

INSPECTION REPORT

TATTENHALL PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tattenhall, Chester

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111108

Headteacher: Mr M Mullin

Lead inspector: Mrs J Thomas

Dates of inspection: 9 – 11 February 2004

Inspection number: 258085

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	153
School address:	Chester Road Tattenhall Chester Cheshire
Postcode:	CH3 9AH
Telephone number:	01829 770477
Fax number:	01829 770842
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Jones
Date of previous inspection:	24 May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Tattenhall Park Primary School is smaller than most other primary schools with 153 boys and girls aged 4 to 11. The school is increasing in popularity with parents. Consequently the roll is increasing and this is in contrast to many other schools nationally where there is a shift to falling rolls in line with the declining birth-rate. Currently about 10 per cent of pupils are in receipt of free school meals and this is lower than most other schools. The school has a Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD) Facility (inspected as a specific focus) and accepts pupils from across the local authority during Years 3 to 6. The impact of this is a strong shift in the proportion of pupils with statements in the junior classes. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below what is usually found. However, the percentage of pupils with a statement of special educational needs is well above national figures. The school has no pupils for whom English is not the mother tongue and a very small proportion of pupils from ethnic groups. Mobility of pupils in and out of the school other than at the normal time of admission is high and this adversely affects the school's prior attainment grades. The socio-economic circumstances of the school are generally better than elsewhere. The attainment of most pupils on entry to the school fluctuates from year to year but is broadly average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17711	J Thomas	Lead inspector	English Geography History Religious education English as an additional language
19344	D Jones	Lay inspector	
22578	G Jones	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education
30651	M Entwistle	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services
Anglia House
Clarendon Court
Carrs Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 2LA

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	12
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	16
PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH MODERATE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES	18
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	19
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	21
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Tattenhall Park Primary is a good school. Standards are average overall but rising steadily and pupils achieve well by the age of 11. The inspiring leadership of the Headteacher is evident in the overall good quality of teaching, strong team ethos, lively learning environment and high quality of care enjoyed by the pupils. Areas signalled for improvement reflect those already identified by the school. **The school gives good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good assessment and tracking enable pupils of all abilities to achieve well. Pupils taught in special groups achieve very well but some more able pupils could do better.
- Reading standards are good through the school as is number work and scientific investigation. Although improving, writing, speaking and listening, investigation in mathematics, and the use of ICT could still be better.
- Teaching is good overall and very well planned to offer an effective curriculum enriched extensively by additional activities for infant and junior pupils.
- Very good leadership by the headteacher and effective management have enabled good progress since the last inspection for the infant and junior pupils. Time has not yet allowed the same level of impact for the planned changes to the Foundation Stage.
- The school links very effectively with parents and the community.

Changes to the school's effectiveness since the last inspection have been good with some very good features. The Headteacher has been in post for two years during which time there have been many staff changes. Improvements to the school include: well-chosen staffing appointments; the quality and standard of education in the infants; the thorough implementation of national initiatives in literacy and numeracy; much better assessment, target setting and tracking practice; monitoring of performance; subject leadership and, the quality of self-evaluation and strategic action planning. The school is well placed to move from strength to strength.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Prior attainment
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	C	C	C	B
Mathematics	C	D	C	B
Science	D	D	B	A

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Some caution should be exercised when interpreting comparisons with all schools as there was a high proportion of pupils with complex special educational needs in the school's Year 6 and also, of pupils who did not start their education at Tattenhall until the junior years.*

Standards are at least average and pupils achieve well by the ages of seven and 11.

Standards are rising. Many pupils do better than expected nationally in reading and number work by the end of the infants and juniors. Most pupils write satisfactorily for their ages with a few who do much better. Standards in knowledge of scientific phenomena are average but above average in investigative work; pupils achieve well. In ICT, both age groups attain as expected and achieve soundly. Pupils with special educational needs, some of whom are taught in special groups achieve very well. The few with additional English language needs achieve well. Pupils attain and achieve soundly in religious education. There is good quality work in history and geography. Pupils sing well; many achieve above average in physical education including swimming. Much very high quality artwork is displayed and this, lights up the learning environment.

The youngest children achieve the goals expected by the end of the reception class. They do well in personal skills and most aspects of their knowledge of the world; children achieve soundly in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics and creative development. Some do especially well in reading and writing. The children are held back in improving their physical development skills because space, accommodation and resources are too limited.

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Pupils enjoy school and their attendance is good as is punctuality. **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching is mainly good although there is some unevenness. It is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage, consistently good in the infants with more variability in the juniors where it ranges from satisfactory to excellent with most being good. Teaching is very well supported by teaching assistants. Pupils have a good work ethic although the emotional needs of a few younger junior pupils slow the learning pace at times. The teaching of English in Year 6 is excellent. Assessment practice is very good and marking mainly helps pupils improve their work. Literacy and numeracy skills are used well but the use of speaking and listening skills is more varied. Many additional activities enrich the curriculum and these have a very positive impact on motivating pupils to learn. Art, music and PE are used well to broaden pupils' learning. Good examples of ICT usage are emerging but this best practice is not embedded equally well in all planning. Challenge for the higher attaining pupils is not consistent. Pastoral care, support and guidance all support learning very well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall the leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher is highly ambitious on the pupils' behalf. His vision is very good and is making a valuable difference to whole school practice. The deputy headteacher gives first rate management support. Key staff have made a good start on subject improvements. The management of science has been particularly effective as has special educational needs. The management of the Foundation Stage requires a sharper focus for improvement. Governors are knowledgeable, interested, highly committed and fulfil their roles well. The management of finance is very good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is at the heart of its community and the links established impact strongly on pupils' learning and personal development. Very good efforts are made to include pupils and parents in decision making. Many parents have a high regard for the school and its popularity is increasing. Pupils say they like school and feel safe and secure.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the planning, learning environment, resources and the secure outdoor area for the youngest pupils. Monitor and evaluate the impact of improvements on children's learning.
- Bring to the fore the school's plans to improve writing further especially handwriting and spelling.
- Ensure lesson planning gives suitable attention to investigative work in mathematics, the use of ICT and speaking and listening skills in all subjects.
- Ensure higher attaining pupils are consistently given challenging work.

and, to meet statutory requirements, there are no concerns.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards are improving year by year and are at least average with some pupils doing much better than expected by the ages of seven and 11. Achievement is good for the range of pupils aged 11. The youngest children achieve soundly overall towards the goals expected by the end of the reception class with some variation in success in the areas of learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reading standards are good through the school as is number work and scientific investigation. Although improving, writing, speaking and listening, investigation in mathematics, and the use of ICT could still be better.
- There is scope for the youngest pupils in the reception class to achieve more.
- Very good assessment and tracking of pupils' progress enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well. Pupils taught in special groups achieve very well but some more able pupils could do better.
- Seven year old pupils performed well above average in the national tests in 2003.
- High proportions of 11 year olds scored at the expected Level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science. However, less scored at the higher level In English.
- In art and design, geography, history, singing and physical education many pupils achieve well.

Commentary

1. **Standards are improving for seven and 11 year olds.** All seven year olds scored at the expected level in last year's national tests. The trend of results is above the national trend. In reading and writing the school was in the top five per cent nationally and well above average in mathematics. Boys outpace girls in all three tests, but both groups achieve better than elsewhere. The pupils' use and application in mathematics let them down slightly. This reflects accurately the inspection findings.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	18.8 (17.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	17.3 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.7 (17.9)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 18 pupils in the year group. The small cohort makes caution necessary. 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	27.0 (27.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.2 (26.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.4 (28.1)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Year 6 results were average in English and mathematics but above average in science when compared with national data. This represents good achievement because the cohort had a

high percentage of pupils with special educational needs including more statements of special educational need than is usually found. A higher than average proportion of pupils had entered the school during the junior classes and this has affected adversely the prior attainment grade. The results are above the national trend. All are an improvement on the previous year. The English results were higher than average in the proportion achieving the expected Level 4 but weaker in the number gaining the higher Level 5. Pupils scored well in reading but not writing which was the 'chink in the armour' and this again reflects the inspection findings. The results buck the national trend as girls did better than boys in mathematics and science but boys outshone girls in English.

