

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. LUKE'S C.E. HALSALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Crosby

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104921

Acting Headteacher: Mr B. Banks

Lead inspector: Mike Onyon

Dates of inspection: 7-9 June 2004

Inspection number: 264915

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:	265
School address:	Cooks Road Crosby Liverpool Merseyside
Postcode:	L23 2TB
Telephone number:	0151 9245142
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. D. H. Trollope
Date of previous inspection:	28 September – 2 October, 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This Church of England voluntary aided primary school, taking pupils from three to eleven years old, serves a socio-economically mixed area in Crosby. Pupils are largely drawn from the immediate area of the school. At the time of the inspection there were 243 full time pupils on roll, in eight classes. In addition 44 children attend the nursery, 25 children in the morning, and 19 in the afternoon. Most children enter the nursery with above average standards of attainment. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including those with statements, is well below the national average; their difficulties include dyslexia, and speech and communication needs. A very small number of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds and none are learning English as an additional language. The school is part of the 'Manor Partnership' Education Action Zone and offers its facilities for community use, in particular use by St. Luke's church. At the time of the inspection the headteacher was absent through illness and the school was led by the deputy headteacher, acting as headteacher.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18146	Mike Onyon	Lead inspector	English as an additional language, Foundation Stage, Art and design, Design and technology, Physical education.
9883	Brian Silvester	Lay inspector	
32604	Susan Manning	Team inspector	Mathematics, Science, Citizenship, Music.
8070	Joe Haves	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, Information and communication technology, Geography, History.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Luke's is an effective school providing good value for money. Children's attainment on entry is above average. The long term absence of the headteacher has been managed well by the governing body, with current very good leadership provided by the deputy headteacher in his role as acting headteacher. Overall, pupils achieve well and current standards, by Year 6, are well above average in English and mathematics, above average in science and average in information and communication technology (ICT). Leadership, management and governance are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very effective leadership by the acting headteacher is providing a clear vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations for the school.
- By the end of Year 6 standards are high in English and mathematics.
- Standards by the end of Year 2 are average. Currently pupils' achievement is satisfactory in English and science but unsatisfactory in mathematics, as the result of an over reliance on a commercial teaching scheme.
- Good teaching gives children a good start in the Foundation Stage, and good teaching in Years 3 to 6 is leading to pupils' good achievement.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The school provides very well for pupils' health, welfare and safety, with very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This leads to very positive attitudes to learning and very good behaviour.
- Support staff are deployed very well, effectively supporting the targeted learning needs of pupils.
- Although the school has undertaken a review of its marking procedures and the use of assessment, they are not used consistently to inform targets for pupils' learning, to help pupils understand what they need to do improve and to inform parents of progress.
- Whilst subject co-ordinators are more involved in the monitoring of their subjects than at the time of the previous inspection, their role can be further developed.

The absence of the headteacher over the last twelve months has led to a period of uncertainty, but, under the leadership of the acting headteacher, standards have been maintained at the end of Year 6 and are predicted to be better this year. Issues identified in the last report have been addressed appropriately. There is now very good quality provision for pupils with special educational needs, classroom practice is observed by co-ordinators, school development planning is improved, appropriate information is provided for parents of pupils entering the nursery and the governing body now undertakes an effective strategic role.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	A	B	E
Mathematics	C	C	A	C
Science	A	C	A	B

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

Overall standards of attainment by Year 6 represent **good achievement** for the pupils, taking account of their above average starting point when they enter the school. Children achieve well in reception, exceeding the goals they are expected to reach in the required areas of learning.

Currently, pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is, overall, satisfactory, but there is unsatisfactory achievement in mathematics. Current standards in Year 2 are well above average in writing, above average in reading, and average in mathematics, science and ICT. Overall achievement in Years 3 to 6 is good, with very good achievement in English and mathematics. Current standards in Year 6 are well above average in English and mathematics, above average in science and average in ICT. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and there are no pupils learning English as an additional language.

Pupils' personal qualities are very good. Their attitudes to learning are very positive and they behave very well. The school's very supportive Christian ethos very effectively promotes pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance is very good and is promoted well by the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and examples of very good teaching were seen in English, mathematics, science and ICT. An excellent lesson was seen in history. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good, although, in a small number of lessons in Years 1 and 2 the level of challenge and methods used are weaker. Where teaching is most effective, teachers have a good command of the areas of learning and subjects taught, the pace of learning is very good, they use a good range of resources and teaching strategies effectively and have very high expectations. The good quality of teaching seen at the previous inspection has been maintained. The school's very positive ethos enables teachers to insist upon very high standards of behaviour. Overall, teachers use assessment appropriately to match activities to the needs of pupils. The curriculum is broad and balanced with good opportunities provided for enrichment. The care and support offered to pupils are very good. The school's partnership with the community is good, with a very effective partnership with other schools and colleges. The partnership with parents is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The acting headteacher very effectively provides purposeful leadership based upon a thorough analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses, implementing appropriate actions, for example effectively developing the role of co-ordinators, and continually seeking to improve. Leadership by other key staff is satisfactory with a need to further develop the role of subject co-ordinators. The governing body provides good governance; governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses well and are actively involved in helping to shape a clear vision for the future of the school. They have offered considerable support in the absence of the headteacher. The acting headteacher's clear focus on good quality professional development for staff contributes effectively to the standards achieved. All statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Overall, parents regard the school highly. In particular, they feel that teaching is good, they are comfortable approaching the school with problems, staff treat children fairly and their children like school. Pupils are also very supportive of the school and feel that their views are listened to well. They are trusted to do things on their own, they get help when stuck and they have to work hard. Pupils know that there is an adult they can go to if they are worried at school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise pupils' achievement in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- Use marking consistently, to inform targets for improvements in pupils' work and to better inform parents of pupils' progress.
- Further develop the role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring standards in their subjects.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.

Whilst pupils achieve well overall, achievement is better in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2 achievement is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory in mathematics. By national comparison, standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science, by the end of Year 6. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well, as do pupils with special educational needs.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6.
- Children make good progress in the nursery and reception, and learn positive work habits from the start.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well due to effective and focused support.
- By the end of Year 2 standards in mathematics and science are average, but achievement in mathematics is currently unsatisfactory.
- Whilst achievement in ICT is satisfactory, standards have not improved as in other subjects, as opportunities are less well developed in the subject.

