities. There are opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of sporting activities including football, netball, and cricket. There is a choir and many pupils learn to play musical instruments. There are visits to places of interest, for example Macclesfield Museum and Arnside in the Lake District. The residential visit arranged for older pupils to the Isle of Man, enables them to experience a wide range of more adventurous activities not normally available to them. Very positive and useful links with a local college, provide additional opportunities to develop art, music and drama skills. Many visitors to school share their skills and experience, for example an author visited school to enable pupils to develop their writing skills. Work with an 'artist in residence' enabled pupils to work with clay and fabrics in an impressive way. Importantly, members of staff developed skills during these sessions that they now use with pupils regularly. Teachers ensure that pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for specialist teaching do not miss any part of the curriculum. There are strong links with the community. The school presents music and drama productions and makes contributions to the festivals and celebrations of the local church. These opportunities successfully contribute to the social and cultural development of all pupils.
20. The headteacher and the senior management team review and develop the curriculum very effectively. They have been successful in maintaining full coverage for all subjects during the past year despite working in difficult circumstances. Subject co-ordinators manage curriculum development in their areas very well. As a team they are committed to maintaining and improving the very good provision for all subjects. They share a whole school perspective for each subject and ensure that knowledge, skills and concepts are very well developed. They check that there is good progression within subjects through long term planning supported by medium and shorter term evaluation. They have implemented the plans to link subjects such as literacy, numeracy, science, the humanities and creative subjects very well.
21. Staffing levels are very good. There are sufficient numbers of qualified and experienced teachers to teach the full curriculum. The well-trained and well-organised support assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. They make a significant, well planned contribution to the teaching team ensuring that all pupils benefit from the high quality curriculum.
22. The accommodation is very good. The recent re-building project has resulted in a very efficient, attractive environment for learning. The external grounds support a range of outdoor activities and the swimming pool, which is used only during the summer months, enables teachers to introduce pupils to swimming at an early age. Improved storage facilities have been incorporated into the new building so that resources remain in good condition and are easily accessible to all. There are spaces available adjacent to classrooms for practical activities and designated areas for specialist tuition in information and communication technology and for special educational needs. A large attractive carpeted area has been designated as the site for the development of the new library. The very good range of fiction

and non-fiction books for pupils to research information are presently stored either in classrooms or corridors. Teachers and pupils have good access to these books and they all know where they are to be found throughout the school. There is a plentiful supply of good quality resources for all subjects. All of this equipment is readily accessible to pupils and teachers and is used imaginatively to support pupils' learning.

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

Provision for ensuring pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and the support and guidance for pupils is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are very well-managed arrangements and procedures relating to child protection.
- Relationships between pupils and between adults and pupils are very good.
- Parents and pupils state that all the staff are very helpful and approachable.
- Induction arrangements for children and pupils joining the school are very structured and work well.
- Pupils readily accept responsibilities for ensuring the smooth running of the school although opportunities to involve pupils in the organisation of how the school might be improved are very informal.

### **Commentary**

23. As at the time of the last inspection the school continues to take good care of its pupils. Child protection arrangements remain very secure. The headteacher has designated responsibility for liaising with outside agencies and is properly trained to carry out the duties associated with this role. All of the staff are very familiar with the procedures and routines in place and what they should do if the need occurs. Suitable health and safety measures are in place and are followed well. A review of risk assessments in the light of changes brought about by moving into the new accommodation has been undertaken; although the new procedures have not yet been fully formalised. The school has been careful in ensuring that Internet security has been addressed fully. The school's equipment is linked into the local authority's system for preventing access to unsuitable websites.
24. Arrangements for the support and guidance offered to pupils remains effective. Teachers know their pupils well and have very good relationships with them. As a result, pupils find it very easy to approach staff and are confident to discuss any problems or concerns with them. Arrangements for the induction of new pupils are good and work well. The school's system for checking pupils' academic progress and achievements is very good. Teachers give very effective support and advice whenever any child's individual needs are identified. The system for monitoring pupils' personal development remains mainly informal, but is considered to be effective by parents and pupils. Praise and rewards are used well to encourage effort, and achievements are recognised and celebrated each week at the Thursday assembly.
25. Pupils undertake many active roles and responsibilities willingly and to good effect. Pupils' opinions about the school are sought annually through a questionnaire and many pupils express their opinions readily. The head teacher recognises there is scope for more pupil involvement in planning and initiating useful ideas and has appointed a member of staff to work with pupils to set up and run a school council in the near future.

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

The school has **good** partnerships with parents and the community. Its links with other schools and colleges are **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's partnership with parents and their support for learning are good.
- Pupils' annual reports are good and guidance is provided about targets for the future.
- Links with the community are long-standing and remain successful; they support a range of opportunities for the enrichment of learning.
- Very effective links with other schools including the local high school are an important part of the life of the school.
- The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents is bland and lacks impact.

## Commentary

26. The school continues to enjoy a close relationship with its parents. Most take a keen interest in their children's education and provide good support for their learning both at home and in class. Home-school links through reading are very good, particularly for the younger pupils. A number of parents (and grandparents) regularly support teachers and pupils' learning in lessons where they provide valuable assistance. Many other parents support plays, concerts and various fund-raising activities and events. Parents' views are sought each year through a questionnaire, but response to this is often very low. However, a recent suggestion to set up a school web site has been taken on board by the headteacher and two parents have volunteered to produce one.
27. Overall, parents receive good information about their children's progress and other aspects of school life. Pupils' annual reports are thorough, give a clear picture of pupils' achievements and also identify areas where they could do better. A few parents expressed concerns about the present arrangements for discussing their children's progress with teachers. The school is aware of this issue and is very keen to do what it can to revise existing practice in order to accommodate their needs. The prospectus, which was raised as an area for improvement in the previous report, has now been combined with the governors' annual report. This is good practice, but the new document still contains some flaws. These errors were brought to the attention of the school during the inspection. A letter was sent to parents the following day informing them immediately of the omissions and listing suitable corrections. The document available for prospective parents has been amended and any new parents approaching the school will receive copies of the improved prospectus that now meets statutory requirements.
28. Strong links have been maintained with the local community; particularly with the parish church and with the many visitors from the wider Christian community in the neighbourhood. Educational visits and visitors to the school continue to widen and enrich the curriculum very well by providing very good first-hand experiences for pupils. A notable example of this impressive work may be seen in the tapestries and tiles that are displayed around the school to commemorate the millennium. These were produced by pupils working with an 'artist in residence', paid for through a donation from a local business organisation.
29. Links with other local schools, the secondary school and the local college are very good and enhance the quality of education very well, particularly in sporting activities and music. Visits by teachers from the secondary school are greatly appreciated by parents. Transfer arrangements operate very effectively and ensure the smooth passage of Year 6 pupils to secondary education at the local high school.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are all **very good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The shared vision and aspirations of the headteacher and the senior management team are very high.
- The leadership and management by the headteacher and the key staff are very good.
- The very high quality complementary roles of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher contribute to the smooth running of the school and the confidence of teachers.
- The role of the governing body is strong in all aspects.
- The strategic planning is very good.
- The school's self evaluation and monitoring and their use for improvement are very good.
- The principles of best value that influence the financial planning are very securely incorporated into all aspects of school development.