3. **The children in the reception class achieve at a satisfactory rate overall.** They do well in personal skills and most aspects of their knowledge of the world although information and communication technology is underdeveloped. Children achieve soundly in speaking, reading, writing and mathematics and creative development. Some do especially well in reading and writing because of the direct, structured teaching. The children are held back in improving their physical development skills because space, accommodation and resources are too limited. Very regular, detailed notes about what the children have learned, can do and know are kept. The data is not used rigorously enough to plan each activity to match the required stepping stones towards the nationally expected Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage or to plan adult intervention in the children's tasks to move achievement forward at a faster pace. At present there are missed opportunities to promote mathematical development and foster language skills in all of the areas of learning.
4. **Achievement by the end of the infants is good for all ability groups and many attain at least average standards by the age of seven.** In Year 1, pupils make good strides in reading, writing and number so that many are doing better than expected for their age. This is a strong cohort and the teaching is moving achievement along productively. In Year 2, the cohort is not quite as strong as last year and while many are achieving better than expected in reading and number less do well in writing, although some show signs of being effective writers. Nevertheless, the varied and well produced learning activities mean pupils are achieving to their potential. They receive a good grounding in ICT knowledge and skills. Much of the work in religious education is discussion based in both year groups which means lost opportunity to capture what pupils have understood or recalled. The management of the infant classes is good and there is a harmony between the teaching team which aids continuity greatly.
5. **Achievement is good by the end of juniors with some slight variation** due to unevenness in teaching quality although never less than satisfactory. Standards are average in English, mathematics and science overall when pupils leave at 11. However, current work shows a good number read and calculate and use and numbers at higher levels than expected. A few write very well. Pupils make steady progress as they move out of the infants and work shows good productivity overall. However, in some lessons the need to cater for the emotional needs of a few slows the pace of learning. Management is taking action to redress the concerns and the whole school approach to behavioural support is helping. The recently appointed SENCO has not yet had time to identify and cater specifically for this minority. The Year 5 cohort is an able group and because they receive good quality and challenging teaching their needs are well catered for. Many of them absorb skills and ideas quickly; they are a lively yet productive class who work well together and overall achieve well. Year 6 pupils achieve well; regularly their success is escalated because of excellent teaching in English and high quality organisation to include all pupils.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2. By the end of Year 2, all of this group are achieving the basic national expectation in English, mathematics and science. This represents particularly good achievement for pupils who find learning more difficult than most. By the end of Year 6, achievement by pupils with special educational needs is very good. Although Years 3 to 6 have an above average number of pupils with statements of need, the proportion of pupils scoring below the

expected level in national testing was only just over a third of that represented nationally. This shows at least good achievement. The small numbers of pupils who require additional refresher English language support are making good progress and there is no obvious difference in their achievements to the rest of the pupils.

7. Achievement throughout Years 1 to 6 is very ably supported by highly skilled teaching assistant support.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. The pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good across the school; cultural development is good.

Main strengths are:

- The pupils learn in an inclusive environment free from harassment or discrimination.
 - The very strong pastoral, moral and social relationships throughout the school and emphasis on team work.
 - The close community ties.
 - The strong spiritual values evident in their school life.
8. The pupils benefit greatly from the role models provided by all staff, the team ethos. The high quality of the learning environment is let down by weaknesses in the accommodation and resources for the Foundation Stage. These are already planned for improvement by the school. Most pupils enjoy school because their efforts are encouraged, their good achievements celebrated and they feel safe and secure.
 9. In the reception class pupils are encouraged to be independent. They are growing in confidence and learning to be co-operative and sharing when they play and work together. These young children are encouraged by secure relationships. This is evident when they come together with the whole school for assembly. They almost burst to share their answers and keenly demonstrate what they know.
 10. In the infants and juniors pupils display very positive attitudes. There is a productive buzz of work which supports lesson progress and achievement. A good example was in Year 1. The strategies used, through song and using dice, dominoes and worksheets to help pupils recognise odd and even numbers provided a range of challenge for the different abilities which kept pupils engaged and engrossed. In a Year 6 lesson pupils enjoyed excellent rapport with the teacher when analysing a nonsense poem for sound, connotation, layers of meaning and investigating the appeal of humorous verse. They were stimulated by the work and exhibited high levels of attention and participation. The very good work ethic supported by excellent behaviour maximised their achievements. The level of attention by staff and pupils for those with learning needs is very high. This was replicated on many occasions when the relevant withdrawal of some pupils for additional support or special group work was woven sensitively into the activity.
 11. The pupils' very good conduct is consistent as they move about the school between lessons, during recreation and at lunch times because they know, understand and respond well to the high expectations for behaviour. Pupils are courteous and respectful with school staff and visitors and enjoy discussing their work and school life. Most recognise and support the need for rules and all have contributed to rules for classroom conduct. They report that bullying is not a feature of their school life, and know what to do should it occur. A number of junior pupils have responsibilities that support school activities and carry these out sensibly. Pupils make their views known through the use of a 'Listening Box'.

12. Attendance and punctuality are good and lessons start on time. Authorised absence is affected most often through sickness and pupils taking holiday during term time. The school makes good provision to promote regular attendance.

13. The ethos and promotion of Christian ideals provide a strong basis for pupils to develop very positive values founded in spiritual, moral, social and cultural traditions. They display maturing responses in their relationships and recognition of the importance of community. The school has close links with churches in the village and a member of the local clergy leads worship each week. In the quality of their artwork and in their celebration of music and singing, the pupils reveal a spiritual sense of reflection and immense enjoyment.
14. The pupils are considerate and recognise the effect on others of their words and actions. A few face emotional challenges; the school is active in support of individual's behaviour. Individual teachers work hard to cater for these needs whilst minimising the risk to learning. They are mainly successful in their efforts.
15. Junior pupils support one another through shared reading and assist infant pupils during lunch. The school helps pupils look beyond themselves to consider the plight of others through charity work. A very wide range of activities is offered to help pupils socialise and interact with each other. This ranges from cooperative activities in the classrooms, residential visits and for example, working with pupils from another school in geography lessons.
16. Pupils gain good insight into aspects of their own culture through studying features of Roman Britain, how life was in Tudor England and the effects of the Second World War on life in the 1940's. They are aware of the breadth of cultures around the world through studies of aboriginal art, Indian textiles, the traditions and tenets of the Hindu faith and through looking at how people in Africa live. Through the programme for religious study pupils learn soundly about faith and belief and how this can shape people's lives.
17. Pupils' views of the school were collected in all age groups. Some completed the questionnaire; some younger ones discussed their views with their teachers and inspectors talked to varying groups during lessons and break sessions. The responses were typically variable but very largely positive. Very few made any dissent. A minority of younger pupils feel older ones are not always well behaved but the inspection has no evidence to support this. Some older ones say they would not go to an adult if they had a concern. The school has already begun to analyse and discuss the responses with groups of pupils. A school council is in the process of being assembled to take pupils' ideas and concerns on board. The school plan identifies consultation with pupils about subject improvements.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.1	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed – White and Asian

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
151	0	0
2	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

The quality of education is good. In Years 1 to 6 pupils benefit from a rich and interesting curriculum. In the reception class (Foundation Stage) the curriculum is satisfactory but constrained by weak planning and limited space and resources.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It is satisfactory in the reception class, good in the infants and good in the juniors ranging from satisfactory to excellent. Assessment practice and its use are very good in Years 1 to 6 in English, mathematics, science and information and technology; it is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage. Teaching has improved considerably in the infants since the last inspection with a notable impact on achievement and provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whole school approaches to teaching, learning and assessment are embedded in Years 1 to 6. They are not so striking in the Foundation Stage.
- Procedures for assessment are very good in the core subjects and provide teachers with a wealth of information. This information is used very well to plan work for individual needs.
- All staff display high levels of interest and care in pupils' broad needs enabling them to learn in a safe, secure and trusting setting.
- Opportunities to use speaking, listening, ICT and mathematical skills and knowledge in a range of situations are sometimes lost.
- Tracking progress, setting targets and predicting outcomes are all very well served by assessment information.
- The learning environment is very well organised and displayed. It stimulates the pupils to be engaged and encourages independence in Years 1 to 6.
- Marking is mainly good and helps many pupils to see what they need to do to make better progress but there is some inconsistency.
- The high quality of assessment procedures in the core subjects is not yet replicated in the non-core subjects, although these are satisfactory overall.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 43 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2 (5%)	9 (21%)	19 (54%)	13 (30%)	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.

