

INSPECTION REPORT

ALTRINCHAM C OF E VA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Altrincham

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106341

Headteacher: Mr Jim Inglis

Lead inspector: Mr John D Eadie

Dates of inspection: 24th - 26th May 2004

Inspection number: 260057

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	281
School address:	Townfield Road Altrincham Cheshire
Postcode:	WA14 4DS
Telephone number:	(01619) 287 288
Fax number:	(01619) 125 934
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Kevin Davies
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Altrincham C of E (Aided) Primary School is situated close to the centre of this Cheshire town and serves three local parishes. The socio-economic indicators for the area are well above average. However, the school attracts pupils from quite a wide area and also draws a small number of pupils from social housing a little distance away. There are significantly more girls than boys in many year groups, although in Year 1 there are twice as many boys as girls. Children generally have average skills and knowledge when they start in the Nursery. Almost all pupils are of white British heritage; the remainder are from a variety of other ethnic groups with no single group having more than one or two representatives. Four pupils do not speak English as their home language and these pupils speak a variety of Asian languages and all are confident English speakers. The proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is average and the proportion who have identified special needs is also average. These have a range of needs, most having speech or hearing impairment or physical disabilities with a couple having moderate learning difficulties. The mobility of pupils is about average, though a higher than average proportion of the current Year 6 has joined the school after the normal joining time. The school has won a number of awards, for instance a Schools Achievement Award in 2002, Investors in People in 2003 and Healthy Schools, Business and ITT Partnerships and Inclusion and Anti Racism in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20191	Mr J D Eadie	Lead inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Personal, social and health education and citizenship
9511	Ms A Longfield	Lay inspector	
27773	Mrs F Mackenzie	Team inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Physical education
28686	Mrs E Walker	Team inspector	English as an additional language The Foundation Stage Special educational needs Geography History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Altrincham C of E Primary is a very good school. The Christian basis of the school is very evident in all that it does and so each person is regarded as a valued member of the community. This concern means that all individual needs are met very well and that pupils of all abilities achieve very well through the school. This is most marked in their personal development, which is excellent. **The school gives very good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The overall quality of teaching is very good and the pupils are learning very well and achieving very well through the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and he is very ably supported by other staff with leadership responsibilities and the whole staff team.
- The curriculum is very broad and interesting for all age ranges and there are excellent opportunities taken to enhance what is offered with an extremely wide range of visits, visitors and other activities.
- There is an extremely caring Christian ethos evident in the school, which is largely responsible for the pupils' excellent personal development.
- The excellent support and guidance that pupils receive is based on the school striving to meet all the needs of each as an individual.
- The governors are very supportive of the school and have an excellent understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection. The weaknesses identified have been addressed very successfully and well above average standards have been maintained. A number of other aspects which were already strong at the last inspection have also improved further, for example the pupils' attitudes, their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development and the overall levels of care for the pupils are all now excellent.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

Pupils achieve very well through the school. Children enter the school with broadly average skills and knowledge and achieve very well to reach standards well above the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception in their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. The standards reached are above average in all other areas of learning by the end of Reception. They continue to achieve very well to reach well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. The current Year 6 are reaching above average standards in English, mathematics and science and have achieved very well as they only just reached average standards in the Year 2 tests four years ago. There have been a number of new pupils in this year group since 2000, which has meant that the year group as a whole has not had the same continuity of learning. As can be seen in the right hand column in the table above, the previous year group achieved very well from their performance in the tests in Year 2 four years

previously. The A* in the table above for mathematics in 2002 indicates a performance in the top five per cent of all schools in the country. Standards in many subjects are above average, though standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of Year 6.

The pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. They have excellent attitudes to their school and their work and generally behave very well. Rates of attendance are well above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a very good quality of education. The curriculum is very broad and has many interesting and effective innovations, for example the regular courses available within the curriculum in unusual areas such as fencing and photography. The range and quality of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities are excellent. **The quality of teaching is very good** overall and so the pupils are learning very well. A major contributor to the pupils' learning is the very good use of well-trained and experienced teaching assistants and other adults. Systems of assessment are very good. Pupils' progress is very carefully and thoroughly monitored. However, although targets are set for their progress, they are not sufficiently precise to allow the pupils to be fully aware of the next steps they need to take to improve.

The support, guidance and welfare of the pupils are central to the school's philosophy of learning to love and loving to learn. Pupils feel safe, secure and very much part of the school team. Partnerships with parents and the community, particularly the linked churches, are very good and effective in providing the pupils with further opportunities. Partnerships with other schools are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher leads the school very well. He is very ably supported by his deputy and other key staff provide very good leadership in their areas of responsibility. The whole staff makes a very good team and the school is managed very well. The school is governed very efficiently and all statutory requirements are met. Governors provide very good levels of support and make a very significant contribution to strategic planning. An unusual feature is the contribution of the school's council to the work of the governing body.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and regard it as offering their children a very good education in a positive environment. Pupils are very content and are particularly pleased with the friendliness of the school. A minority of parents feel that they do not receive good information on their children's progress. The judgement of the inspection is that reports to parents could be improved. A few parents are unhappy with the end of term arrangements for dismissal. The inspection team agrees that the school should consider these arrangements.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The following should be viewed in the light of this being a very good school. They are not weaknesses, rather the next steps in development for a successful school.

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

- To continue to refine the systems of setting targets so that the targets set are sufficiently precise to enable individual pupils to know exactly what they need to do to improve.
- Improve reports so that parents have a clear understanding of what their children have achieved and what they need to do to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils achieve very well through the school. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well through the school.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are currently above average at the end of Year 6.
- Standards in the national tests in Year 6 have been well above average in Year 6 for some years.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 have been well above average for three years.
- Standards at the end of the Foundation Stage¹ are well above average in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and above average in all other areas of learning.

Commentary

1. Standards in the national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Standards have improved faster than the national trend in recent years and have improved well since the last inspection. Compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals standards were well above average in mathematics, above average in reading and average in writing. Recently, boys have not been performing as well as girls in the tests. The school has conducted some very good analysis of why this might be the case and has established that in these year groups, boys scored less well in the tests on entry to the school. A number of effective initiatives have been put in place to improve boys' achievement. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in the tests is rather higher than one might expect, indicating that potentially higher attainers are being challenged well.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.3 (18.1)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.8 (16.3)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	18.0 (17.6)	16.3 (16.5)

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

2. In the national tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003, standards were well above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards have been maintained at this level for some years and have improved since the last inspection. Compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free schools meals, standards were well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. They were the same when compared with schools whose pupils attained similarly in the Year 2 tests in 1999. These latter figures show that these pupils have achieved very well since these tests. There has been no material difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls at this age. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels in the tests, again showed good levels of challenge for higher attainers.

