

INSPECTION REPORT

COLWICH C of E (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Colwich, Stafford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124244

Headteacher: Miss S Poole

Lead inspector: Mrs Kay Cornish

Dates of inspection: 12 – 15 January 2004

Inspection number: 260767

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 Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	112
School address:	Main Road Colwich Stafford
Postcode:	ST17 0XD
Telephone number:	01889 881286
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Mary Buckley
Date of previous inspection:	12 October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This small, Church of England Voluntary Controlled (VC) school of 112 pupils, aged four to 11 years, serves villages with mainly privately owned housing. Pupils are taught in four classes with some extra tuition provided mornings for smaller grouping. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements, is 12.5 per cent, below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special educational need, which is less than the local education authority's average of 1.6 per cent. No pupils are believed to speak English as a second language at home, which is low. No pupils are eligible for free school meals. Attendance is very good at 96.9 per cent, and higher than the average for England. One in five pupils learn French at school. Children are admitted into the Reception class in the year they are five. Their performance on entry overall was in line with expected levels nationally. A privately run playgroup is on site. A key aim of the school is to provide a broader, balanced education in order to improve pupils' confidence and achievement within a caring environment, sensitive to Christian values.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21080	Mrs Kay Cornish	Lead inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Music Foundation Stage of Learning Personal, social and health education and Citizenship
15522	Mr Bernard Morgan	Lay inspector	
2433	Mr Ian Bennett	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education Religious education Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

Colwich C of E (VC) Primary School is a rapidly improving school, very effective, and offering a very good quality of education to pupils. The school gives sensitive respect for the Christian ethos. Pupils' achievement over time is good, as a result of good teaching. A significant proportion of teaching is very good. Pupils' standards are mainly above the national averages or expectations. The very good leadership and management have led the school through difficult changes since the previous inspection in October 1998. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The excellent headteacher, appointed two years ago, has inspired very good teamwork and introduced management systems, which are flexible, innovative and very effective.
- Good teaching and the strong commitment of all staff have raised standards and ensured the very good care and welfare of all pupils.
- Imaginative curriculum design and a wide range of enriching opportunities, have improved planning and standards.
- A thorough programme of assessment and whole-school review has led to a rapid improvement in standards and new targets, apart from the area of under-development in handwriting and punctuation in Years 2, 3 and 4.
- The governors' very good support of the headteacher has underpinned a rapid management of change and ensured a thriving school community.
- The high quality of the school's links with parents, other schools, and the wider community, has improved many aspects of the school.

Since the previous inspection, the school has made very good progress. All the previous key issues have been rectified successfully. Provision and staff training in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved standards in this subject. The addition of a well stocked, bright library is an impetus for improving reading skills. Community, parental support and communication have been regained since the previous inspection, when they were in need of development. Staff changes have stabilised. The curriculum has been improved and enriched. In 2004, standards have risen. New leadership has inspired very good teamwork.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 6.*

Care must be taken when analysing the scores of small schools. Standards of the current Year 6 are better than those of 2003. Year 6 pupils are likely to reach above average standards in English and science, and well above in mathematics in May 2004. Mathematics is a strength of the school. With reference to the above table, five pupils out of seventeen in 2003 had special educational needs, a year group with a heavy proportion of lower achieving pupils which lowered average scores. However, there was also a high proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in mathematics, reading and science. The value-added measure of improvement between Year 2 and Year 6 is (B): good.

Pupils' overall achievement is **good**. Children enter the Foundation Stage with satisfactory skills overall. Their achievement is good and they are well on the way to reaching all the early learning

levels by the end of the Foundation Stage, and above the expected goals for personal, social and emotional development, and mathematical and physical development.

Pupils' achievement and standards in all other year groups, and for most subjects, are predominantly good and rapidly rising by the end of Years 2 and 6. They are well above average for speaking and listening, mathematics, and well above the expected levels nationally for music. In religious education, standards are good and meet the requirements of Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. Standards are at least satisfactory, overall, in writing in Years 2, 3 and 4, but the quality of pupils' punctuation and handwriting for the age-range is not as good as it could be.

The school's nurturing of pupils' personal qualities is very good. Pupils are very keen to come to school and their relationships with others are very good. Their behaviour is very good and they undertake work willingly and independently. The above average rate of attendance is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The very good quality of education has a strong impact on pupils' rapidly improving standards. Teaching and learning are good, with a significant proportion of very good teaching. Three lessons observed were excellent. The quality of the curriculum is very good, as are the opportunities for enrichment outside of lessons. There are very good inclusive opportunities to ensure that all pupils are focused on reaching their potential. The accommodation is satisfactory and used most effectively to raise standards as, for example, in reading and music. Good learning resources, the high quality of care, guidance and support given to pupils, and the very good partnerships with parents and the community, all combine to ensure that the quality of education provided is very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The excellent headteacher has inspired very good teamwork. A high quality staff shares her vision and helps to manage very effectively. Management systems are flexible, innovative and very effective. Governors' very good understanding of the school has helped to manage swift change through the past three years of difficult decision-making. The school complies fully with statutory requirements. The school has received good support from the local education authority and consultants to bring about very good improvements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The headteacher has been very successful in reinstating positive relationships with parents, which was an issue during the previous inspection. Parents' views have been sought, valued and acted upon with a high degree of co-operation. Parents regard the school with very good respect and like its ethos. They particularly appreciate the new professional leadership and the talented, accomplished teaching. They like the considerable changes since the previous inspection, as, for example, the wider curricular opportunities and enrichment, their closer involvement, the new library and the rising standards. Parents have concerns about the impact that changes in pupils' numbers on roll have on the school's budget. Pupils like school, its interesting lessons and activities, and the staff, as, for example, saying: *"There's always an adult to go to if you have any concerns."* *"Teachers are fair here and listen to pupils."* *"There's quite a lot of caring in the school."* *"Younger pupils hug bigger children."*

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important thing the school should do to improve is:

- Improve pupils' skills in joined handwriting and punctuation in Years 2, 3 and 4.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' **achievement** is predominantly **good**. There are good standards in all year groups and for most subjects. Since the time of the previous inspection, standards have strongly improved.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Throughout all year groups, well above average standards are achieved in speaking and listening and in music. In Years 3 to 6, well above average standards are reached in mathematics.
- Reading standards in all year groups are good and above average, as are writing standards in Years 5 and 6.
- In Years 1 and 2, standards achieved in mathematics and geography are good. In most other subjects, there are good standards.
- In religious education, standards are good and meet the requirements of the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus.
- In no subjects are standards wholly unsatisfactory. However, standards in punctuation and joined handwriting in Years 2, 3 and 4 are underdeveloped.

Commentary

CHILDREN'S ACHIEVEMENT IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE¹

The following table shows how children achieve in each area of learning and the levels they are likely to reach at the end of Reception.

