

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BISHOP STAMER C OF E AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 132200

Headteacher: Mrs D Poggio

Lead inspector: Mr J Sorsby

Dates of inspection: 22<sup>nd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> November 2004

Inspection number: 266434

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	366
School address:	Boothem Old Road Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST4 4EE
Telephone number:	01782 234800
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr H W Durose
Date of previous inspection:	25 <sup>th</sup> November 2002

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

Bishop Stamer C of E Primary School is a larger than average size primary school with 366 pupils from nursery to Year 6. The school was formed in 2000 following the closure of two schools. It was inspected for the first time in 2002 but changed significantly in September 2003 with the closure of another local school and pupils and staff joining Bishop Stamer Primary. The school operated on two sites until September 2004.

Approximately 20 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above average. The majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. One per cent of pupils have a statement of special educational needs; this is below average.

Seventy-three pupils are of a background other than white British or mixed British, the largest groups being Pakistani and Black African. Fifty five pupils speak English as a second language and 15 pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Almost all pupils live in an area of very considerable economic deprivation. Eighteen per cent of pupils joined or left the school at times other than normal in the last year, this being high. Most pupils in nursery to Year 2 have had all of their education at Bishop Stamer. With the mergers that have taken place all other pupils have attended a minimum of two schools, many have attended three and one pupil has attended seven schools. Few pupils have therefore attended Bishop Stamer Primary long enough to derive maximum benefit. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, 30.4 per cent, is above average. Children's attainment on joining the school is very low.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
14042	J Sorsby	Lead inspector	
32676	N Power	Lay inspector	
27591	M Campbell	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Mathematics Design and technology
34100	Z Connolly	Team inspector	Art and design Geography History Provision for pupils with special educational needs Personal, social and health education
27387	D Tomkins	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education
19386	T Watts	Team inspector	English Modern foreign languages Music Provision for pupils with English as an additional language

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# PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

## OVERALL EVALUATION

In a very short period of time this has become a **very effective school** that provides **very good value for money**. Pupils achieve well and their standards rise from being very low to being around nationally expected levels by the end of Year 6. This is despite few pupils having been at the school long enough to benefit fully from its quality of education because of its being formed from the pupils of three former schools. The school owes its success to very good teaching and exemplary leadership and management.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and management, and overall leadership and management are excellent.
- The quality of teaching and learning are very good.
- Although standards are too low in English, mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language, higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils achieve well.
- The school plays a very effective role in enriching the lives of its pupils.
- The school very successfully promotes pupils' English skills.
- Although developing, information and communications technology (ICT) is not yet a fully effective tool in teaching and learning.

The school was first inspected in November 2002 at which time it had serious weaknesses. Despite subsequently absorbing most pupils from another local school that closed, there has been very good improvement, covering every activity and subject in the school except ICT. All key issues except the development of means to measure cost effectiveness of spending decisions have been very successfully dealt with.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	E*	E	E	E
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	E
Science	E*	E	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.*

### **Children in nursery and reception and pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well, except in ICT.**

Standards remain low because few have been at the school long enough to benefit fully from the very good teaching. Children's attainment on joining the nursery is very low in all areas of learning except their physical development, and their life experiences are very limited. Few have, for example, experienced a bus ride or been taken outside the immediate vicinity by the age of 7 or 8 while for many their more advanced physical development is the result of street play. By the end of reception they have achieved well and their standards rise to being well below average (rather than very low) although in their physical development their standards are below average. Their standards do not rise further in nursery and reception because of their very low standards on entry. Pupils now in Year 2 are achieving well although standards are still below average for their age in reading, writing, mathematics, science, physical education and in their personal and social education. In ICT, music and design technology standards are well below average while in history they are average.

Pupils now in Year 6 have achieved well since joining the school and are working close to expected levels in all subjects except physical education, history and their personal and social education, in which standards are in line with expectations for their age.

In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2004, standards were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools they were well below average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. These results represent good achievement in Years 1 and 2 and very good achievement in writing. Pupils' standards in Year 6 in the summer of 2004 were below average in science and well below average in English and mathematics. This was despite good achievement and was the result of the disruption to pupils' education, particularly while in Years 3 to 6. Subsequent to the 2004 tests the school moved from two sites to the current single site, effectively undergoing a further expansion in the numbers of pupils and staff. These results do not reflect the progress made at this school by the 2004 Year 6 pupils but a combination of their work in several schools. **Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good.** Behaviour is good. Attendance rates are average and punctuality is good. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a very good quality of education; the quality of teaching and learning are very good.** Assessment data is very effectively used to ensure that lessons are consistently planned to challenge all pupils; this includes those who have special educational needs, higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils and those for whom English is an additional language. All pupils receive very good, very well informed support. Teachers plan very well and motivate pupils very well. Lessons are fun, pupils generally behave well, and the atmosphere is usually very conducive to learning. The curriculum is well designed to interest pupils and meet their academic and personal developmental needs. It is enhanced by good links with the community and other schools, by the quality of relationships with parents, by the quality of care provided to pupils, by very good involvement of visitors and visits, by the teaching of Spanish in Year 5 and by residential visits in Year 6. Learning resources are good. The accommodation is satisfactory but places some limitations on subjects such as physical education and music.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are excellent.** The headteacher's exemplary skills are responsible for bringing together diverse pupils and staff from a number of schools and moulding them into a school and a team with a strong identity and desire to succeed. All necessary systems, such as monitoring pupils' progress and using the information to plan challenging lessons for each individual pupil are fully in place for every subject of the curriculum and working very well. The headteacher is supported by a very good governing body, a very effective senior management and very hard working and committed subject leaders. Governors fulfil all their duties very well, and see to it that the school complies with its statutory requirements.

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

Parents are very pleased with the school. Pupils enjoy attending school very much.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- to further develop opportunities for pupils to learn and practise ICT skills in all subjects of the curriculum.
- to continue to improve standards in English, mathematics and science to reach national levels.

# PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

All pupils, including those with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language, higher attaining and gifted and talented pupils achieve well. Standards in most subjects inspected, including ICT, rise from being very low to being just below average by the end of Year 6. In history, physical education and personal and social education they are average.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils achieve well
- Standards rise from being very low on entry to the school to being just below average in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

#### Commentary

1. Children's standards on entry to nursery are very low. Their standards of physical development are slightly higher but are still well below those expected for their age. Children achieve consistently well in nursery and reception because the teaching they receive is very good. They do not achieve better, as might be expected because of very good teaching, because their overall attainment is so low on entry. It takes time for them to learn the basics of language, communications and social skills before they can begin to make measurable progress. By the end of reception standards have improved and are below average in their physical development but they remain well below average in their language, communications, mathematical, creative and social development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

2. The following table demonstrates that pupils' test results in 2004 at the end of Year 2 were lower than the national average and that while there was improvement in writing from the previous year, standards remained unchanged in reading and fell in mathematics. In 2004 they were well below the national average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing. In comparison with similar schools they were below the national average in writing and well below average in reading and mathematics. However, given their very low standards on joining the school, these pupils achieved well.