¹ The Foundation Stage contains the children in the Nursery and Reception classes.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.0 (27.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.5 (30.0)	26.8 (26.7)
science	31.2 (30.9)	28.6 (28.3)

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

3. Children enter the Nursery with broadly average skills and knowledge. They achieve very well to reach standards above the goals children are expected to reach overall. They reach well above these goals in their communication, language and literacy and their mathematical development by the time they leave the Reception class. This very good achievement is due to the very well planned curriculum for these children and the very good teaching in these classes.
4. The very good achievement continues in Years 1 and 2. Well above average standards are maintained in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2. Pupils are achieving very well across the range of subjects. Well above average standards are being reached in science and above average standards in ICT at this age. Rising standards at this age group and the very good achievement are due to the very good teaching and very good leadership and management analysing what needed to be done and putting in place very effective systems to raise standards.
5. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to achieve very well. Standards being reached by the current Year 6 are above average overall and in English, mathematics and science. This is lower than standards have been for some years. However, this group of pupils only just reached average standards at the end of Year 2. As well as this, almost a third of the year group has joined the class since then, many of these coming in with special educational needs. Standards in ICT are average at the end of Year 6 as this group of pupils has not yet had the opportunity to cover fully all aspects of the curriculum as it has not been in place for their entire career at the school. Above average standards are being reached in a number of other subjects, for example art and design and music. The maintenance of very good standards at this age is due to the very lively and interesting curriculum, which engages these pupils. The very good leadership of the school has put in place a number of very effective procedures to raise the achievement of specific groups of all ability levels. Parents agree that their children are making good progress through the school and are delighted with this.
6. The number of pupils for whom English is not their home language is too small for statistically valid analysis to be carried out on their achievement over the years. However, those presently in the school are achieving as well as their classmates due to the sensitive support they receive. The pupils with special educational needs achieve very well. Their progress is carefully monitored and appropriate steps are taken at the regular reviews which take place with staff and parents. The school's very strong commitment to inclusion ensures that pupils of all ability levels achieve very well. For example, a number of pupils have been identified as having particular gifts and talents and the school has put in place very good procedures to challenge these pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes are excellent and their behaviour is very good. Pupils say that there is no bullying in the school and inspectors support this view. There is an excellent spirit of co-operation and respect between the staff and pupils which helps create a purposeful and well-ordered school in which all are valued. The school provides excellent provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are very good. All these aspects have improved since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' relationships are excellent and pupils recognise that their peers are friendly.
- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and pupils feel trusted to show initiative.
- Pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm for school life, especially the younger children's, contribute very effectively to their learning.
- The school prepares pupils very well for life in a multicultural society.
- Very good attendance and punctuality contribute very well to pupils' learning and achievements.

Commentary

7. The excellent attitudes and very good teaching enhance and stimulate pupils' learning and enable them to achieve very well. Parents are very supportive of the school and the way in which staff help pupils to understand right from wrong. Pupils are keen to come to school and clearly take an interest in their work. They show an interest in school life and the range of activities provided, exemplified by the range of photographic displays around the school. Pupils co-operate very well in their learning, work independently and take considerable responsibility for their own learning. They are very confident and show developing self-esteem.
8. Pupils' behaviour in class, at breaks and lunchtimes is very good. They show very good levels of respect for the views of others and have a very good understanding of right and wrong. The school is free from bullying, racism and all forms of harassment.
9. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their personal qualities and responsibility. One of these is through the school council, which holds weekly meetings in which representatives discuss issues raised by pupils. The school provides many clubs, which develops pupils' sense of community. Pupils feel trusted to do things on their own. Children in the Foundation Stage are in line to exceed the early learning goals² in personal and social development. Relationships are excellent within the school, which functions as an orderly and caring community.
10. Attendance is well above the figure for primary schools nationally. It is a reflection of parents' determination that their children get the most out of their educational opportunities. But it also reflects on pupils' eagerness and willingness to come to school. It is rare that pupils come to school late. Regular attendance and good punctuality are hallmarks of the school and are significant factors in pupils' achievements.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.0
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.

11. The school has excellent arrangements to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Carefully prepared daily acts of collective worship allow pupils to reflect on issues either by joining in prayer or sitting in moments of quiet. Music is used effectively to provide a spiritual uplift for the beginning and end of assemblies. Pupils' spiritual awareness is also raised in a range of lessons.

² The 'early learning goals' are the goals children are expected to reach by the end of Reception. 'Stepping stones' are the steps leading towards these goals.

12. Pupils have a clear knowledge of what is right and wrong and how to be good members of the school community. They take their responsibilities very seriously and with pride. The school council provides a very good opportunity for pupils to take an active and much appreciated part in how their school develops. Their suggestions are taken by the headteacher to the governing body.
13. The school provides many and varied opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour and teach the differences between right and wrong very well. Social events and extra-curricular activities contribute much to the pupils' own development and awareness of others' needs. There are very good opportunities at lunchtime for the pupils to engage in conversation with other pupils and adults and absorb manners and social graces. The Year 5 class were full of enthusiasm about their recent residential visit to an outdoor pursuits centre in West Wales and were busy organising a presentation for their parents.
14. The cultural development of pupils is excellent. The curriculum provides them with many opportunities to listen with interest to visitors to the school and to go on educational visits. For example, one year group recently went to the Bridgewater Hall to spend a day with a poet and then read their own poems. There are opportunities to discover about other cultures and to respect ethnic beliefs. The French curriculum is enhanced with a French breakfast on Bastille Day. The school raises money to support John, a child in Uganda, through his studies. Pupils are very well prepared for life in a multicultural community as they are encouraged to see the person not the problem or belief.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education for the pupils. The curriculum is broad, balanced and has been made very relevant for the pupils with a number of interesting innovations. The quality of teaching is very good and the pupils are learning very well. The school provides an extremely safe and caring environment for the pupils. There are very good links with parents and the community and satisfactory links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is very good overall and has improved since the last inspection though it is more variable for pupils in Years 3 to 6 than it is in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The pupils are consequently learning very well. Assessment is very good and used very well to plan for the next stages in pupils' learning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan their lessons very well and organise their classes to ensure very good learning takes place.
- Teachers are very good at encouraging their pupils and providing work that interests and engages them so they apply themselves very well and are very productive.
- The school's strong commitment to inclusion ensures that teachers are very good at meeting individual pupils' needs.
- Teachers make very good use of the very well trained and experienced teaching assistants and other adults who help in class. They also use resources very well.
- There are very good systems for assessing the pupils' progress and achievement, though the pupils are only just beginning to be involved in the setting of their own targets.