Area of Learning	Achievement
Personal, social and emotional development	Good
Communication, language and literacy	Satisfactory
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Satisfactory
Physical development	Good
Creative development	Satisfactory

1. Children enter school with standards that are as expected for their ages overall, but with a broad range. Their communication, language and literacy skills when beginning school are below the levels expected; their mathematical and physical skills are above. Children achieve well in the Reception year. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The table above explains children's achievement, currently, in relation to the early learning goals they are likely to achieve at the end of the Foundation Stage.

¹ Standards are the levels of knowledge and understanding and skills that children reach compared with children of the same age nationally. Achievement is an assessment of children's knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to their capability. It is a judgement whether children are doing as well as they can and are working to their capacity.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.3 (28.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	29.1 (28.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.1 (29.3)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 17 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

CARE MUST BE TAKEN WHEN ANALYSING THE SCORES OF SMALL SCHOOLS

- Standards in Year 6 now are better than those of 2003. Pupils are likely to reach above average standards in English and science, and well above in mathematics. Mathematics, as a subject, is a strength of the school.
- In 2003, out of seventeen pupils in Year 6, five pupils had special educational needs, including one with a statement. This was a year group with a heavy proportion of lower achieving pupils which pulled down the average scores. However, there was a high proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in mathematics, reading and science. Taking the three years together, from 2001 to 2003, the performance of pupils in all core subjects exceeded the national averages for their age group (Year 6). When comparing Colwich School with all schools, as well as similar schools, the value added measure is (B), which is above average. This means that in the time lapsed from when Year 2 pupils took their tests originally to when they sat tests for Year 6, their performances improved well.
- Achievement is predominantly good throughout Years 1 to 6 and for most subjects. Pupils with special educational needs have good provision, particularly for English, mathematics and science. Their equal opportunities to participate in all planned areas of the curriculum are good and help to maintain their standards all round. Higher achieving pupils are challenged successfully, so that they often reach higher levels in their learning and knowledge of the National Curriculum.
- When standards of achievement in subjects are high, this is because the subject is taught very well and often by teachers with specialist expertise, as, for example, in music. In addition, standards have risen and are better because of very good leadership and management, better planning of the curriculum, very good assessment of pupils to inform the planning, and very good opportunities for enrichment, open to all. The very good evaluation of the school's performance has provided valuable feedback for teachers to review patterns in achievement before taking action. All staff work as a strong, cohesive team, challenging and encouraging pupils so that their good achievement is firmly established and standards continue to rise.
- The school has identified where there are standards in need of improving. It has already been identified that improving writing standards should be a focus this year, and improvements are noted in pupils' achievement over time, particularly in sentence writing, enriched vocabulary and story structures. Plans are already being made to focus on improving the quality of pupils' punctuation and handwriting in Years 2, 3 and 4. In addition, immediate plans are being made to share the wheeled toys used by the playgroup on site, in an enclosed area, in order to improve children's creative development even further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

These are strengths of the school. Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are **very good**. Behaviour, both in lessons and in and around the school, is **very good**. The provision for their personal development is **very good**. Relationships throughout the school are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good levels of attendance and attitudes to learning.

- Very good behaviour and relationships, both in lessons and in and around the school.
- Pupils' personal development is very good
- Very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	School data	0.2
National data	5.6	National data	0.5

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

7. In 2002 to 2003, the attendance rate was very good and well above national averages for all primary schools. The school operates effective procedures to promote and monitor attendance. Parents and pupils understand them and respond well to these approaches. There have been no exclusions in the past academic year.
8. The very positive encouragement and very good relationships ensure that pupils enjoy the activities offered to them. They respond very well and work hard, with obvious respect for the staff. The school invites and responds to pupils' suggestions, as, for example, in the recent consideration of the improvements planned for outside play facilities. Discussions with pupils show that they feel themselves very much part of the school community. Pupils' personal development is promoted and supported very well through a range of activities. Older pupils have the opportunity to attend a residential outdoor activity course. Pupils enjoy representing the school in activities from team sports to presenting musical evenings. Pupils state that the range of activities available to them outside lessons contributes much to their enjoyment of school life.
9. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very effective. This has a direct effect on their good behaviour in lessons, and both the youngest children and older pupils are able to settle down to work quickly. They sit well at tables or on the carpet, and listen carefully. The school has responded well to the issues raised in the previous inspection and pupils are now introduced to experiences from many cultures and this is evident in the school's planning and some displays. Pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on relevant issues and are given appropriate responsibilities that they carry out well. All pupils in the school are taught to know the difference between right and wrong and to take responsibility for their own actions. An effective system of rewards and sanctions, which is consistently applied throughout the school supports pupils as they learn to make decisions that are socially and morally acceptable to all. Work by artists is on display in the school but there is insufficient work by artists from other cultures, or by women, and there is little three-dimensional work.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The **very good** quality of education has a strong impact on pupils' rapidly improving standards. Teaching and learning are good with a significant proportion of very good features. The quality of the curriculum is very good, as are the opportunities for enrichment outside of lessons. The accommodation is satisfactory. Good learning resources, the high quality of care, guidance and support given to pupils, and the very good partnerships with parents and the community, all combine to ensure that the quality of education provided is very good, overall.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching during the inspection was **good** and has a strong impact on pupils' **good learning** and achievement over time. The quality of teaching during the inspection was good, with a

significant proportion of very good lessons. Occasionally, teaching was **excellent**. No lessons showed overall unsatisfactory teaching. This is a positive picture and an improvement from the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The thoroughness of assessment of individuals is very good, as are the analysis of whole-school assessment data and action for improvement.
- There is very good encouragement and engagement of pupils to ensure their very good attitudes to school and their good learning.
- All teachers insist on high standards of behaviour, which results in pupils' good co-operation and concentration.
- All staff have worked very hard, and successfully, to create a cohesive teaching team inspired by the clear vision of the headteacher.
- Teachers' implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the National Curriculum is very good.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3 (10%)	13 (43%)	13 (43%)	1 (3%)	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.

- Very good teaching was observed in each class, particularly for literacy, numeracy and music. Some excellent teaching was seen in English and music lessons, and a session in ICT.
- Assessment procedures are very good and the information gathered is used very well to guide teachers' planning of lessons. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored and targets for improvement are made. These targets are shared with pupils and their parents. Pupils' knowledge of their own learning is very good overall. Targets set for pupils with identified special educational need are focused clearly on what pupils need to learn next and are fully supportive of their learning overall. Teachers plan carefully to accommodate the needs of these pupils in lessons. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and provide pupils with feedback about how well they have achieved and what they have learned. The best marking indicates clearly to pupils what they need to do next. Pupils in some classes evaluate each other's work and say they find this a valuable and rewarding experience, as they are able to learn from each other.
- Teachers have very good knowledge of the subjects they teach. Their expertise is used most effectively for the benefit of all pupils. For example, the expertise for information and communication technology is used well in the ICT suite for smaller groups of pupils, which enables the class teacher to focus on a different, single-age group within the mixed-age classes. The teacher with musical expertise is deployed in other classes, to the benefit of those pupils and this helps to raise standards in music. Teachers' careful planning ensures that relevant links are made between subjects, so that pupils' good learning is more meaningful to them.
- Teachers use a variety of approaches and methods to maintain pupils' interest and concentration. They ensure that there is sufficient time for the outcomes of lessons to be listened to and discussed during the feedback at the end of lessons. This gives pupils insight into their own progress and how they can improve. There is good understanding of the needs of pupils with special educational needs, and good use of teaching assistants to ensure that

these pupils achieve well. The very good encouragement of pupils is successful in promoting their very good attitudes to school and their good learning.