#### *Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004*

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (14.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	14.1 (13.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	13.8 (14.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 45 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. The table below demonstrates that pupils in Year 6 in 2004 achieved higher standards than pupils in Year 6 in 2003, particularly in mathematics. However, their standards in English and mathematics were well below the average for all schools and similar schools and in science they were below average. Given their very low standards on entry they achieved well.



### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.5 (23.9)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	25.5 (22.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.0 (27.4)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 51 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. Pupils now in Years 2 and 6 are achieving consistently well in all subjects except ICT in Year 2, in which achievement is only satisfactory. Standards are improving as pupils settle into the routines of what for many is a second or third school. In Year 2, standards are average in history and below average in reading, writing, mathematics, science, physical education and personal, social and health education. In ICT, design and technology, and music they are well below average. In Year 6, pupils continue to achieve well. Standards are as expected for their age in physical education, history and personal, social and health education. Standards are below average in English, mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology and music. Pupils have achieved very well from their starting standards in nursery and reception and this is the consequence of excellent leadership and management and of overall very good teaching.

5. When people from the community are involved in the school's work, it supports pupils' good achievement. For example, high school staff actively support the teaching and learning of Spanish and of art and design, and pupils achieve well.

6. Standards of work produced by pupils with special educational needs are comparable with other pupils and they achieve well because targets are realistic and recognise their individual needs. These pupils apply themselves well in lessons and rise to the challenge of the work set. This work is well planned by the class teachers and well supported by classroom assistants.

7. Pupils whose home language is not English make very good progress in their understanding and speaking of English, and their ability to read and write. In the long term they achieve very well in gaining the full range of skills in communication. In other subjects, their progress and level of attainment is the same as their classmates.

8. Overall, there has been good improvement in pupils' achievement since the last inspection.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES**

Attendance is average and punctuality is good. Pupils' attitudes are very good and their behaviour is good. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.

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

- The attendance rate is much improved.
- Pupils behave well and develop very good attitudes to learning
- Pupils show great respect for each other, staff and the school
- Pupils' personal development is very good

#### **Commentary**

9. Pupils' attitudes, personal development, attendance and punctuality have all improved since the last inspection and the good behaviour reported at that time has been maintained.

10. The school has worked hard to improve pupils' attendance rate. Systems of rewards and sanctions have been introduced and most significantly, pupils are very well motivated. They enjoy school and don't want to miss it. There has also been regular reinforcement to parents of the importance of attendance at school.

11. Overall, pupils' personal qualities develop very well. Great emphasis is placed on helping and encouraging pupils to act responsibly in lessons and at play. All pupils consequently feel that they are part of the community and respect and value each other. In lessons, for all but a very small minority of older pupils whose behaviour is sometimes challenging, pupils behave well – as much because they expect that of each other as in order to meet their teacher's high expectations. There have been seven fixed period exclusions in the past year, for behaviour related reasons.

12. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all school activities and their attitudes to school are positive. They are well behaved in class and around school. The encouragement they receive from all members of staff enables these pupils to take an active part in all aspects of school life.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	5.2	School data :	0.6
National data:	5.1	National data:	0.4

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

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

### Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	283	6	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	2	1	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	39	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0

Black or Black British – African	12	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	3	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school is providing a very good quality of education. The quality of teaching is very good. Pupils learn well rather than very well because few have been at the school long enough to benefit fully from what it provides. The good curriculum is well enriched and very innovative. It meets all statutory requirements. Assessment is very good and information from assessment is put to very good use in planning lessons that meet pupils' needs.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching improved significantly since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school. The very detailed and broad range of assessment data collected by teachers is put to very good use to ensure that all pupils are challenged in lessons.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a high proportion of very good and some excellent teaching.
- Teachers plan well, have good subject knowledge and motivate pupils very well.
- What pupils know, understand and can do is assessed very well in most subjects.
- Lessons meet individual pupils' needs very well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in lessons.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language are very well supported in lessons.
- English and literacy skills are very well taught through all subjects.
- ICT is not consistently used as it should be as a teaching and learning tool.

## Commentary

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2(5%)	15 (33%)	20(44%)	8(18%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

13. The majority of teaching is good or better; one in every three lessons is very good and a small proportion is excellent. Teaching is best in nursery, reception and Years 1 and 2. In these year groups pupils make solidly good progress. In Years 3 to 6, some lessons, while still of a good quality, have less impact for two reasons. Firstly, pupils have had the majority of their education elsewhere and do not therefore derive the maximum from their lessons. Secondly, a small minority of pupils sometimes behave inappropriately, lessening the effect of the lessons concerned for all. Nevertheless, overall good learning still takes place and pupils continue to make good progress.

14. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, and almost always, these are met. Well planned lessons ensure that pupils enjoy what they do, are well motivated and experience a wide

range of activities. Teachers know their subjects well and share their knowledge well in a calm learning environment. No time is wasted as lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Assessment is very well used to ensure that every pupil is appropriately challenged by each lesson. Of particular merit is the emphasis on developing pupils' literacy skills through the teaching of all other subjects.

15. A particular weakness in teaching and learning, which has until now been outside the control of the school, is the use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool. As a consequence of the various mergers and expansions of the school, the computer hardware and software it possesses are an incompatible mix of the equipment derived from schools that are now closed. This has made the use of ICT as a teaching tool, and enabling pupils to practise their ICT skills exceptionally difficult but this problem is now being addressed.

16. Class lessons are well planned and differentiated so that the needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met and Individual education plans make teaching relevant to these pupils. Targets set, although challenging, are manageable and attainable. There is also valuable support for these pupils from members of the special educational needs team who monitor and track pupils' progress.

17. Teachers are very effective when teaching pupils whose home language is not English. They make sure they have pupils' full attention, and speak very clearly, and prepare activities and resources that are very well suited to their needs. Additionally, teachers often give extra responsibility to classroom support staff to guide, encourage, and work with individual pupils who need further explanations, and more time and practise with their work. The bilingual support staff are invaluable, especially with new pupils who are at a very early stage in their learning of English. Their work with the pupils' families is also very important, such as in showing parents how they can help their children to learn.

