

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **ST ANDREW'S CE (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Weston, Stafford

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124298

Headteacher: Mr G P Daynes

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> June 2004

Inspection number: 266015

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary  
School category: Voluntary Controlled  
Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 167

School address: Ferrers Road  
Weston  
Nr Stafford  
Staffordshire

Postcode: ST18 0JN

Telephone number: 01889 207030

Fax number: 01889 207031

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Brian Edgecombe

Date of previous inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> October 1997

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Andrew's Primary School is situated in Weston and draws pupils from a wide area. With 150 pupils (82 girls and 68 boys), it is smaller than most primary schools. A further 17 children attend part-time in the pre-reception class. The number on roll has risen steadily since the previous inspection. The large majority of the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage. Very few pupils speak English as an additional language and they are bi-lingual. Currently, there are 22 pupils from the nearby Traveller community on the school roll. High levels of mobility, especially in Years 1 and 2, affect the school. The relatively small cohorts often have substantial variations in the percentage of pupils with learning difficulties. The pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic groups and there is a wide spread of attainment on entry; for most pupils attainment is above average, although there are variations from year to year. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below average and none has a statement of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (seven per cent) is below average but does not fully reflect the pupils' backgrounds. The school has Investors in People status and is recognised for its dyslexia friendly approach.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team |                  |                | Subject responsibilities   |
|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|--|
| 20891                          | Sean O'Toole     | Lead inspector | English as additional language;<br>Mathematics;<br>Information and communication technology;<br>Personal, social and health education and citizenship. |
| 14178                          | Patricia Willman | Lay inspector  |  |
| 20911                          | Judy Dawson      | Team inspector | Foundation Stage;<br>Science;<br>Art and design;<br>Design and technology;<br>Music;<br>Physical education.  |
| 23566                          | John Iles        | Team inspector | Special educational needs;<br>English;<br>Geography;<br>History;<br>Religious education.   |

The inspection contractor was :

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

**This school provides a sound quality of education.** The quality of teaching and learning enables the pupils to achieve satisfactorily. The headteacher, staff and governors provide sound leadership and management. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Year 6 pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science
- Aspects of teaching, including pace, challenge and the match of work to individual needs are not sharp enough in some classes
- Teaching, learning and achievement in Years 3 to 6 are mostly good
- The rate of progress in Years 1 and 2 is not fast enough
- Strategic planning, subject leadership and the assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress are not rigorous enough
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and relationships are excellent
- The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- This caring school has very good links with parents and the community

The school has improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection in October 1997. The school has tackled most of the issues raised in the last report effectively but more remains to be done to accelerate younger pupils' progress. Standards at the end of Year 2 have remained low but they have generally improved at the end of Year 6. Governors now have a secure understanding of the school and ensure it meets most statutory requirements. Teaching and learning are better in Years 3 to 6. The school is in a secure position to build upon the improvements made.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**Overall achievement at the school is satisfactory.** Achievement is at its best in Years 5 and 6. Children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage and by the start of Year 1 exceed most of the expected goals for their age in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

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

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

There has been a downward trend in performance in the Year 2 national tests for several years but inspection evidence shows that this has now been reversed. Test results in 2003 showed that when compared nationally and with schools in similar contexts standards were well below average in reading and mathematics, and below average in writing. Inspection evidence shows much improvement this year with standards being average in reading, writing and mathematics. This change reflects the different makeup of the cohort with significantly fewer pupils with special educational needs and improvements in the teaching of reading and mathematics. The 2003 test results for Year 6 showed a dip from previous years. This group of pupils included a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and several late entrants to the school. Inspection evidence shows that currently pupils in Year 6 make good progress and achieve well. Standards in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are currently above average. The school has improved its target setting procedures and there are improved expectations and performance; pupils are on course to achieve these sufficiently challenging targets.

Pupils achieve well in art and design, music and some aspects of design and technology. Achievement in ICT and religious education is satisfactory and pupils attain appropriate standards for

their age. Pupils with special educational needs and those from Traveller families are included well and supported effectively. Their achievement is mostly good, although they attain below average standards. Boys and girls are equally successful, although there are some minor variations in tests results from year to year. More able pupils in some classes are not always given sufficiently demanding work and they could do better.

**The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good** and contributes much to the pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Pupils are very conscientious in their work and responsibilities; they make an impressive contribution to the life and work of the school. Attendance is now above average and punctuality is good.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a sound quality of education. Teaching and learning range between unsatisfactory and excellent and are satisfactory overall.** Some good procedures for assessment are not used rigorously enough to drive up standards. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Strengths in the teaching include fostering positive attitudes and behaviour well, providing effective homework and the good work done by support staff. Staff meet the needs of pupils from Traveller families and those with special educational needs well. Teaching is at its best in Years 5 and 6 because pupils are set challenging work and expectations are high. English and mathematics are taught effectively. Areas for development include increasing the pace of some lessons, making better use of time and matching work more carefully to move learning on briskly. Marking is completed conscientiously and in some classes pupils are given sharp targets which help them to understand what to do to improve, but this practice is inconsistent. The curriculum is satisfactory and meets requirements, although some aspects of science are not taught with sufficient frequency in Years 1 and 2. The school provides good enrichment opportunities, including a wide range of popular extra-curricular activities, residential visits and opportunities for pupils to participate in countywide events. Staffing levels are adequate. Resources are satisfactory. Although much has been done to improve the accommodation, the limited space restricts some activities and provision is unsatisfactory. This is a caring school that makes very good provision for the pastoral needs of pupils and provides well for those with special educational needs. The school has a very positive ethos.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are sound.** The headteacher provides a strong pastoral lead. Insufficient use is made of data to set challenging targets in the teaching. The school development plan is weak. Subject leaders' contribution to raising standards is too variable. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met, except in some aspects of science. They are very supportive of the staff and have an appropriate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Good use is made of available funds and careful consideration is given to best value when purchasing supplies and services. The school's finances are in good order.

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

The school has very good links with parents. Almost all parents are very happy with the school's provision, especially the way in which staff encourage pupils to become mature and caring people. The school takes the views of pupils very seriously and the pupils, in turn, hold the school in high regard and clearly enjoy all it offers.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Accelerate pupils' progress through better teaching and more rigorous monitoring and assessment especially in Years 1 and 2
- Sharpen up leadership by improving the contribution of subject co-ordinators to raising standards and improving the school development plan
- Meet statutory requirements for science in Years 1 and 2

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is satisfactory overall and good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils attain standards that are above average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6. Test results at the end of years 2 and 6 have shown a decline in recent years but the school has now reversed this trend.

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

- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good and sometimes very good progress
- Progress, especially for more able pupils, could be better in Years 1 and 2
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are not high enough
- Pupils from Traveller backgrounds achieve well

#### **Commentary**

1. Attainment on admission to the school is mostly above average. Boys and girls make a sound start in the reception year and by the start of Year 1 most exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. They are equipped well for the National Curriculum. These young pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen and hard working.
2. Progress through the school is variable ranging from satisfactory to very good. There are some barriers to consistency in learning caused by high mobility in Years 1 and 2. Some cohorts have a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and at times an influx of pupils from Traveller backgrounds, which has an impact on national tests results. This was especially evident in the 2003 results at the end of Years 2 and 6. The school's data shows that, although standards were low in these cohorts, almost all of the pupils had made at least satisfactory gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. However, trends over time show that pupils' performance in tests at the end of Year 2 has not kept pace with the national picture of improvement. This was the result of lack of sufficient challenge and rigorous focus on setting sharp objectives for pupils' performance which led to some underachievement. In the last year, the school has introduced several initiatives to raise attainment and pupils in Years 1 and 2 now achieve satisfactorily. These improvements have included additional training and support in the teaching of mathematics, an effective programme of guided reading and some improved links in cross-curricular work.
3. Results of national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 and comparisons with schools with similar contexts showed that standards were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Inspection evidence shows much improvement this year due to the school's new initiatives and a more able cohort. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are now at least average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils are very able in speaking and listening and have a good grasp of a range of reading skills. Pupils' attainment in science is below average and they do not achieve well enough because the curriculum is insufficiently broad. Overall standards and achievement in reading, writing and mathematics are showing signs of improvement, although past results showed little improvement on those reported at the time of the previous inspection.