18. The leadership of the school has spent considerable time in establishing a whole school philosophy to ensure consistency of practice in teaching and learning. The governors have a teaching and learning committee which has approved a new teaching and learning policy. It lays down the foundations for common goals and practice. These are evident in most but not all teaching in the school. They are best reflected in Year 6 where the quality of teaching shines through, and also in Years 1, 2/3 and 5 where it is good overall with some very good features. The pupils in the reception class and the Year 3/4 class benefit from satisfactory teaching with some good features and the impact of the policy although in place is not so strong. The governor's committee asks pertinent questions about relevant issues. For example, it recently highlighted questions for the staff to consider about how well higher attaining pupils were achieving. An issue noted as inconsistent by the findings of this inspection.
19. Other initiatives for improvement have included a whole-school approach to behaviour management. The impact of this is evident in the delivery of lessons. Teaching is able to flow

virtually uninterrupted by any behaviour issues because pupils know, understand and accept the rules for classroom behaviour. Also, where learning blossoms best, lessons are very well planned to engage pupils, activities are well matched to their needs and teaching moves at a good pace so there is little reason for pupils not to join in and absorb their studies. The minor exception to this positive picture is that a small minority of pupils have recently emerged as having emotional needs. This, at times, cuts across the teaching and subsequently detracts from learning and achievement.

20. Some other key features which make the better teaching successful are:
 - the high quality support and interaction available to all pupils;
 - the bright and lively learning environment and the effort made by staff to resource lessons with visual aids;
 - the creative approach to supporting learning with additional visits, visitors and linking the subjects together so that there is greater depth to the pupils' studies;
 - the limited but valuable use of setting in English and mathematics once a week pitches learning even more accurately to pupils' needs.
21. On two occasions teaching in Year 6 was judged as excellent and this outstanding practice is exemplified further in the English section of this report. Where teaching is satisfactory the pupils learn new skills in a structured and systematic way but lessons lack the verve, pace and flow of the best practice.
22. Pupils acquire knowledge, understanding and skills well but as yet use of their speaking, listening, ICT and mathematical skills and knowledge is inconsistently developed with some very good examples highlighted in the subject sections but not yet embedded in all planning and delivery.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, and the teaching of pupils with moderate learning difficulties is very good. The school offers the pupils with a statement of special educational need a judicious balance of time between the withdrawal group situation and work in class. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) teaches literacy and numeracy to these pupils as a special group. In the sessions, the pupils learn very well because of her careful planning, step-by-step approach, very good questioning, and positive manner. Very good assessment leads to regular reinforcement and consolidation of learning. In normal lessons, this group, and other pupils on the special educational needs register, are taught well. Teachers expect highly of them, and teaching assistants regularly give them good quality support. Good liaison between teachers and support staff helps planning of the next learning steps. Teachers write the individual education plans for the pupils in their class, and so are familiar with the targets when planning lessons. However, there is some variation in the teachers' skill at turning these into well-matched tasks in all subjects. A strength is the way that teachers vary their groupings of pupils according to different subjects, so that limited skills in English and mathematics do not hold them back in other subjects.
24. The school has made significant progress, since the last inspection, in setting up effective procedures for assessment. There is now a very thorough programme of assessment which is used consistently in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. As a result of these procedures, teachers have a very clear picture of pupils' progress. They can plan work according to their needs and keep track of how well pupils succeed over time. At the same time, the outcomes of assessment are used regularly to set targets and to predict progress. This all contributes very positively to the steady raising of standards in the core subjects.
25. Assessment procedures are satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and teachers use the information well. The school would do well to adapt its procedures, seen in the rest of the school, to support children making better progress in the Foundation Stage. Teachers mainly mark pupils' work well. Most examples help pupils to understand what they have done wrong and how they can improve their work. This supports well the progress they make and helps

raise standards, allowing pupils to achieve well. Some comments are a little over generous and where this is so, there is little evidence in future work of how the pupils have moved on to improve, for example, their spellings.

26. The school is working steadily to create portfolios in all subjects to help teachers to check the standards of pupils' work and support their judgements of how well pupils are working in relation to the levels of the National Curriculum.

The curriculum

The **good** curricular opportunities offered to pupils enable them to achieve well in almost all subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs, including those with moderate learning difficulties, have full access to the broad curriculum and achieve very well.
- Over the last two years the school has built a strong curriculum based on action planning and enrichment in the infants and juniors. This has yet to be replicated for the youngest pupils because planning in the Foundation stage is a weakness.
- Planning is very good overall in the infants and juniors but planning to use speaking, listening, investigative mathematical skills and ICT capability is less strong.
- Good planning for cross-curricular links in a wide range of subjects makes topic work more relevant for pupils, although sometimes more able pupils are not always challenged to the full.
- Extracurricular provision and enrichment activities are very good with good access across the age ranges.
- There are some weaknesses in both accommodation and resources, which are a barrier to achievement and do not support raising standards especially in the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

27. Curricular opportunities offered to pupils from age 5 to 11 are good. They are satisfactory for the youngest pupils in the reception class. The curriculum enables infant and junior pupils to achieve well in nearly all subjects. It has been updated over the last two years and now provides a strong base for further innovations. Subjects are often linked together well for example, in a topic on the Second World War pupils visited the war museum, downloaded information from the internet, used literacy skills for various forms of writing, talked to members of the local community and drew pictures related to aspects of the Blitz. This all helped pupils' depth of understanding by using a wide range of primary and secondary evidence.
28. Weaknesses in the curriculum, of which the school is aware, are the use and application of pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge in a range of situations, together with limited cross-curricular use of speaking and listening skills. The use of ICT is emerging more strongly in some parts of the school than others. Planning for the early learning goals for reception class children is not good enough because it does not follow closely enough the guidance available.
29. Opportunities for enrichment in the curriculum are very good. The school provides a wide range of opportunities to take part in art and music. It also provides a very good range of extra curricular opportunities, with a large number of pupils taking the opportunity to join clubs after school. There is a wide range of visits and visitors to the school. Particularly successful are the residential visits for pupils in the junior classes. Not only do these visits support specific areas of the curriculum but give very good support to pupils' social development.
30. The school offers a very good, balanced curriculum to those pupils with special educational needs. Also, the facility for pupils with moderate learning difficulty has a very positive impact upon the curriculum of all pupils. This helps them to achieve well. There are occasions

when, in some lessons, not enough challenge is provided for more able pupils and this limits their chance to achieve their potential. All pupils in school benefit spiritually, morally and socially from their involvement with others whose needs vary from their own.

31. Teachers and support staff are well informed about and committed to special educational needs issues. Procedures for the writing and review of individual action plans are secure, and parents are kept well informed. Close teamwork between SENCO, class teachers, support teacher and teaching assistants mean that the pupils are supported well in working towards their targets during lessons. Identification procedures are not yet as robust as all other procedures, and require some review by the newly appointed SENCO. A very valuable feature of provision is the high attention paid to social and emotional links with others. Grouping arrangements are flexible, value talent and raise aspirations.
32. Teaching assistants provide very good support for specific pupils to whom they are attached, while at the same time providing equally good support in their general class work. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory overall with some weaknesses, identified elsewhere in this report. However, the outdoor accommodation for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. Its own play area is too small and there is a lack of large apparatus or large wheeled toys to support children's physical development. The size of the ICT suite means that only half a class can use it at a time, reducing pupils' access to computers in spite of teachers' best efforts. The semi-open plan environment is conducive to the team spirit which prevails through the school and encourages very positively the sharing of success.

Care, guidance and support

The school's provision for the care, welfare and guidance and support of pupils is very good. Provision for health and safety and the involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very strong pastoral relationships and care provided by the school.
- The pupils' access to support, guidance and advice is very effective.
- Good provision to seek out pupils' views.