## Commentary

30. The headteacher and senior staff have established very good strategies for the leadership and management of the school through their commitment to maintaining high standards and raising them even higher. Together they provide a very good and inclusive education for all pupils. The headteacher has remained firmly committed to this view over the years and with the senior management team, has ensured that the richness of provision for art and design and music have not been diminished in the successful drive for very high standards in English and mathematics. The headteacher leads by example at all times. All staff have very high levels of commitment to the school's vision of providing a very strong Christian ethos. Strategic planning, responses to the key issues from the previous inspection and the school improvement plan are very securely in place. The school improvement plan is very well focussed on the identified needs and is an easily managed document.
31. The management of the school is very good. Teachers' roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and carried out. Subject leaders are given a very high level of responsibility for developing the work in their subjects. They have very well established and rigorous curricular development plans and reviews. Subject leaders have a very strong influence on the work of the school in all subjects and aspects. They create very effective teams of teaching and support staff and are very good role models for other staff and pupils. Their role is in the process of being modified to meet the changing needs of pupils and teachers following the many changes to the premises.
32. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The subject leader is very successful in identifying priorities, setting targets for improvement and monitoring and reviewing progress towards them. She involves the very high quality teaching and support staff in all aspects of the provision and they are a very strong team. The very good accommodation and quality of resources are used very effectively to ensure that all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum are securely in place. The headteacher and governing body have been highly successful in managing the organisation of children during the construction of the new accommodation for the Nursery class and the outdoor provision. In this way they have made very good improvements since the previous inspection.
33. The governance of the school is very good. The governors have very good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the school. The headteacher's report, action plans and reviews from subject co-ordinators and governors' own monitoring are very well incorporated into the school's and the governors' action plans. Many of the governors have attended training, and the expertise of each governor is used to very good effect as they use their skills to monitor the work of the school. Consequently they make very well considered decisions based on accurate information about how the school works. Using their strong knowledge they give very good guidance about their areas of expertise and are

frequently consulted for advice on all aspects of school development. They know very well how the school works and are very secure in discussing and planning for aspects such as curriculum development and the provision for pupils with special educational needs.

34. Governors' knowledge and understanding of the work of the school and their responsibilities have improved since the last inspection. They have been very closely involved and supportive in all aspects concerning the recent building programme and are very well informed about the financial position of the school. The highly efficient finance officer maintains very detailed and up-to-date accounts. The governors take opportunities to discuss and, where appropriate, agree priorities on the school improvement plan. Although the main priorities are decided by the headteacher in consultation with the staff, the governing body supports and, when necessary challenges decisions and the financial costs and considers alternatives. In this way the school has developed a very effective and evaluative approach to financial management. A particularly strong feature of the school is the governors' approach to ensuring best value in all aspects of provision including resources and standards. Recent financial reports are very favourable.
35. The planning for performance management is very securely embedded in the leadership and management of the school. Performance management systems that have proved to be beneficial for teachers have now been extended to support staff. The very good systems in place for the induction of new staff and the ongoing professional development of all teaching and non-teaching staff contribute to their skills and effectiveness.
36. Pupils and teachers in Years 3 to 6 worked for over a year in temporary accommodation and moved to the present very attractive accommodation only a few weeks prior to the inspection. As a direct result of the excellent management of the building programme there was minimal disruption to the curriculum and standards. Parents were very positive in their praise for the way in which the headteacher protected their children from what was potentially a very disruptive time. This represents excellent step-by-step management and mutual support throughout the school. The fact that within a few weeks the school building is attractive, pupils' work is very well displayed and there is a "business as usual" atmosphere is a clear indication of excellent forward planning and vision by the governing body, senior management team and subject leaders.
37. The role of the subject leaders is very well developed and is very good overall. This is consistently very good in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 and has been maintained at a good level in Years 3 to 6. The pattern of monitoring the work of colleagues in the classroom in Years 3 and 6 has changed since the move into the new building. Subject leaders understand the need to adapt the approach that worked so well in the open-plan classrooms where teachers could monitor teaching informally, to a more formal structure. Training and review opportunities have been planned with the express purpose of establishing new routines. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator have maintained the monitoring role across the school very well whilst the building work has been in progress.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	689,658
Total expenditure	631,282
Expenditure per pupil	2,238

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	56,939
Balance carried forward to the next	58,376

38. The apparently large amount carried forward was for spending planned for the new building, that had been allocated but where the work was not completed. Some of these funds are still earmarked for the full development of the new library.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **very good** in both the Nursery and Reception class.

39. Children are prepared very well for transfer from the Nursery to the Reception class and the Reception class to Year 1. Although there is a wide range of ability, the majority of children enter the nursery with attainment levels that are slightly below average especially in all aspects of communication, language and literacy. Most children achieve very well as a result of very good teaching and support. Children in the Reception class also benefit from very high quality teaching and consequently achieve very well, reaching all of the early learning goals, with higher attaining children exceeding them in communication, language and literacy and mathematics.
40. The Nursery has been totally rebuilt and refurbished. The teacher has worked exceedingly hard to create a very attractive learning environment in a short space of time. Children's learning is greatly enhanced by this improved accommodation and external area. The outdoor area has been greatly improved since the previous inspection and contributes to very good achievement in physical development and the development of personal and social skills.
41. Children enter the Nursery in the term following their third birthday and, although some children transfer into the Reception class, a significant number transfer to other schools. Parental links are very well established before children begin school and are maintained well during their years in the Foundation Stage.
42. Most children achieve very well in all areas of learning because of very good teaching and very good curricular provision. The teachers plan a very wide range of stimulating and relevant activities. All adults are very good role models for the children and manage them well. The classrooms are near to each other and have their own outdoor learning areas. This is used very effectively in all areas of learning when the weather is suitable. All aspects of the accommodation are used very effectively to enhance the quality of education of all children in all areas of learning.