14. The very good management of behaviour has resulted in quiet concentration within lessons, and sensible responses of pupils during sessions of exciting challenges, as, for example, in a history lesson, when pupils examined evidence with a partner and drew conclusions about the person who had provided the evidence. All staff have worked hard together to implement strategies for behaviour management consistently. This results in pupils being very clear about what is expected of them and which instances meet with approval or not. A significant proportion of pupils respond with respect and consideration.
15. The headteacher has taken an incisive lead in motivating and influencing staff to work very closely as a team to provide a whole-school framework of the curriculum, which is most appropriate for a small school's needs. This has led to very good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the National Curriculum, supported well by the local education authority's advisory service. Teachers take good care to ensure that pupils understand what they are doing by discussing and writing up the aims for each lesson at the outset. Towards the end of lessons, teachers sum up what has been covered and they assess how much learning has taken place. This enables them to modify plans for subsequent lessons. Careful records and clear plans are maintained, which include high quality individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. The very good enrichment of the curriculum has led to improved standards and better planning.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is **very good**. Very good extra-curricular provision enriches the curriculum. The quality and range of learning resources are good and the quality of the accommodation is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has succeeded in developing a curriculum to meet the needs of all its pupils.
- Opportunities for enrichment are very good and accessed by many pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

Commentary

16. The school plans the curriculum carefully to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The quality and range of opportunities provided are very good overall. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been thoroughly implemented by teachers and this has contributed to the high standards attained by pupils in English and mathematics. The school has produced long term plans for all subjects. This planning has been adapted from the range of national initiatives and guidance to meet the needs of Colwich school pupils. Links between subjects are regularly made. This is possible because the school has a very clear, informative curriculum organisation plan, which enables links between subjects to be identified systematically and planned for. In addition, opportunities to support pupils' awareness and understanding of the ethnic and cultural diversity found within British society are being addressed and opportunities built into the curriculum through themed weeks.
17. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. These enrichment activities include visits and visitors, and the opportunity to play a wide range of sport, play musical instruments, have the opportunity for residential trips to an outdoor education centre whilst in Year 6 and links with a school in Wales. Pupils' learning is enriched through their involvement in these activities. For example, pupils who take part in the school music club have many opportunities to refine their playing, singing and performance skills. The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils, regardless of ability or gender, have good equal access

to the opportunities it provides. This approach is a reflection of the high level of inclusion evident in all aspects of the school's work.

18. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good overall. The provision is led and managed very expertly by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She supports teachers in the writing of pupils' individual education plans. These plans are very good because they focus very clearly on what pupils need to learn next and the support they will need to achieve their individual targets. Pupils are involved in writing and reviewing the plans and have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. The co-ordinator provides very good support for teachers when they have particular concerns about individual pupils and she works with the on-site playgroup to ensure that any concerns identified pre-school are known by teachers. Teaching assistants are well qualified and highly motivated in their desire to support pupils with special educational needs, and contribute significantly to the good achievement of pupils. Parents are well informed and involved in the review and target setting process for their children. Good use is made of external agencies to support the school's work with pupils with special educational needs. Very good support from the headteacher, administrative staff and governors ensures that the efficient management of special educational needs occurs.
19. There is an adequate number of well-qualified staff to support pupils' learning. Resources are generally good but the Reception pupils would benefit from access to wheeled toys. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and much has been done to enhance it since the previous inspection. The new library and the development of the outside environment enhances and supports the curriculum and helps to improve pupils' reading and awareness of nature. High quality displays of pupils' work, and features such as the gardens in the school grounds, help to create a pleasant and welcoming learning environment.

Care, guidance and support

This is a strength of the school. Overall, the care, guidance and support provided for pupils are **very good**. This helps to promote very good standards. Health and safety procedures are very good. Pupils' achievement and personal development are monitored very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Care is taken to keep pupils safe and secure.
- Each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school.
- Pupils' guidance is supported very well by teachers' assessment of their personal and academic progress and development.
- Induction arrangements are very effective.

Commentary

20. The school works hard to promote the care of all its pupils. All staff take very effective steps to provide them with a clean, safe and secure environment where pupils are happy and learning is encouraged. All staff are well aware of child protection issues and the designated person has received appropriate training. Parents state clearly that pupils are happy in school and that staff work very hard on their behalf. The school is working towards a formal school council. Good care is taken to listen to pupils' views, as, for example, when consideration was being given to the redesign and improvement to the schools hard play area. The arrangements made for the induction of pupils are very good. Parents speak highly of the help their children and themselves receive. As a result, children settle quickly and make rapid progress. The school takes considerable care in its monitoring of pupils' progress in both their academic and personal development. This is used well to support the next stage of learning. This aspect shows further improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the monitoring of pupils' progress and development

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

This is a strength of the school. Overall, the partnership with parents, other schools and the community are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents hold the school in high regard and pupils also benefit from the wide range of social activities that parents and volunteers support.
- Information for parents, including reports on pupils' progress and development are very good.
- The work of the parent teacher association makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning and personal development.
- Links with local schools and the community are very good.

Commentary

21. Parents consider that the school works hard to keep them informed about its activities. This aspect has improved significantly since the previous report, when the school did not adequately share its vision and direction with parents. The reporting process to parents about pupils' progress, in both their academic and personal development is much appreciated. Staff keep detailed records and are able to give parents clear information about pupils' development. Parents state clearly that the school is strongly improving and that they themselves have confidence in its leadership. Parents consider that staff work hard and have their children's interests at heart. The school values the views of parents and has both sought and responded to parents' questionnaire replies recently.
22. The pupils benefit greatly from the work of an active and committed parent teacher association that has raised significant sums to support school projects. Of particular note are the improved library facilities, which are now well used by pupils, and the development of story sacks for use by pupils and families at home. Pupils also benefit from the wide range of social activities that are supported by parents and volunteers.
23. The school has very good working arrangements with the local playgroup which is based on the school site. There are also very good links with local primary schools. For example, the school participates with them in a range of sports activities, and these are much enjoyed by pupils. Links with local secondary schools are also very good, such as the strong links with Hagley Sports College.
24. The school values its position within the local church, and pupils gain much from the opportunity to participate in various visits to the church and community events. The links with a local business, Rugeley Power Station, started as a private sponsorship for the school's new library, and have since developed into a more detailed project to benefit pupils' knowledge.
25. The links with parents are now firmly established. The recent headteacher has regained the confidence of parents since the previous inspection, when links with a significant minority of parents were unsatisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. The governance of the school is very good and is fully involved in strategic planning. Senior staff and leaders of subjects are very effective.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governance of the school is very good and governors' very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school has underpinned a positive, rapid management of change.
- The excellent headteacher has inspired very good teamwork. She has successfully created a close team of high-quality staff to share her vision and manage very effectively.
- Management systems are flexible, innovative and very effective.
- The self-evaluation procedures implemented demonstrate clear, purposeful educational leadership.