Commentary

15. The quality of teaching is very good overall, though it is more variable in Years 3 to 6 than in the rest of the school. However, both the excellent lessons were taught in Year 5 and there were a number of very good lessons in Years 3 to 6 as well. Parents and pupils are enthusiastic about

the quality of teaching, the pupils being particularly happy with the support they receive. The teachers plan very thoroughly to address the differing needs of all the pupils in their classes. A particular strength of this planning is the planning for any other adults who help in class. This is particularly notable in the Foundation Stage where other adults are extremely well planned for and contribute to learning excellently. As well as very well trained and experienced teaching assistants, the school welcomes a number of other adults: parents, governors, trainee teachers, other students and work experience youths for example. All of these are provided with plans which give a clear indication of which pupils they are to be responsible for and what the learning objectives are for these pupils. The plans also have space for brief analysis of the pupils' success and any other comments. These all ensure that these adults are very effective in supporting pupils' learning and that the work of these pupils is closely monitored.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 40 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (5%)	11 (27.5%)	19 (47.5%)	8 (20%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

16. Teachers know their pupils very well and have a passion to do their best for them. They are therefore very encouraging and are also very good at making their lessons interesting and engaging. This results in the pupils being enthusiastic and working very hard. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 5, the teacher had provided a wide range of stimuli, based around the pupils' experiences, which ensured that they were fully engaged and interested in their work. The inclusive nature of the school ensures that pupils almost always receive work appropriate to their needs. There are just very rare occasions when all pupils start with the same task, when potentially higher attainers could go straight on to more challenging work. The school makes very good use of employing part-time teachers with particular expertise to enhance the provision for pupils. For instance, a teacher is employed to teach music so that all pupils receive expert teaching in this subject. This is one of the major reasons for standards in music being above average.
17. The excellent lessons were exemplified by the range of opportunities on offer for the pupils and the responsibility they were given for their own learning. The teacher was constantly asking questions such as, "What do you think?" or "How are you going to tackle that?" These questions enthused the pupils to try their own methods and be individual in their learning. The end result was excellent learning in these lessons and really good achievement. A further strength of these lessons, in common with many seen throughout the school, was the very effective use of resources. For example, an overhead projector was used very well to provide the pupils with a range of stimuli, along with a range of other materials for the pupils to work from.
18. Assessment is very thorough. The school carries out a wide range of appropriate tests and keeps a very thorough record of these assessments. These enable clear checks to be kept on pupils' progress over time. Very good analysis is done on these records to establish those who might not be progressing as well as expected, as well as to keep a check that the potentially higher attainers are achieving as well as they should be. These assessments have started to be used to set targets for pupils' progress. At present these targets are insufficiently precise to allow pupils to know exactly what it is that they need to do to improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good and is very well supported by an excellent range of opportunities to enhance provision. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very well planned curriculum for the Foundation Stage makes learning interesting and relevant for these children.
- The clear links between all subjects enable pupils to use their skills in all areas of learning.
- The excellent range of activities and enrichment which is available for pupils to explore other opportunities to extend their learning.
- There are some shortcomings in the accommodation.

Commentary

19. The curriculum for the younger children is full of interesting and relevant learning experiences in all the areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The strength lies in the vibrant and dynamic learning environment and the very good rapport which exists between all members of the team. The careful and thorough planning enables children to experience a stimulating environment and an interesting range of activities to extend their learning. The theme is constructively planned and all activities are carefully thought through so that every aspect and area has clear links with each other. The curriculum is planned and shared by both the Reception and Nursery classes. The outdoor areas are carefully set up to make all areas of learning a real and pertinent experience.
20. The thorough preparation of the curriculum is very good. The curriculum is planned as a tool to develop pupils' skills and knowledge and is progressive and rooted within national guidelines. The very good links between subjects are carefully thought through so that every area of learning enhances and supports as many subjects as possible. There are logical links between each stage and phase of learning. Planning throughout the school is very good and focuses on the needs of individual pupils, with careful attention being paid to the detail. The very good plans for their individual learning enables pupils' with special educational needs to achieve very well in all areas of the curriculum.
21. The school has considered a range of good advice from both local and national sources to develop the programmes of study. Schemes of work are clearly devised with the needs of the pupils as the clear focus. There is a very good breadth and balance in all subjects. Literacy and mathematics skills are used well and extended in all subjects. Staff are enthusiastic and committed to the school. Support assistants are well qualified to meet the needs of the pupils they are supporting. All staff work as a team and this ensures that the needs of all pupils are well met in every area.
22. The excellent range of additional activities which the school provides extends the already very good provision to make the curriculum interesting and exciting. This motivates pupils' learning. The pupils are eager to welcome the visitors who present various aspects and ideas to challenge and extend the curriculum. The enrichment activities include a number of planned additions to the curriculum. For example, the school runs short courses within the curriculum in unusual aspects of physical education such as judo and fencing. Photography is also part of the curriculum and the headteacher is constantly seeking ways in which the curriculum can be "supercharged".
23. The school offers good conditions for all of its pupils. The building is attractive, some classrooms are spacious and the outdoor areas are very good. However, other classrooms are cramped and hamper learning opportunities afforded through the practical activities which are integral to the science and mathematics curricula, for example. The library, which is well stocked and organised with a good range of books, is not easily accessible to pupils. The

interesting and well-displayed pupils' work reflects the good results pupils produce in all areas of the curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school ensures that pupils are excellently cared for. Excellent support, advice and guidance are available because the school knows pupils' academic and social progress so well. The school has excellent procedures to involve pupils in its work. Pupils know that their opinions are listened to and valued and that where necessary, something will be done about their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are very well prepared for introduction to school in the Nursery class and there are very good arrangements for transfer of pupils from one year to another within the school.
- Teachers know their pupils very well and support them through their school life.
- Very good interactions between adults and pupils foster excellent trusting relationships.