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

Provision for this area of learning is **very good** and is given an exceptionally high priority throughout the day.

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

- Very well planned activities and resources increase children's independence and their ability to work in groups.
- Very good teamwork and teaching ensure strong support for those who need direction.
- There is very good progression in the range of activities between the Nursery and Reception class.

#### **Commentary**

43. Throughout the Nursery and Reception class, children say prayers at the beginning and end of each session giving thanks for their activities, which helps them to reflect on the value of their experiences. Children achieve very well in the way they work and play together and share equipment and, in the Reception class, are well placed to achieve and sometimes exceed the levels expected for their age group.

44. The staff work as a very effective team and children are introduced sensitively but thoroughly to good social conduct including classroom routines. All staff have very good relationships with the children and have a good knowledge of their needs. They take time to talk to them and use praise very effectively to raise children's self-esteem. They give sensitive reminders in order to develop good standards of behaviour. Children enjoy the snack time and in the Nursery the snacks vary each day. The children learn about healthy eating as they share in making the snacks, with the staff, as part of their work. This aspect is a significant part of their personal and social training. There are many opportunities throughout the year when children participate in celebrations of festivals based on local, national, Christian, multi-faith and multi-cultural customs and beliefs. Children adapt very well to working both as a class and in small groups. They enjoy shared activities and take turns in using the wide range of equipment in the outdoor area.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision for this area of learning is **very good** in both classes.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All teachers and support staff plan many opportunities in all areas of learning to develop children's language and literacy skills.
- The children in the Reception class have very good opportunities for reading a very wide range of books and the home-school reading programme is very well established.

### **Commentary**

45. Teaching is of a very high quality in both classes and all children are very well challenged. Children achieve very well in all aspects and are well placed to attain the expected levels in all aspects with higher attaining children exceeding them by the end of the Reception year. Teachers and support staff create many opportunities during activities to develop children's vocabulary through posing probing questions, and give children sufficient time to respond to questions using phrases and sentences.
46. In the Nursery most children enjoy books and listen to stories with very high levels of concentration and interest. They are bursting with enthusiasm, eagerly respond to questions and comment about details in the book. During the inspection they listened and watched with avid interest to a book in the shape of a pizza, eagerly anticipating the flavour of the next slice and the creature that will be found in it. They recognised frequently used words using picture clues and initial letter sounds. During the shared book activity reading the book, "Jack and the Beanstalk", in the Reception class all of the children remembered many details of the story and described the adventures of Jack. All the children know the title and the author and the majority summarised the book very well retelling in detail some of Jack's adventures. They listened carefully and enjoyed the story and, in the role-play activities, played the part of each character quoting from the text. There is a good range of interesting books in both classes and the home-school reading is very well established. In the Reception class, most children have very positive attitudes to reading and speak about the wide range of books that they have read. Parents are encouraged to listen to their children reading at home and comment about their achievements. Most parents form good partnerships with the school in this aspect and this is reflected in their children's work. The literacy hour is very well adapted to the needs of the children in the Foundation Stage, consequently, there is a good balance of speaking, listening, reading and writing activities.
47. Very good relationships give children the confidence to speak and all adults listen intently to their comments. The teachers have developed a very rigorous and tightly structured plan for the teaching of sounds, with the emphasis on children's ability to say the sounds, recognise them in words and practise their use in writing. Children are encouraged to hold pencils with

the correct grip. The analysis of writing shows that most children form letters accurately and have frequent opportunities for practising letter formation and patterns. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is very well planned in order to develop children's understanding of spelling. Standards show a very rapid rate of improvement compared to their attainment on entry to the school.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in this area of learning is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- The teachers plan a wide range of structured activities to ensure that children understand number and apply their skills to other areas of learning.
- Children have very positive attitudes to this area of learning.

### **Commentary**

48. Children make very good progress from below average standards on entry to the Nursery to children in the Reception class being well placed to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year. Higher-attaining children are on course to exceed the early learning goals. Most children in the Nursery understand and use the terms taller and shorter and have compared their height to teddy bear's height. Most children count to five and recognise triangles and squares whilst higher attaining children also recognised hexagons.
49. Standards are high and children achieve very well in this area of learning because of very good teaching and rigorous assessment. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and use assessment very effectively to guide planning based on children's prior learning. Children's knowledge and understanding is very good in all aspects of number, shape and space and problem solving. Most children add and subtract using numbers to 10. Higher attaining children calculate using numbers to 20 and some use larger numbers. Nearly all children recognise a wide range of two-dimensional and some three-dimensional shapes. Children create interesting mathematical patterns in art showing a very good awareness of order, shape and colour. Most children are confident in this area of learning, enjoy the activities and work very well. The teachers plan a very good range of mathematical activities associated with other areas of learning and this further enhances pupils' understanding and interest.

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

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of interesting activities is planned and this enhances children's knowledge and achievements.
- Very good opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing and mathematics are included in the planning.
- Children have good opportunities for using computers in the classroom and the computer suite.
- The Foundation Stage leader plans a very wide range of visits and visitors to enhance children's learning.

### **Commentary**

50. Children in both classes achieve very well and most children in the Reception class are well placed to reach most of the early learning goals at the end of the year and higher attaining children already exceed them.
51. Children in the Nursery have made teddy bear biscuits and pizzas, know most of the ingredients and explain how to make them. They planted cress seeds and know that plants need water in order to grow. Most children have used their understanding of how to use ICT for dressing a teddy and following a route from land to the sea. They name many of their favourite toys and foods.
52. Pupils benefit from a very wide range of rich and exciting opportunities within each class and the creative use of the school grounds, local environment and a wide variety of visits. Throughout each day children are involved in many activities and their learning is very well developed by the investigative approach to learning about the environment and themselves. Work on display, photographic evidence and the curricular planning shows that children have many opportunities for learning across all areas. In the Nursery, children have many opportunities for making models using large and small construction kits, matching shapes and using a wide range of materials. Children in the Reception class planted broad bean seeds and describe some of the conditions needed for growth.
53. Teachers extend children's knowledge of different cultures and religions through a wide range of practical activities; for example, they know many of the customs associated with the Hindu festival of Diwali and have made divas. They also made mango designs in creative work. Their understanding of ICT is incorporated well into children's learning in both classes and children in the Reception class use the computer suite with great confidence and very good purpose. They have many opportunities for using the listening centres.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The very good planning incorporates very effective use of the outdoor area.
- Staff provide stimulating activities that develop children's physical skills in drawing and cutting.