## **THE CURRICULUM**

The good, well enriched curriculum is well planned, imaginative and stimulating and meets the needs and interests of all pupils. Resources are good. There are some weaknesses in the overall satisfactory accommodation.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well enriched with a broad range of extra-curricular activities, the curriculum is well supported by the involvement of visitors.
- Literacy, particularly speaking and listening, is promoted very well across the curriculum.
- Personal, social and health education and pupils' personal development are provided for very well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided for very well.
- Pupils learning English as a second language are provided for very well.
- Pupils have too few opportunities to learn and practise their ICT skills.
- There are weaknesses in some aspects of accommodation.

### **Commentary**

18. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Detailed programmes of work are in place that ensure full coverage of all subjects, in keeping with statutory requirements, and plans provide for a systematic development of pupils' skills.

19. The curriculum is well supported by visits to places of interest and by visitors to school. The study of topics often begin with either a visit or a visitor to put it into context. This gives the pupils first hand experiences to bring their subject alive. For example in history pupils have visited

museums and have been visited by an actor portraying a Roman soldier. In history, a themed day supported by a visitor enabled pupils to experience the art and culture of the Aztecs. Such activities promote pupils' enthusiasm and interest and enhance their understanding of the wider world. Year 5 pupils learn Spanish and Year 6 have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit to France. Spanish has proven to be so popular with pupils that Year 6 pupils have now formed a Spanish club so as to continue their learning of the language.

20. Pupils' literacy skills, particularly their speaking and listening skills are well supported through carefully planned activities in all subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 prepared history presentations for each other's classes that enabled them to plan the best way to make a verbal presentation. This activity also helps pupils to develop their confidence and self esteem, to develop their research skills and to work collaboratively within small groups. Pupils are encouraged to express their opinions and also encouraged to listen to others' points of view. In Year 2, the classes had worked together to compile a set of questions to ask a 'great aunt' who had celebrated her sixth birthday during World War II. The pupils listened intently to her answers and took turns to ask their own questions. Older pupils debated the differences between the lives of poor and rich people in Victorian England, thinking carefully about their reasons and listening attentively to the opinions of their classmates.

21. There is a good range of sports and extra curricular activities that enrich the curriculum. These include hockey, cross country, football, netball, gymnastics and a computer club. Music is well catered for; included is a choir, two recorder groups and provision for pupils to learn string and brass instruments. A specialist on the staff provides a drama club after school.

22. The provision for personal, social and health education through specific lessons and themed assemblies is very good. It includes teaching pupils an awareness of the dangers of drug misuse. There is no formal sex education but pupils' questions are treated with sensitivity when they arise. Healthy eating and a healthy life style are promoted very well.

23. The school provides very well for pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers plan their lessons to ensure that each pupil's needs are met and that pupils are appropriately challenged by their work. Teaching assistants are also very well employed to provide expert help to pupils. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs make similarly good progress to all other pupils.

24. The provision for pupils whose home language is not English is very good. It is very well organised by a dedicated and very knowledgeable co-ordinator. Teachers and classroom support staff have had good training, and they know how to provide work that motivates and stretches pupils in their language development. The employment of two support staff who speak several Asian languages is a very effective use of the school's financial resources.

25. Provision for pupils to practise their ICT while learning other subjects is limited and opportunities for teachers to plan such activities are often missed. The school recognises this and is making every effort to improve provision in this area. The designated computer suite is being re-designed and equipment is being gradually upgraded.

26. Although satisfactory overall there are a range of weaknesses in the school's accommodation. The reception classroom is small for the number of children who attend, although teachers do well to organise their work to make best use of the available space. The library is located in a corridor, is small and inadequately stocked with books. Some classrooms are small for the effective teaching of some subjects, for example, music. Two recently erected mobile classrooms do not have a water supply or toilets and are not linked to the internet.

## **CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

The school gives its pupils very good support, advice and guidance. The school ensures the care and welfare of its pupils well. The school seeks, values and acts on pupils' views well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils receive very good academic and personal guidance from all adults.
- Pupils are cared for well.
- The home-school worker monitors pupils' home situations well.

### **Commentary**

27. The school monitors pupils' academic and personal development very thoroughly and as a result is able to give very good advice and guidance. Pupils are confident that their teachers give them suitable help about how to make their work better. All staff know their pupils very well and are sensitive to their needs. For example, pupils for whom English is not their first language are supported in classes to ensure they learn well. The school's procedures to support pupils and prevent harassment of any kind are well planned and implemented. For example, to avoid any name-calling all pupils are expected to call each other by their given names. The behaviour policy is clear and unambiguous which means that sanctions are applied consistently.

28. The school and particularly the special educational needs co-ordinator places a high priority on supporting pupils with special educational needs. The very good ethos of care that has developed enables these pupils to be wholly involved in school life and be confident to take part in all activities.

29. Pupils get on very well with all staff and feel confident that they can turn to them if they are worried or concerned. As staff know pupils very well they provide care that is appropriate for each individual pupil. They have all received training in child protection matters and know how to respond should a pupil have any concerns; the home school worker monitors concerns about the home situation of pupils. There is an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid.

30. The school thoroughly assesses risks inherent in the school premises and hazards involved when pupils visit places away from school and ensures that controls are in place to ensure that potential risks are minimised.

31. There has been good improvement in the care, guidance and support of pupils since the last inspection.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school involves parents very well in their children's education.
- The school takes very good account of parents' views.
- Links with the community and other schools are used well to enhance learning experiences.
- The home-school worker provides very helpful advice and guidance to families.

### **Commentary**

32. The school has appointed a full time home-school link worker to assist parents in being involved in their children's education. This has worked very well. A very good range of activities has been developed to encourage parents to continue their children's education at home. For example,

parents of pupils in reception and Year 1 can attend a 'Share' course to inform them about how their children will be learning and how they can help them. The courses also help staff to get to know their pupils better by talking to their parents. Pre-school packs are available to parents in the nursery to help them to prepare their children for full time education and also enable productive relationships to be built early on between staff and parents. 'Take home packs' are available to help pupils in Years 4 and 5 with their mathematical development and pupils in Year 6 with their reading skills. A good number of parents take advantage of these schemes and the school plans to extend them to pupils in all year groups. The home-school worker provides very helpful advice and guidance to families in need of support from statutory agencies.

33. Parents' views matter very much to the school. They are kept very well informed about their children's progress and are encouraged to be part of school life. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school about matters concerning them. The headteacher is open to parents' views, consults with parents formally through questionnaires and informally through conversations in and around school. For example, shortly after the recent expansion of the school following the closure of another local school, parents' views were sought through a questionnaire. The results and the school's responses were sent to all parents and some changes were made to the school's practices as a result. The school's 'open door' policy means that parents are able to talk to staff whenever convenient.

