

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **STANDISH ST WILFRID'S CE VA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Standish

LEA area: Wigan

Unique reference number: 106467

Headteacher: Mrs J Kneale

Lead inspector: Neil Tonge

Dates of inspection: 15 - 18 March 2004

Inspection number: 262068

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:	531
School address:	Rectory Lane Standish Wigan Lancashire
Postcode:	WN6 OXB
Telephone number:	01257 423992
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs V Barr
Date of previous inspection:	9 – 12 November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Wilfrid's is a Church of England aided primary school situated in the village of Standish, close to Wigan. It serves a community of mixed owner-occupied and rented housing and the socio-economic profile is broadly average. When children join the nursery, their attainment on entry is typical for their age, though there is a broad range of ability. There are 531 pupils on roll, which places it well above the average size for a primary school. They are predominantly white British heritage with a very small proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Only two pupils are at an early stage of English language development and only one requires specialist help. Fifty-nine pupils have special educational needs of which 10 have a statement of special educational need requiring additional expertise. Both the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and those having statements are below the national average. The majority of these pupils have specific learning difficulties and the small remainder range from autistic, speech or hearing difficulties to social, emotional or behavioural needs. There is very little mobility of either pupils or staff. Approximately eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. The school is built in three blocks, housing the junior and infant sections of the school with a recently added central block, housing offices and a staff room. The nursery offers 30 places but is currently under subscribed.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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22274	Vera Rogers	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Music Physical education Special educational needs
23004	Christopher Taylor	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English English as an additional language
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good school with some very good features**. Children enter nursery with standards that are broadly typical for their age. By the time they leave school at the end of Year 6, standards are well above average in English, mathematics and science. This is achieved because of the good leadership and very good management of the school, good teaching and thorough procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and taking appropriate action based on this information. The cost of educating pupils is broadly in line with the average for the authority and bearing in mind the good performance of the school, it provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils are attaining well above average standards by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science because teaching is effective.
- The school is well led by a very good headteacher and there is good subject leadership by co-ordinators and this ensures that the school has a shared commitment to succeed.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well because they are carefully monitored and supported when they need help.
- Teachers plan appropriate work to challenge the different levels of ability, although there is a need to increase the opportunities for pupils to be more actively involved in their learning in some lessons.
- Relationships within school are very good because the school works at them effectively and, as a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to their work and they behave very well.
- There is a very strong commitment to valuing every pupil and this ensures that all pupils have opportunities to fulfil their potential.

Since the school was inspected in 1998 the rate of improvement has been very good. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and particularly science have improved significantly and are consistently high. Satisfactory standards have now been achieved in information and communication technology and very good improvements made in teachers' planning, the use of assessment information by teachers to plan activities and the good development of subject leaders. Monitoring of school performance is particularly good and is a significant factor in the good performance of pupils.

### 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*	B	B
Mathematics	A*	A	A*	A*
Science	A*	A*	A	A

*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.*

**The achievement of pupils is good.** When pupils begin school their attainment is broadly typical for their age. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children exceed the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of reception because the curriculum is very well planned and taught. At the end of Year 2, pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and history and their achievement is good. This is because teachers have high expectations of their pupils and good subject knowledge. They make good use of assessment to plan effectively to meet the needs of different abilities of children. It was not possible to make judgements on standards in music and physical education because of the inspection schedule.

At the end of Year 6, standards are well above the national average in English, mathematics and science because pupils' progress is carefully monitored and teachers effectively plan to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. They attain results in national tests in the top five per cent of the country. Achievement is good. Standards of attainment in art and design, geography, history and music are above average, while they are in line with the average in information and communication technology and physical education. It was not possible to make judgements on standards in design technology because of the inspection schedule.

**The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.** Pupils work happily together and show tolerance and respect because they are expected to do so and understand why. The pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They want to learn because most lessons are made interesting and they have trust and confidence in their teachers who motivate them to want to succeed. Standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school at all times. The attendance rate is satisfactory and punctuality is good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching is good.** Children receive a very good start to school in the Foundation Stage because teaching is very good. The standard of good teaching is generally maintained throughout the school as a result of the very good relationships that exist and the generally appropriate activities that are planned for the pupils. The school organises teachers in teams, which promotes consistency, as well as adopting teaching and learning initiatives, which are helping to improve the quality of teaching overall. As a result pupils make good progress and achieve highly, although more opportunities are needed for pupils to develop greater independence in their learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and they prepare appropriate work for all abilities of pupils, but some need to ensure that pupils are given opportunities to be more actively involved in their learning.

The school offers a good curriculum which is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. It is enriched with visits, visitors and a good and broad range of out of school activities. Literacy and numeracy skills are well developed across the curriculum.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management of the school is good overall.** The headteacher provides very good leadership of a well-motivated staff that work very effectively as a team. Subject co-ordinators are effective in reviewing performance in their subject areas and some have a good overview of standards in their subjects. Governors have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and provide some challenge for the school. The school complies with all legal requirements.

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

Partnership with parents is very good. They are kept well informed about their children's progress, events that happen at school and are appreciative of the efforts made by the headteacher and others to listen to their concerns. This ensures that the home supports the work of the school well and this contributes significantly to their children's achievement. Pupils enjoy coming to school because they know they are cared for and valued by their teachers. The school makes very good use of the local community and has very effective links with other schools.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

There are few things that this school needs to do to improve.

- To raise the quality of teaching and learning in some classes still further by providing more opportunities for pupils to take an active role in their learning.
- Improve the facilities in the computer suite.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Children in the Foundation Stage exceed the goals that they are expected to reach at this age and their achievement is very good. At the end of Year 2, standards are above average and achievement is good. By the end of Year 6 standards are well above the average and achievement is good.

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

- Pupils' are attaining standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6 because of good teaching, high expectations of what pupils can do and good leadership of these subjects.
- Overall, pupils' achievement is good because of the careful tracking of their performance and the effective action given to those pupils in need of extra help.
- Standards in many subjects other than English, mathematics and science are also above the average for those expected for their age and achievement is good because of detailed teaching guidance and good lesson planning.
- Pupils with special educational needs, including the gifted and talented, make good progress overall and achieve well.

#### **Commentary**

1. Standards are well above the average expected for pupils at the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science and above the average in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music and satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. As a consequence of pupils' good literacy and mathematical skills, pupils make good progress in many other subjects of the curriculum. Overall, this represents good progress since the last inspection and has been achieved by the very good leadership of the headteacher and the very effective management systems put in place. These initiatives have included the very effective tracking of pupils' progress, the grouping of pupils in ability bands and the setting of targets in English, mathematics and science. The effective action to improve pupils' performance has been supported by good teaching. The trend of improvement in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is above the national trend and the school has sustained a high performance, apart from a slight dip in attainment in writing by the higher attainers in the national tests in 2003. The school was quick to identify this issue and it became a priority for improvement in their school development plan. The school met its targets in mathematics but fell just below in English. Parents' confidence in the standards and achievement of the school is well justified. Pupils similarly have trust in their teachers to do the best for them and, in the main, have a clear view of what they need to do to improve.
2. In general terms, attainment on entry fluctuates slightly from year to year but it is usually broadly average. There are exceptions, however, even to this general pattern, which need to be taken into account in assessing achievement and standards. For example, there are a greater proportion of higher attaining children in the current Reception class and a slightly greater proportion of pupils below average in Year 5.
3. Pupils make a very good start in the Foundation Stage. Assessment information at the end of Reception shows that virtually all pupils exceed the goals that are expected for children of this age. This is because their curriculum is well planned with interesting and challenging activities, particularly those which develop their language and literacy skills. Relationships are very good and the classroom ethos provides a safe and secure environment in which children can explore and develop with confidence. This promises well for the future progress of these children through the rest of the school.