### Commentary

54. Children enter the Nursery with most physical skills close to those expected for their age and they achieve very well. Most children in the Reception class are well placed to reach most of the early learning goals at the end of the year and many of the higher attaining children already exceed them.
55. In the Nursery most children have satisfactory levels of co-ordination when matching shapes in jigsaws and cutting pizza shapes, however a significant number have to be guided in holding scissors and some tear paper. Although half the children hold crayons correctly with support, others find this difficult and do not keep to the outlines of shapes. The higher attaining children colour carefully keeping well within the outline.
56. Children in the Reception class handle a wide range of construction equipment well as they turn cogs and fit shapes into containers. During the inspection, children progressed well from shaping modelling clay to designing buildings and using a wider range of art materials. Children handle and control a wide range of pencils and scissors with very good levels of dexterity, control and attention to detail. Although no lessons were observed where children used the outdoor accommodation, photographic evidence and conversations with teachers

and children confirm that they use a wide range of equipment with good levels co-ordination and balance.

57. In the hall, children in the Nursery class moved with a good sense of direction and awareness of height, speed and shape. The majority of children moved carefully as they balanced quoits on their head. Some of the children in this class still need help when changing clothes for physical activities.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for this area of learning is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good; very good planning related to children's abilities and interests provides effective challenges.
- Teachers use a very wide range of media, which results in children learning in very attractive surroundings and developing confidence and a wide range of skills in the use of colour, texture and shape.
- The particularly good teaching promotes very good learning and achievement in music.

### **Commentary**

58. The enriching variety of creative opportunities contribute well to the children's high levels of achievement and improved learning in other areas. Most children in the Reception class are well placed to reach most of the early learning goals at the end of the year and higher attaining children already exceed them.
59. Children achieve very well, progressing from making the bear paw-prints and 'Get Well' cards in the Nursery to working with rectangular patterns involving mixing paints and matching tones in the Reception class. Children's role-play develops very well from the Pizza restaurant in the Nursery. They set out crockery and cutlery and take on the roles of waiters and customers. In the "Giant's Castle" in the Reception class children retell parts of the story of Jack and the beanstalk in the roles of either the giant, Jack or his mother.
60. Children achieve high standards in the musical aspect of creative development. In the Reception class they play a wide range of instruments, keeping accurate time, and sing with very accurate pitch. They respond well to different styles of music.

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

### **ENGLISH**

The provision for English is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good overall.
- Standards by the end of Year 6 are well above the national average.
- Achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is very good.
- Literacy is used to very good effect in other subjects.
- There is very good leadership and management of the subject including very good assessment systems that are used well.
- Learning support assistants are deployed well.
- The school has identified the need to develop library facilities and is planning to implement these plans soon.

## Commentary

61. Attainment levels in Year 2 are already above the national average in reading, writing, speaking and listening and is on course to improve on this level over the year. By the end of Year 6 attainment overall is well above the national average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. During the past four years the results in the National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 have improved steadily and now exceed the national averages. Most progress has been made in raising the standards in writing. Results in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests indicate an upward trend, accelerating from 2000, with attainment well above the national average in 2003.
62. Overall the quality of teaching across the school is very good. The very good input of teachers and time invested by the well-trained support staff have a significant impact on the progress that pupils make. The predominantly very good teaching, combined with the pupils' very good attitudes and willingness to succeed, ensures that achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs is very good. Learning is enhanced further by the dedicated, targeted support offered by the special educational needs teachers.
63. Inspection evidence shows that most pupils are attaining standards in speaking and listening and in reading that are better than those found in most schools and are, indeed, better than might be expected. When sharing discussions about their reading pupils explain eagerly how they love books. The home school reading diary, developed after the previous inspection, is a very useful link between teachers and parents. The reading records of older pupils have been maintained over several years at an exceptionally high standard. Records have developed from pictures and a few words to book reviews that demonstrate the maturity and insight of the writers. The high standards seen in writing across all age groups show that the actions initiated by the teachers, as part of the successful work aimed at attaining the 'quality mark', are also maintained in work in other subjects. This approach to writing is lifting pupils' work in writing for a range of different audiences to a tremendously high level. Pupils respond positively to the very good teaching and they work hard. A wide and interesting range of well-organised strategies is used to good effect to support pupils' learning.
64. The pupils in Year 1 demonstrate very good skills in communication, language and literacy. They are able to name and describe the characters of traditional stories, such as 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. These skills are further developed through planned programmes and the hard work of pupils, teachers and support staff. Most pupils have become confident communicators by the end of Year 2. They demonstrate good listening skills when responding to the teacher's questions. Pupils are attentive and eagerly participate in discussions, as observed in lessons in Year 5 when they describe the '*creatures*' in a version of the story of 'Pandora's Box' as '*having scuttled and oozed*' as they escaped from the box. In Year 6, pupils present cogent arguments as to why people should care for the environment and how natural beauty might be preserved. They discuss why ancient or mature trees should not be chopped down. They cite examples of preserving endangered species or suggest, for example, that 'a tree may be planted in memory of some-one'.
65. Reading is promoted strongly in the school. As a result, the enthusiasm for most pupils to read begins early. For example, they eagerly discover the meaning of words relating to character traits while reading books such as 'Goldilocks' and 'The Gingerbread Man'. By Year 6 most pupils read fluently and with good expression that reflects the meaning of the text. There are very few older pupils who experience reading problems and need to figure out the meaning of unfamiliar words but some less able younger pupils still find this a more difficult task. They persevere very well sounding out unfamiliar words, sometimes with help, and invariably succeed. The standard of writing and the presentation of work in all classes are very good and by Year 6 pupils write in a neat, cursive style, of which they are rightly proud.