34. Where pupils are identified with special educational needs, information is shared between home and school. Parents are encouraged to work alongside school to ensure their children make good progress. Parents are informed regularly of any changes to individual education plans and are asked to comment and contribute. The special needs co-ordinator also operates an 'open door' policy so that parents can approach the school with any problems or concerns.

35. Businesses and organisations within the local community are supportive of the school and the school makes good use of opportunities that emerge. For example, a supermarket chain invited pupils to visit and view a collection of past and present lorries and trucks. The school capitalised well on this opportunity and invited the lorry drivers to school to explain why numeracy and literacy skills were important in their work. Local churches are used well to support pupils' personal development through their visits to the school and pupils' visits to them. Close ties exist with other local schools which support the curriculum and pupils' learning. For example, local high schools provide lessons in Spanish, art and design and dance.

36. This aspect of the school's work is much improved since the last inspection.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are excellent. The leadership of key staff is good and the governance of the school is very good. The headteacher's leadership is excellent.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher demonstrates outstanding leadership.
- The governors provide highly effective support and fulfil their statutory duties very well but have not yet developed a structure for tracking the impact on pupils' achievement of particular spending decisions.
- The school's monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress is very good.
- Curriculum leadership is now well established and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

### **Commentary**

37. At the time of the last inspection the headteacher had been in post for less than a term and had therefore had little time to impact on the school's leadership and management. Now, two years on and despite a further enlargement of the school following the closure of another local school, her outstanding leadership has permeated all aspects of the school's organisation. She is equally committed to raising pupils' educational standards and to the broadening of pupils' life skills and experiences. The school's Christian ethos is well demonstrated in the day to day delivery of the behaviour policy and in the zero tolerant attitude to racism and bullying.

38. The management of this school is first rate. The role of curriculum co-ordinators is now well established and they are having a significant impact on pupils' attainment. They are at least good and often very good in developing the curriculum. They ensure that pupil monitoring and tracking, a feature of all subjects, is efficiently administered. The contribution of the school's senior management team has been important in ensuring the smooth implementation of the enlargement of the school that has taken place over the last year, and its movement from two sites to one. The success of these developments is evident from the strong school team spirit among pupils and staff.

39. The governance of the school is very good. The governors now have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and play an active part in shaping the vision and direction of the school. The governors have a comprehensive structure of standing committees through which they ensure that all their statutory duties are fully met. They have a direct input into the school development plan and the linking of priorities to financial planning. The governors demonstrate a firm commitment to ensuring best value but have not yet developed a structure for tracking the impact on pupils' achievement of particular spending decisions.

40. The leadership and management of special educational needs provision by the special needs co-ordinator is very good. She is enthusiastic and dedicated and has a clear vision of the school's needs for the future. She is very well supported by a small dedicated team who have worked together to develop systems to monitor and track individual pupils' progress. They have worked very hard to enhance provision which is now of a high standard and has had a marked effect in raising the achievement of pupils with special educational needs.

#### **Financial information**

**41. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO PROVIDE FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR THIS SCHOOL, DEMONSTRATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THEIR FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT. THESE FIGURES ARE NOT AVAILABLE BECAUSE FROM APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2003 THE SCHOOL WAS OPERATING TWO BUDGETS FOR THE TWO SCHOOLS THAT THEN CAME TOGETHER AND FOR ONLY PART OF THE YEAR (SEPTEMBER TO APRIL 2004) HAS IT OPERATED A SINGLE SCHOOL BUDGET. NEVERTHELESS, GIVEN THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THE SCHOOL PRESENTLY SPENDS FOR EACH PUPIL, THE PROGRESS PUPILS ARE MAKING AND THE QUALITY OF THE EDUCATION BEING PROVIDED, THE SCHOOL PROVIDES VERY GOOD VALUE FOR MONEY.**



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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children achieve well in the nursery and reception classes because very good teaching ensures that they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions.
- The children do not reach the standards that are expected of them by the end of the reception year, because they enter nursery at an overall, very low level of attainment.
- The reception room is small for the number of children taught

### **Commentary**

42. Children in the nursery and reception classes are given a very good start to their education. Most children join the nursery with very low standards in all areas of learning. Children achieve well and standards slowly rise throughout nursery and reception but by the time they start Year 1, most children's standards are well below those expected for their age. Their good achievement is due to very good teaching throughout nursery and the reception classes, the joint planning that takes place to ensure commonality of experience across the classes and the judicious blend of child initiated and teacher directed activities, which are appropriate to the age and abilities of the children. Achievement is not very good because of children's initial very weak language, communication and social skills which prevent large gains in knowledge. The well briefed and enthusiastic nursery nurses and teaching assistants add to the quality of experience that the children receive, and in both age groups there is a cohesive whole team approach by all staff.

43. The curriculum is well planned and children are given an exciting range of experiences that are stimulating, interesting and of high quality. Numerous visitors enrich children's learning opportunities. However, because of the size of the reception classroom for the number of children, greater use has to be made of the outside area and cloakrooms for teaching, regardless of the weather or activity. Assessment arrangements are most effective and build up a clear picture of each child's development enabling staff to match activities closely to individual needs so that all groups of children make progress. All staff bring enthusiasm, skill and understanding to the children's learning and every opportunity is taken to develop spoken language, literacy and numeracy skills. Overall, there has been good improvement in the nursery and reception classes since the last inspection.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The children achieve well because there is very good teaching and learning which focuses on developing their personal skills.
- Staff have high expectations of how the children should behave and set good role models for the children to copy.
- Children settle quickly into nursery because they feel safe and secure.

- Reception children become familiar with routines, enjoy learning and are able to sustain their concentration and interest for longer.

### **Commentary**

44. As a consequence of good teaching and learning in this area of development, children achieve well. This area of learning is given appropriate high priority when children start nursery and reception. However, because of very low standards of attainment when children enter the nursery, most will not have met the expected levels by the end of the reception year. Throughout the nursery and reception classes, children receive patient, caring and appropriate support.

45. Once in nursery, children begin to settle and get to know daily routines. They understand the need to change activities and begin to learn how to make independent choices. They share the small world farm animals together or the tricycles outside. In reception, routines are consolidated and extended, such as choosing an activity or equipment and working independently. When they set off on their tasks, they show great interest and share resources. The opportunities to co-operate with others and take turns is successfully reinforced. Children play happily bathing 'babies' or cooking foods with the canteen visitors.

46. They take part willingly at tidy up time, because they have learnt that working together makes the task easier. Children have the opportunity to develop working relationships with one another and the adults who work with them. Adults set good examples for the children to copy and all interactions are positive; this plays an important part in the children's social development.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The exciting and varied activities give children a very good start to their acquisition of early language skills.
- The quality of teaching is very good, especially in basic skills, which help to promote children's early reading, writing and talking.