Commentary

33. Very strong personal relationships and high quality pastoral care exemplify the provision and add significantly to the pupils' learning environment because pupils respond very well to encouragement. All staff provide a 'listening ear', are caring and supportive, and the pupils respond with respect and affection. Reception pupils are well cared for. They learn and play in a safe environment. They have trusting relationships with staff.
34. The school generally provides well for security and monitors for aspects of health and safety on a regular basis. Health and safety issues identified for imminent action by the school and the inspection are acknowledged for improvement within the school plan. Child protection procedures are well established and known and understood by staff.
35. Procedures for induction at reception are good and secondary transfer is very good. Informal arrangements exist for pupil mentors to support new arrivals. Advice and guidance to pupils is monitored and recorded and used to inform planning for individual needs. This is very effective.
36. A school council is on the cards and the school is concerned to ensure pupils' views and ideas are taken into account. The school currently provides opportunity for pupils to offer their views through 'Listening Boxes' placed about the school. They have been actively involved in contributing to classroom rules.

How well does the school work in partnership with parents, other schools and the community?

The school makes **very good provision** for its links with parents and the community. Its links with other schools are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with the local community are very strong.
- Arrangements for the transfer of pupils to other schools are very good.
- Information for parents on pupils' progress is very good.
- Procedures to ensure satisfaction by parents and deal with complaints are very good.

Commentary

37. Parents generally report strong satisfaction with provision made to involve them in the life of the school and the quality of its information. They are satisfied with access to staff and consider that the school has an open-door policy. Parents report that they receive information on term topics and advice on how to help the children learn. They are very satisfied with annual reports of pupils' progress and opportunities to discuss these with teachers. The induction arrangement for reception pupils is good. The school has good links with other schools and the arrangements for the transfer of pupils to other schools is very good.
38. Tattenhall Park is very much at the heart of its local community and succeeds in the integration of school into the community and community into the school. The arrangement is a reciprocal partnership and a resource that has significant impact on the pupils' personal development and learning and supports the school's funding. A significant example is the 'Village Room' within the school building. A number of activities take place here that draws the community into contact with the school. These include information technology training provided by the main receiving high school, the outreach group for the local community, the parish council meet here and a number of local groups including the playgroup also make use the facility. The school's swimming pool generates significant funding through its use as a community resource. The pupils enjoy a number of inter-sport activities with village teams. They also meet the community through visitors into school to talk about their work such as the veterinary surgeon. The pupils have sung for the local senior citizens' group and escorted them around their school. The school has liaised with a number of local businesses to display the pupils' artwork in public areas of their premises and Years 5 and 6 pupils have worked with a local business to produce a new school prospectus.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management in the school are good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and effective management. Governance is good. Key staff are making good inroads into subject developments and improving teaching and raising standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's ambitious vision for pupils' achievements is driving the school forward.
- The school knows itself very well and strategic action planning has identified very relevant priorities, including the Foundation Stage of learning, which nevertheless requires a sharper focus still.
- The analysis of assessment and performance data is first rate and guiding standards upwards.
- Performance management and staff training are helping staff to influence and improve provision and standards in their areas of responsibility. Science and special educational needs are particularly notable.
- The governors know the school well and help to shape its work; they offer good counsel and ask pertinent questions.

Commentary

39. The headteacher has provided very good leadership. He has a strong vision of what an effective learning environment should look like and his very well-founded philosophy is being embedded in whole-school practice. This is a key strength of the school. He has created a dedicated team of staff who work hard. The senior management team has the will and knowledge to create a quality and inclusive education. The deputy headteacher gives first class support and leads by example in all aspects of practice. There is a strong team approach which pervades all levels of management. This has been achieved through some turbulence in staffing and resulted in well-chosen appointments. Key staff lead by example and it is no coincidence that where teaching is best in a subject it is taught by the subject leader. Leadership of special educational needs so far is good, and set to become very good as the SENCO is longer in post. Her leadership shows up best at present in the very good role model to other staff through her personal teaching, and in the successful implementation of the annual reviews of pupils with statements of need, including transfer pupils.
40. Management is effective in many respects. Areas for improvement have been prioritised and the most important have been tackled robustly. None more so than assessment practice which although satisfactory previously, lacked the rigour to raise standards further. The headteacher leads and manages this aspect of the school and his capacity for analysis of data underpins the rise in standards. Management of the curriculum and pupils' behaviour have also been well addressed and contributed to the raising of standards. Time has not allowed the same level of attention to all areas of the school and while the infants and juniors are moving forward well the management of the Foundation Stage has some way to go to keep pace. A shift in management attention is now required and the school acknowledges the need to bring to the fore its plans for improving provision in this important key stage of learning. Management of special educational needs is very good. The SENCO is managing the fine balance between delivering the special group provision and her broader SENCO remit. Time has limited the SENCO from having a clear picture of the progress of pupils on the special needs register as they move through the school but this is high on her agenda for attention. Other subject leaders have been effective in auditing needs, action planning and evaluating success. The science coordinator has done a sterling job in her focus on investigative science resulting in pupils achieving well in this aspect. Performance management is well in place and has been sensitively but firmly embedded in the annual cycle, linked to school priorities and staff training.

Governance is good. The governors know the school well and many are actively involved in school life on a daily basis. The governor's individual skills have been effectively harnessed to support provision and evidenced in the quality of financial planning which is a key strength. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities well. They have a good insight into target setting and the analysis of performance data. They take their responsibilities seriously and will challenge and provoke debate to gain full understanding. The governors are mindful of considering 'what if' scenarios in their forward planning and are already considering the implications of the school's growing popularity and the planned reductions in funding for special educational needs support. The governors have a firm grasp of the principles of best value. The school has a good contingency budget which is to safeguard against planned funding reductions, protect staffing levels and to improve accommodation and the external environment. The school gives good value for money because it adds well to pupils' quality of education and achievements.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	473,827.16	Balance from previous year	71, 497.91
Total expenditure	482,619.07	Balance carried forward to the next	62,706.00
Expenditure per pupil	3,328.41		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH MODERATE LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

Provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulty is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve very well because of very good teaching in the special group and very good support during normal lessons.
 - The way in which the school includes and supports its pupils with a statement of need enriches the schooling experience of all its pupils.
 - The SENCO and senior staff manage the provision very well.
 - There is a very effective social - educational balance between provision in a special group and lessons in normal classes.
 - The SENCO creates an effective team in which the teaching assistants, support teacher and class teachers all play a valuable part.
 - Monitoring and evaluation to determine overall effectiveness and value for money is not as sharp as it could be.
42. Teaching of the special group of Year 5 and 6 pupils is very good. The pupils are working at well below the expected levels for their age, but they achieve very well in reaching their targets. The planning refers both to the individual education plans and to the national strategies for both subjects, so that it boosts success in normal classes. For instance, over a period of three days, they learned how to extract information from a set of data, collate it onto a tally chart and then create a graph to show the number of different pets owned by the class. This level of success is because the teacher breaks down the learning into small, achievable steps, explains things clearly, and uses simple resources well. She also asks questions to check for understanding and reinforces the learning in many different ways. There are no distractions, no wasted time, but lots of repetition and a very good relationship between teacher and taught. The SENCO creates this purposeful environment in a room that is not ideal for the task. It is designed as an audio-visual room, and used for this purpose at other times. There is no natural light; and constrains what can be permanently set up or displayed. The way the school includes the pupils with statements in all its work contributes strongly to its overall effectiveness. Social and educational links between pupils are very well promoted, and pupils in the special group make valued contributions to the school's successes in swimming and athletics, and to the social and moral development of all its pupils. They help the school to put its policies into practice.
43. The headteacher, SENCO and management team manage the provision of the facility very well. Procedures, systems and outside links, including those with parents, are efficiently organised, and staff are very appropriately deployed. Well thought-out timetabling arrangements mean that the SENCO and support teacher can maximise their influence. When they work alongside the class teachers in Years 5 and 6, the pupils with statements learn well, and all pupils benefit from their expertise and variation in teaching style. Well-matched work results in very good progress for the pupils with statements, and often for other pupils within these lessons.
44. The school's very good assessment systems ensure that the headteacher and class teachers monitor pupils' achievement well. However, as yet, the SENCO has not taken on this formal responsibility for the special group, or for formally monitoring teaching in class and reporting upon effectiveness.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning requires improvement so that all of the children's tasks result in good progress towards the expected Early Learning Goals.
- Most children are on target to achieve the expected Early Learning Goals at the end of the reception class but there are missed opportunities in communication, language, literacy and mathematics to make achievement even better.
- Children achieve well in personal, social and emotional development and in most aspects of their knowledge of the world because of good teaching in these areas although teaching of ICT skills is not well developed.
- Provision for physical development is unsatisfactory because the internal accommodation, resources, and lack of a properly equipped outdoor area for play and investigation, create barriers to learning and achievement.
- Good links with parents mean that the children, and their families, feel secure and happy about coming to school and induction arrangements are good.