Commentary

24. There is an ethos of care, order and structure, which is emphasised in the school's expectations of pupils' conduct and their response in the daily assemblies. This ethos has been built on and improved since the last inspection. The school has a suitable policy for child protection and all the staff are aware of their responsibilities. There are excellent health and safety procedures in place including the arrangements for administering first aid and dealing with accidents or sickness. Fire drills are carried out regularly. Teachers are very conscientious of their supervision of pupils in their class.
25. The school's systems for caring for pupils are well established and work very efficiently. Arrangements for admission to the Nursery class are very good, ensuring that children get off to a good start in their learning. There is very good tracking of children's progress and this ensures that good information is available when they transfer into Year 1 and into subsequent year groups. The school's strategies for listening to pupils are excellent. The school council representatives visit classes of younger children to listen to their views and report back to them on decisions made that affect them. As well as this, the school council's views are always an item on the governing body agenda and their thoughts are discussed and again feedback given. Teachers are very good at making informal occasions available to listen to pupils' interests, successes and concerns. This puts them in a very good position to make effective use of their accumulated information about individual pupils.
26. There are excellent and trusting relationships between adults and pupils in the classroom and beyond it. This is equally true of relationships with lunchtime staff. As a result, pupils know that they will be listened to, that what they have to say is important and that they can rely on and trust the adults in the school. This effectively reinforces the warm, friendly, family atmosphere which exists in the school and gives pupils confidence. Very good arrangements for the care and support of pupils with special educational needs include effective strategies for identification of specific needs and the careful tracking of their progress.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents are very strong. This is also the case for links with the wider community. Links with other schools are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The links between home and school have a very strong effect on standards achieved, on the pupils' progress in learning and on their progress in their social skills.
- Parents get very good information about what is happening in school.

- Pupils' reports are not consistent and do not always give good information about progress.
- The school has very close links with the churches.

Commentary

27. A strong feature of the pre-inspection questionnaire and meeting for parents with the inspection team was the confidence and trust placed in the school by the vast majority of parents. A measure of parental confidence is the number of parents who help in the classroom. They strongly believe that their child likes school, makes good progress and that teaching is good. The half-termly parent workshops on a variety of curriculum and other topics are well attended and contribute significantly to the strength of the links with parents. Parents have regular opportunities to visit school formally to discuss their child's progress. Pupils' reports do not give sufficiently clear information to inform parents what their children know, understand and can do. Reports also do not always indicate clearly what pupils need to do to improve their work. Because there is a strong and positive link between home and school, pupils benefit a great deal. The school is quick to support family values; the home gives strong support to learning through taking a keen interest in it. The impact is strong on both academic progress and on the development of social and personal skills. Children come to school ready to learn and the school capitalises well on this. There are good relationships with parents of pupils who have special educational needs. This ensures that these pupils are kept in touch with their learning and that parents have good information about their child's progress. The inspection team agrees with the parents that the school needs to consider the present arrangements for the last day of term.
28. The school works very closely with the local community. In particular, the school has very productive links with the three Anglican parishes it serves. Pupils attend the churches in rotation for the religious festivals. The three vicars and other members of the congregations are frequent visitors into school and their visits are much enjoyed by the pupils. Pupils go carol singing in local residential homes and raise large sums for charities both local and international, several of these from the pupils' initiative. The school premises are used extensively by the local community and by local adult clubs and uniformed organisations.
29. There are satisfactory links with the local schools. There are a number of secondary schools for parents to choose from when their child reaches the end of Year 6 and the school has regular and satisfactory links with them all. One of the most beneficial is a link with Altrincham Boys' Grammar School which provides French teaching for the older pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher leads the school very well. Other staff with leadership roles provide very good support. The school is very well managed at all levels and governance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher leads the school very well.
- He is very well supported by his deputy.
- Other key staff lead their areas of responsibility very well.
- The school is managed very well at all levels.
- Governance is very good and governors have excellent awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
- The school's commitment to inclusion is excellent.

Commentary

30. The headteacher has not yet been in post for three years, but has already made a very good impact on raising standards. He has successfully built on the very good work already in place at the time of the last inspection. Careful analysis of strengths and weaknesses has allowed him to raise levels of provision for the pupils still further. For example, he has initiated a number of features to “supercharge” the curriculum, as he would put it. The regular curriculum workshops for parents have enabled them to have a clear picture of his vision for the school and have therefore supported developments. His deputy, who has been in post for the same length of time, leads in the classroom and in her other responsibilities by example. She, too, is innovative and gives the headteacher very good support, sharing his vision and complementing his skills very well. Other staff lead their areas of responsibility very well. Although a number are fairly new to their roles, they all show very good leadership qualities and fully share in the commitment to provide the best for the pupils. All play their full part in the teamwork which is so important to the school’s success.
31. The management of the school is very good. The school’s pre-inspection self-evaluation form showed very clear analysis of strengths and weaknesses. It was far from being a complacent document, despite the many strengths. There is a constant striving to do better. A particular strength is the analysis of performance data, by both the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. The information gained is used very well to ensure that the school is adding value for all its pupils. Staff development and performance management are very well managed. Training has been very clearly targeted to the priorities for the school and for individual teachers. This has had a significant impact on maintaining the well above average standards in English, mathematics and science, whilst addressing the areas identified in the last report to improve provision in other subjects. A particular feature of the training has been that provided for teaching assistants. They are now able to play their full role in aiding pupils’ achievement, another improvement since the last inspection. Finances are very carefully managed. The school has made a conscious decision to spend more than is usual on staffing and has achieved this without any shortcomings in resources or other features. Significant savings were made against the budget for the last year which ensured that a prudent figure was carried forward to the next year.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	540,243	Balance from previous year	17,279
Total expenditure	532,521	Balance carried forward to the next	25,001
Expenditure per pupil	1,855		

32. The governance of the school is very good. The governors have an excellent understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This is largely because many of them visit regularly and have excellent relationships with the headteacher and staff, so they are well aware of what is going on in the school. They do not take for granted what they are told however and ask searching and challenging questions to establish the facts for themselves. Governors are very involved in the strategic development of the school because of the intimate knowledge they have of its strengths and weaknesses. They make a very important contribution to the teamwork that is so evident in the school. This is yet another way in which the school’s excellent commitment to inclusion is shown. Every single person, child or adult, is valued for what they contribute.