### **Commentary**

47. Standards are very low on entry to nursery and although the children achieve well throughout the nursery and reception classes, by the time children enter Year 1, they are still well below the expected levels for their age. Staff take every opportunity to develop the children's speaking and listening skills and to promote early reading skills. They make use of exciting resources such as balloon-letters to help children learn simple phonics and the environment in nursery and reception is print-rich.

48. In both the nursery and reception classes very good teaching is characterised by a secure knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children and the very well organised and exciting activities that motivate them. Throughout these classes, children gradually develop their confidence in speaking and listening because staff engage in almost continual conversation with them in small groups or individually, whilst they work at chosen activities, which helps those who are reluctant or lack confidence to speak. They chat, question and encourage the children to extend their vocabulary and their confidence in the spoken word. Children initiate and develop their own conversations whilst bathing their 'babies' or playing with the farm animals and all classes talk about their activities with enthusiasm. In nursery they know the number of teddies on the train and reception children discuss the look and feel of ice balloons.

49. Teachers provide a range of activities to encourage children to explore mark-making in nursery and reception. They can try to write their names or can 'write' in the home corner. Basic writing skills are taught and children see the purpose of writing because activities are often linked to work in other areas of learning such as role play. The development of early reading skills has a high priority and is supported by parents. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories such as 'The Blue Balloon'.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching provides very good opportunities for all children to develop mathematical understanding.
- There are very good practical activities provided for nursery and reception children which helps them learn.

### **Commentary**

50. Throughout the nursery and reception classes, staff make very good use of practical activities to promote children's mathematical development. This contributes to the good progress they make and enables them to achieve well from a very low starting point. However, most children will still not reach the expected targets by the end of the reception class.

51. Teachers make purposeful links between children's mathematical development and related activities, for example, teddies in a train or soldiers in the castle. In nursery, children begin to count and start to understand how many make 1, 2 and 3. In reception, these foundations are consolidated and extended. Higher attaining children use a number square up to 20 and play games to reinforce their understanding. There is a clear emphasis on mathematical vocabulary which is evident in practical activities such as matching the number of bands to the number of children allowed in the home corner at any one time. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive very good support with the steps in learning being smaller. This builds in success and children show great pleasure in their achievements.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching ensures that all children have very good opportunities in this area of learning.
- Many visitors enrich the curriculum making teaching and learning, stimulating, exciting and fun.

### **Commentary**

52. Children are provided with a wide range of opportunities to learn about their world and this enables them to make good progress towards the targets they are expected to achieve. For example, children in nursery paint pictures of themselves, looking at how they are the same and what makes them all different. Older children look at how people change and a midwife brought in a small baby and bathed it in front of the children, making them aware of how they have changed in a few years. A grandfather, a member of the Black Watch, came in wearing full dress, with kilt and sporran, drums and bugles and children asked him questions and made lots of noise with drumsticks and bugles. Such activities provide chances for children to broaden their own limited experiences and helps them develop an awareness of themselves and others.

53. All children have access to computers and enjoy visiting the computer suite. They begin to refine their hand eye co-ordination and those who find this difficult are given good support by the

ICT teacher. Children learn about festivals celebrated by different cultures such as Divali and this enables children to learn how different groups of people are the same and yet different.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outdoor area is used very effectively to support learning across several areas of development.
- Children are given a wide range of exciting opportunities to develop the necessary motor skills.

### Commentary

54. Although children enter nursery with levels of physical development that are well below those expected at this age, they achieve well because they are given many opportunities to run around, play and develop their physical skills safely and securely and because teaching is good. By the end of reception, children's physical development is just below the expected targets. The work in nursery has been built upon and extended with more refined skills being developed with a wider range of challenges being offered to all children. Teaching is very good and children learn quickly because they participate in well planned activities both indoors and out. Nursery children use the school hall for dance activities where they begin to develop an awareness of their bodies. Older children use the outside area to cycle, push prams, throw a ball and bounce around. All staff give children opportunity to develop their manipulative skills by rolling and moulding dough, using scissors, tools and playing with small toys. They also have access to a wide range of construction equipment which further enhances their physical development.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because lively and exciting activities capture their interest.
- Very good teaching ensures children have a good understanding of their learning.

### Commentary

55. In nursery, teachers plan a range of activities which stimulate children's imaginations. As a result, their learning is good and they make good progress towards their learning targets. They use a variety of paints, papers and other art materials to begin to develop their skills and creative minds. They enjoy the various play areas and activities around the nursery and have access to good quality props to support their play. Staff provide opportunities for children to sing simple songs and rhymes and this also contributes to their creative development.

56. In reception, there is also a wide range of creative opportunities for children to share, expectation and challenge are increased and children achieve well because of very good teaching. They express their feelings through a range of materials and media, music and movement, story making and imaginative play. Children's skill development is secure because they have access to daily activities such as paints, collage opportunities and a variety of fabrics, papers and artist's materials. They are taught basic skills such as holding a brush or mixing colour correctly and a visiting artist works with children to enhance their learning. Conversations with adults in these activities are a strength of teaching, expanding ideas and vocabulary. In music, children sing and play musical instruments with enthusiasm. However, by the end of reception year, standards are still well below those expected.



## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are making good progress, achieving well and coming close to reaching nationally expected standards by the time they leave school. However, standards remain below average.
- Pupils learn very well in lessons because the teaching is usually very good.
- The subject management is good.

#### Commentary

57. When pupils first come into the school, in the nursery, their standards are far below national expectations. By the end of Year 2, their standards have improved and by the end of Year 6 are only a little below national expectations. The school has worked very hard to achieve this level of improvement.

58. Lessons are very well planned and prepared for, following national guidelines in the long term planning as well as how individual lessons are organised. Teachers have warm and positive relationships with pupils, and are able to motivate them to want to work and learn. Their management of pupils' behaviour is very good. For the most part, pupils are attentive and very willing to join in discussions or doing their own reading and written work, and they work well either on their own or in small groups and pairs. When support assistants are available in classes, they are used very well to support the learning of individual pupils or small groups, perhaps pupils who are less able, or who do not have English as their first language. These pupils make particularly good progress in their understanding of the spoken word, and in their own speaking of English. Lessons have a series of well-organised activities that encourage pupils to try ever harder, and to make better progress. Occasionally, teachers do not encourage the quieter pupils to join in class discussions, or they leave too little time for pupils to get on with their individual work. Particularly in Year 6, there is sometimes not enough difference in the work given to the most and least able pupils, especially when the aims of the lesson are not very clear, and lessons become rather slow. Mainly, however, the teaching is very good; it is challenging and it reflects very well on teachers' very good knowledge of the subject.