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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.0 (16.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.9 (15.8)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.2 (16.7)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 71 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. In Years 1 –2, pupils make good progress and achieve well because teaching is well structured and activities are interesting. Pupils' progress is tracked carefully and the school is quick to provide additional help where it is needed. Each pupil's needs have been analysed and programmes devised to support their progress.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (30)	26.8 (27)
Mathematics	29.5 (29.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.5 (31.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 70 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Standards are well above the average by the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement is good. This is because teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can do and pupils rise to the occasion. Teachers provide a great deal of individual support for their pupils, set work that is appropriately challenging and monitor pupils' performance carefully so that help can be provided when it is needed. Very good relationships ensure that pupils want to succeed and all pupils are valued whether their academic potential is great or small. In less effective lessons, which nonetheless are satisfactory, standards diminish because the active involvement of pupils in their learning is less than in the better lessons.
6. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and most reach at least the lower end of the expected levels by the end of Year 2 and by the end of Year 6, respectively. Pupils who are causing concern are identified early and placed on the school's register. Although they receive good support within the setting arrangements for English and mathematics lessons, there is little additional support within other lessons. This slows down their progress in those subjects. Inspection evidence shows that the learning needs of the higher attainers are well met and they are attaining in line with their abilities. The one pupil with English as an additional language makes good progress.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good, as is their personal development. Pupils' attendance at the school is satisfactory and their punctuality is good.

### **The main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very good attitudes and behave very well in the classroom because it is expected and taught.
- Pupils are very well behaved around the school and in the playground.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The attendance levels are satisfactory.

## Commentary

7. Most pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. For example, in the infant assembly, pupils walked quietly into the large hall and responded well to the headteacher's impressive presentation in which several pupils were expertly used to illustrate a Biblical story about valuing the great and the small. In the playground, pupils play together very well. They also demonstrate very good relationships with all teaching and supervisory staff. No pupils have been excluded from the school.
8. Teachers have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and this was particularly evident in the majority of classrooms where lessons were well paced and children's concentration levels were high. In a lesson in citizenship, for example, children worked well together to create short dramatic sequences to demonstrate the meaning of the word 'democracy'.
9. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to take responsibility for their own standards of work and in carrying out various tasks around the school. They are involved in a wide variety of activities to promote personal development as shown when older children help younger children in the dining room. Some of these older children are affectionately known by the younger pupils as 'mini' dinner ladies. The school does not at present have a school council but it has laid the groundwork for one with class councils, discussion times in class and the making of class rules.
10. The provision of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very effective and they are provided with many opportunities to work together in the classroom and around the school. They explore the local environment by means of many curricular linked visits. Many subjects of the curriculum such as art, music, geography and history are used well to promote pupils' spiritual development as well as their understanding of different cultures and faiths. Large photographs of a tiny owl shown by two small children to the whole of the infants' assembly added a moving spiritual dimension to this well presented act of collective worship. Moral and social development are enhanced, for example, through the many opportunities provided for speaking and listening and in working and playing with other children in the school and in the playground. Pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong and this is amply demonstrated by their consistent good manners and in their very positive relationships with all staff at the school.
11. The overall attendance at the school is satisfactory and is in line with the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is lower than the national average and the school positively discourages parents from taking children out of school for holidays during term time. Occasionally, a few pupils are late but the majority of parents are supportive of the school in terms of helping to ensure that their children attend regularly and promptly.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.0	School data	0.2
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good and they are a significant strength of this school. This is a view shared by parents and pupils alike.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Pupils achieve well because of the good quality of teaching and learning, a broad and stimulating curriculum, the very good relationships, which foster positive attitudes to learning, the good care it provides for its pupils and the very good relationship the school has with its parents and the community at large.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. Assessment is good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers build very well on pupils' positive attitudes to work.
- Pupils work hard and present their work neatly.
- Assessment procedures are good and this information is well used to set challenging targets for pupils and to inform the planning of future lessons.
- Planning is good and the tasks which are set are well structured so that learning builds throughout the lesson and the pupils achieve well as a consequence. The quality of marking is good and helps pupils to understand what they need to do to improve.
- Some teaching is over directed and this restricts the development of pupils as skilled learners.

### Commentary

13. The overall quality of teaching is good. This maintains the high standards at the time of the last inspection when teaching was recognised as a strength of the school. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed.
14. Teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are very good whilst in Years 1 to 6 they are good. A key feature of the school is that teachers encourage and nurture pupils' very positive attitudes and behaviour by generally providing stimulating and interesting lessons and monitoring their progress carefully. This creates a very positive atmosphere in which pupils of all abilities can learn and thrive.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 52 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	7 (13%)	27 (52%)	16(31%	1(2%)	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.*

15. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good, overall. Classrooms are bright, cheery and welcoming for young children. They want to come to school. Teachers have a very good understanding of how children of this age learn and expect them to achieve at levels above those found nationally. Many interesting and challenging activities are planned for the children and they make good progress and achieve very well as a result. Teachers lead activities very well using very good question and answer techniques, which encourage children's participation and the broadening of their vocabularies. Children move independently around the very good range of 'free choice' activities put out by teachers.
16. All teachers are very successful in their management of behaviour during lessons. Pupils are responsive to their teachers, behave very well and carry out their work quietly and sensibly. Pupils are encouraged to work neatly and this is reflected in very high quality of recording in science in Year 6, for instance. In many lessons teachers receive good help from teaching assistants. This additional assistance in classrooms helps groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well, although their availability is somewhat limited.
17. Teachers have good subject expertise. National guidelines for literacy and numeracy are well established and the teachers are experienced at teaching the content in an imaginative way. Higher attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 are challenged with tasks which would not be out of place in secondary schools. The specialist music teacher's skills and knowledge contribute very positively to the high standards of music and singing.

18. Teachers sometimes use over-directed methods. This restricts pupils' opportunities to learn and they become passive rather than inquisitive. This occurred in some science and some mathematics lessons where there is a significant difference between the best practice and the satisfactory lessons.
19. Teachers set interesting and challenging tasks for homework in a number of subjects. Pupils often enjoy the range of tasks set for them at home. Marking is particularly good in English but less consistent in mathematics and the foundation subjects. Many homework tasks develop pupils' thinking from the work they have been doing in class and this helps them consolidate their learning well, for instance it extends pupils' ability to research in history and science.
20. Pupils respond well in lessons. This is a consequence of the high expectations that teachers have for the pupils and the praise and encouragement they give them to succeed. As a consequence, pupils are prepared to take risks and attempt all that teachers ask them to do. They produce work of a good presentational standard and they are attentive during explanations by teachers or other members of the class.
21. Pupils identified as having special educational needs achieve well because of good teaching. Through good provision, comprising additional help from teaching assistants, speech therapists and other adults, they have made good progress. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils. They are fully included in all lessons and are given tasks that are well matched to their abilities. The pupils' Individual Education Plans (IEPs) contain clear targets although these are often too broad and not broken down into sufficiently small and achievable steps. However, the imminent adoption of small-scale steps for Individual Educational Plans for these pupils is likely to improve this provision. The Special Educational Needs co-ordinator (SENCO) provides good support to class teachers to assist with the writing of IEPs to ensure that they are relevant.

## **The curriculum**

Curriculum provision is good. The basic curriculum is enriched very well. Accommodation and resources are good, overall.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The provision of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- A good range of extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors to school enriches pupils' learning very well.
- The accommodation is good.
- Pupils are well prepared for transfer to the next stages of their education including transfer to the high school.
- The computer suite is cramped.

## **Commentary**

22. The school provides an enriched curriculum, which meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. The curriculum provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very well planned to provide a wide range of experiences covering all the recommended areas of learning. Since the last inspection the school has reorganised and improved curriculum provision. They have introduced the national strategies for English and mathematics and adopted the national guidelines and local authority guidance to enable appropriate curricular coverage and the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in all subjects. This has had a positive effect on improving pupils' achievements. The school has also improved its resources for ICT although the computer suite for pupils in Years 3 – 6 is too cramped to accommodate them comfortably.