Commentary

45. The children achieve at a **satisfactory** rate overall, because of satisfactory, steady, caring teaching. Individual lessons are planned to catch interest, and carefully managed so that the children get on with their tasks busily. Planning across a half-term or a week is insufficiently detailed to make the teaching by all adults focussed and to demonstrate that the curriculum is properly balanced. Present plans do not show clearly enough how each activity matches the required stepping stones towards the nationally expected Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage. The teacher and teaching assistant make very regular, detailed notes about what the children have learned and can do, and know the needs of the children well. This data now needs to be more efficiently collated into 'at-a-glance' records that the teacher and assistant could use more readily to plan for adult intervention in all of the children's tasks. At present there are missed opportunities to promote mathematical development and language skills.
46. The rather cramped and faded learning environment holds back the children's achievement in several ways.
- The outside play area is secure, but barren; it contains no large apparatus for climbing or swinging; it has no soft landing surface; and the school has almost no push-pull or wheeled toys to develop gross motor skills.
 - There is not enough space for large scale art or design work or construction activity.
 - Most role play areas, with the exception of the 'witches' corner' are too small to make an imaginative impact.
 - The classroom is not an exciting shop-window for the children's achievements that would entice them on to further effort.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

47. The children reach a **good** level of **personal, social and development** by the end of the reception class. This is because of good teaching in this area. The teacher and teaching assistant model good relationships and teach the children to consider the feelings of others, and to develop a sense of community. For example, the teacher's sensitive approach to differences in family structures within the class allowed each child to feel equally valued and

showed the class that differences are a positive feature of living in contemporary society. The children are alert and confident, full of ideas and comment, but can sit quietly when required, and behaviour is consistently good, and can be very good. Arrangements for transfer into school are good, and children settle happily as a result.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

48. Teaching is satisfactory with some good features and learning reflects this. The children achieve well in the reading component of **communication, language and literacy**, and most are on course to meet the expected goals in reading, writing and oral communication. A good proportion of children will go beyond this level, as they already read common words in a range of contexts, and some can read simple sentences independently. This is because the teacher teaches the link between letters and sounds thoroughly, relating it to spelling and to reading. The children are broadly on course to achieve the expected goals in writing, and again, a substantial minority will exceed these. Work in writing books shows that by this mid point in the year, higher attaining pupils can write clearly defined, simple sentences about their walk in the park, without adult help. The teacher shows the children how to form their letters correctly, and when she is able to focus upon guiding the writing of a small group, the children learn well. During the inspection, they responded well to the challenge of composing sentences on small whiteboards. At other times, worksheets limit their efforts. The classroom contains a number of very suitable incidental opportunities for writing, such as patient notes in the veterinary surgery, or magic spells in the witches' den. However, there is too little skilled adult intervention in these activities, so that the children's ideas and vocabulary are not always built upon. The same is true of speaking and listening. Some children start school with well-developed oracy skills, and flourish in the supportive atmosphere of whole class discussion and conversation. Others would benefit from more focussed adult involvement in their small group tasks.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

49. Children achieve to an average level in **mathematics**. Teaching is satisfactory and learning is sound but has scope for improvement. There is not enough intervention with the children when they are exploring mathematical ideas independently to improve their vocabulary, question their understanding and reinforce key teaching points. Children acquire counting, calculation skills and underlying understanding soundly. They have some but often too limited chances to investigate with numbers, patterns and shapes. The children can match and name two-dimensional shapes, but have more difficulty with three-dimensional shapes. They cooperate well together and share equipment in a friendly way.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good overall** with some weakness in information and communication technology.

50. Many children enter school with a keen interest in the world around them, and achieve well in several elements in **knowledge of the world**. Here, the teaching is good because it is more often creative and engaging, and the children respond well to the good quality, first-hand experiences and they learn well about the and from the world around them. For example, a visit by a vet, visits to 'Techniquest', to the local church, and the park, for instance, stimulate learning back in the classroom, and promote a good grasp of time and place. The teaching of information and communication technology is weak and whilst the children have opportunities the teaching lacks the confidence to move them forward. There is also less opportunity for

the children to design and build, or construct with a wide range of objects or use a variety of tools. This is linked to issues of space and the limitations of the secure outside area. This contains no natural habitats, so that direct experience of the natural world is not as continuous as the teacher would like, although walks in the park around school enrich this area of learning well.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **broadly satisfactory**.

51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Most children are on target to attain the goals expected for children at the end of the reception class. They achieve soundly overall. Colour mixing and multi-media work on a small scale is of good quality but there is little work in three dimensions. The appealing 'witches' den' has had a good impact upon the children imaginative development, and other role play areas would benefit from this approach, and from more focussed planning for linguistic and mathematical, as well as creative development. The confined space does not support all aspects of creative development well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **unsatisfactory overall**.

52. Children's physical development is satisfactory overall in spite of limitations of accommodation and resources. Teaching is satisfactory but provision for outdoor play, to use push and pull toys and opportunities for children to climb, run, crawl through, under and over large objects is not good enough. Children's fine motor skills develop satisfactorily, and some children have good hand-eye coordination. All hold pencils and brushes correctly, because the teacher shows them how to do this, and reinforces learning regularly. In a drama session, they showed some imagination in creating movements in the character of 'Farmer Duck'. However, because they cannot continually access a properly equipped outdoor area, they cannot practise, reinforce or explore the boundaries of their physical skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well by the ages of seven and 11.
- High proportions of pupils attain at the expected levels for seven and 11 year olds in the national tests.
- Standards in reading are above average across the school. Speaking and listening skills are inconsistently focused upon. Writing although improving has not yet reached its peak and the test results bear this out. Handwriting and spelling stand out as requiring a more consistent emphasis.
- Assessment is very good as is subject planning.
- Subject leadership is very good and evidenced in the quality of action planning and robust evaluation of success.
- The range of purposes for pupils to write is broad and literacy skills are used well across the curriculum.

Commentary

53. Standards in English are on the up. Many pupils age seven and 11 achieve at least average standards and some do better. The reasons are that the rigorous implementation of the literacy strategy has brought consistency and direct skills teaching to the fore. The quality of analysis of performance data is excellent and this drives target setting and planning very accurately. Teaching has improved, especially in the infants. The incisive leadership by the subject leader has analysed what needs to be done and taken effective action towards achieving it. Pupils are given ample opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Guided reading has been extracted from the literacy hour and given greater focus which impacts well on pupils' comprehension skills.
54. There has been a trend of improvement over the last three years. This trend reached a high for pupils at the end of the infant stage in the 2003 tests when all attained at the expected level in reading and writing. These pupils, including those few who attained at the lower end of the spectrum, are making good progress and achieving well in Year 3. Daily work shows seven year old pupils attain as expected in speaking, listening, and writing with a significant minority who are currently working at a higher than expected level. Many attain above average standards in reading.
55. This picture is replicated for the oldest pupils in the school. Most attain as expected nationally and achieve well. In reading many attain better than expected. 11 year olds also achieve well in speaking and listening. Some are achieving very well because of the high calibre of teaching they receive. This is especially encouraging given that over 30 per cent of pupils, as was the case last year, have special educational needs. Pupils throughout the school with special educational needs including those taught in special groups mainly achieve very well because of the high quality teaching support. A few pupils have additional English language needs and they receive specific effective support each week. Their recorded work shows good advances in the use of Standard English and structure.
56. Teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to excellent in Year 6. Pupils learn well. The best features of teaching are the very good whole school approach to assessment which guides planning, the drive for high quality output and depth of understanding, the predominantly very effective behaviour management and stimulating well-matched activities which rarely leave pupils with any time to spare. This is not always true for the higher pupils who could at times be given more demanding tasks. For example, when 8 year old pupils were required to edit text using a computer and replace simple adjectives with more complex and interesting descriptors the more able were not over tasked and freely admitted they could do more.
57. Pupils have a suitable range of opportunities to talk about their work, perform to an audience and listen to others. The quality of these experiences varies through the school but is nowhere better exemplified than in Year 6 where the **outstanding**, seamless teaching sews learning into every chance to move pupils' skills forward. In an excellent lesson on parody, pupils were challenged to rewrite a known poem in the form of a parody. Higher attaining pupils were encouraged to practice choral speaking of their combined efforts. They were self-critical when reading their work aloud and sought comment to help them improve. All abilities were equally encouraged; even the most reticent of speakers was prompted to have a go and made the whole class laugh and applaud with his rendition of 'Twinkle, twinkle little fly' which scanned beautifully and was masterful in its simplicity. Prior to reading/ reciting their efforts the teacher set listening targets to ask pupils to check whether the objective was met, what made it successful and how it could be improved. The goal must be for all practice to reach this level.
58. Pupils read and understand well. New reading resources have increased enthusiasm for reading. Many pupils are well able to break down words unknown to them and fluency and expression are mainly good. The pupils benefit from having the village library on site. The