Commentary

26. The governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and in shaping its direction is very good. The governing body is very good in fulfilling its statutory responsibilities and in promoting good opportunities for the inclusion of all pupils. The school complies fully with the Acts for Race Relations, Disability and Sexual Discrimination. There is shared, honourable intention for rapid improvement. The very good ethos of the school is strongly reinforced through very good respect for individual differences and all-inclusive opportunities to ensure that pupils are focused on their potential. Governors have been very supportive of the headteacher in the positive, rapid management of change since her appointment two years ago. The key issues of the previous report have been rectified successfully.
27. The excellent headteacher has imaginative vision and has inspired strong teamwork. She receives very good support from her senior teacher and staff, who have worked very hard as a close team in order to consolidate and carry out new initiatives. The very good delegation of managerial responsibilities to staff is clear. Monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher is very effective, and is developing strongly through co-ordinators. The subject co-ordinators have worked very hard with the headteacher to improve planning the curriculum. New assessment procedures are very effective in identifying subjects' strengths and weaknesses. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies is of a high quality, helping to raise standards for English, in Year 6 currently, to above average, and mathematical standards to well above.
28. Very good management of the curriculum is flexible and innovative. As a result, the content of taught subjects links together in a meaningful way, most appropriate for the needs of pupils. Blocking units of work to allow greater flexibility for the termly timetable, has been innovative and imaginatively planned. For example, in a design and technology topic to produce hats appropriate to characters from books or legends, a few days were set aside for older pupils to concentrate more sharply in a condensed unit of time. Instead of spending an hour a week unpacking design and technology items, materials and equipment, the sharp burst of effort over several days was more rewarding for pupils and they had a greater sense of achievement, reached more quickly. The quality of finished products was high, and the studying of the rest of the curriculum did not suffer. A week has been planned in the near future to focus on *Arts with a multi-cultural theme*. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is also very good. Staffing and resources are most effective in targeting the learning of these pupils. The co-ordinator provides very good support for staff and the procedures implemented. An informed and experienced governor, with a close interest in this aspect of special educational needs, makes a very good contribution to monitoring provision to ensure that pupils receive their full entitlement and are wholly included in all activities.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	307,990
Total expenditure	295,751
Expenditure per pupil	2,424

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	22,570
Balance carried forward to the next	34,809

29. Expertise amongst governors to manage the financial delegation is very good. Governors have ensured that a representative of the local education authority financial department regularly attends the governing body meetings, so that they are assured of first-hand advice. Governors and the headteacher are aware of fluctuations in the budget due to numbers on roll varying, and they have produced workable financial management plans to protect staffing levels and good resourcing. Correct procedures have been followed recently to manage the reorganisation of classes, in order to make savings to protect the school's future development. The balance carried forward in April 2003 has ensured current staffing levels and smaller groupings for literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6 daily, the completion of the library and ICT suite and the purchase of extra reading resources. A very efficient school administrator gives very good support to help the school in its financial management, achievement of educational priorities, and in its self-evaluation.
30. The self-evaluation procedures demonstrate the high quality leadership provided by the headteacher. The school's improvement plan has clear priorities, long-term, in order to develop all aspects of the school's management. They are costed carefully, with key personnel identified for the management of change according to an appropriate timescale. The monitoring of performance data, reviewing patterns and taking action for improving pupils' achievement and curricular opportunities are very good. The management of the continuing professional development of staff has been very good. The management of the recruitment, retention and deployment of staff has been excellent in the past two years. Such flexible management has underpinned the rapid changes needed to move the school positively forward.
31. Improvements, therefore, in leadership and management since the previous inspection are strong, particularly for regaining the confidence of parents, whose expertise is now utilised fully. Leadership and management by the headteacher, governors and key staff, contribute positively to the very good quality of education for pupils and their improving standards. There has been very good, rapid improvement in the past two years to provide an enriching, inclusive climate for learning, where all pupils have the opportunity to reach their potential. Value for money is very good.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

32. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage² is **good**. Routines to settle children into school when they start are very good. Induction arrangements ensure that two terms before they commence full-time in the September of the year in which they reach the age of five, they attend part-time mornings in a small group. In addition, on site is a privately run playgroup where children start at two and a half years. Links with the playgroup are very good, as are links with other local playgroups. Before commencing in the Reception class, children in the playgroups visit during three mornings and stay to lunch. There is an induction meeting for parents and carers in the summer term, and parents have the opportunity to visit on other occasions. All receive a prospectus and induction pack explaining how children can be helped to settle in the early stages. During the initial parents' meeting with inspectors, at the school, many parents expressed good satisfaction with the induction arrangements provided by the school.
33. At the time of the inspection, there were fifteen Reception children in a mixed Year 1 and Reception class of twenty-two. All Reception children are full-time. When children start school, their standards, overall, are as expected for the age-range but span a full range. However, their communication, language and literacy skills when beginning school are below the levels expected; their mathematical and physical skills are above. Skills on entry in knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative and personal, social and emotional development are appropriate and in line with the expected levels.
34. Children achieve well in the Reception year. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when achievement was satisfactory and unsatisfactory in physical development. There is very good leadership for the age-range, particularly in the high quality of planned learning opportunities for children, linked carefully to the early stages of the National Curriculum. The small steps for the Foundation Stage curriculum are planned for and aim towards the early learning goals at the end of the Foundation Stage. A clear progression of skills has been identified for each of the six areas of learning.
35. Very good assessment on entry and inspectors' findings during the inspection show that children are on course to reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, in their knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their creative development. It is likely that their achievement will be above the early learning goals in mathematical, physical and personal development at the end of their time in the Foundation Stage. The provision for children in this Church of England school to learn about the Christian ethos and traditions is sensitively handled for the age-range. It contributes well to their overall understanding of the world. Teaching is at least good, with some very good teaching observed in communication, language and literacy. Provision for children with special educational needs is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Reception children achieve well in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical and physical development.
- Teaching and learning are good with very good features in all areas of learning.
- Opportunities for using wheeled toys are unsatisfactory.
- Routines to help children to settle into school when they start are very good.