59. In the long term, pupils' very good learning in lessons has led to good progress. Pupils' achievements have been held back by the disruptions that the school has suffered in recent years, especially two school amalgamations, and changes in premises and staff. This has particularly affected pupils in Years 5 and 6. They have responded well, but inevitably, their standards have not improved as much as they otherwise should have done with teaching of this high quality. Pupils come into the school with very poor English skills, but they make dramatic progress throughout the school, although not quite enough to be reaching the nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6.

60. The leadership is good, although it is shared between three teachers who have responsibilities for different aspects of English. They tend not to meet together very often to discuss



developments, and so there is not a single clear view of how the subject is progressing, and what needs to be done. However, the management is good overall. Senior staff have used thorough assessments of pupils' progress to look carefully at areas in which pupils were lagging behind. They have made many very good changes that have targeted better learning. Thus, standards have risen in all areas of English, through a very broad and well balanced curriculum. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are improved by the many opportunities they have in lessons for listening and discussing with the teacher and with their classmates. There are additional reading lessons provided for those that need them, and individual reading sessions with classroom assistants and parents. Teachers are very careful to encourage pupils to write neatly, in good clear sentences, with correct grammar and punctuation. They have frequent spelling activities and tests, and set homework regularly to extend pupils' learning. The libraries are improved, although the one for older pupils is unsatisfactory, being in a draughty cloakroom, and with many old books. Pupils are more motivated to want to read by the introduction of "high interest" sets of books that they can borrow, such as about cars, drawing or aircraft. Support staff know the pupils well, and how to help them in lessons, so improving their learning further. Many teachers make satisfactory use of computers and related high technology equipment during lessons, sometimes in developing pupils' listening skills, but mostly for their writing and reading development.

61. Since the previous inspection despite many changes to the nature of the school, there have been very good improvements overall, with standards rising, teaching now very good, and well-established organisation of the subject.

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

62. Literacy is very well supported in other subjects across the curriculum. Pupils are given many very good opportunities to extend and practise their speaking and listening skills in other subjects, such as in discussions in art and design, personal and social education and physical education. Similarly, their writing skills are very well reinforced, for example, in science and history. Their awareness of how a language is structured is very well developed in Spanish lessons and the French club.

### **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

63. Only one lesson was taught in **modern foreign languages** during the inspection, and it was only the second one of the year. It is therefore not possible to judge the overall quality of provision, which consists of a lesson in alternate weeks for Year 5 pupils. The lesson that was observed was very well taught by a teacher from a nearby secondary school. She was enthusiastic and had very good command of the language, with very high expectations that the pupils would join in and respond. They did this eagerly, and enjoyed the different activities, as well as making very good gains in their learning of some basic words and phrases in Spanish. The long term plan of what is to be taught is good, based mainly on speaking and listening as a practical start to the language. In Year 6, pupils can join a French club at lunchtimes, and they have had the opportunity to go on a four-day trip to France for the past two years. Photographs and discussions show that they enjoyed these trips very much, and gained a lot of confidence as well as a broader cultural awareness from them. Staff within the school are very keen to develop this subject in the future. They have already taken many pupils to a European market that is held annually in the town, to give them a wider experience of different languages, cultures, dress and customs.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching which is helping to raise standards.
- Standards are below average.
- Assessment monitors individual pupil progress closely so that pupils know what they have to do to improve their learning.
- The subject co-ordinator has developed the subject well and is aware of the need to further develop problem-solving and mental strategies throughout the school.
- ICT is not used frequently enough in the subject.

## **Commentary**

64. Pupils make good progress overall and by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, all pupils achieve well. From a very low starting point when pupils enter Year 1, due to good teaching and close monitoring and assessment by all staff, by the end of Year 2, pupils are working hard, although standards are still well below those expected. Most pupils continue to work well throughout the school and in Year 6, current standards are only just below those expected. Pupils are on course to achieve national expectations by the end of the academic year. Despite the disruptive effect of the major changes in the school that have particularly affected pupils in Years 5 and 6, the current quality of provision and standards being achieved are unchanged since the last inspection.

65. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive consistently good support and achieve as well as their classmates. The school recognises pupils of higher ability and in lessons, these pupils are challenged and their learning and thinking extended. There is an emphasis on the development of an appropriate mathematical vocabulary throughout the school which allows all pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in the subject. However, there is little evidence of the use of ICT in the subject either in books or in displays although new software has been purchased.

66. Teaching is good throughout the school with a significant number of very good lessons. In these lessons, there is continuous expectation from teachers for pupils to work at the peak of their understanding. They help pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do next. Teachers make lessons interesting and expect pupils to behave well, ensuring that little time is wasted. Consequently, there is a positive atmosphere for learning in most lessons. However, there are occasions where some children become restless and disrupt the learning of others.

67. Teachers and support assistants work well together to ensure that the needs of all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are effectively met, particularly during group activities. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils worked hard to understand equivalent fractions. Explanations were clear, learning took place in small steps and all pupils made very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs were well supported by a specialist teacher, who gave them praise and encouragement and this group made as much progress as their classmates, causing the group teacher to modify her immediate teaching plans. In a less effective lesson, pupil behaviour needed firmer management, opportunities were missed for reinforcing written number and resources could have been better used. Where provided, staff make effective use of inter-active whiteboards in their lessons, and this gives pupils opportunity to be actively involved in their learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly and achievement targets are in some pupil books but not all.

68. The subject coordinator has made a significant contribution to the development of mathematics, starting to do so before the school came together on one site. She has analysed the remaining weaknesses and has planned well to further develop pupils' mental mathematics and problem solving skills.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. Teachers provide only satisfactory opportunities to develop mathematics through other subjects, for example history and physical education. In design and technology there was some use of measuring. There is insufficient emphasis on numeracy skills in science and data - handling is under developed in ICT. Overall numeracy links would benefit from further development across the curriculum.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Science is well taught throughout the school.
- Leadership and management of the subject are very good.
- Pupils' attainment is carefully analysed and the action taken contributes effectively to their good progress.
- The enrichment of learning through the use of ICT is inconsistent.
- Standards, although rising, are still too low.

## **Commentary**

70. Standards on entry to Year 1 are well below average. By the end of Year 2, pupils are still below average but have made good progress. By the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to make good progress and are nearly at the nationally expected level. Standards are very carefully analysed and targets set for all pupils. This has been particularly successful in raising standards for the more able where in national tests the percentage attaining the higher level 5 was in line with national expectations. This represents good progress by the end of Year 6. This applies equally to pupils with special educational needs and to those pupils who have English as an additional language.