separation of the guided reading session from the literacy hour has provided an added focus for reading and pupils were regularly seen to have their heads buried in a book if not working directly with the teacher. Very effective questioning by teachers and teaching assistants aids pupils' understanding of new words and the story meaning. Writing is improving with no significant gender issues. Boys say they enjoy writing about real things. This matches well with the emphasis on using writing through the other subjects. Pupils have writing targets and they know what they mean. There are a few key weaknesses which if addressed could improve standards notably. Pupils have not been systematically taught to write using a joined script and therefore have to work much harder with spelling and letter strings. On occasion, writing is hard to read back even by the writer. Writing skills of note taking, fluency and speed writing are not encouraged enough in the other subjects. There is not enough intervention by the teacher in pupils' independent writing to show them how to improve or encourage the use of spelling aids and dictionaries to correct their efforts. Finally, lack of opportunity to read completed pieces aloud restricts pupils' abilities to spot weaknesses in grammar and structure and set pointers for improving their work.

59. Subject leadership is very good and the action plan is comprehensive and regularly evaluated to measure success. All areas of weakness have been identified by the school. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. Pupils have good opportunities to use their reading and writing skills. They research in the other subjects and use their writing regularly to communicate their findings. A recent week long focus on English in Art produced some high quality writing to describe art work stimulated by visiting artists. Year 3 / 4 also produced some very good descriptive writing linked to artwork about St George and the Dragon. The use of ICT is increasing and notably good in Years 2/3.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Current standards in number are above average for seven and 11 year olds.
- Pupils achieve well and this is an improvement on the last inspection.
- A recent focus on the use of investigative mathematics shows the seeds of good impact on learning but this is not consistent or yet well embedded throughout the school.
- In pupils' books, there is evidence of more able pupils not always being set challenging tasks.
- The use of ICT is improving but could still be better.

Commentary

61. Standards in both Year 2 and Year 6 are average but with a significant minority reaching standards higher than this. Standards in number are above average. In the 2003 national tests, all pupils in Year 2 scored at the nationally expected level as did over 80 per cent of pupils in Year 6. The percentage of pupils scoring better than this was very slightly below average. Pupils with special educational needs received good and often very good support and very many obtained the national level for their age, showing at least good achievement. More able pupils, on the other hand, are not always set sufficiently challenging work in their lessons and so at times do not achieve their potential. However, overall pupils achieve well.
62. Teaching overall is good, with 3 lessons out of the 8 seen showing very good teaching. This impacts positively on learning and is the main reason for many pupils achieving well in mathematics. Lesson plans are clear and teachers teach mathematical skills with competence and in a systematic way. As a result learning is good. Teachers have good

classroom management skills and as a result pupils spend maximum time on task. The strong focus placed on numeracy skills is seen throughout the school and in many classes there are examples in displays of how computations can be made.

63. Teaching assistants are particularly well deployed and well qualified. They work closely with pupils with special educational needs, including those with moderate learning difficulties. This results in these pupils achieving well and sometimes very well.
64. A minor weakness in the teaching of mathematics, which the school has noted, is that of teaching and providing pupils with opportunities to use their mathematical skills in open-ended problem solving and investigations. The school is supporting teachers with their efforts to provide more of this type of activity in order to help pupils to achieve their full potential.
65. The subject leader oversees the subject competently and agrees that currently the use of investigative mathematics and information and communication technology is not well developed. She has not recently had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classes, although monitors plans and checks the standards of work in a range of classes. Action planning is comprehensive and reflects well the school's priorities. Improvements since the last inspection have been good with much greater consistency to provision across the school.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. Pupils make sound use of their mathematics skills across the curriculum. For example, they have access to time lines in relation to their work in history. In Years 3 and 4 pupils use their data handling skills to chart temperature falls in science work. When carrying out a traffic survey good use is made of mathematical knowledge in Year 6 work. Less effective are the links with ICT of which the school is aware.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in science have been rising steadily since 2000 and pupils performed strongly in the 2003 national tests for seven and 11 year olds. Pupils achieve well.
- Investigative work in science is better than in most schools, although it can still improve.
- The subject leader has led the improvements in science very well.
- Assessment systems are good, and support progression in the skills of scientific enquiry.
- There is consistently good teaching by teams of teachers and assistants.
- Mixed ability grouping arrangements heighten inclusion, but sometimes limit the level of challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- ICT is under-used in science.

Commentary

67. All pupils achieve well in science. In the 2003 tests performance was above the national average in Year 6. More pupils than in most other schools achieved the higher Level 5. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 means that standards are broadly average across the class, although the work in books is better than in most other schools.. By the end of Year 2, almost all will reach the expected level, and many will exceed it this year so standards are generally above average for seven year olds. The good improvements to science teaching have not yet filtered through to impact on standards for 11 year old pupils although pupils are achieving well by the ages of seven and 11.

68. A particular strength across the school is the pupils' ability to plan and carry out a scientific investigation. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 worked well together, listened to each other, and devised various ways of filtering out clean from dirty water, adapting their techniques as they experimented. They were less good at considering how to take accurate measurements, but observation and planning skills had clearly progressed from Year 3 to Year 6. Work in their science books shows that they have a good grasp of fair testing, as they explain that the bread samples for an investigation into bacteria had to be purchased 'on the same day, be of the same type and of the same size'. The constituent, individual enquiry skills need more work, but are better than generally found. Moreover, in each class, pupils make good efforts to explain for themselves their scientific investigation and factual knowledge. This means that they think about what they have learned and deepen their understanding. For example, a lower attaining pupil in Year 2 wrote a clear description of what she did to make a bulb light up, using known words and phonetic spelling, and showed good understanding of a simple circuit as a result. Pupils appreciate and use the correct terminology, so that every pupil refers to 'air resistance' in explanation about falling paper. They consistently make good attempts to link practical investigation to scientific knowledge, writing for instance that 'the micro-organisms multiplied in the warm milk'.
69. These improvements are the outcome of planning to raise standards, effective teaching and good leadership by the subject leader. Teachers incorporate practical science into every unit of the school's scheme and most lessons this enables pupils to learn well with good understanding. The new assessment grids are helping them to be alert to the range of skills to be taught, although each specific skill would benefit from more focused attention in addition to the investigative context. Whenever possible, science lessons are well supported by teaching assistants or support teachers, so that a questioning approach is possible. However, higher attaining pupils would benefit from sharper intervention and challenge as a group. Literacy skills are used well. Teachers show the children how to write up investigations using tables, charts and diagrams, and expect them to find their own words to express what they have learned. ICT is not well used as yet, however, either for fact finding or data collection and processing.
70. The subject leader has worked hard to bring about these improvements. Her selected starting points, of analysing test outcomes to determine strengths and weaknesses, were entirely appropriate. She has determinedly implemented the resulting action plan, and raised the profile of science within the school. The subject is poised to improve even further as the assessment data accumulates, and tracking enables a sharper grouping of pupils at times to raise the level of challenge for all abilities. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Two lessons recorded as ICT were seen along with others in English where ICT was used and some examples of use in other subjects as well as recorded evidence and discussions with pupils enable the judgements to be made.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- The addition of a computer suite has improved access for pupils.
- Teaching is good and helps pupils achieve well.
- Elements of control technology are not yet being taught, although there are plans to do so this year.
- The school has made some useful progress in linking ICT with other subjects, although there is still more work to do in this area.