² The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the Reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal, social and emotion development, but also include knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development.

Commentary

36. In the area of **personal, social and emotional development**, teaching is good, resulting in children achieving well. Children are confident and happy. They work and play enthusiastically with each other. The children benefit from working alongside the Year 1 pupils in the class and, in turn, the Year 1 pupils benefit from increased demands on their responsibilities. All children have good opportunities for making independent choices besides the work set aside for them to complete. They complete these tasks confidently because activities are organised and supported well by the teacher, her assistant and volunteers.
37. The children achieve well in **communication, language and literacy**, improving upon their standards on entry. Teaching in this area is very good and children take great delight in the beautiful new big books on offer, and colourful reading books which they take home daily. The teacher and staff place very good emphasis on encouraging children to express themselves fully and take every opportunity to enrich children's vocabulary. Staff make very good use of magnetic 'letter shapes' to involve children in building up rhyming words, similar to those shared in their *Big Book of Nursery Rhymes*. The promotion of early writing skills is satisfactory overall, with a good feature in the encouragement of 'emergent writing'³ developing steadily.
38. In their **mathematical development**, children's achievement is good due to good teaching. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children have a good understanding of numbers. A significant majority of children match a number of items to five. They recognise three-dimensional shapes correctly. Higher achieving children add two numbers together to make seven, or can subtract a number from five. Many children sort identical items into sets correctly. Children count to twenty with confidence.
39. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is secure by the time they transfer to Year 1. Teaching is good. Overall, children's achievement is satisfactory. Children are provided with a wide range of interesting activities which extend their knowledge about their world. For example, many children enjoy using the role play area, set up as a Post Office, and were observed stamping their pads onto paper and 'answering the telephone' in their imaginary conversations. They use construction toys confidently to represent everyday vehicles. Children complete a simple computer technology program, as, for example, when creating defined shapes from cubes on the screen. They use a mouse with good dexterity to move the cursor on screen and complete the command. Children sequence daily events correctly and have satisfactory understanding of when 'daddy' or 'granny' were little or how objects look when they have aged. They explain clearly how the weather changes and describe significant events for family or friends, such as weddings and baptism. Children have an appropriate knowledge of healthy snacks.
40. Children achieve well in their **physical development**. Teaching is good. This aspect has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Teachers use the resource of the large hall effectively in addition to the safe climbing apparatus outdoors. Children's throwing and catching skills are good. Running is well co-ordinated and children stop with a good balance of the arms to aid movement. Children use space sensibly, travelling in a variety of ways. When pretending to be 'Jack in the Boxes', they spring up from a crouched position and land with a secure stance and full stretch of the arms and fingertips. Children use scissors and tools confidently and well. They show good control of pencils and brushes. Most manipulate small objects to sort, or build, most competently.
41. The **creative development** of children is satisfactory. Children have regular access to painting activities and their finished art reflects good colour mixing skills and clean, confident lines. Activities are meaningful and children paint from their own experiences, such as when a

³ Explanation for emergent writing: Writing that is not copied, but is created by the child to express his/her own thoughts. Often some words are recognisable through pattern or sound.

girl is depicted 'pulling her Wellingtons out of a puddle', or another child is being 'pulled by her dog'. Children regularly use a variety of items to create their own characters, such as Humpty Dumpty, out of modelling dough. Their singing experiences are good and they have opportunities to select musical instruments to create specific effects. Although teachers give good opportunities overall to develop imaginative play, as in the role play area of a Post Office, children's movements in the outdoor areas are more directed rather than explored. There are no wheeled toys available to the children and this aspect of their creative development is somewhat restricted.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**, ensuring well above national average standards in speaking and listening, and above average standards in reading.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in speaking and listening are very good.
- Pupils' achievement in reading is good due to a greater focus in recent years.
- Leadership is very good and has ensured clear, worthwhile priorities for developing English as a subject.
- Standards in writing are improving but punctuation and joined handwriting in Years 2, 3 and 4 are underdeveloped.

Commentary

42. Speaking and listening skills are well above the national average in each year group, due to very good teaching. Pupils listen carefully to the teachers, adults and each other. Many very good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop clear enunciation and understanding of conversations, as, for example, when younger pupils explain logically the sequence of a story's plot, or the finer detail of a sun's reflection in the illustration of a pool from a page in a book. Older pupils are articulate, confident speakers, whether in a small group or in front of a large audience in musical and dramatic performances, such as a Victorian Music Hall. By the end of Year 6, pupils discuss all areas of learning with very good vocabulary and fluency of ideas, demonstrating very good interchange of understanding.
43. Reading standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, due to very good teaching. Pupils' achievement in each year group is good. Pupils read enthusiastically, with good expression and full understanding of the printed word. A significant majority of pupils thoughtfully discuss the plot, characterisation and features of narration in stories. Their prediction of events and awareness of recurrent themes by individual authors are very secure. Pupils have good extended research skills, using the content and index pages of books confidently. They use dictionaries competently, know about a simplified Dewey library classification and are familiar with the layout of the school's library. However, skills in using encyclopaedias are underdeveloped. Pupils' knowledge about the sounds of the alphabet and combinations of letters is good. The building of syllables and knowledge of rhyming is secure. In Years 3 to 6, the secure higher reading skills of skimming and scanning help pupils well in their research of other subjects, such as history and geography.
44. Leadership and management of English are very good. Very good professional development of the teachers and their assistants has enabled very good expertise for teaching English skills. This is particularly noticeable in encouraging pupils to explain more precisely their thoughts, in improving pupils' vocabulary in order to enrich thinking, and to focus on a variety of strategies for improving the teaching of reading. One of the recent priorities has emphasised the strategy of group reading, when small groups analyse the text together with the teacher or an assistant. Extra resources, (£5,000 worth) in the form of attractive group

reading books, have been purchased in the past two years ensuring that the enthusiasm of the staff in implementing a greater interest in books and reading is well supported. The new library is well used as a resource, further increasing an awareness of beautiful books and the richness of the English language.

45. As a result of the very good leadership of a core subject, all teachers have been inspired to raising standards and improving achievement. Planning is of a high standard and the National Literacy Strategy has been effectively adapted to meet the needs of mixed-year groups and the wide variety of levels of ability in each class. Planning for pupils with special educational needs in English is very good, and reflected in the high quality of individual education plans which provide worthwhile targets. During the inspection, teaching of English was at least good. On one occasion it was excellent. Overall, teaching was very good in English.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent lesson in which older pupils were encouraged to understand aspects of narrative structure.

This was seen in an English lesson when older pupils were encouraged to understand aspects of narrative structure, in this instance, studying play scripts. This was in preparation for a visit from 'Young Shakespeare Company', when pupils would participate in a Shakespearean workshop. The teacher made excellent use of an overhead projector and an appropriate excerpt of prose and speech from a story, in order to teach how to transform prose narrative into a drama script.