23. The curriculum is planned to ensure that all pupils receive similar experiences and opportunities. In order to provide work that is more closely matched to the needs of all abilities, the pupils work in ability groups for English and mathematics. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They usually have additional support within their sets for English and mathematics lessons. However, this support does not always extend to other subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6. The Individual Education Plans for pupils with special educational needs state clearly what pupils need to learn in order to make progress, although the targets set are not in sufficiently small, achievable steps. The school has plans to remedy this situation in the near future.
24. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is very good. It is taught regularly in each class and also as part of 'circle time', where pupils discuss important issues, and as elements of other subjects such as science. The dangers of alcohol and drugs' misuse are taught as part of these lessons. The school has a clear programme for teaching sex education and relationships to older pupils. Parents are invited to meetings with teachers and the school nurse before these lessons take place so that they are fully aware of the content. The school makes good use of the regular visits of the 'Life Education ' caravan and the Crucial Crew project to support its work. Good use is made of the regular visits of the police, school nurse and health authority to deliver these aspects of personal and social education. Pupils' personal, social and health education is also further emphasised during a special 'Theme Week' when pupils worked with visiting artists and students and designed a number of impressive large panels depicting themes such as 'Friendship' which are on display in the school hall.
25. The school has very good arrangements for pupils before they start in the nursery and before they transfer to each of the next stages of their education. They have established very good links with the local high school to which most of the pupils transfer. There are regular visits throughout the school year by the staff of the secondary school. They teach some lessons such as mathematics and French on a regular basis. Teachers share planning and records so that the staff of the secondary school are made aware of any specific needs of individuals, particularly those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils. There are very good links with other local primary schools. These involve the sharing of in-service training for teachers and two-way visits to other schools to observe good practice.
26. The school provides a good number of activities outside of the school day. These include a number of after school clubs including sport, recorder groups, the school choir and band and a 'challenge club' which focuses on challenges for pupils in mathematics, science, English or art. There are also several opportunities for pupils to learn to play musical instruments such as keyboards, brass, cello and violin provided by the peripatetic music service. These opportunities are well supported. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visits to places of interest, both within the local area and further afield. These cover a wide range of curricular areas and include visits to concerts by the Halle orchestra and Drumcroom Art Centre. Older pupils also have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit where they develop their skills in outdoor activities. Pupils' learning is further enhanced through the special 'Theme Weeks' which are held twice each year. These focus on areas such as the arts, science and technology, personal and social education. During these weeks the pupils from across the school have the opportunity to work with visitors such as artists, sculptors and authors. The school is fortunate to have a swimming pool, which means that all pupils from Year 2 to Year 6 have more opportunities than usual to develop their skills.
27. The school has a good number of suitably qualified teachers who work well together. Although there are an adequate number of support and teaching assistants across the school who provide good support within lessons such as English and within small withdrawal groups, there are often times when lessons would benefit from this support, where groups are often large, particularly in Years 3 to 6. This would then provide better support for pupils who find learning difficult. Overall the quality and adequacy of the accommodation is good, although in three separate buildings. There are two halls, which means that the pupils in both infant and junior classes have easy access as well as the swimming pool and good outdoor playing

areas for physical education. Although the school has a computer suite, which is adequate to teach one-half class at a time, this is situated in the juniors and is therefore not as easily accessible to the infants. The school's library is good in some respects but as it is also used as a classroom for some of the time it is not as easily accessible to enable pupils to use it to develop their independent work. Learning resources are adequate and allow all aspects of the curriculum to be taught in full.

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

The procedures for child protection, welfare and health and safety are good and the procedures for supporting and guiding pupils through monitoring are also good. The procedures for seeking and acting on pupils' views are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Child Protection procedures are in place and effective.
- Relevant staff are trained in child protection systems and procedures.
- Teaching and support staff know their pupils well.
- Medical records are well maintained and fire drills are undertaken and recorded.
- Good risk assessments take place in advance of school trips.
- The school provides a high level of support and guidance as pupils progress through the school.
- There are a small number of minor health and safety issues of which the school is aware and which are now the subject of reviews.

### **Commentary**

28. Child protection systems and procedures are effective and the reporting person is known to all staff in the school. Relevant staff training in child protection also takes place regularly. The school teaching and support staff, supported by external agencies, provide a high degree of welfare and pastoral support to individual pupils as illustrated by the good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored both formally and informally by the school and steps are taken to identify any individual problems with a range of strategies which includes the provision of Individual Education Plans for some pupils. Parents are very appreciative of the care the school takes of their children and the pupils themselves have considerable confidence in the adults of the school community to help them when they need it.
29. In the classroom, teachers and support staff know their children well and they are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by pupils and to take appropriate action. The school operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and appropriate records are maintained. Medical files are kept on all children and relevant staff are made aware of any particular allergies. Regular fire drills are carried out by the school and appropriate records are maintained. The school also carries out occasional health and safety audits of the site and is proactive when considering possible risks on external trips out of school.
30. Lessons in personal development are used very well to provide pupils with the opportunity to talk about themselves and to develop their self-esteem and confidence. Pupils' personal development is enhanced through the provision of both classroom and individual targets to which pupils are expected to work. The school acknowledges pupils' achievement through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies. This practice is clearly a much valued and effective area of the school's promotion of pupils' personal development and achievement.
31. The high level of child protection and welfare systems to support to pupils at the school, together with the good procedures for promoting pupils' personal development and well being, have a very positive impact on their learning and they are a strength of the school.

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

Parents think very highly of the school and there are very good links with them. The school's links with the local community, including other schools, is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents and their children like the school and are appreciative of what the teachers do for them.
- Parents consider the school is well led and managed.
- Parents feel that the school is approachable when they have any problems.
- The school makes full use of the community and other schools to support the curriculum.

### **Commentary**

32. The parents are very supportive of the school's aims and objectives. Parents state that their children like school and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that teaching is good and that the school is well managed. Pupils share this very positive picture.
33. The information provided by the school through the prospectus, annual governing body reports to parents and through regular and well designed newsletters, both curricular and general, is of a high standard. Annual academic reports to parents have been designed by the school. They are used effectively during parents' evenings to clarify any parental queries relative to their child's progress. However, some of the documented targets for improvement included against curricular subjects in these reports are a little too general. There are three parents' evenings each year and these are very well attended by parents. There is also a very active parents' association which provides additional and much appreciated support to the school.
34. A few parents are frequent visitors to the school both in terms of providing very welcome classroom support and in assisting with external visits and with the breakfast and after-school clubs. Parental attendance at school concerts, celebrations and sports days is very good. Parents are regularly consulted on a number of issues concerning their children's education. The information gleaned from the questionnaires are reviewed by both teachers and parent representatives in order to ensure that parents have a 'voice' in the way the school is led and managed.
35. The school also makes very good use of the local environment to enhance pupils' subject understanding, for example in history or geography visits and the range of out of school clubs and activities is very good. The school has very good links with the community and regular field trips are made to study the local environment or to visit theatres or museums. There are also very close links with several local schools, both at primary and secondary level. Year 6 pupils receive a very good induction to the High School. There are already very good curricular links between the two schools and these include regular French and mathematics lessons supported by staff from the High School. School leavers spend an induction day at their new school, and as part of the consultation with parents, they now attend in the class they will join and with their new tutor. At the request of parents, school leavers spend a day at their new school in the actual form they will join and with their new form tutor. Furthermore, during the parents' open evening at the new school, pupils have another opportunity to meet their new classmates and to ask questions of their new form tutor. This is a very effective provision.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management is good overall. Leadership of the school is good overall and by the headteacher, very good. There are very good management systems in place to evaluate the performance of the school. The governance of the school is satisfactory.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is good overall and by the headteacher, in particular, is very good. As a consequence, there is a shared commitment to succeed by all in the school community.
- Management is very good because there are effective systems in place to monitor the progress of the school, particularly in the core subjects. Most subject co-ordinators have a clear overview of standards in their subjects across the school.
- Parents and pupils are very confident in the quality of education offered by the school.