Commentary

The tables shown in this section give average point scores for pupils. Each level in the National Curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term. So, if a school's points are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.0 (17.0)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.7 (15.5)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.9 (17.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. Results in the 2003 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 were above average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Results at the end of Year 2 in national tests were below average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing. Current Year 2 pupils had a disruptive year due to staff illness and their rate of progress slowed during this period. Pupils currently in Year 3 entered school with levels of attainment lower than usual. This was one reason why the results in the tests were lower than the previous year. Because the leadership of the school ensures a sharp focus on raising standards further, considerable support is currently provided for this group of pupils.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.7 (28.9)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	28.9 (27.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	30.6 (28.9)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 35 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. In Year 6, current standards are well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science. This represents very good achievement in Years 3 to 6 in English and mathematics, and good achievement in science. Pupils benefit from teaching that is good and often very good. The large majority of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and responded to the questionnaire agree that their children achieve well.
3. In the current reception class, children are well on course to exceed the expected goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. Effective teaching of early literacy and numeracy skills in the nursery and reception has provided a good platform for pupils in Year 1, so that they are currently reaching standards in English and mathematics above those expected for their age. Year 2 pupils are currently reaching average standards in mathematics and science, well above average standards in writing, and above average standards in reading. When taking standards on entry to Year 1 in account, as the result of recent improvements, this represents satisfactory achievement in science, but unsatisfactory achievement in mathematics. Teaching in mathematics is largely led by the needs of a commercial teaching scheme and the school development plan clearly indicates the intention to focus more effectively upon individual pupils' learning needs in the subject. In addition, there have been disruptions to teaching, as a result of staff illness, which have slowed pupils' progress.
4. The school places appropriate emphasis upon standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and also ICT. In particular, under the leadership of the acting headteacher, emphasis has been placed, effectively, on standards in mathematics, science and ICT throughout the school. As a result, whilst standards are average in science, pupils are achieving appropriately in this subject and the impact of improvements is beginning to be felt in mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are achieving even better now than at the time of the previous inspection, when their progress was judged to be good. The curriculum is planned carefully to ensure that the pupils' literacy and mathematical skills are developed across other subjects, thereby reinforcing their learning more widely. Pupils are currently making good progress in ICT. The subject is being developed well throughout the school, but there have been problems with accommodation. The decision to significantly improve facilities and resources for ICT followed a careful analysis of standards achieved, and at the time of the inspection building work was well advanced to substantially improve ICT accommodation and to enable greater access for all pupils. Staff have overcome these difficulties well and ICT is used as an integral part of many subjects and therefore pupils are using their ICT skills consistently to help improve their confidence in the subject.
5. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Their needs are identified quickly and targets drawn up that are known and understood by everyone. The targets are reflected systematically in day-to-day activities and work is matched closely to individual needs. The support for them, either individually or in groups, is effective in helping them to make good gains in the key skills of literacy, numeracy, speaking and listening and co-ordination. This success has a clear positive impact on their confidence and self-esteem that in turn enables them to take part more fully in whole-class lessons and activities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is very good. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. The pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school sets very high expectations for pupils' conduct and works to achieve them.
- Pupils' relationships with others are very good.
- The very good social and moral development of the pupils is reflected in their very good behaviour.
- Pupils are keen to attend, they come to school happily and this is reflected in the high attendance levels.
- Pupils' self-knowledge, spiritual awareness and their respect for feelings, values and beliefs of others are very good.
- A strong, caring Christian ethos is evident throughout the school.

Commentary

6. St Luke's is a voluntary aided church school, with strong Christian beliefs. In this context, the school values all relationships between staff, children, parents, governors and the community in general, very effectively caring for and respecting each other's abilities and opinions. Good routines of caring and responsibility are established in the Foundation Stage. In both the nursery and reception, the teachers' welcome and enthusiasm encourage children to settle quickly. As a result children are confident when they choose activities and speak and listen to other children in a sensitive way.
7. A daily act of worship, which follows clearly defined themes, very effectively provides spiritual guidance to pupils. Religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Because local clergy lead weekly assemblies and contribute to the curriculum, pupils trust them and effectively look to them for very good moral guidance. By celebrating Christian festivals and the major festivals of other religions pupils are made aware of the similarities and differences of different faiths.
8. The development of the pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures is good. The provision for cultural education is enhanced by a wide range of out-of-school visits and visitors. The pupils raise money for a wide range of international charities like the Toy Box Appeal for Guatemala. There is good provision of education about multicultural, multi-racial communities in the United Kingdom and pupils learn effectively about life in a multi-racial society.
9. The school's provision for social and moral education is very good. Moral development is promoted through fairness and respect of others' values, feelings, beliefs and property. Parents think that the moral teaching is good. There is a strong Christian, caring ethos in the school. Pupils act in a friendly, courteous and trustworthy manner. Pupils are given responsibilities and citizenship is nurtured through community involvement and support for charities.
10. The pupils' personal qualities are very good. The school's very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education leads to the pupils' very good behaviour and attitudes to their work. Pupils are expected to behave in a responsible and acceptable manner. Relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are very good and this assists their learning. Relationships are built on mutual respect and concern for each other. Pupils enjoy their work; they listen well to their teachers and apply themselves with enthusiasm to the tasks given. They work and play together well. As the result of pupils being praised and rewarded for good work they are encouraged to improve and also to contribute to the efforts of other pupils.

11. An anti-bullying policy is in place. Incidents of bullying are rare but, when they do happen, they are dealt with speedily, in line with the policy. There have been no exclusions since the previous inspection.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	3.6	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

12. Pupils happily come to school and are keen to attend. The level of attendance and punctuality is very good, and there are no unauthorised absences. If a pupil is absent without a known reason, the 'first day response officer' telephones the parents. Cases of persistent absence or lateness are pursued by the Home School Liaison Officer.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, with some weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is good. Provision for pupils' care, support and guidance is very good. The school's partnership with parents and the community is good, with a very good partnership with other schools.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good throughout the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory in Years 1 to 6 and good in the Foundation Stage.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between staff and pupils are very good.
- Most lessons are effectively planned, so pupils know what they have to do.
- Good use is made of support staff and voluntary helpers.
- Teachers' secure knowledge of the curriculum leads to effective questioning.
- At times, the pace of lessons is too slow.
- In a small number of lessons, particularly mathematics in Years 1 and 2, there is insufficient challenge, so learning is not extended sufficiently well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 44 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	13 (30%)	23 (52%)	7 (16%)	0	0	0

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

13. Good teaching of children in the Foundation Stage ensures they develop and improve their basic skills in such areas as literacy and numeracy. The well planned lessons stimulate learning, although a lack of equipment restricts the development of outdoor play. Class teachers work effectively with teaching assistants and so children are always productively occupied and have good access to adult support. This ensures all children achieve well and standards of work are above average.