The teacher's excellent relationship with the class enabled them to ask questions confidently about her explanations. Pupils responded well to very high challenges and demonstrated excellent learning of understanding present, past tense, using a colon to introduce drama cues for speech, and how stage directions could inform tone of voice and emotional responses of characters. Pupils were maturely independent in their approach to working, reading aloud to their partner with excitement and fervour in their voices, and yet showing quiet respect in a hushed plenary when contributions were shared.

46. As a result of mainly good teaching, standards of writing in Years 1 to 4 inclusive are satisfactory overall, with good aspects, such as the fluency and logicity of ideas, and good use of enriched vocabulary. Pupils write interesting sentences to reflect their thoughts and begin to use appropriate connectives to move away from writing in simple sentences only. However, pupils' writing shows insecurity when joining letters for handwriting, and insufficient care taken to demarcate sentences and phrases through correct punctuation. Their spelling skills and use of simple dictionaries are good. Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 are above average for writing. They write fluently, confidently, with expressive style, vocabulary and mainly accurate spelling. Presentation, handwriting and punctuation are satisfactory. Grammar is generally accurate and paragraphing is confident. The range of pupils' writing throughout all year groups is wide, and a significant majority of pupils have a good idea of how to create imaginative, interesting and well-structured stories.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

47. Pupils are provided with a good range of activities in other subjects that helps them to practise their language and literacy skills. Good examples of evaluative writing are found in a design and technology project on the making of hats. Pupils express their views and listen sensibly to the views of others in science and mathematics lessons. Pupils have very good awareness of their individual targets to improve their skills, which are clearly identified. Targets written in all year groups consistently remind pupils to concentrate on improving their English skills in other subjects. Teachers take good care to correct pupils' use of English in a range of subjects, helping them to improve all round.

MATHEMATICS

The provision made for mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are planned and structured well because teachers' subject knowledge is very good, consequently pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- Frequent good quality opportunities are provided for children to develop their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills.
- The good relationships in classrooms ensure that children are always well motivated.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good, particularly in the use of assessment data to focus on areas for development.
- Teaching assistants are well used in lessons to support pupils with special educational needs.
- Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their work and identify what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

48. Standards in mathematics are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6. They are improving because teaching and learning are very good. The subject has continued to be developed since the previous inspection and consequently, standards continue to rise. Pupils' achievement is good and they reach the targets set by the school. These challenging but realistic targets are based securely on the very good assessment information gathered by teachers. There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to develop skills in all areas of mathematics. Their number work and knowledge of number patterns such as multiples and factors of numbers is very good, and their understanding and use of data collection and databases is good.
49. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and plan lessons that are firmly based on what pupils have already learned. Many opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to learn and develop their use of mathematical language. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 know and can use terms such as 'quotient' and pupils in Years 1 and 2 can use the appropriate vocabulary to describe the characteristics of two and three dimensional shapes. Pupils are shown, and encouraged to use a wide range of problem solving strategies. The emphasis placed on good presentation of work ensures that pupils lay out calculations logically and neatly, and so make few errors.
50. Pupils have a very positive attitude and enjoy their lessons. They are encouraged to work with partners in order to discuss and evaluate their work, and to work independently. Teachers clearly communicate to pupils what they are intended to learn and achieve in each lesson. This helps pupils to focus clearly on their tasks and as a result, learning is very good. Classroom relationships are consistently very good. Teachers and teaching assistants support and challenge pupils and value their efforts and responses. Consequently all pupils, including those with special educational needs are motivated and keen to learn because they feel well supported. Pupils are well supported with a range of appropriate resources.
51. Leadership and management of the subject is very good. The subject leader has undergone extensive training in the subject area and is very knowledgeable. She analyses the progress made by pupils very thoroughly and uses this information to identify what needs to be done to continue to improve teaching and standards. She monitors and evaluates the school's work in mathematics through looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work but as yet has not monitored teaching on a regular basis. Teachers make good use of ICT to support the subject. Pupils are taught how to perform calculations using spreadsheets and to store and display data through databases.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects are good. The use of ICT skills in mathematics has been greatly developed since the previous inspection and is now good. Pupils' skills in mathematics enable them to solve investigations in science

effectively. Presentation of data and findings is logically ordered with clear methodology explained and recorded during scientific investigations. Pupils have good skills in compiling graphs when analysing data. This helps them to explain clearly their findings in science or geography. Their measuring skills help them significantly in design and technology projects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**, ensuring pupils' good achievement throughout each year group.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above the national average levels as a result of good teaching.
- There is very good leadership and management of the subject, which has ensured rapidly improving provision.
- Pupils can predict, hypothesise, present information clearly and evaluate findings accurately, showing good skills in order to plan rigorous investigations in science.
- Pupils have an accurate knowledge of all aspects of the National Curriculum for science.
- The very good relationships ensure that pupils' attitudes and motivation for science are very good.

Commentary

53. Pupils' achievement over time is good. By the end of Year 6, pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests for science in 2003 were above the national average. The progress pupils made between Year 2 and Year 6, over four years shows an above average value added measure. Current pupils in Years 2 and 6 show strong improvement in their achievement compared with previous years. A strength in teaching is in the very good expertise in science of teachers and in their very good planning to ensure that pupils' skills progress well and evenly over time. Challenging and realistic targets for pupils are based firmly on the very good assessment information analysed by teachers. There are a number of interesting activities planned for pupils as, for example, in the science investigations by Year 6 pupils, who study the effect of micro-organisms in mould on bread under a range of conditions. There is good emphasis in all lessons seen on the correct use of specific vocabulary, which ensures that pupils fully understand scientific terms. There are many examples of how pupils measure and evaluate in design and technology, which reinforce similar skills for hypothesising, evaluating and recording in tabular format in science. Teaching is predominantly good in each year group.
54. Leadership and management of science are very good and have ensured that the subject has rapidly improved, particularly in the past two years. Teachers have been helped to produce clearer planning and coverage of all the attainment targets of the National Curriculum for science. The headteacher, as co-ordinator, has monitored and evaluated lessons and pupils' recorded work. Assessment of how well pupils achieve closely informs teachers' planning on a daily or weekly basis. Teachers make good use of ICT to support the subject and help pupils to store and display data through databases. The professional development of all staff for the subject is very good and strongly improved since the previous report. There has been imaginative development of an outdoor environmental area to encourage and support pupils' learning of environmental science.
55. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good skills in order to plan a scientific enquiry. They make relevant observations in a variety of ways, providing simple explanations for results and putting forward clear ideas for finding out answers. These skills were particularly noticeable in a Year 2 lesson when pupils investigated the distances travelled by toy cars when pushed on a flat surface. Pupils linked cause and effect easily.

56. By the end of Year 6, pupils write in their own words:

- What they want to find out.
- What they think will happen.
- What they need in order to perform the variables for an investigation.
- How they will record the results.
- What they have concluded.