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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| Reading       | 13.6 (15.0)    | 15.7 (15.8)      |
| Writing       | 13.9 (15.4)    | 14.6 (14.4)      |
| Mathematics   | 13.9 (15.1)    | 16.3 (16.5)      |

*There were 13 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Standards attained in the Year 6 national tests in 2003, when compared nationally and with similar schools, were below average in English and science and average in mathematics. This cohort had been affected by high turnover and several less able pupils joined the school in Year 6. This dip followed several years of steady improvement in standards. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 achieve well and are on course to attain above average standards in English, mathematics and science. The improvement in standards is the result of consistently good teaching in Years 3 to 6 and very effective work done in Year 6. The school has set realistically challenging targets and indicators are that it is likely to achieve them this year. Strengths in English include the pupils' high levels of competence in speaking and listening, their ability to write purposefully and read with expression and fluency. Pupils are confident mathematicians and have a secure grasp of problem solving. They have a good grasp of scientific principles and apply them well when carrying out investigations. Standards are rising and are generally higher than at the time of the previous inspection.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English       | 26.4 (28.3)    | 26.8 (27.0)      |
| Mathematics   | 27.0 (26.2)    | 26.8 (26.7)      |
| Science       | 28.3 (27.8)    | 28.6 (28.3)      |

*There were 28 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and receive good support from classroom assistants and teachers. Individual education plans clearly identify pupils' needs and are used to plan appropriate activities. The school provides well for pupils with physical disabilities. Pupils from Traveller families achieve well as they are supported well by experienced and skilful staff. These pupils take a full part in lessons, although not all join in wider activities such as school trips, and this hampers some aspects of their learning. Although these pupils achieve well, their attainment is below that of most pupils in the school. The school makes suitable provision for some gifted and talented pupils in its provision in music and physical education. The needs of the more able pupils in Years 5 and 6 are planned for carefully and these pupils make good progress, but more needs to be done to increase the pace and challenge in the teaching in some lessons in other parts of the school. Girls and boys make similar progress in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT have improved since the previous inspection and are now average. Pupils attain appropriate standards in religious education. Some good work was seen in art and design, design and technology and music. Standards in geography are average. Pupils make appropriate use of their skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT to support their work in other subjects.

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

Pupils respond well to the very good promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and, as a result, their attitudes, behaviour and personal development are very good. Pupils are punctual and attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good attitudes and excellent relationships are the foundation of the positive ethos for learning in school
- Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are consistently encouraged and praised for making the right choices
- Because pupils are expected to take responsibility for their own and other's actions, they develop very good levels of self-confidence and maturity
- Pupils with special educational needs and those from Traveller families are fully involved in all aspects of school life

## Commentary

6. Because of the very good promotion of Christian values by the school and the support by parents, pupils enjoy coming to school and show high levels of interest in and enthusiasm for all aspects of school life. They are urged to reflect on moral and spiritual issues in assemblies and to respect the feelings and beliefs of others. The link with a school in Walsall, for example, has increased their awareness of the lives of pupils from different backgrounds and cultures. They feel valued because teachers always listen to their responses and ideas in lessons and this encourages them to participate. The delightful garden area, which pupils themselves helped to create, promotes an appreciation of living things and the cycle of life. They enjoy the creative aspects of their learning, particularly in music, performing with enjoyment, confidence and skill in assemblies.
7. Moral and social development is promoted very well, and this ensures that pupils clearly understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour within the school community. They willingly comply with the expectations of their teachers and become sensible and useful members of the community. All staff consistently praise pupils' good work and behaviour and this motivates them to try harder. They are encouraged to listen quietly to each other's ideas in lessons and to respect different viewpoints. Because of the very good relationships between most pupils, there are few concerns about bullying, and pupils trust the staff to deal with any unkind behaviour fairly and effectively. The prefects and many of the older pupils play an important role in moderating behaviour during playtimes. They play with the younger pupils and keep an eye on the keenly contested football games, sometimes defusing disputes in a calm and sensible manner. The residential visits undertaken by Years 4, 5 and 6 pupils are highly valued by the pupils. The work of the School Council has a very positive impact on the quality of school life. Many of their initiatives and ideas have come to fruition and pupils learn that they can make a difference. There have been no exclusions.
8. The provision for cultural development is very good and this has a significant impact on pupils' personal development. They learn about the cultural and religious traditions of others through many of their lessons and assemblies encourage them to empathise with those less fortunate than themselves. Festivals from other faiths are celebrated and pupils have a good awareness of the multi-cultural nature of British society. A good range of music, art and literature is studied and the interesting displays around the school celebrate pupils' work in these areas. Pupils study the lives of people living in other countries, Mexico for example, and in assembly, pupils sang a Zulu song about freedom. Visitors from other countries come to school to talk to the pupils about their lives and experiences and Class 5 have corresponded by electronic mail with a school in Hong Kong.
9. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and most exceed the levels expected for their age. They are encouraged to work and play constructively and happily together and learn to make sensible choices. The children listen carefully to instructions and try hard to please their teachers and other adults who work with them. They are polite, articulate and friendly individuals who enjoy coming to school and behave well.

10. Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now a little better than that found in most primary schools. Over half of the pupils have very good attendance records. About 16 per cent of pupils have poor attendance records and, of these, more than half come from Traveller families. They are rarely late to school, and this enables the school day to start on time. There are very good formal and informal systems to monitor and improve attendance and parents understand the importance of regular attendance.

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

| Authorised absence |     |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data        | 5.2 |
| National data      | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence |     |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data          | 0.9 |
| National data        | 0.4 |

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a sound quality of education.

**Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning vary widely but are satisfactory overall. There is some good practice in assessment but generally the use of assessment to plan work needs development.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are good
- English is particularly well taught in Years 5 and 6
- The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen varied between excellent and unsatisfactory
- Some lessons lack sufficient pace and challenge, especially for the more able
- Support staff contribute much to learning

**Commentary**

11. Pupils are attentive and keen learners. They work hard and contribute much to lessons through effective discussion. Their collaborative skills are well advanced and the way in which they cooperate by sharing ideas and working together helps to create purposeful learning. Staff build excellent relationships with the pupils and create a positive climate for learning so that pupils grow in competence and develop good skills of concentration. The staff's consistent approach to managing behaviour and the use of praise and reward are notable strengths. The pupils are enthusiastic about most lessons and comment very favourably about the help they receive from adults. They enjoy homework and feel that it helps them to gain in understanding. Homework is mainly linked to English and mathematics, but occasionally pupils carry out research on their own and produce some interesting topics on a range of subjects. Almost all parents share these positive views about the quality of teaching and learning.
12. The teaching is inclusive in its approach and staff work hard to meet the needs of individuals. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs, who are taught effectively. Adults have a good understanding of the specific needs of pupils with learning difficulties and use appropriate individual education plans to plan tasks that help the pupils to grow in confidence. The staff are good at pitching their questions at the right level to involve pupils with special educational needs in all activities, and their explanations are well focused. In a similar way the needs of pupils from Traveller families are met well. Individual or small group support is provided to enable these pupils to participate in lessons and make good gains in basic skills. Work for more able pupils is matched well with older pupils but not as effectively lower down the school, and some of the tasks are not challenging enough. Although teachers think about different tasks for these pupils, many cope easily with what is set for them.