14. Inspection findings support parents' views that teaching is good and pupils' views that lessons are interesting and they are expected to work hard. There is a purposeful atmosphere in most lessons, based upon detailed planning and very positive relationships. Pupils know what their tasks are because lesson objectives are displayed on the board and carefully explained at the commencement of each lesson. As a result, pupils work both independently and collaboratively, because they are confident in what they have to do. Support staff and other adult helpers make an important contribution to learning. In particular, pupils' improving achievement in ICT is clear evidence of their valuable contribution to learning. The school's leadership and management now ensure that teaching and learning are effectively monitored and, as a result, barriers to learning such as an over-reliance on commercial teaching materials are quickly being remedied.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well supported. This is because needs are carefully analysed and their individual education plans identify specific targets for improvement. For example, in Year 6 these pupils are very well supported so they have full access to the curriculum and are able to contribute confidently in class discussion. The levels of support available also ensure that other specific groups of pupils also benefit from focussed attention. This contributes effectively to the good achievement throughout the school and is an example of the school's commitment to full inclusion.
16. Overall teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2, with some weaknesses in the teaching of mathematics. Standards have not been as high as they might, as the result of staff absences and an over-reliance on the contents of a commercial scheme of teaching. This has resulted in the majority of pupils undertaking tasks at a similar level, with limited challenge for higher attaining pupils. Observations of the leadership team now focus very much upon matching tasks to the previous attainment of pupils. In science, in Years 1 and 2, the teaching and learning observed indicate good current achievement by pupils, as a result of this focus. There has not been the same focus in some mathematics lessons. Teaching and learning observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to very good, with the best teaching in literacy. The very good relationships and effective planning ensure pupils sustain interest in their tasks. In a literacy lesson, the introduction of a 'mini-beast' encyclopaedia provided good opportunities for pupils to read and discuss its content and also improve their scientific knowledge. The class teacher's secure understanding of how children learn ensures spelling and pronunciation are reinforced effectively. On occasion, the pace of lessons is too slow and pupils become restless, which slows learning.
17. In Years 3 to 6, over three quarters of lessons are good or better. In history, an excellent lesson drew very effectively upon local history and culture, embraced a range of difficult concepts and was good fun. Pupils responded extremely well, contributing fully and, as a result, achievement was very high. The teaching was inspiring, stimulating pupils and enabling them to understand difficult concepts well. Elsewhere, very good teaching provides a wide range of learning opportunities. Through effective questioning, pupils explored the origins of cricket and improved their understanding of passive and active text through discussion. Stimulating resources promote learning effectively, however, on occasion, difficult vocabulary needs further explanation.
18. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and improving. Information gained helps the school track trends and take action to seek improvement, indicating, for example, a clear need to raise standards in mathematics and science by Year 2, resulting in improvements in science and an ongoing focus in mathematics. However, there are still inconsistencies in the quality of marking, so that pupils do not always receive sufficient guidance on how to improve. Pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in formally assessing their own work. The school is aware of this through the focused monitoring of marking through samples of work, undertaken effectively by the leadership team.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is good. The school provides a good range of enrichment activities which support learning across the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support staff are used very effectively.
- There are very good opportunities made for pupils to develop their understanding of citizenship through charity work and the very good links with the church and local community.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to participate in a range of sporting, music and after-school activities.
- Residential and other visits, together with a wide range of visitors, support pupils' learning well.
- Tasks set are not always matched to the needs of all pupils in some lessons.
- The current ICT suite is too small to allow for whole-class teaching.

Commentary

19. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects, including religious education. The school provides a daily act of collective worship.
20. The school timetable allows for a sensible balance of subjects across the curriculum. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and have recently been reviewed and updated. There has been a clear emphasis upon planning and provision in mathematics, science and ICT which is beginning to have a positive impact on learning, particularly in Years 1 and 2. As a result the use of specialists to teach design and technology and ICT is enhancing provision in these subjects. Teachers create good opportunities for pupils to practise the skills learned in one subject in other areas of the curriculum. Policies for drugs education and sex and relationships education are used effectively in lessons. Best use is made of the very small computer suite, with sessions effectively timetabled for small groups of pupils, led by well trained teaching and support staff. The limited resources for ICT have had a negative impact on standards in the subject and the school is in the process of improving facilities and resources in the light of its analysis of weaknesses to be addressed.
21. All pupils are respected by the adults in the school and personal, social and health education is effectively planned, often as part of work in other subjects. This contributes to the very good behaviour and positive relationships in the school. The pupils are polite and courteous and make visitors feel very welcome. There are very good opportunities made for pupils to develop their understanding of citizenship through fundraising for a variety of local, national and world wide charities. Pupils are encouraged to consider global issues and how to protect the environment through discussion in lessons and in school assemblies.
22. The curriculum is inclusive and pupils have equal opportunities to achieve regardless of gender or ethnic group. However, in a small number of lessons, particularly mathematics in Years 1 and 2, teachers do not always plan work which matches the needs of all the pupils in their care. This means that pupils of higher ability are insufficiently challenged by the tasks which are set for them in some classes. Planning in other subjects of the curriculum has improved, over the last twelve months, with a much better balance of activities effectively linked to pupils' needs now available.
23. Overall, the school makes very good provision for pupils who have special educational needs. They have full access to the curriculum and benefit from targeted support, which is clearly identified as their needs are determined. Where necessary additional resources, such as calculators, are provided to help them in lessons. The role of support staff is significant in

ensuring they enjoy equal access to all aspects of the school. Teachers and teaching assistants have the support of Educational Action Zone (EAZ) staff, who also currently work effectively with pupils, especially in Year 3.

24. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage in their education. For example, in the final half term in Year 6 pupils study units of work in mathematics, English, science and ICT which they continue in Year 7 in their new schools.
25. The school provides a good range of sporting and other activities beyond the classroom and outside school hours. These activities are usually well attended. The school has responded well to parents' requests to allow for younger pupils to take part in after-school clubs. Older pupils have good opportunities to take part in competitive team games. This helps to develop teamwork and social skills. Residential and other visits, together with a wide range of visitors, support pupils' learning well.
26. Overall, resources for the curriculum are satisfactory. They are well looked after, carefully organised and clearly labeled, allowing easy access by pupils and teachers. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Very effective deployment of support staff is having a positive impact on standards and is ensuring that lower attaining pupils and those with special needs make good progress in lessons.
27. Accommodation is generally satisfactory for the purpose. However, because the ICT suite is too small to accommodate a whole class this has had a negative impact on standards in the subject. Because the hall is a through route to other parts of the school, physical education and other lessons are sometimes disrupted. The school is successfully addressing these issues through its new building programme. Outdoor play space is limited at the present time due to the on-going building work. Attractive displays in corridors and classrooms create a very rich learning environment for the pupils and celebrate their achievements very effectively.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare and health and safety of pupils are very good. The support, advice and guidance given to pupils are very good. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The Christian ethos of the school emphasises the need to have care and concern for others.
- All staff have a high regard for the pupils' well-being and pupils feel safe and secure.
- There is a happy, caring, supportive family ethos in the school and this assists the pupils' learning.
- Pupils are encouraged to participate in the life of the school and the wider community.

Commentary

28. This is a very caring Christian school and the pupils feel secure and happy. Staff have a high regard for the well-being of the pupils. Regular risk assessments and health and safety checks are completed rigorously and any defects dealt with promptly to ensure the health and safety of pupils. The school's ethos is built upon care and concern for each other, for example older pupils looking after younger ones during playtimes and lunchtimes, and adults ensuring that there is a safe environment in which pupils can flourish. Healthy eating is encouraged and younger children receive a piece of fruit every day. The school nurse visits regularly to carry out basic health checks. Staff with first aid qualifications are appropriately available to deal effectively with accidents.
29. The school's child protection policy is effective. Pupils are very supportive of the school and are very happy in school. Pupils' views are listened to well, for example, through questionnaires,

and they are trusted to do things on their own. Pupils carry out additional class responsibilities well and, as they get older, effectively take on school-wide responsibilities, like assisting in assemblies and at special events. Plans to introduce a school council are well advanced as the school has the support of the local community. Pupils are also involved well with many church and community organisations and there is a strong whole-school, church and family ethos. The church community has a strong feeling of affiliation with the school. Through their involvement pupils are highly regarded in their local community.

30. The personal development of the pupils is monitored appropriately by the class teachers and reference to it is included in the pupils' annual reports. Mainly informal records are kept. The academic performance of pupils is currently monitored in a satisfactory way. Induction arrangements are satisfactory. New entrants into the nursery come in part-time initially to get used to the school. Parents are invited in and a good information booklet is provided. Reception children come in for half a day in July, prior to their entry in September. They initially start part-time in the school for two weeks. These arrangements help children settle into their new class well. There is no formal meeting for parents prior to reception entrance.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and the local community are good. Links with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school.
- The Parents Teachers Association (PTA) works very hard, raising money to obtain resources to enhance the pupils' education.
- The mechanisms for the transfer of pupils to their next stage of education are good.
- Views of parents are well sought, valued and acted upon.
- The pupils' annual reports do not give specific subject targets.