66. Some pupils require additional support, particularly those with specific learning difficulties, problems associated with speech and communication and those with behavioural and emotional problems. This help is often through tasks being adapted to match closely pupils' needs and abilities, thus allowing them the opportunity to succeed and make progress. Support assistants provide very good additional teaching and guidance to complement the work of the teacher. The targets stated in individual education plans are the focus for additional support. These are shared with parents.
67. The subject is led and managed very well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Results of tests are analysed carefully and challenging targets are planned well for the next stage of pupils' learning. The systematic monitoring of planning and assessment is very well organised and has been very effective in lifting standards to their present levels. The subject leaders are keen advocates of the subject and are committed to raising standards further. All staff endeavour to create a stimulating environment through displays of books and pupils' work to encourage and stimulate learning.
68. Library provision has been identified for development and plans are in place to realise these intentions in a designated part of the new building very soon. To compensate for the temporary shortfall, each classroom has a well-stocked class library and younger pupils have access to structured reading programmes within their classrooms. Non-fiction books are classified, using a recognised system that is simple and practical and is understood by the pupils. There is a good range of fiction and non-fiction books that are recent publications and in very good condition. All pupils are encouraged to take their reading books home regularly.

### Language and literacy across the curriculum

69. Throughout the school the pupils' literacy and language skills are constantly being very well applied and improved in other subjects. Examples include writing about design and technology projects, such as the function of an axle, and using specific vocabulary in writing up science experiments. In Years 5 and 6 pupils researching work in history develop their skimming or scanning skills very well. English makes a good contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. Overall the promotion of language and literacy across the curriculum is very good.

### MATHEMATICS

The school's provision for mathematics is **very good** in all aspects.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very high levels of achievement throughout the school overall, result in high standards in Year 2 and very high standards in Year 6.
- There is very effective leadership and management of the subject.
- Exceedingly rigorous monitoring, assessment and tracking guides teachers' planning for all pupils, including gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs.
- The curriculum is greatly enriched and supports a very strong emphasis on investigations.
- Pupils of all ages have very positive attitudes to and confidence in mathematics.
- There is very good teaching and learning overall.
- Pupils in Year 6 use too many practice worksheets early in the academic year.

#### Commentary

70. The high quality provision is extremely successful in raising standards and makes a valuable contribution to the very high levels of improvement since the previous inspection. By Year 6,

the majority of pupils are very confident mathematicians who use a wide range of methods for problem solving and delight in investigations. They understand and apply their knowledge of the angle properties of triangles and quadrilaterals, to more complex shapes. They have a very good understanding of the equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages and apply this knowledge to challenging investigations. Because of their very good mental skills they calculate speedily and explain their reasoning. Pupils present their results neatly and manipulate numbers easily and confidently.

71. Many pupils in Year 2 have good knowledge and understanding of place value to 1000 and know some multiplication tables. They add and subtract two-digit numbers mentally and three-digit numbers on paper. They apply number skills very confidently to measurement and data handling. They classify many two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes using their properties, including symmetry. Most pupils can tell the time to the half-hour and quarter past and use a wide range of measurements. They collect information and use, draw and interpret graphs. The majority of pupils reason mathematically and look for and recognise patterns in number.
72. Very good teaching contributes to very high levels of achievement and all aspects of teaching are very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding; planning for each ability group is of a very high quality. Teachers question pupils and challenge their thinking. Their expectations of skills and learning are always shared with pupils and checked at the end of the lessons. Consequently, pupils know how well they have achieved. In the small number of lessons where teaching was only graded as good, although pupils were challenged well, there were slight elements of complacency and over reliance on pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes. Where teaching was excellent there was an exceptionally high quality of investigations planned and mathematical demands made on pupils. The hallmarks of the very good and excellent teaching are the fast pace, challenge and the ability to enthuse pupils throughout the lesson. The regular homework set is used to extend classroom activities and it provides very good opportunities for consolidation and revision.
73. The provision for pupils with special educational needs including those pupils with statements is very good, and the very high quality of support given by classroom assistants contributes to all pupils' achievements. The very well planned use of ICT resources including the very attractive computer suite, contributes to raising standards. The provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good and is reflected in the well above average levels of achievement.
74. The school has very successfully and rigorously introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. This is new since the last inspection and is constantly reflected in the wide variety of methods chosen by pupils when investigating and calculating using large numbers. They search for patterns in numbers and shapes and select from an extensive range of mathematical processes when multiplying and dividing. Pupils are confident when they explain their thinking and justify their reasoning to their friends and teachers. The language of mathematics has been very well developed and taught, and enriches pupils' understanding and confidence in problem solving.
75. Other contributory factors to the high levels of improvement and pupils' very good progress are the very good leadership and management by the subject leaders, the very effective monitoring of teaching and planning, and the very good range of assessment procedures and target setting. The subject leaders have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all aspects of mathematics and are committed to improving the achievements of all. Teachers and the subject leaders very carefully track pupils' progress and the resulting information is used to guide teachers' daily planning, grouping and curricular review. The very good range of resources, books and ICT is used very effectively to enhance the quality of pupils' learning and to raise standards.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

76. Mathematics is applied very effectively across the curriculum. The recently installed computer suite and the use of ICT in the classrooms enhance pupils' understanding in many areas of numeracy. They apply mathematics very creatively when designing symmetrical patterns in art and design and for accurate measurements and predictions in science and design and technology. Note values and rhythms in music make high demands on pupils' understanding of note values. They frequently use large numbers when comparing heights of mountains and the passage of time in history. Pupils often use mathematics as part of their work in other subjects and consequently develop an appreciation of its practical application.

## SCIENCE

The provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and, as a result, learning are very good.
- Procedures for assessment and the use of information collected, are very good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- The curriculum and its support by good quality resources are very good.
- Standards achieved by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above the expected levels.