13. Teaching in the Foundation Stage varies from satisfactory to good and is satisfactory overall. Staff have a good knowledge of individuals and are very successful at promoting personal, social and emotional development by providing the children with opportunities to be independent, make decisions and choices and engage in good opportunities for collaboration. Basic skills are taught efficiently and reading and writing are practised regularly. The children learn with enthusiasm and are keen to practise new words and to retell stories they have been told or read for themselves. Some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are taught well, with the children learning much about changes in materials through their play with water and ice. In these sessions the adults carefully question the children and make suggestions which move learning on at a good pace. Staff have very good relationships with the children and create a safe and secure environment which stimulates learning through much practical activity. The rather restricted space in the pre-reception class hampers some activities.
14. The teaching of basic skills in English and mathematics is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In all classes the use of guided reading sessions has worked well in raising standards. The staff make use of the guidance in the National Literacy Strategy in planning English lessons, and sometimes this is adapted very well and results in effective learning which fully engages the pupils. However, some of these lessons are much too long and the momentum of learning is lost as the pace drifts. In some lessons too much time is spent on repetitive tasks which do not inspire and enthuse the pupils, but in an excellent lesson in Years 5 and 6 the pupils produced work of a good standard because of the high expectations of the teacher, skilful exposition and carefully constructed time limits within which the pupils were expected to finish their work. The teaching of mathematics has improved through staff training and the use of the numeracy strategy to provide an appropriate balance between direct teaching and practising skills. Staff have secure subject knowledge in English and mathematics.
15. In most lessons, objectives are made clear and the pupils know what is required. Teachers often start with a review of previous learning, making sure that pupils have a clear grasp of what has been achieved and what is to be done. In the best teaching, teachers refer back to these objectives and intervene skilfully to set further challenges. Sometimes lessons lose their way as the pace drops and additional challenge is not introduced. Science is taught well in Years 3 to 6 but the limited curricular opportunities in Years 1 and 2 mean that learning in this subject is not as effective as it should be. Recent developments in teaching, such as the use of interactive whiteboards, are having a good impact. Teachers use these resources well and they provide a good focal point during lessons.
16. The school has improved assessment since the previous inspection and in some classes there is good assessment of pupils' performance. All teachers are conscientious in their marking and pupils are praised and encouraged effectively. In the best examples of marking the teachers highlight what the pupils need to do to improve and then subsequently check on this. However, this process is not widespread and some pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve. Although the school has a good bank of data, which provides a record of pupils' progress from year to year, the information is not used effectively enough in planning lessons and in setting individual or group targets.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 35 lessons**

| Excellent | Very good | Good       | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor   | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 1 (2.9%)  | 4 (11.4%) | 16 (45.7%) | 12 (34.3%)   | 2 (5.7%)       | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%)    |

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is satisfactory. There are good enrichment opportunities. The school has satisfactory levels of staffing and adequate resources. Some aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides good sporting opportunities and very good experiences in the arts
- Science is not taught with sufficient depth and regularity in Years 1 and 2
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good
- There is good provision for personal, social and health education

### **Commentary**

17. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a satisfactory curriculum and good provision for personal, social and emotional development which equips them well for the next stage of their education. The organisation and planning of the curriculum throughout the school is satisfactory, although there are gaps in the teaching of science in Years 1 and 2 and this leads to low standards and unsatisfactory achievement in this subject. Appropriate provision is made for English and mathematics and the school makes suitable use of national strategies to support literacy and numeracy teaching. In most subjects the school uses national guidelines. These provide a secure basis for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in the subjects, especially successfully in the creative, physical and practical aspects of pupils' development. Statutory requirements for the teaching of the subjects are met with the exception of science in Years 1 and 2.
18. This is an inclusive school in which pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Appropriate systems monitor these pupils' performance. The school has an award for its awareness of problems caused through dyslexia. Parents and pupils are involved in the preparation of individual education plans for those pupils for whom the school has special concerns. There are regular opportunities for pupils to receive support in class or in small groups. Similarly pupils from Traveller families receive good support and staff have good levels of experience in catering for their needs. The staff pay good attention to checking on their progress.
19. The school is successful in ensuring equality of opportunity for all its pupils. Differences between the performance of boys and girls in national tests have been analysed. Staff ensure that both groups of pupils have the same opportunities for learning and participation in a good range of events. The personal, social and emotional development of pupils is catered for well with a good programme of activities, including teaching about sex and relationships and the harmful and positive effects of drugs. There are good opportunities for enrichment, including a wide range of popular extra-curricular activities and three residential visits which contribute much to pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Sporting activities are promoted well and link effectively to health education. The provision for the arts is very good and pupils' creative skills in dance and art contribute much to developing well rounded pupils. Visits are used well to enhance learning, for example in history, and visitors bring their own expertise to share with pupils.
20. There are sufficient well qualified teachers. Staff work well together and support staff are effective. The school's award through Investors in People is highly valued and is clearly reflected in the way that the curriculum and learning are organised. The support assistants contribute much to learning. The teachers and classroom assistants are very hardworking, appropriately trained and committed to the welfare and education of their pupils. The school has adequate resources. The accommodation has several attractive features and enhances learning, especially in sport and environmental studies. However, there is overcrowding and some of the classrooms are in poor condition. Currently, the Year 1 pupils use the computer suite and library each morning and move around to different rooms in the afternoon, and this disrupts their education and hampers the use of library and ICT suite for other pupils.

## Care, guidance and support

The school makes good provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of all pupils. The very good relationships in school ensure that pupils receive good quality support and guidance. Pupils' views have an excellent impact on school life.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The kindness and commitment of all staff ensure that parents and pupils feel confident that any problems will be handled fairly and effectively
- The welfare of pupils is a fundamental priority for staff and governors
- The personal support and guidance for each individual is very good
- Pupils trust their teachers and know that they will help them if they are unhappy
- Educational support and guidance could be better

## Commentary

21. The overall good quality of this provision has improved since the last inspection. There is an appropriate awareness of health and safety issues. Recorded fire drills are carried out twice a term. There is good provision for first aid. Regular checks of the premises are carried out which ensure that the school provides a safe environment and risk assessments are done prior to visits out of school. The headteacher is responsible for child protection issues and keeps up-to-date with developments. All staff are aware of their duty of care in this aspect of pupils' welfare. Pupils learn about the benefits of a healthy diet through their science lessons and older pupils are given appropriate information about sex and drugs. Through their personal, social and health education lessons pupils learn strategies to keep themselves safe and teachers emphasise the safe use of resources in lessons.
22. Because there are very good relationships between pupils and the adults who work with them, pupils are confident that someone will help them if they are unhappy or worried about something. Personal, social and health education lessons and circle times provide good opportunities for teachers to informally monitor and support pupils' personal development and to identify any specific issues that may be troubling them. Because the use of assessment is not closely linked to individual needs, the educational support and guidance for pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2, is not as effective as it should be in raising achievement. There are good induction arrangements for new arrivals, both to the pre-reception class and throughout the rest of the school. This ensures that parents are confident that their children will be cared for.
23. The School Council is a very effective body. It represents the views of all the pupils and the management of the school takes these views very seriously. The playground equipment, acquired through the efforts of the School Council, has a very positive impact on the quality of playtime. They are also involved in policy making and making important decisions on the future of school life.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a very good partnership with parents and the community. Links with other schools are good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have very positive views about the work of the school and support the Christian values promoted by the school
- The parents' association works hard and receives a high level of support from parents and the local village community for its events
- There is good commitment to involving parents in decision making