Commentary

31. Parents expressed strong support for the school, through their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires and at the meeting for parents. Whilst information provided to parents is satisfactory overall and pupils' annual reports tell parents what their children know, understand and can do, the reports contain general targets for improvement but no subject-specific ones to assist parents in helping their child/children to progress.
32. Parents' evenings are held twice each year, enabling parents to effectively discuss their child's progress with the class teacher. Through their involvement in special events, like class assemblies, church services and school performances, parents effectively build their knowledge of some areas of the curriculum and make a good contribution to the education of their child. A committed team of parents and church members regularly help in the school and the PTA successfully raises funds to support the purchase of additional resources. The views of parents are sought effectively, via questionnaires. For example, more extra-curricular activities have been provided in response to parental requests. Homework is used appropriately to reinforce and extend work undertaken in the classroom.
33. There are strong links with many church organisations and there is a very effective whole-school, church and family ethos. The support and prayer from the Christian church community underpin everything the school does. As a result of their participation in local competitions like swimming, cross-country, football, netball, athletics and chess, pupils' social skills are effectively developed. Links with the community are good, for example, pupils sing for the local Mothers' Union and help with community events. Community organizations, like a school of

dance, are encouraged to use the school's facilities, successfully enabling pupils to take part in a range of activities.

34. Funding received through involvement in the local Education Action Zone (EAZ) has been used effectively to install a system for cataloguing the library books and to provide a support worker to oversee it. Pupils move on to their next stage of education well, experiencing successful 'taster days' in their new schools, prior to transfer, and there is a good exchange of pupils' records. The school welcomes teacher training students for teaching practice, from Liverpool Edge Hill University. Other students, from local colleges, carry out part of their training to be nursery nurses and teaching assistants in the school. There are very good links with a number of local special schools and students from local high schools attend work placements.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The acting headteacher provides very good leadership and key staff make a satisfactory contribution to the school's effectiveness. The school is well managed and governors carry out their roles effectively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher has led the school very effectively in the absence, through ill health, of the headteacher. He has been a prime factor in creating a good school, which continues to improve.
- The procedures set in place for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance are good.
- Governors fulfil their role as critical friends well and they are playing an increasingly effective role in moving the school forward.
- The management of special educational needs is good and pupils are well supported as a result. This represents considerable improvement since the previous inspection.
- Whilst the role of subject co-ordinators has been developed considerably since the previous inspection, there is scope to involve them more in monitoring and evaluating standards in their subjects.

Commentary

35. Over the last twelve months the headteacher has been absent, through ill health, and leadership has been very successfully undertaken by the acting headteacher, who had been the deputy headteacher. Initial uncertainty as to the length of the headteacher's absence slowed the implementation of some priorities for improvement. During the headteacher's absence, other staff have taken on key roles and supported appropriately. Uncertainty about the future staffing position has been effectively overcome, with the acting headteacher very effectively creating a clear vision, in particular, to raise standards by Year 2, so that all are clear about the future. The acting headteacher, effectively supported by the leadership team, has improved the quality of provision in Years 1 and 2, effectively monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Whilst standards in Year 2 have dipped in mathematics and science since the previous inspection, there is clear evidence that they are now improving, with pupils currently achieving satisfactorily in science. The improvements are yet to be fully felt in mathematics. With such an incisive focus on standards, improvement over the last twelve months has been rapid.
36. The acting headteacher has effectively utilized the strengths of the staff team and has very clear plans to further develop the leadership team. The temporary nature of appointments means that key staff make a satisfactory contribution to school effectiveness. The acting head provides motivation for staff, parents and pupils alike in striving for further improvement. Under his leadership a very clear analysis has been undertaken of the data available to the school relating to the achievement of pupils and future expected outcomes. The staff team are united and work coherently to the overall benefit of the pupils, and everybody's efforts are valued. Whilst the curriculum is led effectively and subject leaders understand what they must do to

improve their areas, there is still scope to increase the involvement of co-ordinators in understanding the outcomes of assessment data and making predictions about the future expected performance of pupils. Policies have been implemented quickly and there is much consistency in their application as a result. This focus has developed a very positive atmosphere for learning where all pupils are fully included. The school's strong Christian ethos and principles are reflected in all its work.

37. The acting headteacher has built very effectively upon good management systems to help run the school smoothly. Currently, many are new although their impact on the work of the school is becoming increasingly effective. For example, good procedures put in place for monitoring and evaluating pupils' progress, together with good procedures for monitoring the curriculum and teaching, have been effectively used to improve provision. Until recently, this aspect of the school's work was undertaken mainly by the acting head, but is now beginning to be devolved to key staff as they are trained in the expertise required. Staff with curriculum responsibilities are beginning to contribute to the evaluation of attainment and pupils' progress and setting out strategies for improvement.
38. The governing body is involved in shaping the future direction of the school and governors are now well organized in a committee structure to carry out their role effectively. In particular, they have supported the acting headteacher very well, effectively taking on the role of 'critical friends'. This has been particularly beneficial as he sought to move forward in a number of areas. The good information presented to governors by the acting head about the school's provision and performance has enabled them to have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, and how to address them. Governors visit school regularly with individual areas of focus. In particular, they effectively support provision in ICT. One governor regularly supports teaching in the subject. Governors and staff are proud of the heritage of the school and share the same high aspirations for its future. Relationships are very good, ensuring that the school and its pupils benefit from a shared purpose and commitment.
39. The good management of special educational needs ensures that all pupils are included, regardless of their individual differences or backgrounds. Provision has improved since the previous inspection, when it was a key issue of concern. Pupils with special educational needs play a full part in all activities and are supported well by learning assistants. Good role models are provided for the pupils, for example an after-school judo session, during the inspection, was very well led by a visually impaired instructor. Parents are fully included in identifying targets for their children and individual education plans are kept up to date and revised regularly. The administration and management are efficient and staff have confidence in identifying pupils, formulating a plan and ensuring the plan is reflected in day-to-day provision for those pupils with special educational needs.
40. Considerable additional staffing costs, incurred as the result of long term staff absence, have effectively been recovered through insurance. In addition funding has been allocated to meet the costs of current building works, to extend the accommodation and to improve the school's ICT resources and infrastructure.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	582,675
Total expenditure	605,966
Expenditure per pupil	2,240

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	27,506
Balance carried forward to the next year	4,215

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Children start school in the nursery with above average attainment overall. Most children achieve well in all the areas of learning because of the consistently good teaching. As they enter Year 1 most pupils have exceeded the early learning goals and are working in the early stages of the National Curriculum. The good quality provision has been maintained well since the previous inspection. The provision is led effectively, with the teachers and learning support assistants forming a strong team. The assessment strategies are particularly rigorous, with focused and detailed observations of the children made each day, during and after activities. This provides a wealth of information and benchmarks indicating children's progress, which is used well to plan lessons and activities. As a result, children's work is interesting and varied, providing challenging opportunities for children of different abilities. There are well advanced plans to locate the nursery and reception classes together in the 'Halsall' building, improving the current outdoor facilities. Information offered to the parents of children entering both the nursery and reception class has improved since the previous inspection and is of good quality, assisting parents to become partners in the education of their children.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults are very sensitive to children's needs and provide good role models, which encourages children to be caring and to accept responsibility.
- Good planning, teaching and effective daily routines promote very good attitudes and behaviour.