They know that they will need to repeat certain observations and will have to attempt to explain variables.

57. The breadth of pupils' knowledge of all aspects of the National Curriculum for science is impressive. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the human body, how to keep fit and eat a balanced diet, and what happens when a light is shone on a puppet against a screen. Pupils' very secure knowledge about experiments with light is reflected in their recordings: *"It made a shadow because the puppet was solid. When the light source went closer, the shadow grew bigger, further away, it went smaller."*
58. By the end of Year 6, knowledge of plants and animals in their habitat and classifying living things is good. Pupils accurately compare leaf shapes, how animals adapt to their habitat and clearly know about food chains. They have experimented with dissolving and separating mixtures, understand which solids dissolve and which variables affect the rate of dissolving. In experiments with filtration, they understand about the saturation point. Pupils demonstrate clear understanding of how changing the components of a circuit can affect its function and of electrical conductors and insulators. They have good knowledge of the movements of the planets in our solar system.
59. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning about science. They treat equipment and apparatus with respect. They show great enthusiasm when designing variations to experiment, enjoying the practical work and delighting in their discoveries. Relationships are very good, resulting in pupils co-operating well when working in pairs and groups, sharing resources fairly and having good awareness of safety factors. As a result, pupils sustain good concentration and are patient to repeat their experiments to ensure the accuracy of their conclusions. Most pupils take pride in recording their findings clearly and carefully.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Each lesson has a clear and achievable objective for learning, and teachers give good support to pupils ensuring they all achieve well.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good and there is a clear understanding of the next steps required to take the subject further.

Commentary

60. Standards in ICT in Year 2 and Year 6 are above those expected and pupils of all abilities achieve well because they have good support in lessons. There has been very good improvement in provision for ICT since the previous inspection. This is due to the very good leadership and management in the subject that have led to a significant improvement in resources and teachers' knowledge and understanding. A computer suite has been created, and the well-organised timetable enables all pupils to use it on a regular basis. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils' work in books and on display around the school shows that they cover an appropriate range of work.

61. The ICT suite is a valuable resource for the school. Pupils are fascinated with the technology and confidently use the programs set up on the computers. They are motivated, work hard and behave well. Good use is made of skilled teaching assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers plan well for ICT ensuring that pupils' skills are developed progressively. Work is frequently linked to other subjects so giving it relevance to pupils. Most pupils are confident in using ICT to support their learning in other subjects.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader has promoted strongly the development of the subject and has succeeded in addressing the issues raised in the previous inspection very well. She monitors the subject thoroughly and has identified what further resources are required to continue the development of the subject. She ensures that cross-curricular links are identified and used and monitors work regularly in order to ensure pupils are making appropriate progress.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. There are many examples of the use of ICT to support other subjects on display around the school and in pupils' books. For example, they use their word-processing skills when drafting and editing their work in English, and access the Internet when carrying out research. Pupils are also using e-mail to communicate with a school in Wales.

HUMANITIES

64. Work in **geography** and **history** was sampled and analysed, with only one lesson seen in each subject. Therefore it is not possible to form an overall judgement about provision in these subjects. However, discussions with subject leaders and pupils, and the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning form the basis of judgements made for these subjects. There is every indication from pupils' work in books and on display that standards are above average and have improved since the previous inspection.
65. In both subjects the curriculum is enhanced through a range of visits and pupils were very enthusiastic about these. Teachers make the work both interesting and relevant to the pupils. Years 5 and 6 pupils had recently visited a Victorian School Museum and this had led to work of high standards. Pupils use the Internet to research topics and, in Year 2, a pupil had accessed a website on the Great Fire of London and had printed out maps of the city showing the coverage and spread of the fire. Discussion with pupils indicated great enthusiasm for the subjects.
66. Planning of the subjects by teachers is very good and is monitored by the co-ordinators who also implement assessment procedures that allow for pupils' progress to be tracked.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are good.
- Teaching and learning are good overall with pupils given many opportunities to reflect on issues.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Planning by teachers is good.

Commentary

67. Standards of attainment seen during the inspection are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. These features represent good improvement since the previous inspection.
68. In the two lessons seen, teaching was good overall and pupils were gaining a good understanding of Christianity. Lessons are well planned based on the locally agreed syllabus and good resources are used effectively to support teaching and pupils' learning. For example, in a lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils on baptism, they visited the local church and the vicar demonstrated to them how baptism operates, involving them all in the process, and explaining clearly what it meant. Appropriate emphasis is given to exploring other faiths and the school has developed contacts with representatives of Judaism and Hinduism in order to enhance this. A consistent feature of teaching is the way pupils are encouraged to look beyond the factual, and to explore ideas about symbolism and imagery, as, for example, when pupils write about the symbolisms for Peace and what it means for them. These features of lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
69. Leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She has refined and improved the way lessons are planned to ensure all pupils cover the units within the locally agreed syllabus. Assessment of pupils' progress is very good. She has also developed the resources available to support teaching. She provides good support for teachers, and is committed to improving standards further.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

70. There was not enough evidence for observing teaching and learning to report and judge fully on all of these subjects individually. However, lessons were observed fully in music and physical education. Samples of pupils' work on display were analysed in art and design, design and technology and portfolios. Documents and the school's planning were analysed and discussion took place with subject leaders.
71. In **art and design**, in each year group, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils' observational drawings are successfully representational and there is good awareness of design. The analysis of patterns to be found in nature and the commercial world is good, as is the evidence of sensitive colour mixing in paintings. Sketches of portraits are satisfactory, but shading to give depth is not as good as it could be. Pupils have a secure understanding of symbolism in art, as depicted in pupils' work about imaginary journeys in the style of Aborigines. The management of the subject is satisfactory with some good features, such as a planned theme week for the whole school with a multi-cultural aspect as the focus. The curriculum is mainly broad, although the range of work by famous artists on display, particularly from a variety of cultures and women artists, is lacking in breadth. Insufficient provision is made for a broader range of sculpting or work in ceramics, although evidence of landscape sculpture from natural objects is good. Overall, the subject is successful in improving pupils' perceptions of the natural and artificially made world, therefore, contributing significantly to pupils' spiritual development and enriching their individual designs, as, for example, for the symbols of 'Peace'.
72. In **design and technology** there has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection. From the evidence provided, pupils in each year group show good skills in developing, planning and communicating ideas. They have good knowledge of materials, gained in their science lessons. Finished articles show good assembling, combining and joining of materials. Designing skills are very good, as is evident from a glass window panel above a classroom door, which was a Millennium Project for the whole school. The design, which depicts symbols from the school: a Christian cross, a dove, train, stag, canal boat, and the school's coat of arms, is of a high quality. Teachers' planning for a breadth of experiences and good progression of skills to improve finished products is very good. So far, in the planning cycle, pupils have designed a healthier diet, suggested ideas for improving their

playgrounds, created shadow puppets and photograph frames, analysed the structures of music stands, ironing boards and shelf brackets. Finished work on designing and making musical instruments is good.