## Commentary

24. The parents who took part in the consultation before and during the inspection expressed very positive views about the work of the school. They are pleased that their children are expected to work hard and that they are encouraged to become mature and independent. Parents are provided with good information through the prospectus, the annual governors' report and the regular newsletters. The annual reports on the progress of children are good overall. Many clearly indicate how well children are achieving, but targets for improvement are not specifically identified. The consultation evenings are very well attended and parents comment that these give them good information about how well their children are doing. Teachers are also available at other times should parents need more information or have a concern. The school provides an overview of what children will be learning in each class during the year. Parents encourage their children to complete their homework and are very keen to support the personal and educational opportunities provided. Many parents volunteer to help with visits and large numbers attend the performances and celebrations held in school. The parents' and friends' organisation raises significant funds through a wide range of activities and events which are very well supported by both parents and the village community. Parent governors have a good impact on the work of the school. As part of the governors' annual meeting, parents are encouraged to discuss matters that may have caused them concern and to offer ideas for the future. Records are kept of these discussions and, whenever possible, incorporated into the school's procedures and decision-making process. A few parents felt that this process of consultation and involvement has, in the past, taken place after changes were made rather than before.
25. The school has very good links with the local community and, in particular, with the church. Pupils visit the church at important times in the Christian calendar and the local clergy are regular visitors to the school. The events organised by the parents' organisation benefit from the generosity of local business by way of raffle prizes and "promises" for the auction. Many members of the village community support the school fairs and attend activities organised by the parents. A few also come into school and read with the children. There are good links with local playgroups and good systems ensure effective transfer to secondary education. Pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education. Links with other schools are well developed and effective. The quality of these partnerships has improved significantly since the last inspection.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Both leadership and management are satisfactory. Governance of the school is sound.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides strong pastoral leadership
- Evaluation of the school's past performance has not been rigorous enough
- Staff work together well and are committed to raising standards
- The school's strategic plan is weak
- The role of subject leaders is underdeveloped
- Administration, financial planning and management are good

## Commentary

26. Although some headway has been made since the previous inspection, there is still more to do to accelerate pupils' progress especially in Years 1 and 2 and to provide greater challenge for more able pupils. Parents are most impressed by the school's ethos and the way in which the staff promote pupils' personal, social and emotional development. This aspect is a real success of leadership and management and the headteacher, supported fully by the staff and governors, provides inspiration and enthusiasm in this area.
27. Although leadership is satisfactory overall, there are some areas for development. The headteacher has developed a comprehensive system for tracking pupils' performance and recording assessments. However, the system is not used rigorously enough to pinpoint targets in the classroom and this has led to some underachievement in the past. This problem has now

been rectified. The headteacher, staff and governors have produced a comprehensive school development plan which incorporates most aspects of school life but it does not focus sharply enough on raising standards. Subject leaders' action plans are also rather bland, focusing more on resources and coverage than on raising standards. Although subject leaders are enthusiastic and good at sharing ideas, their role in monitoring and evaluating standards and teaching is underdeveloped. In spite of these weaknesses the staff show much commitment to the pupils. This is reflected in the good management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school complies very well with the requirements for special educational needs and monitoring of pupils' progress is very effective. A feature of this aspect of the school's work is the early intervention and support given to pupils. The school also draws on expertise from external agencies to provide specialist support when needed. Similarly, this inclusive school manages the work done with pupils from Traveller families well and one of its successes has been much improved attendance among these pupils.

28. The governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are very committed to the school. They are very supportive and imaginative in promoting the school and the community. However, their role in challenging the school about its performance and influencing strategic planning are areas for development. The work of the governors has improved since the previous inspection. Governors check that the school meets all its statutory responsibilities and have ensured that the good practices in inclusion and equal opportunities are supported fully with well written policies and procedures.
29. The school is justifiably proud of its record of involvement in the graduate training programme and this is well organised and effective. The staff show a good commitment to further training and there are links with the school development plan in setting objectives for training. There is a well established system of performance management and this is used to identify strengths and weaknesses and set targets for staff. The school also makes good use of specialist teaching in physical education.
30. Day-to-day management and administration are good and contribute effectively to the smooth running of the school. The office staff are helpful and welcoming and put visitors at ease. They are well organised and use information and communication technology efficiently. The systems for financial management are efficient and effective and there is robust analysis of spending. The priorities in the school development plan provide the basis on which spending decisions are taken. The governors have a good understanding of spending patterns and use the information when making financial decisions. They apply the principles of best value for money when selecting goods or services. Good consideration has been given to the fluctuating roll at the school and the governors have good contingency plans for spending.

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

| Income and expenditure (£) |         |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income               | 379,615 |
| Total expenditure          | 367,093 |
| Expenditure per pupil      | 2,464   |

| Balances (£)                        |         |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Balance from previous year          | 4, 025  |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 16, 547 |



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

### AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

31. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Children are admitted into a part-time reception class [the Pre-Reception Class] at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday. The induction procedures on entry to this class, and the full time reception class that the children move into after two terms, are good. There is good liaison with pre-school providers, including playgroup and nursery visits to school and visits by the reception staff to the pre-school provision. Most children start school with above average ability across the areas of learning and the carefully planned curriculum, promoting the areas of learning, enables them to consolidate and extend their skills. There are good links across the six areas of learning in both classes, making the curriculum relevant and purposeful. Although the planning is separate for the two classes, the teacher in the full-time class oversees the planning for the Pre-Reception Class. Sometimes the themes, or topics, are similar but there is no joint planning to either ensure that the themes are different over the three to five terms the children spend in the reception classes or to share learning experiences between the classes. While the curriculum is satisfactory overall, enabling the children to maintain their above average attainment, more should be done to rationalise the curriculum across the Foundation Stage. In both classes, the teacher, nursery nurse and teaching assistants provide a range of practical experiences that help the children to consolidate and extend the skills learnt in the more formal class lessons. There is scope to extend these further to give the children more opportunities to, for example, select materials and methods when completing tasks and to be more involved in planning and structuring their selection of activities.
32. The teaching is satisfactory overall and it was good in some of the lessons observed during the inspection. The children's progress is monitored appropriately and the teachers provide learning experiences that are well matched to individual needs, enabling children to make satisfactory progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. Traveller children are fully integrated into the class and are supported well. By the end of their reception year almost all children achieve the early learning goals across all areas of learning and the majority exceed them.
33. Although no lessons in **physical development** were observed during the inspection, photographic evidence and the children's control of tools and small equipment shows that almost all achieve or exceed the early learning goals by the end of their reception year. Children are taught to use equipment safely and effectively and have a good understanding of how to keep healthy. Teachers provide many opportunities for children to develop fine movements. They have high expectations of the quality of the children's letter formation, drawing and painting and care when cutting out. Almost all children use tools and manipulate small equipment such as beads and jigsaws skilfully. Sometimes adults provide too much help, restricting opportunities for children to improve their skills. For example, in the Pre-reception class, the "travel brochures" were already folded in half, missing an opportunity to practise this skill. Opportunities for the use of large apparatus, controlling wheeled vehicles and ropes, bats and balls are limited. There is a good outdoor area and a range of appropriate resources but these are not used regularly.