## Commentary

36. Governance is satisfactory. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are reasonably well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of the school, providing support as well as challenge, although more regular and specific visits to the school would help develop their effectiveness. Spending accords with their priorities and with the best value and they monitor the budget carefully.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	1,113, 639	Balance from previous year	10,544
Total expenditure	1,102,557	Balance carried forward to the next	11, 182
Expenditure per pupil	2,180		

37. **The leadership by the headteacher and key staff and subject leaders is good and the management is very good.** The headteacher was appointed shortly after the previous inspection which found a number of important aspects of school organisation in need of improvement. Furthermore, the school was split between infant and junior departments situated in separate buildings and spread over a large site. Under her very good direction the school implemented the recommendations of the previous inspection with great success. In addition, through the creation of teams involving teachers from the infant and the junior sections of the school, she has created a cohesive staff who have, in the main, common and consistent practice. She has done much to include the wider community in helping to shape the strategic direction of the school through seeking their views in questionnaires and enlisting parents onto working parties. The senior management is an effective team that ensures a cohesive approach to the school, as well as fulfilling many specific responsibilities for professional development and assessment. There is very good correlation between performance management and meeting the needs of individual teachers as well as school priorities. Most importantly, the school has put in place very effective tracking systems to monitor the progress of its pupils, as well as monitoring school performance as a whole through self-evaluation. The school has achieved high results in national tests as a consequence of these initiatives while at the same time providing a fully rounded curriculum in the arts, practical subjects and the humanities. The headteacher's commitment to the welfare of staff and the provision for all in the school community has resulted in consistently high attainment of pupils in a happy and productive working environment.
38. The senior management leads an effective team of teachers and the structures and systems that are in place are very good. This is a view shared by parents. The school management plan is an effective document, consistent with the priorities for the school and details the actions/time/person responsible and costs. The senior managers have initiated a detailed curriculum, which covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum, the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy and requirements such as Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education. This has paid dividends in improving the performance of all pupils. Co-ordinators are given time to monitor the quality of work in their subject areas and this information in the non-core subjects is collated into a picture of standards across the school in all subjects.



39. The co-ordinator for special educational needs (SENCO) has an in-depth knowledge about the pupils in each year group, with a good awareness and understanding of the range of needs within the school. Good support is offered to the pupils, especially those with profound and specific learning difficulties. The SENCO keeps well-documented evidence and records reviews and contacts made for each of the pupils on the SEN register.

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

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

**Very good provision for young children in the nursery and reception classes is a strength of the school.** The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and is very good in the reception classes. The curriculum is very well planned to help children learn effectively, and is very well co-ordinated. The very good accommodation provides plenty of space for a wide range of activities, while both the nursery and the reception classes make very good use of the dedicated outdoor play area. A wide variety of imaginative and informative displays and high quality resources create a very attractive and inspirational learning environment. As a result, children make very good progress and achieve very well. There has been very good improvement in the provision since the previous inspection.

Most children join the nursery part-time at the start of the school year in which they become four. They attend either the morning or afternoon session and join the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they become five. A few children attend other local nurseries before joining the reception class. When they join the nursery, most children's attainment is typical for their age, though there is a broad range of abilities. All children learn quickly and make rapid strides towards the early learning goals for young children. By the time they leave reception, most children have exceeded the levels expected in communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Their personal and social development is much better than expected for their age.

Teachers and teaching assistants have a very good understanding of how young children learn. They plan and work together effectively, providing a wide range of interesting activities. Staff ensure that children from different ethnic backgrounds are fully included in all activities and have suitable opportunities to share their own experiences with other children. All children play very happily together, co-operate sensibly and are very well motivated. This is because teachers' expectations are very high, children are constantly encouraged, staff check and record children's progress regularly and work is matched very well to the needs of individual children. Children with special educational needs have appropriate targets in their Individual Education Plans, and receive plenty of assistance from class teachers and teaching assistants. The part-time support teacher provides good assistance both individually to a child with special needs and to small groups of lower-attaining and higher-attaining pupils.

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

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

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

- Children are constantly encouraged to select their own activities and to use resources independently.
- They have very good attitudes to work and co-operate very sensibly with others.

#### **Commentary**

40. Teachers and teaching assistants help children very effectively to develop very good social skills. Nursery children are happy to leave their parents on arrival. They take off their own coats and are quickly involved in choosing from a wide range of activities. They dress up and play sensibly together in *Jack's House* and co-operate well when using the large building blocks in the conservatory. They eat their snack politely and wait for their turn to play on the slide. Reception children eagerly await the start of the morning and afternoon sessions. They sit quietly and listen attentively to their teachers. They put their hands up when answering questions and take turns when sharing resources with other children. They are encouraged

every day to organise their own programme of activities and this helps them to become responsible for their own learning. Children make very good progress and their level of personal, social and emotional development is much better than expected for their age.

## COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop good speaking and listening skills.
- They enjoy looking at books and learn to read simple words and sentences.
- Children recognise the initial sounds of words and identify similar endings.
- By the end of reception, most can write simple sentences unaided.

### Commentary

41. Communication, language and literacy skills are taught very well. Staff constantly talk with children to broaden their vocabulary. They ask many open-ended questions and encourage children to explain what they have discovered. In the nursery, for example, one child named the “axle” on a vehicle correctly and explained how “the wheel turns around it”. Children take part in role-play activities to develop their speaking skills. Several nursery children acted out scenes from *Jack and the Beanstalk*, while some in reception filled up with ‘petrol’ at the *Quick Fix Garage*. Nursery children chatted happily together as they potted plants to ‘sell’ at the *garden centre*. Children who are more hesitant are given plenty of encouragement. As a result, all children achieve very well, and their language development is above national expectations by the end of the reception year.
42. Children enjoy listening to stories. In the nursery, sessions frequently end with the teacher reading a story. Children often sit and look at books on their own. In one lesson, four children listened to a recording of nursery rhymes in the *listening corner* and identified the characters correctly on a picture puzzle. In reception, several children listened to an interactive version of *The Snowman* on the computers, and then completed the related activities. Several children enjoyed sharing their books with the inspector. One higher-attaining girl read a simple story confidently, while an average child read all fifty high frequency words encountered in the context of an early reading scheme without hesitation. Lower-attaining children can read a few key words, look closely at the illustrations and make sensible observations. In one lesson, children followed the text in a large print book and read many words with the teacher. Children then discussed what the characters might have been saying in the ‘speech bubbles’ and compared their own suggestions with those in the text. Children have fun learning the sounds made by each letter. In one class, children vie with each other to identify the sounds so they can leave and get ready for lunch. Children take reading books home regularly to share with parents and other adults. They consolidate their learning of letters and sounds well and soon recognise a variety of simple words. Most begin to use a range of strategies to identify unknown words and to read simple sentences. Children achieve very well, and by the end of reception, most read better than expected for their age.
43. Children are given every opportunity to develop their writing skills. In the nursery, children use emergent writing to describe a *bear hunt* and learn to write their own name. They use a computer game with different levels of difficulty to identify the initial sounds in words such as *king* and *shell*. In reception, they learn to write all the letters of the alphabet and are taught the sounds associated with each letter. They identify words with similar endings and write down their own selection of words ending, for example, with *ug*. They send ‘letters’ from the *post office*, and begin to write their own simple stories with the teacher’s help. By the end of the year, most children can devise and write simple sentences such as *I can see ch(e)rries* in a clear, legible script, while higher-attaining children use capital letters and full stops when writing their own longer sentences such as *My magic hat can do sp(el)ls on its one (own)*. Children achieve very well and most attain standards in writing better than those expected nationally.

## MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy practical investigations such as weighing and sorting objects.
- Good teamwork ensures children are taught effectively in small groups.
- They solve simple problems by adding and subtracting within ten.
- Children know the properties of two-dimensional shapes, and some can tell the time at the hour and half-past.

### Commentary

44. Teaching of mathematical concepts is very good. Children enjoy investigating numbers and exploring shape and size. In a good lesson in the nursery, for example, small groups of children, working with the teacher, threw a dice, counted the number of dots and then covered the correct number with a counter. Later in the lesson, two groups, one with the teacher and the other with the teaching assistant, sorted objects for *Jack's breakfast* and the *giant's breakfast* into sets of *big* and *small* items. By teaching in two ability groups, the staff were able to adapt their questions to the children's individual needs and could challenge the more able children appropriately. In reception, one teacher made good use of a large clock face to teach children the sequence of time from *morning*, *midday* and *afternoon* to *night*. Later, one group of higher-attaining children, working with the teacher, drew times onto clock faces indicating the hour and half-past, while a group of lower-attaining children, working outside with the teaching assistant, played a game of *What time is it Mr Wolf?* Good teamwork ensured that teaching met the needs of individual children well. By the end of reception, most children add and subtract numbers within ten accurately. They recognise common two-dimensional shapes and create simple repeating patterns. Higher-attaining pupils use numbers within 20 and tell the time on the hour and at half-past. Children achieve well, and by the end of the reception year, most children have mathematical skills above those expected for their age.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children learn effectively because they carry out their own investigations.
- There is a good emphasis on learning about children in other parts of the world.

### Commentary

45. Teaching is very good and involves plenty of opportunities for children to learn through practical investigations. In the nursery, children collect leaves during an autumn walk. They plant broad beans and learn from their experiment that seeds need water and sunshine to grow. They examine different materials and sort them into categories such as *shiny* and *dull*. Children in reception conduct a survey of eye colours within their class. They explore different cultures around the world and create collage images of children from countries such as Nigeria, Brazil and India. They make Chinese lanterns to celebrate Chinese New Year, taste Chinese food and perform a dragon dance in the hall. During one lesson, children were fascinated with a radio-controlled toy. They quickly learnt that pressing buttons can make devices start, stop or perform different actions. Children visit the local shops and enjoy visits from the vicar and the local police. They achieve very well, and their levels of knowledge and understanding at the end of the reception year are better than those expected nationally.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children handle tools and small equipment safely and with increasing control.
- They develop their co-ordination by engaging in a variety of energetic activities.

### Commentary

46. Very good teaching ensures that children have many opportunities to develop their manipulative skills and their co-ordination by using finger puppets, pencils, crayons and paintbrushes. They pour water into containers, cut shapes out of play dough, assemble jigsaws and model railways and learn to use scissors correctly. Children take part in more energetic activities both indoors and out of doors. They improve their co-ordination as they pedal tricycles and cars around the outdoor play area, clamber up the climbing frame and slide down again. Children achieve well and their manipulative skills and co-ordination are better than expected by the end of reception.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children use a wide range of materials, paints and construction toys.
- Children enjoy singing and play a wide variety of percussion instruments.

### Commentary

47. Very good teaching ensures that children develop their creative skills well. Teachers make a wide variety of paints, paper, card, fabrics and construction materials available for children to choose from. Children in the nursery, for example, used scraps of wool, felt, shiny paper and tissue paper when creating a large collage of *Goldilocks and the three bears*. During one lesson, several children made attractive collages by sticking pieces of shiny paper and cellophane onto sheets of red paper, while others stuck curly paper and wool onto a long strip of paper to form the hair for a large junk model of *the giant*. Children use white and yellow chalk on black sugar paper to draw pictures of houses, and use a computer 'paint' program to create interesting patterns. In the reception classes, children use their hands to print patterns and to show the effects of mixing primary colours. They paint pictures of their favourite shops, then use a *Word Art* program on the computer to print attractive shop signs. They examine Henri Matisse's *The Snail*, and create their own animal pictures from coloured paper shapes by using a similar style. Nursery children enjoy singing a variety of nursery rhymes. Reception children sing modern worship songs tunefully during assemblies. They enjoy playing a wide variety of percussion instruments and follow instructions well when the 'conductor' indicates that certain instruments should play loudly or softly. Children achieve well and their artistic and musical skills are better than expected by the end of the reception year.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### English

Provision in English is **good**. Standards have improved since the previous inspection.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good attitudes to work and achieve well.
- Good teaching and learning result in standards that are above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 6.
- Very good use of detailed assessments of pupils' progress means that work is well matched to individual pupils' needs.
- Setting by ability allows the most able pupils to be challenged appropriately.

#### Commentary

48. Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject, work sensibly and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs receive plenty of assistance from teachers and teaching assistants. One pupil at an early stage of learning English receives good support from a visiting specialist teacher.
49. Standards in **speaking and listening** are above average in Year 2 and well above average by Year 6. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Year 2 talk confidently to their teachers. They are encouraged to give full responses using a wide range of vocabulary. In a lesson about stories from different cultures, for example, pupils made good observations about the settings of the stories and explained how the different locations influenced the themes. Later in the lesson, pupils used a thesaurus to find interesting synonyms to broaden their vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 respond well to their teacher's questions, take an active part in discussions and share their thoughts and ideas sensibly. They regularly enjoy role-plays and debates, and each summer, pupils take part in a drama and musical production that enables them to develop their performance skills in front of a large audience.
50. Standards in **reading** are above average in Year 2 and are well above average in Year 6. Pupils of all ages are keen to read and achieve well. Teachers and parents work together well to promote good reading habits. Staff listen regularly to individual pupils' reading, while parents are encouraged to share books with children at home on a daily basis. Teachers are aware of the need to encourage boys, in particular, to read regularly, and staff ensure that there are plenty of action-packed books that will appeal to them. During a shared reading session in Year 2, pupils used their 'story voices' well to add appropriate expression when reading a North American Indian story about flamingos. Pupils in Year 2 talk with interest about the books they are reading and retell the story in some detail. They use a range of strategies to read unknown words, and most can read simple stories confidently. By Year 6, most pupils read a wide variety of texts fluently and tackle unknown words competently. They discuss the development of different characters and deduce additional details from the text. Pupils use dictionaries and thesauruses to discover the meaning of unknown words and use library skills well to locate information on a variety of topics. Pupils use the school library regularly to borrow books from a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. The room is also used as a classroom, however, so there are no comfortable easy chairs to encourage pupils to sit and read as a recreational activity.
51. Standards in **writing** are above average in Year 2 and are well above average in Year 6. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Pupils in Year 2 write in full sentences and make consistent use of capital letters and full stops. They are encouraged to use interesting vocabulary when writing. During one lesson, for example, the teacher worked with a small group of pupils helping them to extend their vocabulary when describing the setting for a story. One pupil wrote imaginatively, *The rainforest had tall trees to shade when it was hot. It had*

*thousands of spaces to run wild*. In a lesson in Year 4, pupils used a range of interesting vocabulary such as *paralysed by fear* to describe a battle scene. The school responded quickly to disappointing results in the national tests in Year 6 in 2003 by identifying writing as an area for further development in the School Improvement Plan. The school has since received detailed advice from a local authority advisor and appropriate strategies to improve writing further are already being implemented effectively. One improvement has been to provide more opportunities for writing in a variety of genres across different subjects of the curriculum. Good examples of descriptive writing were seen in subjects such as history and art. Different genres include biographies and newspaper reports in history, sequences of instructions in design and technology and evaluations of investigations in science. Pupils are encouraged to plan thoroughly before starting to write. In a good lesson in Year 6, pupils evaluated the techniques used in constructing a persuasive letter, while one group of pupils, assisted by the teacher, adapted a letter written in non-standard English to create an effective formal letter of complaint. The use of dialogue as a way of making stories interesting is well developed, and teachers encourage pupils to write poetry to extend their imagination. Good use is made of computers to improve the presentation of finished work, and word processing is used on occasions to draft and redraft text.