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 **very good**.

33. Provision for the Foundation Stage has made good gains since the last inspection. The Foundation Stage environment is very stimulating and well resourced. The accommodation is spacious and displays are of high quality. The teaching in both the Nursery and Reception class is never less than good and is very good overall. This means the learning of these children is very good and they are enthusiastic learners who achieve very well in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and achieve well in the other areas of their learning. Children exceed the early learning goals in all areas of learning.
34. The range of resources is very good, well improvised and fully utilised to fulfil a variety of functions and situations. The very good outdoor areas are fully integrated and utilised very well as a purposeful teaching space for all areas of learning. All support staff make a valuable contribution to the children's learning. The children are very happy to come to school following the very good induction procedures including visits to the Nursery and home visits so children are familiar with their new surroundings.
35. The curriculum is very carefully planned so that it provides the children with real and relevant experiences through which they can explore and develop their understanding and reasoning of the world around them. The children are continually challenged to question and reason in the very good range of activities which are provided to promote their learning. They have time to reflect and receive gentle encouragement to recognise how they can care about themselves and each other. These are all very good features of both the Nursery and Reception class.
36. All staff in both the Nursery and Reception are very enthusiastic and committed to providing the children with excellent opportunities for learning. The leadership and guidance within the nursery and reception team are very good and they are excellently supported by a highly experienced and knowledgeable nursery nurse. This very good provision enables the children to reap the benefits of a very well planned and cohesive learning environment. All activities, including ones children initiate, are carefully monitored and the information is used very well to plan the next stages of learning. The children who have special educational needs are carefully monitored by all staff who ensure they achieve as well as their classmates. They are fully included in every activity and are equally challenged so that they contribute well to discussions and role-play situations.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between staff and the children are very good.
- The children's independence is developed very well.

Commentary

37. Children enter the school with average skills in personal, social and emotional development. They are given every opportunity to extend their development in this area within all the activities in all classes and teaching is good. Their behaviour is very good and their positive attitudes towards their work are equally good. Children engage in their play for a considerable length of time and work very well with each other.

38. The children welcome lots of visitors to celebrate and share a wide range of topical and interesting events and festivals. Parents and grandparents share their special uniforms associated with their jobs and interests. These events provide all the children with a unique opportunity to share experiences and take advantage of many different and interesting opportunities to recognise the needs and responsibilities of the adult world whilst experiencing the joy and pleasure from all their visitors. These events are used very well to promote children's social skills and confidence through meeting and developing relationships with the outside world.
39. The subtle but well organised routines which have developed make sure the children take turns and line up quietly. They work well together in groups because the relationships within the classes are very good. They can also work alongside each other developing their independent learning skills. All groups of children are developing their skills so that by the time they leave the Reception class they are confident and assured about routines and how to behave in school and exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of their time in Reception.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The very good range of activities provides a very good stimulus for speaking and listening.
- Children make very good progress in their reading and writing skills.

Commentary

40. Teaching is very good in this area of learning in both classes so that pupils become engrossed in the stories and rhymes in the Nursery, demonstrating both in words and actions The Very Hungry Caterpillar's appetite. They use their experience in other activities to contribute to discussion about likes and dislikes of various foods and drinks. By the time children reach Reception they are confident in recognising initial and final sounds because of the very clear planning to develop these skills. The higher attaining children know key words and are beginning to read and write simple sentences. They make very good progress in using these skills to extend their knowledge into other areas of learning. The provision for role-play is excellent, menus are produced in the 'Blue Planet Café' and the waiter and chef discuss the fish menu for the day and welcome their customers appropriately. Children use their imaginations and extend their speaking and vocabulary skills very well. There is targeted intervention by all adults in children's role-play, where good questioning encourages children to use language more extensively and to extend their skills in literacy in a variety of different situations. The careful focus on repetition to enhance children's speaking skills is good. They recognise initial sounds and are developing an awareness of different types of books. Children in both classes work well with each other and promote their language skills well as they are engaged in both adult and child promoted activities. The very good use of support extends the learning of different groups of children when they are in a mixed age class. Higher attaining children make very good progress and are extended well in this area. The children concentrate very well and make very good progress in this area. They all exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning and standards are well above expectations overall.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make very good progress in their learning.
- Resources are used well and promote the children's mathematical language very well.

Commentary

41. The progress the children make is very good because the teaching is very good. The interest and enthusiasm which is developed within the lessons is enhanced by the very good range of activities which consolidate and extend the children's learning. The teachers are very well supported by the classroom assistants who help children who have special educational needs to contribute to the lesson and take part in the activities which are planned well to meet their specific needs. Children in the Nursery are already confident when counting to 10 and many are well on the way to counting both forwards and backwards to 20. They are able to match the number of children who are present in the class to the numbers on the board and higher attaining children can write the numbers correctly.
42. Mathematical development is extended by the good use of mathematical inputs and intriguing ideas so that Reception children show their enthusiasm by developing a good mathematical vocabulary to describe two and three dimensional shapes within a 'feely bag'. They describe complex shapes, for example a cone as a "large body with a sharp point" and a cylinder as "a shape with a circle at either end", so that other children can guess the shape. They are knowledgeable and use vocabulary in context when using the shapes in a group. The good range of activities is well supported by adults who ensure that the children are engaged in purposeful learning, making their own decisions but articulating their reasons well about their play.
43. The imaginative approach and very good use of everyday resources, both indoors and outdoors, help children to experience real mathematical thinking. They are very involved in their learning. The children are developing well the key skills of ordering and counting and exceed the early learning goals in this area and standards are well above expectations.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The interest the children display in the world around them.
- The very good range of visits and visitors which contributes significantly to the children's experiences.
- The children are lively and enthusiastic learners who behave very well.