Commentary

41. Children learn effectively, achieve well and most will exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Adults plan and reinforce good routines of caring and responsibility well throughout the day, so that children's attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good. In both the nursery and reception, the teachers' welcome and enthusiasm encourage children to settle quickly. The children sit quietly and show interest when their teachers tell a story or give instructions. They are confident when they choose an activity, speaking to other children and listening to what they have to say. Adults encourage them to share equipment and materials, and offer the opportunity for calm interactions when eating their daily fruit.
42. Good clearing up routines result in the children taking pride in helping to put things away and to keep their classrooms tidy. In the nursery, children register their attendance by recognizing their name card and placing it on a large board. Interesting conversations follow about how many children are in the group and shared interests. The school's ethos encourages a genuine interest in the well-being of others and is established well as children begin their life in school.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning and good teaching ensure that the children achieve well.
- The staff promote speaking and listening well, particularly through child-led activities.
- There is scope to use ICT more widely to promote reading and writing.

Commentary

43. The children enter the nursery with above average levels of attainment and most are likely to exceed the expected national goals by the end of the reception year. The co-ordinator's good planning for language and literacy skills includes well targeted experiences and activities for all the children, resulting in good teaching which helps the children make good progress. For example, in the nursery a group worked effectively together under the direction of the nursery nurse, looking at the sounds of words in their story, 'The hungry caterpillar', whilst the teacher effectively provided one-to-one support for a child in letter formation and writing skills. Adults use many opportunities to encourage children to extend their responses to questions through skilful follow-up questions. Planned role play offers effective opportunities to extend the children's speaking and listening. During the inspection, children in the nursery 'worked' in the pretend flower shop, with its materials and labels effectively promoting exchanges between the children. In reception, a 'jungle' area encouraged lots of conversations about where different animals live and the kind of food and shelter they need.
44. Children learn effectively. They enjoy studying the wide range of attractive books that are provided. These are well chosen to promote interest and to support the topics the children are studying, for example, 'the egg, and growing' during the inspection. Teachers systematically build up their knowledge of letters and sounds and how they are written every day through work on a shared 'Big Book'. Children regularly have organised one-to-one reading time with a teaching assistant, who encourages them to recognize the letters and words they are learning, and to practise writing them. Most know the correct way to write some or all of the letters in their name. During the inspection, some children had the opportunity to listen to a 'talking story' on one of the two classroom computers, helping them to recognise and repeat letter sounds.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning meets the individual needs of all children.
- There are good opportunities to use mathematics in other areas of learning.
- Basic numeracy skills are taught effectively so children achieve well.

Commentary

45. Children begin the nursery with levels of attainment above those expected nationally. Good planning, based on thorough assessment, enables a good curriculum to be presented. This, together with good teaching, ensures children achieve well. Most are on course to exceed the early learning goals by the end of reception. Work is carefully related to children's previous knowledge and learning is presented in a stimulating way. Teaching and learning are good, for example, in a lesson in reception, when interest flagged a little, the teacher introduced lots of 'active' learning, asking the children to "show me seven", "show me eight", checking understanding of numbers and enabling children to experience success in showing the correct number. The activity was successfully developed by encouraging children to 'estimate' how many miniature chocolate eggs were contained in a box. This also illustrates the effective incorporation of mathematical experiences into the general theme of the work being undertaken, based on eggs and growing.
46. By using a large 'duck' made from colourful material, the theme was further developed, and children were given the opportunity to count the number of 'ducklings' and match them with appropriate numbers. The children were very enthusiastic and used good mathematical vocabulary to explain their choices. Children listen well, relate numbers to groups of objects and successfully count on and back to ten. The session concluded with children joining in with the song 'Eight little ducks' in an atmosphere conducive to good learning.

47. Basic numeracy skills are taught well, with all adults losing no opportunities to talk about numbers and to encourage children to use their number skills. Examples of this are when children take their turn at the computer and are asked to look at the list of children's names and answer the question, "how many children have had their turn?" or when the reception class register is completed and children are asked, "how many are in class today", "how many are absent?" Teachers plan these numeracy activities effectively, making sure that children have practical and interesting tasks, which keep them fully focused.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links are made with the immediate environment and outdoor and indoor investigations.
- There is good provision to help children develop an understanding of their own and others' cultures.
- Computers and investigative tools associated with ICT are not yet used enough to enhance learning.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning in both the nursery and reception are good and children achieve well. Most children are on course to exceed the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Whilst the outdoor environment is currently restricted by building works, adults make good use of both the outdoor and indoor learning environments. The classroom environments and additional areas close to the classrooms are used imaginatively. During the inspection, for example, reception children used an outdoor area close to their classroom to search for plastic eggs. They accurately described how they had found them and gave directions to others. The nursery nurse effectively drew on their experiences and concluded the session by asking children to replace the 'eggs' where they had found them, so that others could then look for them in the following session. The classrooms have an appropriate range of tools and materials, including indoor sand and water play areas, as well as computers that children can use. Children also have a regular timetabled opportunity to use the school's computer suite. However, there is not enough use made of ICT equipment, often as the result of its unreliability. This has meant that although children have acquired the ICT skills expected for their age they do not have enough opportunities to use them to enhance their learning.
49. During the inspection good opportunities were presented to children to think about their own school and its 'special' nature. During an assembly reception children sat quietly and listened to the story of King David and the moral that we do not need to get our own back, but should think of others. Examples of art and music from other cultures have been used well in looking at the theme of 'growing'. As a result children are able to reflect upon their own behaviour and how they get on with others.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers' skills and enthusiasm enable the children's physical skills to be developed well.
- The current lack of proper outdoor facilities, and limited access to them, limits what children can do.

Commentary

50. In both the nursery and reception the high expectations of teachers for the children ensure that they are challenged well. As a result their physical skills are developing well and many show good physical control and discipline. Children are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. The quality of teaching and learning is good and children achieve well. There are well established routines for children to use large apparatus and they move equipment with care and control, recognising the importance of co-operation, for example, when carrying a floor mat. Children change their clothes with care and most manage with minimal assistance. They listen to instructions well and quickly recognise the rules, for example, in moving, running and standing still in response to the teacher's instructions.
51. During the inspection children successfully developed a pattern of movement on the floor and around large mats, linked to the imaginary movement of animals. Good modeling by the teacher and learning support assistants led children to move with increasing agility and co-ordination. They strived to land with control, and used a range of movements well to illustrate how a frog would travel, on land and in the water. Children were able to transfer their weight in a number of ways, using their hands, lifting their feet and landing quietly. The use of the children's own ideas helped others, including children with special educational needs, to try adventurous ways of moving. The activity was concluded most effectively and the main learning points were summarized imaginatively.
52. There is currently limited outdoor play space for the children; reception children use it at lunchtimes and once each week, nursery children have daily access, but the resources do not yet include large climbing equipment. Teachers currently effectively compensate through planned physical activities during physical education lessons in the school hall. The accommodation is being developed and improved through a planned programme of building works.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the outcomes of the assessment of individual children's progress, enabling good opportunities to be provided for creative development.
- There are good resources for role play, helping children to consolidate learning from other areas of the curriculum.