Commentary

71. Standards of work seen in ICT are average, as they were in the last inspection. As the world of technology has moved forward quickly over the recent past, this should be seen as the school making good progress, in keeping pace with the changes. Some elements of the work seen were slightly above the expected level. For example, some Year 2 pupils were seen using computers in a literacy lesson, where they were editing their work, making improvements to it and saving it on disk. They used icons, showed good mouse control, were able to highlight and move text. Pupils are being helped to achieve well because there is more direct teaching of ICT skills, resources have improved and there are good examples of ICT being used to support English but when planning the other subjects ICT needs to take a higher emphasis.
72. Of the two lessons seen, one was good and one was satisfactory. However, the scrutiny of previously completed work and incidental work seen in classrooms, mainly in literacy lessons, indicates that teaching overall to be good. Teachers have all had training and are confident when using computers, as are their teaching assistants. In a Year 5 lesson, the teacher gave a clear demonstration of how to navigate a data base. This enabled pupils to make a prompt start to their work and achieve well.
73. Since the last inspection, the addition of a computer suite has helped the organisation and management of the subject in the school. Currently classes have generally three opportunities to use the suite. As there are only enough computers for half the class to use them at any one time, then access for pupils is still only for half of the lesson time. This would be acceptable if there was a broad range of "stand alone" computers in classrooms, but this is not the case. The school is aware of the problem and is looking at ways of overcoming this important deficit. Improvements to standards have been satisfactory since the last inspection but resources and teaching confidence and competence are significantly improved.
74. The teaching of control technology is the weakest element of teaching and learning in the subject. Although the school now has the software and hardware necessary to complete the work, there is still an element of training to complete before this can be put into effect. The enthusiastic and competent subject leader is confident that this will take place later in the year, so that this element of the work will be as strong as the others. Leadership and management in the subject have been good. Assessment procedures are good and well used. The subject action plan hits the right notes for improvement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

75. The school has made a useful start at using ICT to support other subjects and also to act as a way of giving pupils more opportunities to use their ICT skills. Links with literacy teaching are strongest. Year 3 pupils, using a paint program, were trying to emulate the work of Seurat, by painting pictures on screen with points of colour. Year 5 pupils were using data handling skills when operating a computer data base about birds. They also used a data base for their traffic survey. Although there are other examples of links being formed, many opportunities are missed, as medium term plans do not yet insist on this type of planning to be shown.

HUMANITIES SUBJECTS

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject leader's own practice is a good model for staff.
- Training is planned and imminent to improve subject awareness and teaching skills.
- The action plan is relevant and on target.
- Religion is studied alongside other topics to enhance its meaning.
- Resources although adequate do not support learning fully.
- There is limited recorded work.

Commentary

76. Two lessons were observed in religious education. In addition, discussions with pupils, a sample of their recorded work and displayed work was analysed. This evidence gives a strong enough base to say that standards are average in relation to what is expected for seven and 11 year old pupils. Pupils achieve satisfactorily with better productivity and application in the upper juniors. The school follows and substantially meets the requirements of the Cheshire locally agreed syllabus. Pupils gain knowledge steadily about the Christian faith and the other main world religions. Pupils learn about belief and faith and how it shapes people's lives but they do rather less well at consistently learning from their studies. The exception is when in the juniors pupils study religion and its impact alongside other subjects. For example, when studying World War II pupils learned about Judaism. Discussions with pupils reveal they had an insight into the important links.
77. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. No lessons and little recorded work were available in the infants. Planning shows these young pupils follow the required programmes of work. In the two lessons seen, both in the juniors, the teaching was satisfactory in one lesson because some pupils were not effectively engaged in contributing. It was very good in the other because all pupils were eager to answer the stimulating questions and debate profound questions about the Christian faith regardless of their ability. Scrutiny of past work shows that teaching in Years 5 and 6 has posed challenging questions for pupils to consider. These questions have provoked pupils to consider 'Who is God?', 'What does he look like?' and 'What do we think of when we hear His name?' By the age of 11 pupils have grasped a firm knowledge of Judaism and produced some excellent descriptions of the Sabbath, learned key facts about the Jewish faith and how this impacts on the daily life of Jews. Pupils have used their language and literacy skills well to describe the Childhood of Krishna when studying the Hindu faith.
78. The subject leadership is good. She is knowledgeable and has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve. Staff training is planned for imminently with a key focus being to improve assessment practice. The subject leader has a good model for this, supported by work done within the local authority. She sees that the use of this will help teachers aim their teaching more accurately at both subject knowledge and understanding and identify where gaps lie in pupils' achievements. Resources are adequate and the school recognises the need to extend them. Improvements are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

Provision in geography is **good**. Provision in history is **good**. The subjects are often taught in a unified way.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in geographical and historical knowledge and subject skills.
- The emphasis on enquiry, using the environment, members of the community and local study trips.
- Teaching is good in both subjects as is the quality and depth of displayed work.
- The range of work covered and the use of art, literacy, mathematical and ICT skills to research and record what pupils.
- The adaptation of work to meet the needs of special groups of pupils.
- Assessment procedures, although in place, are not yet systematically used.

Commentary

79. Only a small number of lessons were seen but scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and discussions about what they know enables the judgement to be made that pupils achieve well and attain slightly better than expected in their knowledge and subject skills of geography and history by the ages of seven and 11. The pupils' attainment is better than usually found because the depth of the work and the links with other subjects heighten pupils' understanding more than usual.
80. By the age of seven, pupils have studied castles, they know the names of key people who live in them and they know a good number of ways to find out about the past. They have studied features of their school and how to find their way around, the name of the countries of the United Kingdom; they are challenged by the teacher's questions to feel the size and shape of the continents on a textured globe. Very good links are made with literacy as young pupils keep a diary of the 'Dan the Dog's' adventures as he holidays with pupils in the class. By the age of seven, pupils have a good knowledge of the impact of the Romans coming to Britain. They use their mathematical skills well to place events in order on a complex timeline using BC and AD; many make very plausible attempts at calculating by counting back and forward. Displays in the Year 2/3 class capitalise on engaging pupils in research questions and a 'Time Tray' encourages them to identify objects from the past and guess their age.
81. By age 11, pupils' studies have encapsulated a broad range of knowledge and skills. They have studied all of the expected eras and periods of history. Finding out about life then and now, through research, pupils have asked their grandparents and community members about recollections of the war and how it affected them. They have been challenged to step outside of just acquiring knowledge to ask wider questions about 'Why did the war take place?' In a current local study involving another school, pupils in Year 5 increase their understanding of the similarities and differences between their rural homes and other pupils of the same age who live on a housing estate near Chester. The quality of this work and the contribution it makes to pupils' mapping skills, knowledge of why people live where they do and contrasting environments is very good. Pupils showed a good early grasp of understanding and calculating scale on maps of the local area. Valuable use was made of mathematical skills to collect data on traffic surveys and of ICT to present that data in a range of ways.
82. The teaching of history and geography is interlinked and is good overall with some very good use of the local environment. Pupils learn well and at times very well because of the interesting way topics are delivered and the additional activities which enhance their understanding. Subject skills are effectively taught. Much of the work draws together the common threads of the subjects to make learning meaningful and relevant for pupils. Teachers engage pupils very well to find out about the past and how it has influenced the present and to study the world around them. The way learning is presented has aroused pupils' curiosity and interest to find out more on their own. The planned activities regularly give opportunity to gain first hand evidence through local study, visits to historical sites, including nearby Chester and looking at primary and secondary evidence. Pupils working in special groups are very sensitively included and given work appropriate to their needs without

any hint of discrimination. There are some excellent examples of pupils using artwork to record their perceptions of people who lived in Tudor times.