73. A project on the designing and making of hats in Years 5 and 6 demonstrates excellent standards in the task, well above standards expected nationally. Pupils have created imaginative designs and used materials creatively to produce hats symbolic of characters from well-known books. Very interesting, original designs depict characters: *Mathilda's purple hat*, *Harry Potter's Slytherin*, *a knight's helmet*, *the Madhatter*, *Frodo Baggins*, to name but a few. Pupils have used a variety of materials and techniques, such as papier maché cups and saucers to decorate the *Madhatter's* top hat. They worked from detailed plans and adapted them to improve the product. They distinguish clearly between what works well and what could be improved, showing excellent knowledge of materials and components, for example, lining taffeta with card to give the hat strength. Pupils' evaluations on display are very good. The co-ordination and leadership of the subject are very good. They have ensured that design and technology has a high profile, evident in the school's displays and in the keen interest shown by all pupils.

Music

Provision for music is **very good**. There has been very good improvement in music since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above the expected levels nationally.
- The leadership, management and teaching of music are very good.
- The range of enrichment activities and resources are very good.

Commentary

74. Music is a strength of the school. All pupils in Years 1 to 6 were observed in lessons, in singing practice for the whole school, and in an extra-curricular club.
75. Standards are well above the expected levels nationally, and pupils' achievement is very good in all aspects of the curriculum for music. Pupils sing sweetly and confidently in an expanding repertoire with very good rhythm, clear entry to each phrase and correct duration of notes. All pupils make very good use of dynamics and texture to their singing all together. Singing during collective worship and choir practice is accomplished, correctly pitched, with very clear diction, all in a challenging repertoire. Pupils learn new songs quickly, memorising a new melody easily.

Example of outstanding practice

Excellent practice in teaching, and pupils' learning to perform a new song together

This was seen when Year 6 pupils, in four groups, learn to sign and play an African song, *Nanuma*, in harmony. They had excellent opportunities within each group to play the four phrases of the song, whilst a 'scribe' notated correctly the whole melody by recording letters of the notes on drawn keyboards. The final performance showed pupils maintaining an ostinato pattern very well, whilst singing, playing xylophones, glockenspiels and chimebars. Learning and achievement were excellent due largely to the excellent teaching. Outstanding features were in the very good listening to instructions, well-focused enjoyment, and very good insight gained by pupils into their own and other pupils' performances. There was twice the number of boys in the music lesson, and all boys and girls co-operated well together. Behaviour and attitudes to the subject were very good and mature.

76. Rhythm work is successfully developed throughout all year groups, due to the teachers' very good expertise. Pupils imaginatively layer sound effects in rhythm work using a variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments.

77. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The planning is broad and balanced and ensures a clear progression of skills between year groups. The use of specialist teachers is a significant factor in the very good impact of music on the whole school. During lesson exchanges, the main music teacher, who is the co-ordinator, teaches each class from Reception upwards. Her knowledge of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses is an advantage and her own expertise is excellent. Approximately a third of pupils perform in the school's choir or learn recorders. Visiting specialists to teach the violin, clarinet, flute and keyboards help to further the pupils' higher standards and breadth of opportunities.
78. The range of enrichment activities is very good. There is very good provision for individual and group work in music and very good use made of staff or volunteers with musical expertise for pupils to receive support. Very good resources support the subject strongly. All Christian festivals are augmented musically, as are school assemblies and school productions, as, for example, a Victorian *Music Hall* evening. The choir has sung at a garden fete in Lord Lichfield's Shugborough Hall, and at the Winter Victorian celebrations there. A joint school venture between Colwich's Year 6 pupils and Year 7 pupils at Hagley Park added to the pupils' enrichment. All pupils from Year 3 and upwards visited Burton-on-Trent for a musical concert. Such activities enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development significantly. The lively musical provision ensures that music has a very high profile and contributes strongly to the very good links between the school and its community.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The broad range of activities available to pupils ensures they are encouraged to develop a full range of skills.
- The resources available to support the curriculum are good.
- The range of enrichment activities is very good.

Commentary

79. Only two lessons were observed but, in both, standards were above that expected and all pupils achieve well. Teaching is good, and lessons are well planned and organised. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Teachers give good demonstrations and communicate clearly to pupils what they are expected to learn. Pupils understand the importance of warming up and cooling down sessions to protect their bodies. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the subject and appreciate the range of activities on offer.
80. All pupils have many opportunities to take part in sport activities out of school hours and through this the school participates in many sports competitions, often very successfully. The links with the local secondary school that has Sports College status has enhanced provision and opportunities. The school offers pupils a full range of physical education activities and has access to a church owned sports field close to the school. This is well used and parents and members of the community contribute to developing sport activities such as the football club that is organised and run by a very committed and experienced parent governor. The development of the outside environment as a creative play area encourages pupils to be active. Provision is made for pupils to receive swimming lessons and by the time they leave in Year 6 the majority can swim the required 25 metres. The school hall is of a good size, and is well equipped to support pupils' learning in dance and gymnastics. The curriculum co-ordinator's planning ensures that pupils get full access to all aspects of the curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

81. There was not enough evidence to report judgements on overall provision because no lessons were observed during the inspection.
82. The encouragement of pupils' independence and personal responsibilities is much improved upon since the previous inspection, when it was identified as an area for development. It is now good. Pupils write letters of application to the headteacher asking for certain 'responsibility posts', as, for example, librarians or in charge of the merit boards, the use of the overhead projector during assemblies and classes, delivering registers to the office, distributing milk and fruit, and seating arrangements in the hall. The school uses the *Health for Life Document* as a basis for planning and is currently developing a full scheme of work for personal, social and health education and citizenship. A very good curriculum ensures that this area of learning is developed in lessons and as a part of other subjects, such as English, science, history and geography. Small groups of pupils have met to discuss issues and the school is working towards a fully fledged School Council. A *Healthy Schools' Initiative* is planned for this year, and early morning activity sessions have taken place during good weather.
83. Teachers use group sessions, such as 'circle' times, to discuss a range of personal and emotional issues. For example, following a discussion about the meaning of peace, an older pupil writes:

*To me, peace means love and gentleness. It is something that lives in your heart.
It is a warm feeling and comes from love. It is one of the only things that comes
from loving and praying.*

84. Governors have approved a sex education policy which is approached through changes in human growth. In all year groups, a school nurse visits to talk to pupils; parents are invited to view a video on puberty should they wish to do so. A drugs awareness programme is taught throughout each year group. Visitors include the police, firemen, road safety officers, and they are used to good effect to enhance the provision. Assemblies observed during the inspection made a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Healthy eating, the benefits of drinking water, and the emphasis on very good relationships, are positive features of this area of learning.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	2
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its previous inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	2
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	2
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
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	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
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).