Commentary

44. Through good teaching, children are provided with a stimulating range of experiences that enable them to make good progress in their knowledge about the world. Lessons are well planned and linked well to the language and mathematical areas of learning. For example, in the very good role-play area which was based on a recent visit to a local aquarium, the creation of the 'Blue Planet Café' provides good opportunities to build both literacy and mathematical experiences through creating menus, deciding on a range of healthy foods and working out the change when paying the bills. The visit was the source of children's enthusiasm in creating a miscellany of stories about the sea and sea creatures. This interest leads to good involvement and very good behaviour in these sessions. In a discussion based

on deciding whether an object is transparent or opaque the children recalled which was which from their recent visit. This knowledge was extended very well by the teacher who demonstrated very effectively how to change jelly to illustrate the meaning and also used the opportunity to extend the children's scientific vocabulary through the changing state and feel of a jelly.

45. The Nursery groups follow a theme based on 'The Changing World'. They are very aware of the care and nurture both plants and animals need to grow. The well-planned and extensive activities enable children to explore a wide range of experiences like finding and matching caterpillars and counting to check for accuracy. They are encouraged, by teachers and other adults, to explore textures and discuss the difference between wet and dry sand, the vegetables in the shop and how to change colours when mixing paint. They are eager to offer their point of view and this is enhanced well by the teacher using a well thought through range of stories to develop their understanding of how things grow and change. Well-directed and encouraging questions from the adults extend the children's knowledge well.
46. Displays about the classrooms enhance learning in this area of development well. A good range of visits contributes effectively to children's learning, as do the many visitors to school. Parents and others who come to school to talk about their work provide a wealth of resources to stimulate children's knowledge and understanding. The children develop their independent learning skills very well through this experience and exceed the early learning goals in this area. They are eager to use the computer for a variety of tasks and their mouse control is developing well as they dress the teddy and match the pairs.

PHYSICAL AND CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical and creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor play facilities are good and used well to develop children's physical development and co-ordination, though the hall is not so well used for children in the Nursery.
- The planned learning in these areas is good.
- The adults help children to develop their control of small manipulative skills well through well-structured activities.

Commentary

47. The children's physical development is planned as part of the child-initiated activities, in addition to the direct teaching in the Reception class. The lack of time in the hall does not allow children in Nursery to develop their skills using space and apparatus within a planned directed lesson. Reception children are aware of the space and are very competent at using balance and stretch movements. They share and consider the needs of each other as they use various pieces of apparatus very well. There is a very good range of equipment both in school and in the local park and these opportunities are used exceedingly well to provide a good range of activities to extend their experience. They are aware of space and are confident about bringing the skills they have learnt into the outdoor area.
48. Children develop their control of small manipulative skills well because they are given very good and effective support in all their activities. They use pencils and brushes with increasing control and cut, stick and paste with the expected level of skill by the end of the Foundation Stage. The range of activities to support this area of learning is good and the variety stimulates their interest to explore a good range of tools with which to paint, colour and cut. They develop their skills well and link these to the other areas of learning. They enjoy an increasing range of songs and rhymes. Most children exceed the early learning goals in this area of learning. The quality of teaching is good in both of these areas of learning.

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6.
- Pupils achieve very well and there is very good support for pupils of different abilities, including pupils with special educational needs.
- Pupils listen carefully in lessons and contribute very well in their responses.
- The teaching is very good and the school has good planning and assessment procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' learning.
- The co-ordination of the subject is very good and the school is well resourced.
- There are no significant weaknesses in provision, but the location of the school library, as part of the staffroom, restricts optimum use for pupils.

Commentary

49. Most pupils achieve very well throughout the school, with pupils with special educational needs, particularly those with learning difficulties, continuing to make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Overall, equality of opportunity is very good, with teachers ensuring that every pupil is very well included and supported in all activities. In Year 6, for instance, the school has provided additional literacy sessions for lower attaining pupils, to boost potential outcomes. Pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn at times and taught separately. Lessons are planned well for appropriate learning of all ability groups. The school has also introduced other initiatives to boost standards and to motivate pupils, such as the 'World Book Day' and raised the profile of reading for boys, particularly in Years 1 and 2, by extending the range of readers to appeal to boys. Throughout the school, pupils' achievement is very good in listening and speaking. This was evident in all lessons seen, as pupils listen very well to learning objectives and offer articulate responses to teachers. The school promotes an ethos of mutual respect. The teachers are good role models in clear pronunciation and use of language. Achievement is also very good in reading and writing.
50. The quality of teaching is very good. There was one excellent lesson seen in Year 5, in which the organisation, motivation of pupils and use of learning resources was exemplary. Teachers plan well, according to the National Literacy Framework, making very good provision for different ability groups. The pace and timing of lessons are generally very good, and high expectations are set. Lessons are well structured and both teachers and well-trained classroom assistants give well-focused support to pupils. All teachers use the information they collect on pupils' progress very effectively, to establish targets for pupils. These are recorded in their books. Assessment tasks are undertaken as required, plus additional interim assessments and pupils' progress monitored at regular intervals. The school tracks pupils' progress via computerised methods. This facilitates the process of monitoring the progress of different groups. Analysis of test results is undertaken regularly and this has informed current development objectives in the subject, which are well focused. Teachers set homework activities, including reading tasks, recorded in home/school diaries in Years 1 and 2. Teachers incorporate the use of ICT as appropriate in lessons.
51. There is very good leadership of the subject and the co-ordinator has a good overview of current provision and strategic planning for this subject. The senior management has undertaken a wide range of monitoring activities of the teaching and learning. Appropriate development objectives have been identified and programmes to bring about ongoing improvement are in place. An example of this is the guided reading provision. The co-ordinator has introduced innovations, such as the 'Desert Island Books', which have impacted favourably upon pupils' motivation to read. She has ensured that all teachers have access to a

wide range of well-organised resources and that all concerned in the teaching of pupils are well trained in current developments. The usage of the library by pupils is constrained, due to its location as part of the same area as the staffroom.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. There are very good opportunities for pupils to extend and use their speaking, listening and reading and writing skills in other subjects. This applies across the curriculum, but is particularly evident in the humanities and outdoor pursuits. An excellent example of this was in Year 5, where pupils' literacy work was inspired by a recent residential visit they had undertaken.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Pupils achieve very well.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and above average at end of Year 6.
- Assessment is very thorough, but pupils do not fully understand how they can improve their work.