### Commentary

77. Very good teaching enables pupils to achieve standards that are above average by the end of both Years 2 and 6. The standards achieved are as good as they are because the school concentrates on pupils being scientists and conducting their own interesting experiments and investigations. This allows pupils in Years 3 to 6 to build on the very good imaginative practices established in Years 1 and 2. Pupils of all prior attainment get a fair deal as work is matched very closely to their earlier experiences. Those with special educational needs succeed because, besides having specially tailored work, they are very well supported by skilled teaching and well-informed support staff. In Year 6 a group of pupils with learning difficulties achieve at the same level as their friends because of very well planned work that is specifically modified to meet their needs. These pupils may well find it difficult to attain at this high level in the statutory tests when they will have to think and write without additional support. For this reason it is likely that although many of the class are on course to attain at a level well above that expected nationally, overall the standard is more likely to be above average rather than well above. Those pupils capable of working independently are provided with a rich selection of opportunities to go beyond the level of the majority of the class and to discover for themselves the next steps in the process being studied. This means that time is used well and all pupils are encouraged to work to their capacity.
78. Teaching and learning are very good across the school. The good relationships that allow teachers and pupils to work well in a calm and purposeful way, allow for times for reflection and fun. Lessons are very well planned, often including options for individual development that extend the intended pattern of learning into interesting by-ways that then lead back into the main purpose of the lesson. In Year 6, when testing the effect of strenuous exercise on the pulse rate, pupils devised a number of ways of recording and evaluating results so as to remove the effect of any 'rogue' scores. They simply added these test results to those planned initially. Later they entered the results into a database and reviewed how they might be best displayed to provide a secure start to the next lesson. In Year 2, experiments with ice promoted stimulating discussions about the properties of ice and water and the effect of heat on ice, that demonstrated a high level of maturity. Pupils began to reflect on the insulating properties of different materials, work that was not planned but grew naturally from their timed observations. The teacher supported their ideas and provided them with the time, equipment and opportunity to show that young scientists often think, reason and move on at a faster than expected rate. She quickly and sensibly modified her intended plan and will need to return to the main strand in another lesson.

79. Whilst in all lessons the investigations themselves were taxing and interesting, especially in ensuring that the concept of the fair test was maintained, it is the attention to evaluation, reasoning and reflection that lifts the work to a higher level. The varied activities provide strong links between ideas and topics that make knowledge secure through a variety of experiences. Resources and pupils are managed very well and in lessons the different approaches regularly make the speed of learning brisk and time flies. Teachers question pupils very skilfully, causing them to think of answers to solve problems and to demonstrate their understanding of complex issues.
80. Assessment procedures are built into lessons in the planning stage and possible alternative strategies are listed to engage pupils' imagination and to extend their thinking in the unlikely event that the first approach fails to capture their interest. Teachers use these processes to adapt their work within lessons and into the next steps in planning as they find out where pupils have mastered work or where they need additional reinforcement. Marking is thorough, in books and often beside pupils, where a comment or a word is enough to refocus pupils' thinking. The completed work in books in Year 6 is of very good quality and demonstrates how pupils attain the high expectations set for them by their teachers. The personal books maintained by all pupils across the school, that reflect their scientific knowledge and understanding, are much more interesting than the commercial materials that are sometimes used in Year 6 to check progress through the subject's required elements.
81. The subject co-ordinator has established very good systems for supporting colleagues and for monitoring their planning, and the evaluation of completed work and test results. The review of the curriculum and ways of making it accessible to pupils, as well as the establishment of practical evaluation and assessment strategies, are helping all staff to increase their personal knowledge and confidence. The increasingly firm grasp that teachers now have on the science curriculum is helping them to promote the subject very well. The headteacher and other members of the senior management team have maintained the monitoring of teaching and the support of colleagues in their temporary classrooms during the past year. The action plan for science identifies the need for this work to be resumed by the subject leader once all teachers and pupils are settled into the new classrooms. It is clear that the systems that worked very well in the open-plan school now need to be reviewed and modified.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The knowledge and understanding of the teachers, supported by classroom assistants, is good.
- The overall quality of teaching is very good so that pupils' interest, confidence and skills are also very good.
- The quality and range of the hardware and software are good.
- The instinctive and extensive use of ICT by teachers and pupils to support other subjects is impressive.

### **Commentary**

82. Standards by the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations and in Year 6 around half of the class are on line to achieve beyond the expected level 4. Many are already working at Level 5 in most areas of the subject. Many of those pupils who have computers at home and who get additional help from older family members are totally confident at this higher level. The skills of this group of pupils help some lessons to move at a fast pace when they readily help their friends. A readily available bank of laptop computers, which have served the school

well during the re-modelling process, supplements the well-equipped computer suite. All of the staff have undertaken recent high quality training, although the experience of working in a shared space over several years enabled skills learned by one class to be observed and shared by others to good effect. The well-structured scheme of work is interesting and comprehensive and enables all of the aspects of the curriculum to be taught.

83. By the end of Year 2 pupils understand the various forms of communication such as tape recorders, text and photographs. They use the computer for word processing, using the mouse confidently, and easily find their way around the keyboard and icons. They readily demonstrate how to log on, edit text, save their work and log off. Pupils in Year 2 used a paint program with tremendous pleasure and were pleased with their own work that they shared with their friends.
84. By Year 6 many pupils are confident and competent users of computers. They know the usefulness of ICT in their work and in the outside world. Pupils readily collect information and present it on spreadsheets, bar charts and pie charts. They enter the results of investigations into their personal database and then select from a range of options the display that best suits their purpose. They use secure search engines to access websites on the Internet. Their skills in control technology are well established. The school has good access to a good range of relevant software. The detailed action plan includes the introduction of interactive boards to extend the use of the subject even further. Pupils enjoy using remote controlled machines to follow a path around a prepared maze. They write programs for the machines to knock down objects, such as skittles, using their understanding of different programs and their knowledge of angles from mathematics.
85. A particular pleasure for older pupils is the development of teaching programs for younger classes, using a multi-media programme introducing recorded music and their own speech to explain and share the work that they are enjoying. One such presentation was how to use the keyboard and make it sound like other instruments in an orchestra.
86. Teaching is very good overall across the school. Skilled classroom assistants, who have shared in the training programmes, support the teachers very well. This shared work has a positive effect on raising the standards for pupils of all levels of attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and present their requirements to pupils with confidence. Lessons are very well planned and the learning objectives are made clear. Emphasis is placed on the development of relevant technical vocabulary. Teachers achieve a good balance between formal instruction and the time allowed for pupils to develop their skills. This results in good learning when pupils achieve their targets. In all lessons, the pace is brisk and learning is broken down into manageable steps. Skilful questioning extends pupils' learning. Additional support is targeted at those who need it most. Positive attitudes and very good behaviour are important factors in pupils' achievement in lessons being at levels that regularly exceed national expectations.
87. The subject leader is skilled and very knowledgeable and supports colleagues very well. There has been a whole-school audit to evaluate skills and to identify training needs for teachers and support staff. As a result, there is a clear overview of provision and standards across the school. Practical assessment systems are used well to monitor the skills acquired, chart progress and to enable teachers to provide relevant follow up work.