Commentary

53. Children learn and achieve well and are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Adults use the outcomes of focused assessment well to plan opportunities for the children to link their learning, for example, in music, dance and art. During the inspection children joined in well with songs about 'eight little frogs' and 'the hungry caterpillar'. They understood the rhythm and movements involved and used them effectively. Art and creative work is well resourced and children enjoy painting, printing and collage. Work is carefully planned to enhance other curriculum areas. Children's work is purposeful and they are encouraged to make choices in their selection of media and use of colours, with effective links to their use of vocabulary and appropriate language. During the inspection the creative development needs of particular children were established through focused assessment activities, led by adults. This exemplifies how the outcomes of assessment are used well by adults to provide appropriate learning opportunities for individual children, enabling them to achieve well.
54. Children have a variety of opportunities to engage in role play, for example, 'selling' flowers in their 'flower shop' or imagining life in their 'jungle'. To enhance the quality of play teachers had provided appropriate materials and opportunities for the children to use them. A good aspect of

teaching is the way in which staff maintain children's involvement in tasks by asking questions about how things are progressing in the shop, or what other materials might be needed. This ensures children learn well through their experiences. Both girls and boys are engaged equally in the activities. Many good quality examples of children's drawings and painting are on display, building their self-esteem and illustrating the high regard given to their completed work.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average by Year 6.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and, as a result, they are now achieving well.
- Standards in writing are well above average throughout Years 1 to 6, because there is early intervention to ensure basic skills are acquired.
- The support provided for pupils with special educational needs and pupils of below average ability is very good, so their progress matches that of all pupils in their year group.
- Assessment procedures do not provide sufficient information to help set targets for individual improvement.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent.

Commentary.

55. Standards of attainment are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. Pupils' overall achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Standards are higher now than a year ago. This is because the school has correctly identified why standards dipped in 2003 and is taking effective action to remedy the situation. Predicted test results for Year 2 indicate better standards this year than last, as a result of good teaching. Higher attaining pupils in the current Year 6 are reaching standards that match their potential.
56. Speaking and listening skills are good in Years 1 and 2. This is because teachers use questions effectively to encourage discussion and group activities promote oral work well. Pupils speak confidently to explain the role of author and illustrator in children's fiction. They devise questions to elicit further information. Plenary sessions reinforce speaking and listening skills effectively, by providing good opportunities for pupils to speak to an audience. By Year 6, most pupils have well developed literacy skills. This is because teaching is consistently good in Years 3 to 6 and often very good. Pupils listen carefully and speak confidently. Pupils are introduced to a rich range of stories from different cultures.
57. Standards in reading are above average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have regular opportunities to read individually, either to their teacher or another adult. Most pupils are accurate readers and possess sufficient strategies to overcome initial problems with unfamiliar words. The most able readers are confident in discussing character and plot, using visual clues to help them. A minority of pupils struggle with new words because they have difficulty in using phonic strategies. In Year 6, pupils are encouraged to choose exciting books and clearly enjoy many of these stories. Pupils are fluent and read with expression. They comment well on plot and character and are able to offer realistic predictions on a story's development. They have good library skills and know how to find information quickly in a reference book.
58. By Year 2, standards in handwriting and writing are well above average and pupils' achievement here is good. Handwriting is very well developed, because it is carefully taught. Most pupils have a secure cursive style and many join their letters. They use full stops and capital letters

correctly and higher attaining pupils use other forms of punctuation, such as question marks. A very good range of writing in pupils' books includes both imaginative stories and descriptive work, such as 'how to make a sandwich.' Pupils enjoy writing poetry and have a good sense of rhyme. By Year 6, standards in writing are well above average. There is a wide range of work in evidence demonstrating pupils' secure spelling, punctuation and well formed handwriting. Achievement is good. Pupils become competent in writing for audience and effect. They re-write Shakespearean plays in a modern idiom, producing film scripts, and write poetry, biography and journalism. Language is used thoughtfully and imaginatively with increasing fluency and creativity.

59. Underpinning all this good work throughout the school are pupils' very positive attitudes towards learning. This is because of very good relationships in all classes, so that staff and pupils work effectively together to achieve success. Pupils with special educational needs and those of lower ability are very well supported by both class teachers and support staff. Their needs are carefully identified and specific targets for improvement agreed. Because of this, these pupils make good progress alongside their peers.
60. Leadership and management are good. The two co-ordinators support their colleagues effectively and have a strong commitment to raising standards. The good quality curriculum provides a wide range of worthwhile opportunities for all pupils. Increasing use is made of ICT to support learning. Assessment procedures are not yet sufficiently well developed to inform individual targets for improvement for all pupils. Some marking is not sufficiently diagnostic to provide all pupils with guidance on how to improve their work. These points have been identified by the school and form part of its action plan. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. The high standards being achieved provide good support in other subject areas. In many lessons, pupils speak confidently and in general conversation they are able to converse in a mature manner. Reading skills assist individual research tasks. Pupils make good use of books and the Internet to locate and interpret information. In geography, they make good use of maps and brochures to plan a holiday. In science, they use information books to develop their understanding of the solar system.
62. The high standards of writing achieved are reflected in several subject areas. Pupils write up experiments in science, using appropriate vocabulary. In history, they write in great detail to show their understanding of ancient Egypt. Skills developed in the literacy hour are transferred across the curriculum and ensure that pupils' work in differing curricular areas reflects their skills in using the English language effectively.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- By the end of Year 6 standards are well above average and pupils' achievement is very good.
- Standards are average by the end of Year 2, but too few pupils attain above average standards due to insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils. As a result, achievement overall by the end of Year 2 is unsatisfactory.
- Very good use is made of resources and support staff, and this is having a positive effect on standards, particularly in Year 3 to Year 6.
- Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons due to the very good support they receive.

- There is inconsistency in the quality of teachers' marking, which does not always indicate to pupils what their targets are or how they can improve their work.
- The role of the co-ordinator is developing, but he does not yet monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject.

Commentary

63. In the 2003 Year 6 national tests, results were well above average when compared to all schools and to those of a similar nature. Teacher assessments, pupils' predicted results and inspection findings confirm that high standards have been maintained and the dip in results in 2001 and 2002 has been reversed. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 are achieving very well against their prior attainment due to the good and often very good teaching they receive. Findings were similar in the last inspection.
64. Pupils enter Year 1 with above average standards. In the 2003 Year 2 national tests, results were average when compared nationally and to similar schools. This is mainly because the number of pupils attaining the higher levels in the tests was well below average. Teacher assessments and inspection findings indicate that, whilst more pupils in the current Year 2 are attaining average standards, the numbers attaining the higher levels are lower than in 2003. This is due to over-reliance on commercially produced mathematics workbooks and worksheets, which provide insufficient challenge for the more able pupils. Too often, work set for the higher ability pupils is the same as work for those of average ability. This has meant that the higher ability pupils do not always achieve as well as they should. Standards, which were judged to be above average in the last inspection, have declined. Under the leadership of the acting headteacher appropriately challenging teaching materials are being introduced into Years 1 and 2 and this is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
65. Across the school pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons due to the very good support that they receive from teaching assistants and tasks which are well matched to their needs. Boys and girls are making similar progress.
66. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. Very good teaching and learning was observed in Years 3 to 6, where teachers plan their lessons well, with clear learning objectives, taking into account the national guidance. As a result, appropriate emphasis is given to all areas of mathematics. There are very good relationships between teachers and pupils and consequently pupils feel secure and are keen to learn. Teachers set very high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond by working hard and concentrating well. The majority of teachers have good knowledge and understanding of what they teach and as a result they are able to prompt and support pupils' understanding, making effective use of questions to assess how well pupils are learning and advance their thinking. Overall, teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory because there is still an over-reliance on the contents of the commercial teaching scheme mentioned above. Most teachers use a wide range of strategies to help their pupils learn and give clear explanations which enable pupils to complete tasks successfully. In Years 3 to 6 tasks are well matched to the needs of most pupils and provide appropriate challenge enabling pupils in these classes to make very good progress.
67. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of shape and can identify the properties of 2D and 3D shapes and recognise all the symmetries of 2D shapes. Most pupils can calculate the area of rectangles and triangles by applying mathematical formulae. The majority of pupils measure and draw angles accurately to the nearest degree. They use standard units of length, weight and capacity and tell the time accurately using the 24 hour clock. Good opportunities occur in lessons for pupils to collect data and represent it in charts, tables or as different types of graphs.
68. Overall, the leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The role of the co-ordinator has developed since the previous inspection. End of year tests have been carefully analysed, weaknesses identified and an appropriate action plan put in place which is helping to