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children make good progress in forming secure relationships with adults and other children and empathise with other people and characters in stories
- They have a very good understanding of right and wrong and care for each other well
- There are few opportunities for children to take responsibility for their own learning

- By the end of the reception year most children’s attainment exceeds the early learning goals

### **Commentary**

34. Most children have had playgroup or nursery experience before starting school and quickly learn to work and play alongside each other amicably. Staff are consistent in insisting on sociable behaviour such as sharing, taking turns and politeness and children in both classes behave very well. Stories, books and religious education lessons give children a good understanding of moral and social issues and they empathise with characters, other people and animals well, expressing their feelings confidently and respecting those of their peers. The older children readily explained why they thought Teddy was excited in their story and built on each other’s ideas. The expectations are that the children tidy up themselves, which they do responsibly. Although children select activities from those the teacher wishes them to focus on, they do not have enough opportunities to take personal responsibility and make decisions about the materials and equipment they use because these are often pre-selected by the teachers. Children do not plan their “free time” in advance or take sufficient responsibility for their learning, causing some lack of purpose and direction when learning is not structured. The teaching is good.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Speaking and listening skills are developed well and many children exceed the early learning goals in this aspect of communication, language and literacy
- Children are encouraged to read and write throughout the day and are confident writers
- While direct teaching is good, some independent activities lack relevance and challenge

### **Commentary**

35. Almost all children in the Pre-reception class speak clearly using complete sentences and show an awareness of tense and grammar. They use a wide vocabulary and are very receptive to new words so that the older children have extensive linguistic skills, exceeding those of other children of the same age. Adults use, and expect to receive, mature speech where sentences are enlivened with interesting descriptive words and a range of connectives. Good use of role-play situations in the “Three Bears’ House” and the “Travel Agents” provide good opportunities for children to adjust their voices and vocabulary in empathy with different characters. Children listen attentively to their teachers and classmates and respond readily and enthusiastically in discussion.
36. Letter sounds and clusters are taught conscientiously in the reception class and the initial letters of words are identified in the Pre-Reception class. The teachers know what each child is capable of and make sure that their questions to individuals are challenging and achievable. Reading is taught systematically and writing is an integral part of the daily activities. Children write lists and labels and greetings cards, keeping registers as part of their play. The younger children, for example, made a travel brochure and take bookings for holidays. The more formal literacy lessons for the older children are well focused and the children understand what the purpose of the lessons are and what they will achieve. The related tasks for those children not working with an adult in the lesson observed during the inspection were not interesting or challenging enough to sustain the children’s interest for long. There is a culture of reading and writing in the classrooms that encourages children to look upon the written word as an everyday means of communication. Children like to read and write. They make steady progress overall and most achieve the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy by the start of Year 1.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

The provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most children's mathematical development exceeds the early learning goals by the end of the reception year
- Some commercial mathematical games provided do not provide sufficient challenge

### **Commentary**

37. The teacher and nursery nurse have a good understanding of the way children develop mathematical skills and understanding. They teach new skills thoroughly, carefully introducing new vocabulary. Younger children count and order numbers regularly and explore pattern, shape, space and measures through a range of activities. In the full-time class the teacher extends learning and tests understanding through well structured questions that challenge while enabling individual children to succeed. However, the questioning of each child results in some lack of pace and means that children sit for some time with little to do. Some supporting activities link very well with other areas of learning. Some children worked effectively with the teaching assistant to put teddy bears in order and to solve problems involving "more than" or "less than". While this was a relevant activity, it went on too long for some children to sustain concentration. The most able children add and subtract numbers greater than 10 confidently and have a good understanding of the value of the digits in a two digit number, already exceeding some of the criteria for Level 1 of the National Curriculum. There were some good teacher-generated tasks to extend learning, but some of the other activities provided at the end of the direct teaching sessions were uninspiring and lacked challenge. Discussions with the children show they have a good understanding of shape, space and measures. The teaching is satisfactory overall and pupils learn steadily, maintaining their above average attainment.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The planning makes good links with other areas of learning
- Learning is securely founded in practical and relevant experiences
- Information and communication technology skills are taught well

### **Commentary**

38. Most children join the school with a good knowledge and understanding of the world and some have had a range of experiences beyond their immediate environment. Both the nursery nurse and the teacher understand this and learning is clearly focussed on deepening the children's understanding of the way things move and grow, the properties of materials and the children's place in both the physical environment and in their family and communities. Through role-play, the children understand aspects of adult life, commerce [the travel agents] and the home. Children tend their plants carefully and explain what they expect to happen to them. They draw simple maps and discuss different human, plant and animal habitats with authority and an extensive vocabulary. Most children have a secure understanding that things happened before they were born and can describe events in the past. In a good science-orientated lesson, children gave sensible hypotheses for ice cubes melting "because our hands are warm", showing their good understanding of the impact of heat on ice. The children's good fine motor skills enable them to achieve well when navigating round the computer screen using the mouse. Good direct teaching and the children's very good attitudes to learning enable them to master new ICT skills quickly.

39. Teaching of mathematical development is mostly good. The teachers make good use of the locality, visits and visitors to school to support the curriculum. Parents are very supportive and help in the classrooms, on visits and by supporting learning at home, often providing resources to support the topics. Almost all children meet or exceed the early learning goals for knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the reception year.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children use a range of media for their artwork
- They show good imagination and empathy in their role-play
- Sometimes adults give the children too much help, restricting creativity

### **Commentary**

40. The children's work in the classroom and in their folders show that they use a good range of media and techniques, often linked with the other areas of learning. Older children select materials to create a seascape from a selection of sea-coloured materials. Others painted on wet fabric to create seascapes in the style of Monet. In an effort to perfect the style, however, children had little choice in the colours or form of their work. The younger children selected and cut out pictures to stick on their brochures, but the choice of picture was the only aspect these children could choose for themselves. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory but the children in both classes have the imagination and skills to be successful and to achieve more, given more opportunities to work independently. Children show a lively imagination when discussing the feelings of characters in their stories and adults are good at developing this, often encouraging other children to add to individual ideas. Although no music lessons were observed during the inspection, the subject teacher's planning is challenging, with objectives that exceed the early learning goals for music. Children sing enthusiastically in assemblies and know a wide range of hymns and songs. Overall most children attain the expected goals for their age in creative development by the end of the reception year.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

The provision for English is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well in speaking, listening, reading and writing by the end of Year 6
- Teaching is very good in Years 5 and 6
- Assessment information is not used well enough to support the specific needs of some groups of pupils
- The subject leader provides a good role model and support for staff
- The links between literacy and other subjects are good
- Insufficient use is made of the school library

### **Commentary**

41. Progress in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but more needs to be done to challenge more able pupils. There is lack of creativity and innovation and, while standards in reading and writing are average, they could be higher. Teaching improves in the juniors and the consistently very good

quality in Years 5 and 6 enables pupils to make very good progress. The pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment and standards in the current Year 6 are above average in reading and writing and well above average in speaking and listening. Pupils from Traveller families also achieve well although the standards they attain are mostly below average. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by staff. Teaching assistants enable their full inclusion in lessons and individual needs are identified at an early stage. The progress of pupils is monitored regularly and discussed with parents and carers. This supports the development of pupils' confidence and self esteem. There has been good improvement from the 2003 national tests when standards in Year 6 were below average. The proportions of pupils who move schools frequently varies between cohorts but their needs are managed well. The trend is now moving upwards and, through focused subject leadership and modelling of teaching, staff understand what to do to raise standards higher. The school did not meet its targets in 2003 because too few pupils reached the higher levels but it is on course to meet them in 2004. Tracking information is well implemented and enables the school to identify differences in the performance of groups of pupils. However, assessment information in Years 1 and 2 is not used well enough to plan specifically for the needs of different groups. Good links are made between the teaching in English lessons and other subjects. Pupils enthusiastically apply their skills and knowledge and this is supporting the development of reading and writing through meaningful learning.