52. Teaching and learning in literacy lessons are good, overall, and are sometimes very good. Teachers have high expectations and plan carefully, taking into account the individual needs of pupils. Pupils' work is assessed thoroughly, and the results are used well when planning future lessons. Marking is very good, and the consistent use of evaluative comments in 'bubbles' and challenging targets in 'blocks' ensure that pupils have a good grasp of how to improve their work. ICT is well integrated into teaching. In an outstanding Year 2 lesson, for instance, the teacher used a powerpoint presentation to enliven a shared reading session and then used a game on an interactive whiteboard to match words such as *sun* and *shine* to create compound words like *sunshine*. In Year 6, pupils used a computer program to construct conditional sentences. Good support by teaching assistants ensures that pupils with special educational needs achieve well during lessons. The setting of classes by ability is very effective as it enables the highest-attaining pupils to move ahead at a brisk pace and to attempt work that is really challenging. In addition, the use of smaller sets to teach lower-attaining pupils also helps to develop their confidence in reading, writing and spelling.
53. Leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a clear action plan to improve writing further and this is already beginning to have an impact on standards.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

54. The school realises the importance of developing language and literacy skills through other subjects of the curriculum. Interesting examples of extended writing were seen, for example, when writing about pollution in geography and when sending letters home from 'evacuees' in history work on the Second World War. There has been a good effort recently to develop pupils' literacy skills further by writing in a variety of styles across different subjects of the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards by the end of Year 2 are above average and well above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well compared with their prior attainment.
- Teaching and learning are mostly good across the school.
- The management of the subject is good.
- Assessment is used well to track pupils' achievements.
- Marking is not always used sufficiently well to help pupils improve.

## Commentary

55. Evidence from the inspection indicates that current standards by the end of Year 2 are likely to be above average. Pupils in Year 6 are in line to achieve well above average standards by the end of the year. The standards reflect the results in the most recent national tests at the end of Year 2, when the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was average but well above the average at the higher Level 3. At the end of Year 6 the number of pupils achieving at both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 was well above average. This reflects an improvement in standards by the end of Year 6 since the last inspection, whereas standards by the end of Year 2 remain at their previously above average level.
56. Since the last inspection, standards in mathematics have improved year by year. This is largely due to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the subsequent training for teachers, which has increased their confidence in the subject and in their expectations. Further improvements have been made in the procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' achievements both individually and within year groups. The school has adopted setting arrangements based on pupils' abilities which helps to ensure that work is planned to meet the needs of the individuals more closely. These initiatives for raising standards have impacted positively in both infant and junior classes and most pupils achieve well compared with their prior attainment.
57. Earlier work indicates that in Years 1 and 2, pupils make good progress overall. In Year 2, the higher attaining pupils confidently add and subtract numbers to 100, recognise odd and even numbers and are beginning to understand simple multiplication and division. They name and record fractions such as halves, quarters and sixths. They apply their number facts when solving shopping sums. When measuring, they use standard units such as centimetres and metres and are beginning to understand weights such as the kilogram. They recognise and name right angles and two- and three-dimensional shapes. When telling the time they identify half and quarter hours. The lower-attaining pupils follow a similar programme of work but have difficulty when working with numbers that are more than 50. They name two and three-dimensional shapes and recognise the quarter and half hours when telling the time. These pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning and most are on course to achieve average standards by the end of the year.
58. In Years 3 to 6 most teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy well and pupils make good gains in their learning. By the end of Year 6, most pupils, including the lower-attaining pupils, achieve at the expected standard with a significant number of higher-attaining pupils well above average. Older pupils are confident when using fractions to solve problems. They find the common denominator for example when working out mixed fractions of quantities. Earlier work indicates that they have a good understanding of place value and use their knowledge of multiplication and division facts well, for example when multiplying and dividing three digits by two. Further work in numeracy shows an understanding and use of negative numbers, decimals, equivalent fractions, averages, percentages and money. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop their understanding of algebra when using letters to represent unknowns. They use algebra to generalise patterns and when carrying out inverse operations. They have a firm understanding of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes and apply this knowledge well when investigating the rotation of shapes around an apex. Most pupils in the lower ability groups achieve well and are working within the lower end of the expected levels. When working in hundreds in number they show a good understanding when using these in adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing to solve problems. They make good progress in developing their understanding when working with fractions, inverse operations, and negative numbers.
59. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is mostly good, with no lessons less than satisfactory. In the most effective lessons, teachers have secure knowledge and understanding, which are reflected in the good pace, the level of challenging questioning and discussion and in the high expectations of the standards that they expect the pupils to achieve. They engage the interest of the pupils through well-planned activities and a range of



strategies that are clearly matched to their levels of understanding, particularly in the oral and mental sessions. Resources are used well, particularly the whiteboards and the ICT interactive facilities where available. Within some lessons, however, and from the evidence of pupils' earlier work, there is often too much emphasis on learning the 'rules' of the operations they are working, rather than on developing pupils' understanding through open questions and discussion or practical activities that assist pupils in developing their understanding. This is particularly evident in the less effective lessons, where explanations are not always sufficiently clear, and tasks and activities do not encourage pupils to investigate, then explain the strategies they are using.

60. Pupils' work is marked regularly although the quality of marking varies across the school. There are some very good examples of marking which refer to targets and give good direction on how to improve. In some classes, however, pupils are given appropriate praise but the marking of their work does not give them sufficient direction on how to improve. The school has developed good procedures to assess the achievements of its pupils, based on regular evaluations by class teachers and standardised tests. This information is used well to plot the achievements of pupils and to set targets. The presentation of pupils' work is generally good. It is well organised and is neatly presented.
61. The management of the subject by the two co-ordinators is good and has been a significant factor in the good improvement in standards and the quality of teaching. The co-ordinators evaluate the results in standardised and national tests to identify any common weaknesses and have had some opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in lessons. The subject is further enhanced through the extra-curricular club, 'the challenge club' in which pupils from Years 5 and 6 can develop their skills, knowledge and interest in the subject. The school has also used mathematics as a focus during one of its theme weeks when each class took part in exploring using a different number. A teacher from the high school works with the above average attaining pupils each week and is able to provide further challenges especially to the gifted and talented group.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

62. The pupils make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in subjects such as science where they use graphs and when using coordinates in geography, but these opportunities tend to be coincidental rather than planned. There are limited opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in mathematics, although this is an area that has been recognised as an area for further development by the co-ordinators.

## **SCIENCE**

The quality of provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The very effective leadership has improved standards considerably.
- Higher attaining pupils are challenged well.
- Some teaching is too directed and does not give opportunities for pupils to develop their learning skills.

### **Commentary**

63. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection because the leadership and management of the subject are very good. All the issues from that inspection have been resolved. Training and good planning support teaching well. Standards have improved considerably and are now well above nationally expected levels because of the good teaching and the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils.