raise standards. There are very effective systems for ensuring that pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 are making expected progress and for identifying pupils, of all abilities, who need additional targeted support and the targeted support is to be extended to Years 1 and 2. The support includes the good use of resources and support staff, involvement in the local Education Action Zone and an after-school "Fun Learning" club. For a time, at the beginning of the headteacher's absence, there was no monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning to ensure that standards attained by pupils were consistent across the school. The acting headteacher has successfully addressed the issue and now regularly monitors the quality of teaching and learning, has identified where improvement is needed and begun to help address this. Sound assessment procedures are in place, but there is inconsistency in the quality of teachers' marking which does not always indicate to pupils what their targets are or how they can improve their work. In some books inaccurate work has been marked as correct. There are sufficient resources, which are well organised and used effectively in lessons. Good quality displays of pupils' work celebrate their achievement and create a rich mathematical learning environment.

Mathematics across the curriculum

69. Mathematics is used satisfactorily in other subjects, including history, geography and science. In science it is used to measure and record the results of experiments, sometimes in the form of graphs created using data handling programs on the computer. Good use is made of the whiteboard linked to the computer by teachers and pupils to explain mathematical concepts and demonstrate findings.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are taught well and this is having a positive impact on the standards they attain in the national tests.
- Most pupils have very good attitudes towards their work and behave very well in lessons.
- Overall teachers have good knowledge and understanding in the subject and this enables them to question effectively, which extends pupils' thinking so that they learn well.
- Good use is made of scientific vocabulary by teachers and pupils in lessons.
- There is no formal monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject to ensure consistency in standards across the school.
- Teachers' marking does not always indicate to pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

Commentary

70. Results in the 2003 Year 6 national tests were above average and are predicted to be above average in 2004. Inspection evidence confirms that the standard of work produced by pupils across Years 3 to 6 is above average. Pupils' achievement is good with most pupils attaining the expected standards for their year group and a significant number of pupils working at the higher levels. This is due to the good and often very good teaching in these year groups and is similar to the findings at the last inspection. Whilst standards by Year 6 were judged to be well above average at the time of the previous inspection, current pupils have achieved well given their starting point on entry to Year 3.
71. Teacher assessments in 2003 and 2004 indicate that achievement is satisfactory overall, by Year 2, as the result of a focus upon standards by the acting headteacher and leadership team. This is confirmed by the standards of work seen in pupils' books and in the lessons observed. Too few pupils reach above average standards by the end of Year 2 because similar tasks are

set for the whole class, and this does not sufficiently challenge the more able pupils. They do not have enough opportunities to use charts, graphs and tables to record their findings, and there is little evidence of ICT being used to support learning.

72. Pupils with special educational needs are often well supported in lessons and as a result are making similar levels of progress to other pupils. No differences were observed in the achievement of boys and girls.
73. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching and learning were good overall and in one lesson they were very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons thoroughly, carefully explaining to pupils what they will be learning. Teachers and pupils use key scientific vocabulary well. In the good and very good lessons seen in Years 3 to 6, appropriate practical tasks were assigned to the pupils which captured their interest and motivated them to learn well. Most pupils talk with interest about their work and take pride in what they are doing. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils are able to describe what constitutes a fair test and are able to describe what stays the same and which variables change when comparing results. They formulate scientific questions, plan investigations and recognise the need to repeat experiments in order to obtain reliable results which will help them to draw conclusions about their work, for example when investigating the rate at which materials will dissolve and whether the change of state is reversible.
74. Assessment procedures are being developed, but have not been in place long enough to impact on standards. In the lessons observed, teachers effectively used questions to check pupils' understanding of what they were learning. For example, during a very good Year 6 lesson the teacher continually prompted and checked pupils' understanding of the different sources of light and encouraged them to be precise in their use of scientific language when answering. Work in pupils' books is generally marked up to date, but teachers do not comment enough on what pupils should do to improve their work. Pupils' work is usually very well presented.
75. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and there have been some improvements in leadership since the last inspection. The co-ordinator is very knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the subject. He is clear about what needs to be done to improve this area of learning and raise standards, in particular the need to raise standards by Year 2. He has put an appropriate action plan in place. He regularly monitors teachers' planning to ensure that all aspects of the science curriculum are taught. However, he does not yet routinely scrutinise pupils' work and does not yet observe lessons to ensure consistency in the quality of teaching and learning in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support staff and the subject's link governor work effectively with class teachers to maintain good quality teaching and learning.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory because it does not currently allow for whole-class teaching.
- The school makes best possible use of its current accommodation in its planned teaching programme.
- Leadership and management are good, ensuring that the subject retains a central role within the curriculum despite experiencing considerable practical difficulties during the school year.
- The subject curriculum is of good quality and provides pupils with a wide range of experiences.
- Class teachers increasingly make good use of ICT to support other subjects.