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

88. The use of ICT across the curriculum is planned in at every level from the time children learn about computers and listening centres to the end of Year 6. It has been developed purposefully and successfully. Teachers' work for other subjects frequently identifies opportunities for its use and pupils resort to either the laptop computers or the new computer suite automatically to enhance the presentation and interpretation of their work. In ICT lessons teachers and pupils support work in other subjects using their computer skills. Literacy skills are enhanced through the pupils' growing proficiency in word processing and

by the use of the many available software programs to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Older pupils readily use the Internet for personal research in other subjects such as history, geography and science. Data handling in science, using computer skills, is well-developed with pleasing results.

## **HUMANITIES**

Provision in both geography and history is **good**. In addition to lesson observations, the judgement is supported by discussions with pupils and teachers as well as by the scrutiny and analysis of pupils' work in their books and in work displayed around the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good leadership and management of the subject provide the drive and direction to maintain and raise the already good standards and achievement within both subjects.
- Good teaching results in standards that exceed the expected level and in pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour towards learning.
- There are very strong links between and across other subjects and the contribution to pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is very good.

### **Commentary**

89. There is close liaison between teachers and subject leaders to enable both subjects to receive adequate time over each term. There is a good system that permits plans to be closely monitored and evaluated so that subject leaders readily identify the strengths and any weaknesses within the subjects and take appropriate action. The good planning and preparation results in good teaching and a positive attitude to learning. This enables standards overall to be at a level that is consistently above those most frequently found in schools nationally. As a result of imaginative and stimulating lessons pupils behave very well and are interested in their work. Pupils present their written work well and take pride in the very attractive way in which they maintain their books.
90. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of a wide range of topics including comparison of life in Warrington with life on the Island of Struay. Older pupils are developing their knowledge of many aspects of life in Ancient Greece including Greek gods and architecture. When demonstrating their skills in ICT, pupils were pleased to select and 'sandwich' artists' impressions over the background plan of ancient Athens to show how the city has changed over time. They were eager to show where the famous buildings have been retained and indicated where the new structures for the forthcoming Olympic Games are to be situated.
91. The enthusiasm of the teachers means the pupils benefit from first hand experiences that enrich the curriculum, including many visits to places of local interest, for example Macclesfield Museum to study Victorian times. The subject benefits from a range of good quality resources that are used to demonstrate the importance of primary and secondary sources when researching historical events. There are very strong, planned links with other subjects, principally literacy, numeracy, ICT and the humanities. Pupils are encouraged to record their findings through independent writing activities. Their writing illustrates the strength of the contribution these subjects make to their social, moral, spiritual and moral education, for example, pupils in Year 6 write sensitively about the impact that cutting down trees may have on the environment.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

### **ART AND DESIGN**

Provision for art and design is **very good** with some excellent features.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The excellent leadership and management by the subject leader, who is a very talented artist, inspire teachers and pupils.
- There are very high standards achieved throughout the school.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to use a very wide range of resources and the work of many artists and cultures, as stimuli for creativity and the development of artistic skills.
- There is very good, structured development of artistic techniques.
- The provision for gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs is very good.

### **Commentary**

92. A wide range of opportunities to develop artistic skills and techniques enriches the curriculum. Pupils throughout the school now achieve standards well above those expected and make very good progress. All aspects of art and design have improved very well since the last inspection. Art and design is used to support work in other subjects such as history, geography, religious education and design and technology. Particularly good examples observed during the analysis of work, were the very high quality ceramic tiles that were made by pupils in Years 1 and 2. Pupils had enjoyed creating complex designs for book covers and comparing fabric prints from Japan and Libya.
93. Pupils' artistic skills are very carefully developed and monitored as they progress through the school. They incorporate art from many cultures and different historical periods into their work. They build on a very wide range of skills and are exceedingly well motivated and confident when experimenting with new techniques. Mathematical shapes and patterns are developed very well as pupils explore texture and design.
94. Insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement on teaching. The analysis of the excellent range of work displayed in school and the very high quality work in pupils' sketchbooks show that their work is developed systematically and teachers have very high expectations of pupils. Art makes an excellent contribution to all aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
95. Pupils' observational drawing and work on pattern become increasingly detailed and accurate, as they grow older. They are encouraged to observe carefully and draw detailed sketches of buildings, flowers and plants. They explore texture, colour and line and create in the style of famous artists from many cultures; for example, pupils described the challenges of working in the style of Seurat and Kandinsky. There are many opportunities for gifted and talented children to succeed and pupils with special educational needs to achieve equally well because of sensitive support.
96. The standard of display is excellent. Pupils' work is greatly valued and provides inspiration for others. The subject leader supports teachers by providing very high quality resources and excellent professional guidance. The system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress is simple and effective and the subject leader monitors standards rigorously. Her leadership is inspirational yet practical. Art has a high profile within school and it enters and wins several competitions, the most recent one being an international book cover competition.

### **Design and technology**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a total commitment to usefulness and high quality of the products made.
- The design element is followed through to the testing and evaluation stage to good effect.
- Work is constructively linked with that in other subjects.
- There is very good shared planning about the nature and purpose of work undertaken.
- The enthusiasm and interest of pupils of all ages is clear to see.
- Pupils' delight in showing and using products that they have made.