42. Pupils use descriptive vocabulary and excite their audiences as they confidently share their ideas and opinions. They use persuasive arguments and critical comments in their oral and written work, and their expressive language maintains the interest and motivation of their friends. Pupils are proud of their work. Books are neat and well presented and there is good evidence of targets enabling pupils to understand their next challenge and how to achieve it. Marking is of good quality in the juniors and very good in Year 6. In Years 1 and 2 there is not enough variety in the range of teaching styles to maintain high levels of interest and motivation. There is not enough rigour to promote the faster pace of learning seen in the junior classes.
43. The very good teaching seen in Year 6 is inspirational at times. All groups of pupils are challenged effectively and the teacher makes very good use of drama to engage pupils and creatively enable them to understand characterisation and context. The pace of lessons is fast and very good use of questioning, research skills and opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups enable them to take part in debate and use the subject language which has been introduced. Pupils have a very good knowledge of grammar and punctuation. Spelling is accurate and this ensures that work is interesting and carefully edited before being marked. Pupils are encouraged to apply their skills creatively in subjects such as history, geography and religious education as they select the most appropriate forms of writing for their tasks and structure arguments logically.
44. Pupils say they enjoy reading and writing. They give precise examples from texts to support their ideas and eagerly find passages to illustrate their points of view. They have a very good knowledge of a range of authors with favourites being Jacqueline Wilson, Roald Dahl and J K Rowling. Library skills support research well but, overall, the library is not used well enough to support independent research across subjects. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the work they do at home and use the Internet to extend their research.
45. The subject leader provides a good role model and her leadership is satisfactory. The action plan does not focus well enough on raising standards higher by Year 2. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching, learning and pupils' work is good in the juniors but lacks sufficient rigour in Years 1 and 2. Provision is similar to that described in the last report.

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

46. There are good links evident in subject planning to provide the context for reading and writing, and there are good examples of pupils' writing in a range of styles across subjects. In geography dialogue and play scripts bring to life pupils' learning about life in the city of

Manchester. In religious education, drama enables pupils to express their feelings and develop a deeper understanding of traditions and cultures beyond their own. The high priority placed on developing oral language is a significant strength. This links learning through meaningful and relevant experiences, which enable pupils to describe their understanding in depth.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6
- The more able are not challenged enough in Years 1 and 2

### **Commentary**

47. After a spell of indifferent test results at the end of Year 2 where standards have been well below average, and average performance in tests at the end of Year 6 the school has made good strides in the last year to raise pupils' attainment. Standards are rising due to increased training for staff, a more effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy and better target setting for performance in national tests. Inspection evidence shows that standards are now average by the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Overall achievement is satisfactory and good in Years 3 to 6 where the teaching has brisker pace and more challenge. Pupils make most rapid gains in their learning in Years 5 and 6 where teaching is often very challenging. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 but good elsewhere. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers, as do those pupils from Traveller families. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons because they are supported effectively and helped through the use of resources.
48. Throughout the school pupils achieve well in number work and show good competence in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. There is regular practice of calculating and the work increases in complexity through the school. Pupils have a secure grasp of shape, space and measures and this work links well with ICT in Year 2 where pupils estimate distances that a robot might travel and make accurate guesses about the angles required for turn. Older pupils have a secure knowledge of the properties of shapes and use this creatively in their art work. Skills in data handling are linked well to their work in computers, and most pupils have a good grasp of a variety of graphs and charts and are able to draw information from them. A relatively weaker area is in using and applying mathematical knowledge to solving complex problems, although good progress has been made in this aspect this year in Years 3 to 6. Pupils have a good grasp of mathematical vocabulary. There is little difference in the performance of boys and girls in lessons although from year to year there are slight variations in test results with girls doing better than boys in Year 2 tests and vice versa in Year 6.
49. Pupils enjoy mathematics and join in lessons enthusiastically. They work hard, maintain good levels of concentration and present their work well. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and good in Years 3 to 6 mainly because of more secure subject knowledge and expertise. Lessons vary in pace and challenge. In Years 1 and 2 there is not enough challenge for more able pupils who often complete tasks quickly and easily. Although staff provide different work for the various abilities it is sometimes not hard enough. In Years 3 to 6 lessons have good pace and are sufficiently challenging as good account is taken of the needs of pupils of different abilities. Throughout the school, good warm up sessions with mental arithmetic questions have contributed much to extending pupils' competence quick calculation. In the best lessons, teachers expect the pupils to work hard and often set time limits to ensure that sufficient work is covered. In a very effective lesson in Years 5 and 6 the teacher set very clear targets and reviewed progress at several points which helped the pupils to keep on track and also provided opportunities for them to discuss any difficulties with the teacher. Homework is used regularly to reinforce what has been taught in lessons. Teachers are conscientious in marking and in the

best examples clearly indicate what the pupils need to do to improve. This practice is not consistent and is rarely linked to specific targets for achievement.

50. All staff follow school guidelines and the subject leader plays a suitable part in checking that the curriculum is covered and in providing training and support where needed. There is regular testing of pupils and the results are recorded and used to track pupils' progress. However, the system is not used to set specific targets, and this is an area for development especially in pinpointing challenge for more able pupils.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

51. The use of mathematics to support work in other subjects is satisfactory. There are good examples of work in science using charts, tables and graphs to present data in Years 5 and 6. Teachers make good links with ICT and encourage the pupils to think mathematically when constructing databases and spreadsheets and to use formula. When programming robots pupils learn much about angles and estimates. When doing scientific experiments the pupils make satisfactory use of a variety of measuring instruments and scales to record their results.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **satisfactory** overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum does not meet statutory requirements in the infants
- Pupils in the juniors make good progress and achieve above average standards in Year 6
- Standards are below average in Year 2

### **Commentary**

52. There were no science lessons in Year 1 and Year 2 during the inspection but inspectors looked at the teachers' planning and timetables, the work in pupils' books and talked to teachers and a group of Year 2 pupils. Provision in Years 1 and 2 is unsatisfactory. Pupils' books contain studies of plant and animal growth, habitats and simple human anatomy. Pupils have grown their own plants and visited the Stratford-Upon-Avon butterfly farm. The work is detailed and well presented and shows appropriate attention to scientific enquiry. The marking is good, often showing pupils how they can improve. However, this is the only aspect of science covered this year for both year groups and there is no work about materials and their properties or physical forces. Discussion with pupils confirms that their knowledge of these aspects of science is limited and based on their general knowledge. The school's planning and discussion with teachers shows that the subject alternates with geography on the timetable. This is not appropriate for the core subject of science. The planning uses a two-year cycle, but just one aspect of science over the year is insufficient to enable pupils to attain national expectations for science. Standards in Year 2 are above average for life processes and living things and some aspects of scientific enquiry, but well below average for the other aspects of science. The unsatisfactory provision has resulted in Year 2 standards in science being well below average over the last few years.
53. Pupils' books in Years 3 to 6 show a good balance of all aspects of science. The recent focus on scientific enquiry is evident in pupils' work and pupils achieve well throughout the juniors. In a lesson in the oldest class, pupils used their good reasoning powers to form a hypothesis about the nature of an experiment the teacher planned based on the materials and equipment she showed them, in spite of the "red herrings" lurking amongst the objects. They then worked cooperatively to design their own experiments. These covered the full range of the curriculum and demonstrated their good knowledge of forces and friction, the properties of materials and changes as well as life processes. Scientific vocabulary is used accurately and as part of the general conversation. In this good lesson, the teacher's good subject knowledge and

understanding of what the pupils can achieve, her humour and high expectations enabled pupils to achieve well. Her attention to literacy, speaking and listening, observational and instructional language, as well as the pupils' personal targets, made learning cohesive and challenging. Pupils in the Years 4 and 5 have good research skills and general knowledge about the solar system. In their lesson to find out about the sun and planets they used charts and books to order the planets by the distance from the sun. Several pupils added additional information during the process. Most did not need the fact sheet supplied by the trainee teacher, using their research to create an information sheet about their planet.

54. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of visits. Pupils go to a local food outlet and dairy when studying diet and Hanson quarry to support work on soil and rocks. They use rivers and ponds and the school pond is a very good source for pond dipping. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and science homework, often including extensive research, is completed conscientiously. Travellers' children and pupils with special educational needs make good progress, in line with their peers. Teaching is good in the juniors, with high expectations and effective marking. The very good liaison with the teachers in Western Road School and the pyramid schools ensures that the most able pupils are given appropriate work. Although the subject is managed effectively in the juniors, the overall management has not been satisfactory because of the weakness in provision in the infants.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in the subject are rising
- The subject is led effectively
- The accommodation hampers some opportunities for pupils to use computers

### **Commentary**

55. The school has made very good strides in improving the provision in ICT since the previous inspection and standards have risen. The subject now meets statutory requirements and pupils show appropriate levels of competence in all aspects of ICT. This success has been achieved through the effective leadership of the coordinator, support from governors and additional training for staff. Currently, some opportunities for the pupils to use the ICT are restricted as a Year 1 class occupies the suite during the morning sessions.
56. Achievement is satisfactory overall and good in Years 1 and 2. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils from Traveller families also enjoy using computers and make satisfactory gains in their skills. Pupils attain appropriate levels of competence for their age in word processing, control technology and data handling. The pupils thoroughly enjoy using the Internet and these sessions are well structured as part of the school's teaching programmes so that pupils have opportunities for research. Many pupils use the skills learnt in school to help them with homework, which include topics with a variety of themes. Pupils have a good grasp of the differences between using technology and manual methods when collecting, collating and analysing data. Most pupils have a secure grasp of a variety of techniques and skills in word processing and combine text and pictures to create effective multi-media presentations. They make good links with mathematics when using control technology to draw shapes, measure angles and estimate length.
57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and there is some good teaching in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and competently initiate ideas. They access a good range of programs and most have mastered basic skills. They cooperate very well in lessons and more able pupils often support their less confident friends. Pupils work hard, listen carefully to instructions and are keen to try out new methods. The teachers plan lessons making appropriate use of national guidelines in developing skills, knowledge and understanding consistently. They also use interactive whiteboards to good effect in lessons in other subjects. The staff make it very clear



to pupils what is to be done and provide good levels of support and guidance. Most lessons have good pace and achieve a balance between reinforcing previous skills and developing new techniques. Assessment is at an early stage of development. Suitable records are kept but there is not yet a system to analyse pupils' skills and pinpoint what needs to be taught next to maximise challenge. The school's resources are much improved and there is a useful plan for further developments. The subject leader provides good leadership and has identified areas for development in staff training and resources.

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

58. Teachers make satisfactory use of ICT in a range of subjects and pupils make appropriate use of their word processing skills to support writing across the curriculum. There are appropriate opportunities to use the Internet to research information and many pupils use these skills at when producing a range of topics. There are good examples of pupils' using computers to improve their skills in composing music and also in creating artwork in the style of famous artists. Good links are made with mathematics as pupils in Year 2 program a robot to mark out geometric shapes. Older pupils carry out research and combine a variety of skills and techniques to create multi-media presentations.

### **HUMANITIES**

59. Inspectors observed two lessons in religious education, three in geography but none in history. They looked at samples of pupils' work, examined teachers' planning and talked with the subject leaders and pupils about the school's work in humanities. The **history** curriculum is of good quality and provides an interesting and stimulating range of experiences which motivate and interest pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and are fully included in all activities. In discussion pupils competently describe how they have researched the lives of famous people. They talk confidently about visits to places of interest and their interest in Ancient Egypt as a result of special days when visitors have re-enacted key events from that time. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 compare everyday life to the past. They know the significance of important days such as Poppy Day and Bonfire Night. They describe the differences in family life between Victorian times and the current day. Pupils research their family trees, draw timelines of their personal development and understand how things change over time. The subject leader is enthusiastic and provides good support for staff. She has good subject knowledge and supports staff well. The coordinator monitors and evaluates teaching and learning and is developing good links with other subjects, for example literacy and numeracy. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development
- The church works well with the school to promote understanding of the Christian faith
- There are good links with literacy

### **Commentary**

60. Standards are in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus in Years 2 and 6 and pupils of all abilities achieve satisfactorily. Pupils develop a good understanding of the Christian faith and their beliefs have a strong influence on their very good behaviour and attitudes. Good links with the church and regular visits by church leaders make significant contributions to the Christian ethos evident in the school. For example, this is reflected in assemblies where important messages are delivered in innovative ways including elements of humour, surprise and reassurance.

61. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have satisfactory knowledge of stories from the life of Jesus and have a good understanding of the main events in the Christian year. In Years 3 to 6 pupils know about other world religions and are aware of the significance of faith symbols. They also extend their knowledge of Christianity and are strongly encouraged to apply their beliefs in a range of actions that values individuals through kindness and support.
62. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory and effective use was made of good quality resources to reflect the wonder and diversity of the world. In Year 1, the teacher encouraged pupils to share their observations of real life objects with their friends. This good link with literacy improved learning through speaking and listening opportunities that included questioning and descriptive work. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and their friends and this strongly supports learning. In Year 4 good use is made of drama to support pupils' understanding of the return of Jesus after his death. Pupils demonstrated the reactions of Jesus' followers through expressive mime.
63. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader arranges for Christian drama groups to work with pupils and to use the knowledge and understanding they gain to present a play for assembly. There is a recognised need to develop assessment procedures. The school is evaluating new proposals to improve this work. The school has good links with secondary schools to enable exchange of ideas and to refine practice.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good across the school
- There are good links with numeracy and literacy

### **Commentary**

64. The standards achieved in geography by the end of Years 2 and 6 are average and similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Geography is taught in blocked units using an investigative approach. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs pupils very well and all pupils achieve well.
65. The quality of teaching is good. All lessons are carefully planned to include links with numeracy and literacy. Pupils in Year 4 prepared presentations on other countries to make to their class. Rehearsals involved editing texts, evaluating emphasis and expression in delivery and the consideration of the use of maps and diagrams to clarify understanding. Good links emerged with numeracy as pupils used graphs to record measurements and make comparisons, for example, of rainfall. In discussion, some pupils show a surprising depth of knowledge. One pupil spoke confidently about the importance of the industrial triangle to the Italian economy. This information was gained from an elder brother and indicates the enthusiasm to extend classroom learning at home. Pupils enjoy comparing environments. In Year 3, pupils systematically identify similarities and differences between living in Weston and a village in India. In discussion, there was a wide range of opinions on whether children should help their parents. This valuable link with personal and social education made a significant contribution to heightening awareness of different priorities in contrasting environments.
66. Field trips are planned to support learning and pupils in Year 6 eagerly prepared for a visit to Llandudno. Very good quality materials, borrowed from a resource centre, focused on a range of features at the Welsh seaside resort. Pupils are enthusiastic learners with many of them identifying additional questions to those accompanying the commercial aids. This is a very good example of how language promotes creative learning. In a good quality lesson in Year 2 the teacher cleverly used strategies to challenge the imaginations of the pupils. Pupils describe to

their partners imaginative sights, smells, sounds and tastes they experienced during a visit to another country. This lesson contributed well to their social, moral and cultural understanding, encouraging pupils to empathise with developing countries.