64. Standards in Year 2 are well above the national average. In these tests virtually all pupils achieved the average standard Level 2 and more than one third of them achieved the higher standard Level 3. Pupils enjoy science and their positive attitudes toward the subject and the good teaching make a winning combination in raising standards. In a Year 2 class, a teacher's opening statement that 'we're going to do science now', was greeted with a universal and emphatic cry of 'Yes!' Pupils are active scientists because the teacher takes them through the whole process in an innovative way using signs for different aspects of the process skilfully. A story-based approach is making scientific concepts more understandable to the pupils, as is the use of examples rooted in their own experience, such as skateboards, to illustrate forces. Pupils are attentive and keen to learn because teaching fosters positive attitudes in which everyone's contribution is valued.
65. Standards in Year 6 are well above the national average and similar to the results achieved by pupils last year in the national tests. These were very high when compared to all schools and to similar schools, with virtually all pupils achieving the average Level 4 and nearly two thirds reaching the higher Level 5.
66. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Lessons are planned thoroughly using the national guidance well. The mixed ability, smaller groupings allow pupils to receive a greater proportion and a more intensive share of teachers' time. The teaching of experimental science is sometimes over directed. There is such a positive atmosphere in all classes that pupils could learn from occasional mistakes in their experiments. The need to develop this greater independence in pupils through discovery is acknowledged in the subject action plan. However, in one Year 6 lesson, there was a particular good example of where the teacher provided such opportunities for self-discovery and investigation in an experiment on substances that dissolved. The teacher handled the lesson very sensitively, prompting the pupils to ask questions about what they were doing and to reflect on their findings. This created a great sense of excitement and wonder. The teaching of prediction skills was strong. Pupils learn to use the word 'because' from a young age, as in 'The sugar will dissolve quicker in hot water because .....'. It is a particular strength of effective lessons that teachers have the subject knowledge to consistently challenge higher attaining pupils about various aspects of science they have studied. Homework is regularly set and marked. It extends the work learned in class. Pupils' work is exceptionally neatly presented, which shows that teachers set high standards and pupils have pride in what they do.
67. All pupils achieve well. They gradually acquire an understanding of the world around them and are greatly encouraged in asking questions like 'how?' and 'why?' They increase their knowledge and use of technical vocabulary, as was evident in a Year 6 class when pupils used their knowledge of molecules to describe a dissolving process. They also develop a good understanding of what 'fair testing' is but this good practice needs to be extended to all who teach science.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Committed leadership has improved standards and provision.
- The small size of the computer suite restricts older pupils' learning.

### Commentary

68. Standards are above nationally expected levels in Year 2. Virtually all pupils are working at the nationally expected Level 2 and up to a third of them are working at the higher Level 3. For instance, pupils comfortably and very enthusiastically write instructions to move a programmable toy in specific directions. Pupils confidently use a word processing program, changing the letter size, colour and style for effect. They use a 'paint' program well to draw a self-portrait, showing good mouse control.

69. Standards in Year 6 are in line with the national expectations and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils work confidently and have very positive attitudes to the subject. They use a presentation program well to write and connect pages of information associated with their World War II topic, though few have yet mastered adding sound and movement to the pages. They work well with spreadsheets and can use simple formulae, for instance to average rows of figures.
70. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have good subject knowledge and many of them regularly and successfully use an interactive white board in their daily teaching. Relationships are very positive and lessons are interesting and challenging. These factors help pupils engage in the tasks, concentrate and maintain very high standards of behaviour.
71. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers create a positive environment in which all pupils can succeed because relationships are very positive and they insist on high standards of behaviour. Pupils are very keen, though their problem solving skills are not well enough developed. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson they tended to raise their hand for support rather than trying to solve the problem for themselves.
72. The room that contains the suite of computers is too small for a whole class of older pupils to use at the same time. Because the class is split into two groups, pupils' lessons are too short for them to master and improve on the skills they have.
73. The management of the subject is good and has raised teachers' confidence. This has improved the quality of teaching in lessons and consequently pupils are learning better. The learning support assistant has a good subject knowledge and is an invaluable support to both teachers and pupils. The use of classroom computers is not as well developed as it might be and is a key initiative in the subject's action plan. Evidence from the inspection indicates that it is more an issue of teachers' confidence and expertise than lack of software.
74. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection because standards are improving steadily. All the issues of the last inspection have been addressed and teachers' planning and assessment procedures are now much better.

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

75. Teachers make satisfactory use of pupils' computer skills in other subjects. The school uses computers and digital photographs to extend and consolidate pupils' skills. Though very little of this type of work was seen during the inspection, displays around the school show that it is a positive feature of lessons. Pupils use 'paint' programs for example, to draw their designs of sandwiches in design and technology. They use the same program to draw very effective pictures in the style of famous artists, like Pollock and Mondrian. They extend their skills in researching the internet, for example when looking for historical information on Ancient Egypt or World War II.

## **HUMANITIES**

*History was inspected in full, whereas geography was sampled.*

76. **Geography** was only sampled as it was not possible to observe any lessons. Judgements about standards are made on the basis of conversations with pupils, an analysis of their work in books and in displays. Overall, standards are above the level expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were typical for their age at the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others in the class. Very good attention is paid to developing pupils' geographical skills as well as increasing their knowledge about places.

77. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop the skills of mapping the immediate area through guided walks. Average attaining pupils can identify some principal features and explain their function. Higher attaining pupils can produce accurate pictures of the main features on their way to school and to distinguish between natural and built features. Most pupils understand the function of how these features are represented on a map and how symbols are used and can use two figure grid references to locate places. They can explain the main differences between their own locality and that of a contrasting locality, for example the isle of Struay in the Western Isles of Scotland. They appreciate that there are differences between developing countries and their own through the study of the Indian village of Chembakoli and in their study of Greece, they can explain some of the differences, for example in the school day between here and there. Through their study of different climates in the world they can explain why particular types of clothing are more suited than others.
78. By the end of Year 6, pupils have extended their geographical knowledge and skills and have attained standards above the average for pupils of this age. They can explain the distinguishing characteristics of a rainforest climate and the features of rivers. They understand the reasons for pollution and how it might be prevented of the features of contrasting localities, for example, a major city and an area in which a national park is situated. They can describe and explain the similarities and differences of mountain environments in different parts of the world.
79. Co-ordination of the subject is good, and the co-ordinators have clear ideas about improvements in the subject. There is a good scheme of work in place and the co-ordinator monitors standards through sampling pieces of work, reviewing planning and collating information about standards across the school through end of topic assessments. Marking is satisfactory but does not always sufficiently refer to the aspect of geography that needs improvement.

## History

The provision for history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in history are above the average expected by the end of Year 6 and achievement is good.
- There is an appropriate emphasis on teaching investigative and enquiry skills.
- The school has recently established a humanities team to promote cross-curricular links and provide mutual support.

### Commentary

80. By the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are above those expected for their age, and pupils make good progress, including pupils with special educational needs. These standards have been raised since the last inspection. Achievement is good. Evidence for this judgement is based on the observation of three lessons, an analysis of pupils' work, displays of pupils' work and conversations with pupils. Good literacy skills contribute significantly to this attainment, as do the enthusiasm teachers have for history and the teachers' very good understanding of the requirements of history in the National Curriculum. Teaching and learning are enhanced through visits and visitors to the school.
81. In Years 1 and 2 pupils develop a good understanding of 'now' and 'then' through topics such as 'Seaside holidays long ago' and through examining the differences between Victorian photographs and those of today. A visitor to the classroom talked about toys he used to play with and pupils were able to identify the differences between now and then. In a good history lesson, pupils were fully engaged in a study of kitchens long ago when they were provided with artefacts, such as a range of irons from different eras, a number of picture cards to sort

into chronological order as well as playdough to make a candle-holder. The teacher maintained their learning at a brisk pace as they moved from one activity to the next, encouraging them at all times to ask inferential questions about life long ago.