## Commentary

97. The small number of lessons observed, together with the extensive collection of completed work, indicate that standards attained are above the national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. This is because teachers work together well with the skilled guidance of the subject co-ordinator. Work is clearly linked to a purpose, and practical ideas are carried through to fruition. The items are designed to meet a need and are then used in other lessons or productions. They have to be functional and durable. During the process of design and making all ideas are tested and then those that prove to be unsuitable are modified, enhanced or re-worked until they are of an acceptable standard. In this way pupils learn that only high quality work is acceptable. The work seen showed very positive links with science, history and art and design. Pupils know very well which subject they are working in but slip easily into a pattern of using and selecting information learned in other subjects in order to complete their present task.
98. Work making containers for money and picture frames has been enjoyed by pupils in Year 4, who have also made figures in card that will move. More confident pupils have attempted to fix motors to their models using their understanding of circuits in electricity. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use a wide range of construction kits and recyclable materials to create and make a range of models either to support work in other subjects or just for fun. In Year 5 pupils making automata using a system of cams, found the work interesting but difficult. They continued to work together, discuss their problems and persevere until they got things right and were justly proud of their completed machines.
99. During the inspection there was only limited opportunity to see the subject being taught but the quality of the teaching seen was very good. The way in which designs in books are marked and the quality of completed work on display indicates that across the school all of the teachers work to the same high standards in this subject as they do in others. This is because the subject is led and managed very well and the resources provided for pupils are good both in the testing stage and for the final products. In food technology, when pupils designed healthy meals, the teacher offered advice and suggestions but pupils' own research and ideas led the work very successfully. Pupils were eager to share their work with others and were keen to explain how they had developed their earliest ideas through to completion.

## MUSIC

The provision for music is **very good** overall with excellent provision for singing.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards across the school are well above those expected for pupils of the same age nationally and they achieve very well.
- All pupils have very good opportunities to work with an extremely wide range of musical instruments and explore music from a range of cultures and styles.
- Pupils delight in the many opportunities for performing.
- The leadership and management of the subject are inspirational and the subject leader utilises the strengths of other teachers very effectively.

### Commentary

100. Insufficient lessons were observed to make an overall judgement on teaching but the quality and range of music heard during the inspection and the wide range of music recorded on CDs reflect very good teaching and achievement. Teachers ensure that pupils of all abilities are very well included in all activities and achieve very well; consequently gifted and talented pupils achieve amazingly high standards and pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take part in all activities and achieve very well. The opportunities for investigating the full range of dynamics and a wide variety of rhythms contribute to the very high quality of composition and performance. Pupils listen with rapt attention and their impeccable behaviour and pride in performance reflect the outstanding teaching observed. Standards show very high levels of improvement since the last inspection.
101. Pupils use ICT for many aspects of music. One pupil who had listened to 'Morning' by Grieg wrote, "It is calm and peaceful; it dies down then builds up again. It is very relaxing and comforting. I felt as though I was flying and soaring up and down".
102. Some pupils benefit from instrumental tuition but these lessons were not taking place during the inspection time available. One of the many strengths of music is the way in which pupils who benefit from this teaching are incorporated into instrumental ensemble work. Pupils who sing in the school choir perform an excellent repertoire of songs with very good pitch, excellent dynamic range and a good feel for the style of the song. They sing an extremely wide repertoire from, for example, songs from the musical 'Les Miserables' to 'Jingle Bell Rock.' Their singing reflects traditions from many cultures and pupils perform in two or three parts with ease.
103. The subject leader supports teachers by providing very high quality resources and excellent professional guidance and demonstrations. She provides inspirational leadership so that music has a very high profile both within the school and in the local community where pupils have many opportunities for performance. This subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

### Physical education

Provision for physical education is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good collaborative teaching across all classes helps pupils to reach their best possible levels of attainment.
- Pupils are very enthusiastic even in the areas where they do not always win.

- The comprehensive curriculum and the good extra-curricular sports clubs encourage boys and girls very well.

### Commentary

104. Attainment at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6 is well above the national expectations. In the lessons and clubs observed the pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieved very well and made very good progress. Based on prior individual skills and team contribution, pupils achieve very well due to their own enthusiasm, keenness to improve and good coaching. School records indicate that standards in swimming exceed national expectations, with many pupils swimming longer distances and gaining swimming awards by the end of Year 6. This is due in part to the school using its own swimming pool between May and September each year. Pupils use the deep water facilities in a local swimming pool during colder months.
105. Pupils in all year groups know the importance of warming up and cooling down exercises in relation to muscle tone, heartbeat and breathing. Work to support this was a feature of a set of lessons in science. Pupils show increasing control and use of speed and tension to express feelings and moods as they get older. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 combined balance, poise and elevation very well in linking travelling movements to create repeated sequences during their gymnastics lessons. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 and then Years 5 and 6 work well together when developing skills in managing control and speed, when making good use of space and when controlling and passing footballs and netballs. Skills are developed using activities such as 'Scandinavian handball' and what is called, 'ultimate frisbee'. Both of these events are fast moving gender free games that encourage hand and eye co-ordination and require a very good awareness of space and distance.
106. The school places a strong emphasis on developing physical ability, healthy life-styles, a strong understanding of fair play and very positive attitudes. School teams take part in friendly and local football, netball and rounders competitions. The local education authority leads valuable in-service training and very good community links are formed with other local schools.
107. The quality of teaching is very good overall. The subject is managed and organised very well by the knowledgeable and enthusiastic leader supported by other teachers, including the headteacher. Teachers willingly and generously devote additional time to after-school practices. The comprehensive and detailed plans for what is to be taught ensure that the full range of physical education activities is covered.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The overall provision for pupils' personal social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision is very well targeted to pupils' needs and ages.
- Achievement in terms of self-confidence is very good.
- Teaching skills are used well and pupils are very well supported.
- The provision for this aspect of the school's life is very well integrated across the curriculum.

### Commentary

108. This work has been developed successfully since the last inspection. Good practice with a clear focus has been established. The ethos of the school, with its development of pupils' individuality and sense of personal responsibility, plays strongly into this area of provision and

the co-ordinator has good support from the headteacher. This work has been instrumental in enabling the staff to fulfil the aims of the school.

109. The approach that the school has taken is very good with useful staff training targeted at what pupils need to learn. As a result, the scheme of work is totally appropriate and is taught well across the school. The involvement of specialist instructors and teachers for occasional lessons works very well and parents are fully involved. Opportunities to link the work across subjects have been used with great skill and this reinforces the ideas that knowledge of life skills is more than just a lesson or subject. The staff use a range of effective ways of teaching the subject across all age groups. There are specific, targeted sessions on sex education and drugs' awareness for older pupils that are provided by health experts.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### **Grade**

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	2

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>2</b>
Pupils' achievement	2

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	2
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>2</b>
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	2
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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