71. Teaching and learning overall is good. This was reflected in observed lessons when teaching and learning were never less than good and, in one lesson, very good. Teachers display good subject knowledge and planning is always clear. This was well demonstrated in a Year 5 lesson when well prepared interactive white board screens were used to stimulate a challenging discussion. The quality of the technical language used by the teacher enabled pupils whose restricted language was inhibiting their scientific thinking to develop their understanding. As a result pupils developed new ideas and engaged positively with the topic on 'How the earth moves' which resulted in good learning. The impact of very good teaching was observed in a Year 1 lesson when a very well resourced lesson, which provided a high level of challenge to the pupils, was conducted with good pace in a very controlled atmosphere. Pupils explored materials, sounds and smells to recognise how they used their senses to find out about the world. They really enjoyed the activities and maintained their concentration over an extended period which resulted in rapid learning. While some teachers who had interactive white boards in their classrooms were using ICT well as a teaching tool, opportunities were often missed to use computers to aid teaching and enrich pupils' learning.

72. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The well qualified co-ordinator has developed both a good curriculum and resources. She rigorously monitors attainment and sets clear targets for improvement. The good range of additional activities, which include dinner time clubs, trips, theme weeks, as well as science packs for Year 6, have all helped to raise the profile of science. She has a clear vision of how to move the subject forward. The quality of science education in the school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The co-ordinator has a clear vision of how to develop the subject.
- The quality of teaching of ICT is good. Interactive white boards are used well.
- The often incompatible range of inherited hardware and software results in inconsistent use.
- The school's computer suite is underused.
- ICT is not consistently and routinely used as a tool within other areas of the curriculum. Pupils' skills are not developed in a consistent and progressive way throughout the school.

## Commentary

73. Standards at the end of Year 2 are well below the nationally expected level and by the end of Year 6 are still below the expected level. However, this represents good achievement overall. This is a deterioration in the level of attainment since the last inspection although it is possible that this judgment represents a higher level of expectation rather than an actual drop in standards.

74. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection so judgments are based on a range of discussions with staff and pupils as well as teaching observed. Overall, teaching is good. In one Year 4 lesson, the very good teaching was characterised by the teacher's technical confidence and good questioning skills linked to the clear sequencing of activities. This enabled the pupils to draw a picture on the computer and then use that picture as a repeat pattern. They learned paste and copy skills and reinforced their ability to save and print their work. This represented rapid learning within the lesson.

75. The co-ordinator has formed a clear view of how to develop the curriculum. The school's recent mergers have resulted in a complete hotch potch of both hardware and software that are not always compatible. This means that classrooms have a range of stand-alone and laptop computers with a patchy range of software. As a result, pupils do not develop their skills in a consistent way. For example, understanding of data handling and experience of computer modelling is inconsistent. The school's computer suite is underused. It was often empty during the inspection and the timetabling gave many pupils only one opportunity a fortnight to use this valuable facility.

76. Leadership and management of the subject are good. In the time the co-ordinator has been in post, he has done everything possible given the existing provision to develop the use of ICT through the school. The curriculum is based on national guidelines but is not yet delivering the full range of expected experiences. The assessment system is comprehensive and provides a good overview of curriculum covered and the standards pupils attain.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

77. During the inspection, pupils did not use classroom computers to any significant extent. The computers were not a focus for learning and only a few classes had displays of pupils' work. However, where teachers had access to interactive white boards, they were used well as a teaching tool. In a Year 5 science lesson the teacher had prepared screens on the movement of the earth and moon which enriched pupils' technical language and aided the good learning that took place during the lesson. However, the overall use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool is inadequate.

## HUMANITIES

78. History was inspected in full and is reported on below; geography was sampled.

79. No overall judgement could be made on provision for **geography** as no lessons were timetabled during the inspection. From the evidence available, pupils make good progress in geography; this is an improvement since the last inspection. In Year 6 pupils talked about the contrast between their own lives and those of children in the third world and how they had studied family life in both locations. Pupils in Year 2 are able to talk about physical and human features that help to shape their world. The co-ordinator has re written the scheme of work using various commercially produced material and her own expertise so that pupils build up their geography vocabulary and skills. However, the use of ICT is under developed.

## HISTORY

Provision in history is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good scheme of work and the subject is well resourced.
- Good teaching, visitors to school and well planned trips bring the subject to life.
- The subject is very well led and managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped.

### Commentary

80. The provision for history has improved since the last inspection when it was satisfactory. Central to this improvement are the very effective leadership and management of the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has high aspirations for the subject and the experiences offered to the pupils. The scheme of work uses commercial programmes of study and relevant units to provide a comprehensive history curriculum that builds up key skills.

81. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. When lessons were very good they utilised artefacts and visitors to good effect and the pace of the lessons was snappy and exciting.

82. A lesson for all the pupils in Year 2 brought history to life as the teachers described their own sixth birthday and that of their own children's sixth birthday parties. The images were brought to life with the use of a video and various artefacts. The pupils were then introduced to a great aunt of one their classmates. They prepared questions and were shown the real amount of rations allowed in World War II. The visitor captivated the pupils with her recollections of her birthday tea.

83. Older pupils are able to talk confidently and enthusiastically about Vikings and Romans and understand the concept of timelines. Each class is adding to a longer timeline which stretches around the Library wall.

84. All pupils talk enthusiastically about the rich hands-on experiences that have made history 'come alive for them'.

85. The use of ICT to enhance subject provision is under developed.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

86. Design and technology, music, and physical education were inspected in full and are reported on below. Art and design was sampled.

87. No direct teaching was seen in **art and design** during the inspection so no judgement could be made about standards and achievement. Pupils were able to talk enthusiastically about artists and topics they had studied. A group of older pupils proudly talked about work that had been completed with a local artist and was displayed in the entrance hall. Younger pupils had studied self portraits with a visiting artist and explained about still life drawings. Year 5 pupils have worked on a community project where they designed and painted plates illustrating what Stoke on Trent meant to them. A local industry supplied the plates and fired them for the pupils. They also worked with a local artist who was commissioned to make a sculpture for a local area of land. All the children involved will be mentioned on the sculpture as a lasting reminder of their efforts.

88. The co-ordinator has supported non-specialist teachers well in trying out new techniques such as batik and mosaic. She has taught exemplar lessons and encouraged the whole school to have a go and enjoy art and design. Resources are now good as the co-ordinator manages a small budget.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in design and technology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils receive a good range of opportunities to plan, make and evaluate products.
- Good teaching ensures pupils are beginning to be taught specific skills throughout the school.
- The subject contributes well to pupils' personal development.