Commentary

53. Pupils are achieving very well in mathematics because of the very good quality of teaching and the very well planned curriculum opportunities. Mathematics lessons are very well organised and teachers are very good at meeting the varying needs of pupils in their classes. There are, however, rare occasions when all pupils start with the same task. In these lessons potentially higher attaining pupils could profitably start with the more demanding tasks planned for them rather than complete the simpler tasks first. Lessons are exemplified by brisk pace and very good questioning skills. Teachers are often heard to ask pupils to explain how they worked out answers. This encourages thinking and is a major contributor to the pupils' learning and achievement and the standards being reached. The mental/oral starter sessions of lessons are carried out very briskly and the pupils are consequently very confident in their number bonds. Learning is aided considerably by the very good use of other adults who often support pupils with special educational needs. A particular strength of this work is the planning sheets provided for these adults. They show very clearly exactly what the pupils they are responsible for are expected to achieve and give these adults space to analyse the success of their learning. This enables teachers to plan very carefully for the next stages of learning for these pupils.
54. The co-ordinator, who has not yet completed two years at the school, has already redesigned the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils and staff. In particular, she has done a considerable amount to link the two different schemes that were being used in the school. She has a very good overview of standards and achievement gained from very good analysis, both of the results of national tests and of pupils' work, to establish strengths and areas for further development. In consultation with other staff, she has put in place very good strategies for addressing these areas.
55. The standards being achieved by the current Year 6 are lower than those that have been reached for some years. This group of pupils did not achieve well in the tests for seven-year-olds four years ago and statistics show that they have achieved very well since then. There have also been a number of new pupils joining this year group, which has disrupted the continuity of learning for the year group as a whole.

56. Systems of assessment are very thorough. The scheme being used contains weekly tests to measure pupils' success and the results of these tests are used very well to plan for the next stages in pupils' learning. Very careful records are kept to check that pupils are making good progress in the long term as well. However, although targets are set for pupils' further progress, these are not sufficiently precise to allow pupils to have a clear idea of what they need to do to improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Mathematics is used very well across the curriculum. Teachers are constantly looking for opportunities where skills learnt in mathematics can be used in other subjects. For example, graphing skills are often used in science and tables and formulae are used to support work in both science and ICT. Accurate measurements are an integral part of work in design and technology and in an excellent geography lesson, work on co-ordinates was applied to mapping skills and pupils quickly learnt how to manage six figure map references.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is well above average and at the end of Year 6 is above average.
- Most pupils work very hard and achieve very well.
- Teaching is good overall and there is a good balance of teaching across the range of aspects of the subject.
- There are good planning structures and a good scheme of work is in place.
- Pupils demonstrate well developed scientific skills.
- Leadership of the subject is good and relevant objectives inform future subject developments.

Commentary

58. Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2. The school targets predict a lower percentage of pupils attaining higher levels in the national tests in Year 6, due to the nature of the current Year 6, in which there are a number of later pupil admissions, who have not received the same continuity of education. Standards at the end of Year 6 are above average overall. Standards have been maintained and provision developed since the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. In lessons, most pupils have a high degree of involvement and concentration.
59. Science lessons were seen in three year groups and samples of pupils' work were scrutinised. Overall there was evidence of good teaching, structured within a nationally recognised scheme of work. There is a good balance of teaching across the range of aspects of the subject, with relevant emphasis upon the development of enquiry skills, including predicting and fair testing. An example of this was in a Year 4 lesson where pupils were investigating air resistance with parachutes and devising fair tests in model parachute drops. The good features of teaching included good subject knowledge, effective questioning by the teacher, with good inclusion and support for pupils of all abilities during the lesson. This resulted in most pupils achieving well. In a Year 5 lesson, in a study investigating the strength of an egg, the teaching ensured that pupils could follow procedural guidance and record the use of equipment, method, results and conclusion successfully. The very good teaching in this lesson motivated pupils very well.
60. By the end of Year 6 pupils show well developed skills when devising and recording their investigations. For instance, Year 6 pupils have worked through a range of experiments,

including testing heart rates in different conditions, participating in 'Cabbage science' experiments, investigating different electrical circuits and participating in sound, forces and friction experiments. Pupils receive good foundations in the acquisition of scientific terminology and get good procedural guidance for conducting and recording. This is evident from work undertaken in the early years, for instance in recording plant growth. Pupils are generally able to use scientific vocabulary well to explain their findings and to record the results on an appropriate chart, graph or diagram. The usage of ICT is the focus of ongoing development.

61. The co-ordination of science is good. The co-ordinator has good strategic understanding of the subject and school development objectives are relevant. She has instigated innovations, including a private/state school partnership, which has impacted well upon standards. She ensures that pupils' progress is tracked throughout the school and learning outcomes monitored. She is in the process of compiling exemplars of moderated work to assist teachers in making assessments.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a thorough curriculum designed for the subject.
- The spacious ICT suite enables skills to be taught very effectively.
- The school has a good range of suitable hardware and programs.
- Good use is made of ICT in other subjects.

Commentary

62. The school has conducted a careful audit of needs within the curriculum for ICT. On the basis of its findings, a nationally recommended course has been adapted to suit its requirements. This is very effective in giving pupils a wide range of experiences in the subject. In particular, skills are well taught, due to a number of factors. This is an indicator of the good leadership of the subject. The ICT suite is spacious, well-equipped and used well. Lessons are usually planned so that half of each class is taken to the suite to be taught necessary skills, whilst the remainder of the class do other work in their classroom. Many of these lessons are taught either by well trained and experienced teaching assistants, or by a part-time teacher employed by the school specifically for this purpose. Pupils therefore have very good levels of skills in using computers and good knowledge of how to use appropriate programs. The school has an extensive range of software to support learning, both in ICT and to support learning in other subjects.
63. Standards being achieved are above average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6 and pupils are achieving well through the school. Standards have improved well since the last inspection. There are a variety of reasons for standards not being as good at the end of Year 6. The major one is that many of this particular group of pupils lack the sophisticated knowledge necessary to enable them to be working at above average levels. There is also limited work done in the area of monitoring as this is the one area where the school does not yet have sufficient equipment. In Year 2, skills and knowledge are above average. For example, pupils have created some effective and individual pictures using a painting program. Some good work was seen in Year 4 where the pupils were working on branching databases.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

64. A particular strength of ICT is its use in other subjects. Each class has time planned in the suite to teach other subjects through the medium of ICT, for example to use word processing skills in literacy or data handling in numeracy. ICT is used very well to record and display the results of science experiments. Teachers are constantly looking for opportunities to enhance their teaching by using ICT. A particularly good example in Year 2 was when the teacher used a programmable toy to explore right angles in a mathematics lesson. After the pupils had discovered that they could get the toy to complete a square, the teacher set them the challenge of drawing a right-angled triangle. The whole class was fully engrossed in the complexities of this challenge, which was eventually completed by a pupil for homework.