Commentary

76. Standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6 are average. Technical difficulties with equipment have had a negative impact, but despite this achievement is currently satisfactory throughout the school. Clear actions have been identified, monitored and evaluated in the subject development plan, with improved resources currently being installed. Because of the way that sessions are currently organised and because of the good teaching, pupils are now making good gains in skills development and increasingly apply these across the school curriculum. In Year 2, they use the mouse effectively to select different tools and create colour drawing. They use keyboard skills to write and improve text, using different fonts. Pupils in Year 6 make effective use of word processing skills to write instructional and persuasive text in literacy lessons. They use spreadsheets competently to solve mathematical problems.
77. The unsatisfactory accommodation currently prevents whole-class teaching, because the computer suite is too small. Sessions for small groups are arranged successfully, giving pupils appropriate access to the resources. Building works are in progress and when complete, the school will open a new computer suite and resolve this problem. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use classroom based computers to support learning and, on occasion, groups have access to the computer suite, where they are usually taught by support staff. In Years 3 to 6, groups of pupils (usually about eight) rotate in turn to have weekly access to the suite. Here, support staff and the subject's link governor successfully teach these groups, following the class teacher's overall planning. They are all qualified teachers and have received specific subject training. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is good and at times very good. Currently pupils respond extremely well to this and achieve well. They enjoy working collaboratively and behave well; older pupils develop skills in independent learning. For example, they research the Internet for information and use 'PowerPoint' to design presentations of traditional nursery rhymes. The difficulties with equipment have left ground to cover and the school is making great strides to do so.
78. In the absence of the headteacher the acting headteacher is the subject co-ordinator and provides good leadership. He ensures that ICT retains a high profile in the curriculum, by identifying barriers to progress and seeking ways of overcoming them. As a result, the school invests heavily in additional staff time to support the curriculum. Through good management, all pupils gain regular access to the curriculum and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards.
79. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. New assessment tasks have been introduced, but there is no formal self-assessment. The school is steadily building up information on pupil progress, but is not yet in a position to set individual targets for improvement.
80. Resource provision is good and the school is planning to purchase additional whiteboards to improve flexibility in teaching. Despite the good level of resources, during the current school year there have been considerable difficulties with equipment failure and this has delayed the introduction of new topics to pupils. As a result, there has been insufficient time to develop pupils' higher skills and raise standards further. However, in lessons, pupils are achieving well. The provision of good quality, reliable resources is being addressed, with urgency, by the school. The planned curriculum is of good quality, offering all pupils a wide range of opportunities to improve their competency in the subject. Provision is judged to be good and, given the technical difficulties, there has been appropriate improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were also average.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

81. Whilst increasing use is made of ICT across the curriculum, its use is, currently, satisfactory. Its impact is stronger in some areas than others. For example, it provides good support for developing literacy and numeracy, but is not used sufficiently to support science. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use 'My Amazing Alphabet' to retrieve information in both text and pictures. This

promotes word recognition effectively and also supports history and geography well. By programming 'Preston' the robot, pupils improve their numeracy skills and directional awareness. In Year 3 to 6, pupils apply their knowledge and skills widely to support language and mathematical development. They write stories and poems, record their experiences on educational visits and use spreadsheets to manage data competently.

82. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident in using computers and in identifying new opportunities to promote learning. There is good support for staff in developing their skills. A member of staff provides valuable help and advice on new equipment such as interactive whiteboards, and the link governor is actively involved in promoting the subject widely. Overall, there is good use of ICT across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Work was sampled in geography and history.

83. Three lessons were observed in **history** in Years 1, 2 and 3. In addition pupils' work was sampled in Years 2 and 6. The inspection evidence shows that pupils in Year 2 have looked at change over time, from the 1950s, including schools, transport and inventions. They have also studied the development of castles and medieval society. In Year 6 pupils have studied Ancient Egypt, looking at agriculture, fashion, toys and games. In addition they have studied life in Ancient Greece. Pupils have good opportunities to develop a range of historical skills such as empathy, and work seen supports literacy effectively. Excellent teaching was observed in Year 3: pupils' understanding of their local history and culture was significantly improved with very good achievement and standards above national expectations.
84. No lessons were observed in **geography**, but work was sampled from Years 2 and 6. This evidence shows that pupils have varied opportunities to develop their skills; for example in map work and assessing contrasting environments. The subject supports pupils' numerical development effectively through work involving measurement and the interpretation of statistics, such as rainfall and temperature.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Work was sampled in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education.

85. One lesson was observed in **art and design**, and teaching and learning were good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieved well and broadly met the expectations for their age. They designed their own cloth pattern, based on observations of African 'Chitenge' cloth provided by the teacher, successfully chose colours and produced their own patterns. The teacher's examples and good questions encouraged their creativity. They worked and talked well in groups, but did not always evaluate how well their approaches were working or how they might work better. Displays show that pupils in Year 2 have made puppets, using felt to design characters based on their favourite story characters. Pupils' work is displayed throughout the school and illustrates a clear progression through appropriate areas of the National Curriculum and appropriate interpretations of the work of famous artists, for example Van Gogh in Year 4 and Matisse in Year 5. Pupils in Year 6 have produced paintings in a Greek style, alongside large scale models of Greek pots, effectively piecing together events of the past. Planning documents and links with other subjects suggest that the subject is led and managed well.
86. In **design and technology** two lessons were observed, in Years 1 and 2, and teaching was good in both. The lessons were in a series planned for the term, effectively developing the pupils' skills by enabling them to design and make a winding mechanism. Pupils worked together well and considered how plans for their models might be improved. Considerable planning had gone into the sessions, to ensure that materials and tools were easily available to pupils. Images of pupils' completed work have been recorded using a digital camera and saved in computer files as a record of achievement, however there is insufficient evidence to judge

standards. A national scheme guides teachers' planning. The work on display illustrated an appropriate range of topics and opportunities for pupils, for example, models of fairground rides, designed and built by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Written and drawn work indicates that pupils are aware of the need to design and confidently discuss any necessary changes to improve the design. They are enthusiastic and keen to complete tasks to a good standard. In the lessons observed, resources were well prepared, the teacher was very proactive in supporting and guiding the pupils, and the teaching assistant played a full and active part.

87. In **music** pupils have good opportunities to learn to play the recorder, guitar and other musical instruments using specialist music teachers. They are given the opportunity to sing and play their instruments to their parents and members of the community in assemblies and musical productions. They listen to a range of music by different composers in assemblies and are developing good skills of composition and performance in their lessons. Two lessons were observed and the quality of teaching varied from good to very good. In the very good lesson, pupils were using a good range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments to investigate, combine and organise sounds to create a short musical piece about the supermarket. They drew symbols for each of the instruments and recorded these in such a way that they created a musical score, which they followed when they performed their composition. By listening to and appraising their own and each other's work, they were able to layer and repeat sounds to create musical effects. Subtle changes in volume and tempo added tone to their composition. In this lesson, pupils were working at above average standards.
88. Planned work in **physical education** covers all aspects, including provision for swimming for older pupils. By Year 6 all pupils achieve the nationally expected standard, swimming 25 metres. The subject is well supported by a wide variety of physical extra-curricular activities, including gymnastics, tag rugby, football, netball, cricket and cross-country running. During the inspection a judo session was observed, offering opportunities to boys and girls in Years 3 to 6. The session was of very good quality, led by a member of the Great Britain disabled judo team. The instructor is visually impaired and presented an excellent role model, only revealing his disability at the end of the session. Teams from the school are taking part in various sports festivals at the two local high schools. Pupils in Year 5 and Year 6 take part in annual residential visits, offering outdoor and adventurous activities. Accommodation is satisfactory, with a small hall and large outdoor grassed area. Resources for the subject are of good quality and quantity. This ensures that new activities and skills can be effectively taught and practised. The co-ordinator leads the subject well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

This area of the curriculum was sampled.

89. The school creates very good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of citizenship. The school ethos promotes positive relationships and there is a strong sense of belonging to a family within the school. All pupils are highly valued by the adults in the school and this contributes to the very good behaviour, self-esteem and relationships in the school. In lessons, pupils are taught social skills such as sharing, taking turns, helping and caring for one another. They learn about social justice and moral responsibility by taking part in fundraising for a variety of local, national and world-wide charities. They learn that their actions and choices affect others in the school and the wider community. Older pupils are encouraged to take more responsibility in groups and individually for their own learning. Through discussion in their science and geography lessons, and in school assemblies, pupils are encouraged to consider global issues such as how to protect the environment. There are very good links with the church and community, which allow pupils opportunities to participate as citizens in local events.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