### **Commentary**

89. Two lessons were seen during the inspection and scrutiny of pupils' work, discussions with pupils during lessons as well as attractive displays indicate that although pupils achieve well throughout the school, by the end of Year 2, standards are well below those expected and by the end of Year 6 they have risen to below national expectations. The low standards are because of the lack of emphasis of the subject within the school in the past. However, there is now an enthusiastic, knowledgeable subject co-ordinator in place who has begun to develop and manage the subject well.

90. A scheme of work ensures that specific skills are progressively taught and that all pupils get experience of the main components of the programme of study for the subject. This is very good improvement since the last inspection where the subject was judged to be unsatisfactory.

91. All pupils are now experiencing opportunities to design and make articles using a range of materials but this has not always been the case. Although pupils now choose their own materials and practise specific skills, some older pupils have not had sufficient opportunities of this nature in the past to improve their limited skills. Younger pupils design and make puppets, using a variety of materials and techniques, making finger, sock, wooden spoon and string puppets. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 design and make bedroom furniture with different expectations in design, product and evaluation. They are taught cutting and joining skills, using plastics, fabrics, papers and re-cycled boxes. They evaluate their work critically. For example with judgements such as, 'The bed wouldn't be very comfortable' or 'this is my dream bedroom' using subject specific vocabulary, where ever possible.

92. Year 3 pupils design and make picture frames. They experiment with a variety of cards, papers, pipe cleaners and straws how to make a structure stable, having first studied a variety of commercially produced frames. In a good lesson, the co-ordinator encouraged all pupils to work with different materials and had good subject knowledge to support pupils' learning.

93. The subject contributes well to personal development as pupils learn how to share resources and evaluate their own and each others' work in a positive and sensitive way.

## **MUSIC**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**



- Standards in singing are good but do not meet expectations in other aspects of the subject.
- The teaching and learning are good.
- The leadership is enthusiastic and successful.
- There is an insufficient range of musical instruments for pupils to use.

## Commentary

94. Pupils' attain well in singing. They enter the school well below the level that would be expected for their age, but make very good progress throughout the school. They are still below national expectations at the end of Year 2, but by the end of Year 6, their standards have risen to be in line with national expectations. However, pupils' skills in other aspects of music lag behind and do not meet national expectations, such as in playing instruments, listening to music and composing their own tunes and melodies.

95. Teachers generally plan their lessons well, although sometimes there is not a clear aim to the activities. They make good use of a range of percussion instruments. There are, however, few other instruments available, such as tuned or electronic instruments. Most pupils are very well motivated by their teachers' enthusiasm and good knowledge of the subject. They enjoy the singing, such as in hymn practices and assemblies, very much, and they try hard and successfully to be melodic and to sing with the mood of the music. Some boys in Years 5 and 6, however, are resistant to this subject and do not join in willingly. Lessons for some classes are too short to develop the theme of the lesson well, especially as the instruments have to be carried around the school to various classrooms, some of which are rather small to be holding active music lessons.

96. This subject is well led by the three members of staff who share the work. Pupils benefit greatly from the expertise of staff; one teacher is a professional musician and two others also play the piano. The long-term plan of what is to be taught is good. It encourages pupils to be creative, enjoy the lessons, and gain skills in different aspects of music. Pupils' progress is tracked well, although not with a single consistent system through the school. These good standards of teaching, learning and subject organisation have remained much the same as at the time of the previous inspection.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching results in good achievement throughout the school.
- The subject is well led by the co-ordinator.
- The good curriculum provision is enriched by a wide range of after school clubs.
- The lack of a playing field inhibits the development of some ball skills and team games.

## Commentary

97. Standards on entry are below national expectations. Pupils achieve well through the school and by the end of Year 6 are in line with national expectations with some features, such as dance, being good. A group of 19 pupils from Year 4, 5 and 6 demonstrated a very good memory for synchronisation of movement and were able to move in time with the music to produce a high level performance. This demonstrated very good achievement during the lesson. The quality of provision and the standard of teaching seen during the inspection represent an improvement since the last inspection.

98. Teaching was good overall with one very good lesson seen. Good teaching was exemplified by a Year 2 lesson when clear planning linked to stimulating ideas provided a high level of challenge for pupils which resulted in good learning. Pupils were able to develop their ability to move like penguins or bears. They developed sequences of movements which resulted in a high level of both enjoyment and learning. While still satisfactory, teaching was less successful when both environmental conditions and pupil response were challenging. For example, a Year 6 lesson on

football skills was difficult for both pupils and teacher as it had to be conducted on a hard surface. Grass would have been much more appropriate for the skills being taught, such as dribbling and passing. The school has no grass playing facilities and, as a result, pupils found this lesson demanding and the teacher had to work hard to keep some pupils focussed.

99. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and has ensured that provision for physical education is good. The school is well resourced. The curriculum covers all expected aspects and through links outside the school and with the provision of extra curricular opportunities has raised the profile of physical education very effectively. Pupils swim regularly and take part in inter-school team competitions. They have access to a range of clubs including multi-activities for Years 1 and 2, football, hockey, netball and gymnastics. The school works very hard to ensure that the lack of a grass play area does not impact adversely on pupils' achievement. Overall, they have been successful but some skill development and team games are adversely affected by the lack of a playing field.

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

The quality of provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Planning is very good.
- Pupils are given very good opportunities to consider matters of importance in their lives.
- The school promotes healthy eating habits well.
- The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator.
- Strong emphasis is placed on developing pupils' self esteem and their desire to succeed.

### **Commentary**

100. The very good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education permeates all areas of the curriculum and all aspects of school life. This is an improvement on the last inspection when it was judged to be good. It features in class planning throughout the school year. The development of personal and social skills has a high priority within the school day and specific times are set aside to give pupils very good opportunities to listen, think and respond to a variety of issues that are relevant to their own lives. For example in Year 5, the teacher sets aside time during the week to play listening games with his class, where pupils are encouraged to experiment with different speaking and listening styles and to find out the effect on their classmates. Healthy eating and a healthy life style are promoted and pupils are educated in the dangers of drugs misuse; there is no formal sex education but pupils' questions are treated with sensitivity when they arise. The quality of the relationships between all the adults and all the pupils in the school is very good and this helps to enhance pupils' self esteem. Adults always use positive reinforcement to build on pupils' self confidence. The co-ordinators leadership of personal, social and health education is very good. She is enthusiastic and experienced and has put in place many very good initiatives to enhance provision even further. Each week a pupil is nominated as 'child of the week' from each class for achieving a personal goal, demonstrating good behaviour or showing compassion for others. There is also a 'Simply the Best' board where pupils' achievements are displayed. There are good home school links which are encouraged and nurtured by the full time Home School Link worker and the school has established 'SHARE' which enables a group of reception parents to enhance their own life skills so as to aid their children.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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