67. The subject leader encourages a creative approach to teaching and learning and has achieved a good degree of success in linking geography across the curriculum.

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

68. Inspectors observed one art and design lesson, two design and technology lessons and three music lessons. No physical education lessons were observed. In addition, inspectors looked at teachers' planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects. They also analysed a range of completed work. The planning for all the subjects meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and there are regular opportunities to study each subject. Skills, knowledge and understanding are developed consistently throughout the school. Evidence from the work observed shows that boys and girls, including the children of Traveller families, are working at similar levels, which are above average for art and design, design and technology and music. The good curriculum for physical education and the wide range of opportunities provided, including a specialist dance teacher, would indicate that pupils have every opportunity to do well in the subject.
69. The staff provide well planned opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills and techniques in **art and design**. Pupils know about the work of several famous artists and produce good work in the style of Picasso in Years 1 and 2 and have a good knowledge of pattern and colour. There is an impressive emphasis on pupils' feelings about their own work and the work of others and the viewer's response to art is included very well in the teaching. The pupils' sketchbooks show a clear development of design and skills. The displays and the portfolio of artwork are of a good standard and some of the work of the older pupils show well above average achievement. Pupils are very proud of their sculptures. The range of techniques and the study of art from around the world contribute very well to their spiritual and cultural development. The teaching in the lesson for the oldest class was very good. Pupils were given great responsibility as they selected design and media to express the moods of four pieces of music. The work was vibrant and lively and they expressed themselves very well. Some good work was seen in **design and technology**. Pupils enjoy practical activities and work hard. In Year 1 the pupils make interesting pond life using a range of materials, linking well with their work in science. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of winding mechanisms but the lesson observed lacked pace and challenge and they were unable to apply their knowledge effectively. The work in Years 3 to 6 includes a good range of techniques and pupils show a good understanding of mechanisms, joining skills and design, including the making of buzzer games using circuits. Their work shows care and good planning. Food technology and needlecraft are part of the curriculum. There are good links with science, art and design, history and geography as well as literacy and numeracy, but no evidence of the use of information and communication technology. The subject contributes well to pupils' social development as they cooperate and collaborate on topics.
70. Although no **physical education** lessons were observed, there is an impressive portfolio of pupils' achievements. The curriculum planning shows a very good range of sporting opportunities and pupils participate in national award schemes. The school have been active in setting up pyramid sporting events and the swimming gala. The subject has emphasised creativity in recent years and the specialist provision for dance contributes much to pupils' cultural development. The school sports clubs are very well attended and the residential visits to Shugborough and Coven make significant contributions to the pupils' social development.

## Music

The provision for music is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is effective specialist music teaching and all pupils make good progress
- There are very good opportunities for pupils to perform and standards are above average
- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and take a pride in their skills

### Commentary

71. One teacher is responsible for the music teaching in almost all classes throughout the school. He has very good subject knowledge and high expectations of the pupils' performance and abilities. In a lesson in Year 3 and 4, pupils used tuned percussion to improvise a sixteen bar melody to accompany their medley of songs for the Staffordshire Festival. This was rapidly extended with the introduction of, first, a two-note ostinato, then a more complex variable ostinato and, finally, the use of the pentatonic scale to provide an accompaniment to the simple songs. The teacher's knowledgeable use of melodies that employ the same harmony added interest and challenge, and the effect was to create a pleasing sound. Pupils performed well and learning was rapid. A junior sextet, practising for a performance to the school, showed good guitar skills. They had composed their own lyrics and melodies for songs and, with the teacher's support, produced chord harmonies. These skills were performed to a high standard in assembly, as were the performances of pupils playing woodwind and brass instruments. Pupils show much confidence and audiences are very appreciative.
72. Pupils in Year 1 have a good sense of rhythm and enjoy using tuned percussion to play the rhythm of the phrases of food and drink combinations. Although they improved their performance during the lesson, the use of tuned percussion for a rhythmical exercise caused complications as the pupils wanted to use more than the one note they were allowed for the majority of the lesson. They listened to each other's performance very well but found it difficult to stick to the task when practising.
73. Pupils from Years 3 to 6 have opportunities to play woodwind or brass instruments, and there is a guitar group. There have been some challenging school performances including "Bugsy Malone" and "A spot of Grease" [adapted by the talented teachers]. Pupils participate in external musical events, including the Stafford Festival. The curriculum is well balanced, providing pupils with a good understanding of a range of music, both contemporary and classical, and from good range of cultures. Skills of performance and composition are developed systematically throughout the school. The school is justifiably proud of its musical traditions and the effective links with other subjects, especially dance, provide a major contribution to pupils' cultural development.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

74. Insufficient lessons were observed in **personal, social and health education** to make a judgement about the quality of the provision or the teaching and learning. Evidence comprises pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers. A particular strength is in pupils' awareness of responsibility and citizenship. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to participate in decision making and in developing skills in working together in teams. This is reflected in the very strong buddy system where older pupils come alongside less confident or lonely individuals and draw them into the life of the school. Younger children speak very well of this approach. Pupils also have a very effective school council and are proud of the decisions they make in the interests of everyone at the school. The school council meet regularly and this is one of the mechanisms which the staff use to ascertain pupils' views.
75. The school places a strong emphasis on the pupils' health and well being and prepares them very well for the next stage of their education. Parents are especially impressed by the way in

which the school promotes pupils' personal, social and emotional development. Their confidence is entirely justified as pupils show good levels of maturity and responsibility. Pupils have a sensitive understanding of the needs of others and the qualities of effective citizens. Most importantly, the pupils feel empowered and confident that their voices are heard. There are regular opportunities for pupils to discuss their feelings and concerns and staff sometimes capitalise on these opportunities by encouraging pupils to express their feelings in poetry. The school has a good programme of personal, social and health education especially for older pupils. Good arrangements enable the oldest pupils to learn about the changes of puberty and to gain an understanding of sex and relationships. Pupils are taught well about the dangers and misuse of drugs as well as their benefits. The school is very aware of the need to promote healthy living and provides very good opportunities for the pupils to take part in sport. The design and technology and science programmes also include work on healthy eating and exercise.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

| <i>Inspection judgement</i>  | <i>Grade</i> |
|--|--------------|
| <b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>                       | <b>4</b>     |
| 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                               | 4            |
| <b>Overall standards achieved</b>                                    | <b>3</b>     |
| Pupils' achievement  | 4            |
| <b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>        | <b>2</b>     |
| Attendance   | 3            |
| Attitudes  | 2            |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions                        | 2            |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development            | 2            |
| <b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>               | <b>4</b>     |
| The quality of teaching  | 4            |
| How well pupils learn  | 4            |
| The quality of assessment  | 4            |
| How well the curriculum meets pupils needs                           | 4            |
| Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities     | 3            |
| Accommodation and resources  | 5            |
| Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety                             | 3            |
| Support, advice and guidance for pupils                              | 3            |
| How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views                  | 1            |
| The effectiveness of the school's links with parents                 | 2            |
| The quality of the school's links with the community                 | 2            |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges                   | 3            |
| <b>The leadership and management of the school</b>                   | <b>4</b>     |
| The governance of the school   | 4            |
| The leadership of the headteacher                                    | 4            |
| The leadership of other key staff                                    | 5            |
| The effectiveness of management                                      | 4            |

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