83. The leadership and management are satisfactory. The subjects are designated for review next year and detailed within the school plan. As yet assessments for both subjects are not systematic and mainly based on outcomes of pupils' work and discussions with them.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

ART and DESIGN

Provision is not judged because no teaching was seen. However, there is much to be said about the subject because of the range of work displayed and discussions with pupils reveal how they have produced the work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Finished work shows that skills and techniques are well taught and this gives classroom displays a high degree of artistic cohesion.
- Pupils' work across the school combines various media in an increasingly sophisticated way.
- Work in the style of great artists such as Henry Moore and Antonio Gaudi show good brush technique as well as appreciation of the artists' distinctive style.
- Teachers are very skilled at displaying completed art work to its maximum effect, lifting and brightening the learning environment as well as celebrating achievement. A trademark of the school is the way individual pieces are assembled into a unified single piece of display that creates maximum dramatic impact.

Commentary

84. No lessons were observed in **art and design**, but it is evident from work displayed around the school that pupils achieve well. The school has a tradition of achieving good standards in the subject and has sustained this since the last inspection and through the changes in head teacher and key staff. Standards achieved by both seven and 11 year olds are above those reached nationally. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on teaching, although work on display and discussion with staff suggests that teaching is good. The school is regarded locally as a good example of high standards in art and its display, and inspection evidence finds this to be justified.
85. In comparison, some aspects of the subject are less strong. Drawing from direct observation is good in the Foundation Stage, but harder to judge as the pupils become older. This is partly because the school does not yet use sketch books, although their introduction is planned. There is less three-dimensional work than would be expected. This is partially because teachers are less confident in this area, although Shakespearean masks of *Midsummer's Night's Dream* are of very good quality. The pupils' abilities to critically analyse and evaluate their own work are also limited as yet.
86. Although no judgement is made on teaching, there is evidence of good features. Teachers take a bold approach, and teachers who are new to the school quickly gain in confidence as they see what is possible. Art makes a strong contribution to other subjects, and to multi-cultural understanding. A number of local artists visit the school and enrich the curriculum. Resources are good. The subject leader believes that a strength lies in the consistency of teaching.
87. The subject leader is new to the school and to the post. She has good personal subject knowledge, and is very enthusiastic and a proactive role model to other staff. During her first term in post and in the school, she cheerfully met the challenge of preparing the 'Artmark Gold' bid, which helped her to audit the health of the subject. The subject action plan reflects

the weaker aspects exactly, and presents a realistic picture of intent, although it needs more specificity about time scales, resources and assessment criteria.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. It is not possible to make a judgement about provision in **design and technology** because no lessons were observed. This means that the quality of teaching and the achievement in progression in skill development could not be judged. The subject is presently a focus for development during 2004. At present, the curriculum is planned appropriately, according to national guidelines, but with some attention to local differences and needs. Tools, books and resources that pupils require are satisfactory, but the subject leader wishes to up-date the stock of teaching resources so that planning can relate to cross-curricular themes whilst still ensuring progression within the scheme.
89. The new subject leader has plans to make many improvements and has made good start with the audit of resources. Assessment is not yet fully developed. The subject action plan is highly inspirational, but also very detailed, with exact targets, dates for completion and evaluation criteria. It is firmly in line with up-to-date initiatives to achieve 'excellence through enjoyment' and if carried through effectively, should significantly raise the standard of pupils' design and construction skills, and enrich the whole curriculum.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Specialist teaching is good and helps pupils achieve well in lessons.
- There is effective use of peripatetic music teaching to support improving skills and knowledge of some pupils.
- Pupils have good opportunities to perform.
- The subject is well led, ensuring the full curriculum is delivered to all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
- There is not enough evidence of recorded music from a range of cultures being used in the school.

Commentary

90. At the last inspection, although standards were noted as being average in line with national expectations, singing was said to be weak. Singing is now above average in the infant classes and improving in the rest of the school but still satisfactory by age of 11 because the improvements have not yet had time to impact. Other aspects of the music curriculum show average standards, with pupils often achieving well.
91. Good teaching throughout the school is an important reason for pupils achieving well. All four lessons seen were either good or very good. The subject leader teaches all classes for singing and in a separate lesson for each class, other aspects of music as laid down in the National Curriculum. As a result of her very good subject knowledge she is able to challenge all classes at the appropriate level and help the majority of pupils to achieve well. Planning is very good and the leader makes sure that each aspect of music is delivered.
92. Three peripatetic music teachers provide individual teaching for piano, clarinet and violin. The 13 pupils, who receive this tuition, benefit in many ways, especially in the advancement of their knowledge and understanding of music. This was seen being put to good effect in a class lesson in Year 6, in which groups of pupils rehearsed aspects of "Stars hide your face" from Macbeth.

93. Performance is a growing and important aspect of the school's music work. Pupils have sung the Christmas story in Chester Cathedral, provided choral work for Easter and Harvest festivals and presented a summer celebration of work to parents.
94. A weakness in music is that the school does not have sufficient breadth of recorded music in order to provide its pupils with a range of multi-cultural experiences. It currently does this in art but does not yet fully support pupils' multi-cultural development through music, in spite of some individual visitors to the school. The subject leader leads the subject well by example of her own teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **mainly good**, although provision in **swimming is good**.

Main strengths and weakness

- The school makes good use of its own swimming pool and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good and this supports good learning.
- The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to take part in extracurricular and competitive sport.
- Not enough use is made of the school's considerable outside grass area for such activities as orienteering.

Commentary

95. Standards, which were average at the last inspection, remain the same for pupils aged seven and 11. Pupils achieve well. However, dance, a strength at the last inspection, is now average, following the departure of a key teacher. Swimming still remains a strong element of the PE curriculum. The school has its own indoor pool and makes very good use of it. As a result, by the time pupils leave the school virtually all pupils are able to swim.
96. In the three lessons seen, teaching was good and pupils learned well. In a games lesson and two gymnastics lessons, teachers were well prepared and understood the skills they were teaching. They made the lessons interesting, which motivated pupils to learn. Lessons went at a brisk pace and pupils were active the whole time. As a result, progress in the lessons was good and pupils achieved well and showed very good attitudes to the work.
97. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to take part in extra curricular activities. Football, athletics, rounders, netball and tag rugby are all offered as club activities and are well attended by pupils, who gain or improve their skills in club time.
98. At the same time the school provides pupils with very good opportunities to take part in competitive sport with other schools. Almost all of the above club activities are also listed as opportunities for competition. This clearly gives pupils good opportunities to use their skills in competitive situations, whilst at the same time offering them chances to improve their social development.
99. The subject is led and managed well and the subject leader is aware of its strengths and weaknesses. She understands that not enough use is being made of the large grassed area around the school, in giving pupils the opportunity to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities, although pupils have comprehensive opportunities during residential visits. She is currently looking at the possibility of introducing orienteering in order to fill this gap. Improvement has been good overall because of the increase in the range of extracurricular sporting activities.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in this aspect is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extracurricular activities and additional activities are very good and support pupils' social development very well.
- The links with the community are supporting pupils' understanding of citizenship very well.
- Pupils' views are considered and opportunities for this are increasing.
- Pupils have good opportunities to exercise responsibility.

Commentary

100. The school is in the process of improving its already broad provision. For example, a school council is being established and pupils spoke enthusiastically about their role in this. The school has health, drugs and sex education policies in place as required and parents are well informed about the activities. The school has applied for the Healthy Schools Award. Pupils have ample opportunities to learn the benefits of social interaction, tolerance and respect through the diverse range of additional and extracurricular activities the school provides. Recently circle time has been established as another focus for pupils to share their concerns or feelings. The teaching seen in this aspect was good. Pupils instigate raising money for charity and take regular responsibilities from acting as library monitors to showing visitors round the school and there is Year 6 'buddy system' with reception children. Community links and working with other schools support pupils in understanding they are one of many. This is further exemplified through their behaviour and attitudes. The school acronym of T.E.A.M, 'together everyone achieves more' is very evident in their daily school life and supports their personal development well.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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