HUMANITIES

65. Neither of these subjects was a focus for inspection. Only three lessons of geography were seen in Years 2, 4 and 5. Teaching and learning were good overall and in one lesson were excellent. Standards reached in these lessons and in the work seen in the school were above average. Two lessons were seen in history. In these lessons the quality of teaching were good overall. Once again standards seen were above average. Pupils are achieving well in both subjects.
66. There is a good and interesting curriculum in place for **geography** so that pupils can extend their knowledge at an appropriate rate. Teachers use pupils' experience well to extend their powers of observation to make comparisons. Pupils respond well to the points raised in discussions. In the excellent lesson, the very good use of a recent visit and using recently acquired numeracy skills related to co-ordinates enabled pupils to locate specific points and plan detailed routes on an Ordnance Survey map. The very well paced teaching style accommodated all pupils including the higher attaining pupils who had to work hard in considerable detail and with complete accuracy. The well planned tasks engaged the interest and extended the knowledge and understanding of all pupils including those with special educational needs who were very well supported so that all achieved well. Pupils' work throughout the school is developed through the good use of worksheets. Where these are used to cater for the individual needs of pupils they make good progress but in some classes there is insufficient care about the appropriateness of the task for individual pupils.
67. There are good links between **history** and geography. A good balance ensures that pupils can make connections between places and historical events. Pupils have very good opportunities to visit a number of museums and places of interest. These visits and experiences are used well to support pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers plan their lessons carefully so that all pupils can achieve and make good progress. Pupils use and extend their writing skills to describe historical events, for example, how life would have been as a Victorian child or to use the Tudor journeys of exploration to plot the course on a map and describe the conditions on board ship at that time. Pupils in Year 6 have completed and presented their individual research about Britain since the 1930's. They use well-documented evidence from books, the Internet and interviews with people of the times. In a lesson devoted to the preparation for a visit to York, pupils used historical knowledge and skills well demonstrating some understanding of the archaeological terms used in the excavations of the city. Pupils have a clear and good understanding of the changing timeline and can locate when and where important events took place.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

68. None of these subjects was a focus for inspection. One lesson was seen in art and design in Year 6 and the teaching in this lesson was good. No direct teaching of design and technology was seen. Evidence gained from scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions show standards to be above average in both subjects.
69. In the Year 6 lesson in **art and design**, the teaching was good. In this lesson, pupils planned well, making Viking helmets with researched designs. The products were thoughtfully made

and pupils enjoyed their lesson. In most year groups the teachers give good encouragement for observational skills in sketching. The general standard of work on display, showing a variety of media used, including textiles, collage, printing and paint, is good and is an improvement from the last inspection where the school was criticised for using a limited range of media. Sketchbooks are used well to explore patterns, perspectives and designs and as the initial phase in exploring ideas for art and design. The scrutiny of documentation indicates that a scheme of work is in place to ensure appropriate planning structures and skills development.

70. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection, although a sample of work was inspected. As a result, no judgements can be made about teaching, learning or standards within **design and technology**, although the provision looks to be good. There is a scheme of work in place, which ensures good progression in skills development. Throughout the school there is evidence of designing, making and evaluating, with a good progression in learning via different topics. These include making and decorating a Christmas cake, working with 'Ground-force' to improve the playground, T-shirt designs, making battery operated lights and making photo frames. Many of these showed original ideas and well-developed making skills.
71. Three lessons were observed in **music**, in Years 1, 2 and 6. The teaching in all three of these was very good. A specialist teacher employed to enhance the provision for music took the two lessons for the younger pupils. The class teacher, who is a musician, took the Year 6 lesson. In all lessons the enthusiasm and expertise of the teachers were significant factors in the enjoyment of the lesson by the pupils and their good achievement. Singing in assemblies was tuneful, but lacking somewhat in energy. There is a good range of other opportunities. A number of pupils learn instruments, such as guitar, violin and flute. There are also two very good choirs, who perform locally, as well as contributing very effectively to acts of worship both in school and in the churches. Provision has improved well since the last inspection.
72. One lesson was seen in **physical education** in Year 3 and the teaching was good. In this lesson, pupils demonstrated good development of skills in the use of apparatus, concentration and co-operation. The scrutiny of documentation indicates that a scheme of work is in place to ensure appropriate planning structures and skills development throughout the school, across the range of activities. Swimming is taught in Years 3 and 4 and most pupils swim confidently before they leave the school. The planning structure also offers good integration of additional activities for older pupils such as outdoor pursuits, orienteering and lacrosse, so pupils are able to experience a greater variety of activities as they get older.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The whole ethos of the school supports learning in this area.
- The planning for pupils' personal development is very thorough.

Commentary

73. Few classes have formal lessons set aside for these areas of learning. However, there is very thorough planning which ensures that all areas are covered very effectively. For example, drugs and alcohol abuse and sex education are very well provided for within the science curriculum. Health education is also very much part of the provision, with the pupils being very well aware of what constitutes a healthy diet and how to keep themselves fit. Aspects of their personal and social education are built into all aspects of school life, though once again the careful planning ensures that these qualities are developed consistently through the school. There are many very good opportunities to increase the pupils' life skills to prepare them to become responsible citizens. For example, the school council, although only having

representatives from Years 3 to 6, sends representatives to each class in the school to hear their thoughts. They then return to report back on the developments that the council is considering. The excellent inclusive nature of the school, allied to its extremely caring ethos, ensure that all pupils are developing into very caring, thoughtful and responsible young citizens.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	1
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	2
Pupils' achievement	2

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	1
Attendance	2
Attitudes	1
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

The quality of education provided by the school	2
The quality of teaching	2
How well pupils learn	2
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	1
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	1
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	1
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	1
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	4

The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

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