82. Teaching and learning are good because activities are well planned, challenging and interesting. In a good Year 3 lesson, pupils studied Ancient Egyptian gods and goddesses and were encouraged to make sensible guesses about what their importance might have been. In a good summary session, the pupils used this information to generalise about important features of life in Ancient Egypt. Some of the class used computers to research information from the British Museum on their topic. Pupils had made links with other subjects, for example in composing a class poem about Ancient Egypt. Very good relationships also contribute to successful learning.
83. The pupils' enjoyment of history is stimulated and extended by a good range of outside visits related to the topics they are studying. In their study of World War II, they receive visitors, preparing a good range of questions to ask them about this past era. In a good lesson in Year 5, pupils successfully interpreted an archaeological diagram to identify public buildings in the Greek city of Olympia.
84. The co-ordinators enjoy history, as do many of the teachers and pupils, and this is demonstrated through effective teaching and learning of history throughout the school. Opportunities are provided for the co-ordinators to monitor planning, scrutinise samples of work and by using end of topic assessments to understand standards across the school. Compared to geography, however, they are at earlier stage of development. Marking is satisfactory but does not always indicate what pupils must do to improve their historical skills and understanding.

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

### **Art and Design**

The overall provision for art and design is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in art by the end of Year 2 and above average standards by the end of Year 6.
- A wide range of visits and visitors to school provides good enrichment.
- The school has improved provision for art since the last inspection.

#### **Commentary**

85. From an analysis of the work available standards in art and design are in line with the average of those expected by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils achieve well and make good progress in developing their skills and techniques, overall.
86. Since the last inspection the school has made improvements in the provision for the subject which now enjoys a high profile. They have been well supported in this work by the local authority teams, particularly in developing teachers' skills and enthusiasm for the subject. The pupils have opportunities to develop their skills and techniques in all elements of art, which includes the development of three-dimensional work using paper and clay for example. They have opportunities to study the work of famous artists such as Henry Moore and Henri Rousseau and the work of artists from different cultures. The curriculum is enriched by a number of visiting artists to school and visits to the local arts centre (Drumcroon), where pupils work with advisory staff. Some of the recent work produced as a result of these visits has been featured on the LEA Drumcroon website as examples of good practice. In Year 6 the pupils use their sketchbooks well to record their appreciation and responses to the work of a

range of artists and to evaluate some of their own work. They also use them appropriately to practise skills or try out initial ideas. The school's art coordinator has been involved in developing units of work to bridge the transfer from primary to secondary school for Standish St Wilfrid's specifically and for the LEA overall. A further factor contributing to the pupils' successes and enjoyment of art and design lies in the regular 'arts weeks', which are held by the school. During these the pupils work with visiting artists, advisory teachers and students and explore art linked with a range of subjects such as English, dance and PHSE.

87. The subject is well managed by two enthusiastic co-ordinators who provide good support for their colleagues. They have had some opportunities to monitor teaching and learning and have recently included discussion with pupils from across the school as part of the process of monitoring. The school uses the national guidance as the basis for its work, but more recently has adapted this to meet the school's needs more appropriately. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory and follow the planned programme.

## **Design and technology**

### **Commentary**

88. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection so no judgement can be accurately made about teaching although provision is good. From teachers' planning, a review of pupils' work and discussion with pupils the full programme is taught and National Curriculum requirements are met.
89. Standards are above national expectations in Year 2. Pupils achieve well because teaching is good. They learn about different sorts of joins and confidently explore them as they try to attach their axles and wheels to their vehicles. Pupils enjoy the activities because they are well organised and excitingly presented to them.
90. Year 6 pupils' work shows that they have a good understanding of the designing, making and evaluating process and they attain well. Their work on 'shelters' was of a high standard with lengthy and precise evaluations of their models and the methods they used to make them.
91. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinators have helped staff to become confident in teaching this subject. They have also provided sufficient resources for them to work with. Lesson planning and pupils' work have been monitored to ensure that pupils understand what has been taught. Portfolios showing pupils' work are high quality but would benefit from including the appropriate National Curriculum level.

## **Music**

Provision for **music** is good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils' achievement is good by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall, with particular strengths in Years 3 to 6.
- Good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument.
- The co-ordinator manages the subject well.

### **Commentary**

92. Pupils' make good progress in music and achieve above average standards by Year 6. The school has maintained the good practice found at the last inspection and improvements have been made in provision for the infants. Only one full lesson was seen in Year 2, therefore it is not possible to make a secure judgement about standards or teaching in the infants. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching is good. All lessons in these classes are taken by the music co-ordinator and pupils achieve well. The teacher has good subject knowledge, is enthusiastic and

ensures that pupils cover all the strands of the National Curriculum. Pupils have many opportunities to listen to a wide range of music both within lessons and as they enter and leave the hall for assembly. They sing well both within their music lessons and in assemblies. Within lessons they develop their skills of composition systematically as they move through the school. This work is usually linked to particular themes that the pupils are studying, for example in history. Pupils in Year 6, for example, used sounds to compose an accompaniment to selected phrases from the speeches made by Winston Churchill. The compositions were performed well with good layering and depicted the mood very effectively and movingly.

93. Since the last inspection the school has benefited from good support and training from the LEA advisory staff. There has been more emphasis on training for teachers from Years 1 and 2 who teach their own classes. This is beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards. Although teachers from Years 3 to 6 do not teach their own classes for music, they have received some training as part of the preparation for 'Arts week'. They are not able to continue or follow through any areas for development from the music lessons, however, as they are not present in these.
94. The school is fortunate in now having a room dedicated as a music room, which is well equipped. The curriculum is enriched by the many opportunities that the pupils have to learn to play a range of instruments. These are taught by visiting teachers and include the cello, keyboards, violins, the brass band and recorders and are well supported. There is school choir, which is open to all pupils. They regularly sing in church, on special occasions and school productions. Pupils also make visits to see concerts and enjoy a range of visiting musicians such as the African drummers.
95. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable co-ordinator who has responsibility for the music in Years 3 to 6. As the co-ordinator for the infant classes is absent at present, she is also managing the subject in Years 1 and 2. The school uses the suggestions from the national guidance alongside the guidelines from the LEA. Assessment procedures, which follow the recommendations of national guidelines, have recently been introduced and are currently being trialled.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's facilities are good and help create effective learning opportunities.
- There is good achievement in swimming.
- The subject is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Management of the subject is good.

### **Commentary**

96. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in the elements observed (games and gymnastics) and reach broadly expected levels for their age. The school benefits from having its own swimming pool which means that pupils are able to have swimming lessons across all ages. As a result most pupils are proficient swimmers by the time they leave the school. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. A structured scheme of work promotes good progression and continuity across the school.
97. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Only lessons in games, athletics training and gymnastics were observed. In these lessons, the pupils achieved satisfactorily, with one exception. In gymnastics, in one Year 2 lesson, pupils made good progress in developing sequences of movements and achieved well as a result of the very good teaching. In this lesson the teacher

had high expectations and developed the pupils' skills well through constant challenge and suggestions for improvement. Time was given for evaluation as well as opportunities to observe the work of others. Pupils collaborate successfully in order to appraise and modify their work. As a result the pupils worked hard and were keen to work at their task so that there was clear progress. However, in a similarly planned but unsatisfactory lesson, the pace of the lesson was slower, the teacher did not set clear targets for improvement or give time to pupils to evaluate their performances and as a result they lost interest and their progress was slowed. In all lessons staff and pupils were appropriately dressed.

98. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has monitored some teaching and regularly monitors teachers' planning. The basic curriculum is enriched by a series of clubs and extra activities. There are good links with a range of local sports clubs including rugby, football, golf and badminton whose members regularly work with the school. Pupils also benefit from joining in competitive sports and athletics with other schools. The Year 6 residential visit enhances pupils' outdoor and adventure skills.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION**

99. The school's work is good. There is a strong ethos within the school, which promotes this aspect of the pupils' learning successfully. There is a clear programme for health education covering in Year 6 sex and relationships education, and puberty and which also raises pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs. This work is also linked to science throughout the school. The class councils and friendship systems are used effectively to promote the pupils' sense of being part of a community, being responsible and making friends, especially with the younger children in the school.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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