

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **COMBERBACH PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Comberbach, Northwich

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111152

Headteacher: Mrs Janet Groom

Lead inspector: Mike Onyon

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> October 2004

Inspection number: 266657

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	177
School address:	Mather Drive Comberbach Northwich Cheshire
Postcode:	CW9 6BG
Telephone number:	01606 891336
Fax number:	01606 891851
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Michal Marycz

Date of previous 7<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> December 1998 inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Comberbach is an average sized primary school in a rural location. At the time of this inspection, 177 children were attending. The number on roll has fluctuated from year to year but, since the time of the previous inspection, there has been an overall increase. The school's socio-economic context is favourable; the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average at 9 per cent and the percentage with a statement of special educational needs is below average. Pupil mobility is above average and many pupils have joined the school over the last four years. There are no pupils learning English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average but varies from year to year. The school received a DfES School Achievement Award in 2000. It is in receipt of the Sports Council Gold Active Mark and the Schools Curriculum Award. It has a significant partnership with the high school to which most pupils transfer.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18146	Michael Onyon	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, physical education.
9974	Daljit Singh	Lay inspector	
30439	Malcolm Heyes	Team inspector	Special educational needs, English, information and communication technology, geography, history.
27477	Josephine Mitchell	Team inspector	Foundation stage, mathematics, design and technology, music, religious education.

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA  
Herringston Barn  
Herringston  
Dorchester  
Dorset  
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS</b>	<b>9</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>12</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>33</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

**This is an effective and inclusive school** providing good value for money. As the result of good teaching, pupils achieve well overall. Standards, by Year 6, are above average in English, mathematics and science. Overall leadership, management and governance are good with very effective leadership by the headteacher.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's strong ethos effectively promotes good relationships, developing pupils' confidence, self-esteem and respect for one another.
- The school is at the heart of its community with very effective links enabling the curriculum to be considerably enriched.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as the result of very good provision for them.
- The quality of care is very good and information from assessment is used well to plan the next stages of pupils' work, but targets for improvement could be indicated better in pupils' annual reports.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and behave very well.
- The school has improved its provision for outdoor play for pupils in the foundation stage, but it does not yet use the facilities sufficiently to support their physical development.

The school has developed well since its inspection in 1998. The issues identified at that time have been successfully addressed. Pupils' progress in science is now systematically assessed and the assessments help to plan future learning. Resources for information and communication technology have been improved and opportunities are provided for pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good and the planning of lessons is now good. Whilst a suitable enclosed play area and large scale play equipment have been provided for children in the foundation stage, they are not used consistently.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Achievement is **good** overall. When children begin school their attainment is generally average. Children in the reception class achieve well. They have a good start to their education and, by the time they move on to Year 1, most of them exceed the standards expected nationally in the areas of learning in the foundation stage curriculum, except in physical development, where standards are average. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Standards in Year 2 are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are

average. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and results in national tests at the end of Year 6, in 2003, were above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are average. The school's performance in the tests was below that of schools whose pupils achieved similarly at the end of Year 2. This is explained by the fact that in the past three years a significant number of pupils have been admitted to Years 3, 4 and 5. Many of these pupils had below average attainment when they joined and their progress had been disrupted by moving schools. The school has added good value to those pupils who have attended the school from reception to Year 6.

Pupils' personal qualities are **very good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and behave very well during lessons and at other times. They take on considerable responsibilities and are very proud of their school, and have very good opportunities to express their feelings and opinions in high quality lessons in personal, social and health education and citizenship. Pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Attendance is well above average and punctuality is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good** overall, with very good teaching and learning observed throughout the school. The deputy headteacher provides effective teaching and learning guidance to colleagues, positively impacting on its quality. The planning of lessons and teachers' knowledge of their subjects are very good. Teachers very effectively promote equality of opportunity and insist upon high standards of behaviour. The school provides good learning opportunities for all the pupils and offers very good support for learning outside the school day. ICT resources have recently been improved with the completion of an extension to the school building, and are now good. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good; these pupils are well supported and as a result they make good progress in their learning and personal development. Assessment is used well to plan pupils' future learning. The care provided for pupils is very good. Partnership with parents is good and links with other schools and colleges and, in particular, the community are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher is a very effective leader. She provides enthusiasm and drive and effectively motivates all those connected with the school. She has a clear vision for the future of the school that is shared with all staff. Other key staff, including the deputy headteacher, provide effective leadership and management in their respective areas of responsibility. The overall management of the school is good. Governance of the school is good. The governors show a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are committed to help the school to move forward. All statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents expressed very positive views about the school. They particularly commented on the strength of leadership and management, the good quality of teaching and the progress made by pupils. Inspection judgements endorse these views. Some parents had concerns about the quality of information received explaining their child's progress. Pupils have a very positive view of the school; nearly all say that they are able to go to an adult with worries, they really like being at school and think that other pupils are friendly and behave well.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- The use of outdoor play resources for children in the foundation stage.
- Annual reports to parents, to be specific about areas in which pupils need to improve.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Achievement is good overall. Children in the foundation stage, pupils in Years 1 and 2 and pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and standards are above average by Year 6.

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

- Higher attaining pupils are effectively catered for and achieve well.
- Well-planned and effective provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve well.
- Standards in ICT have improved recently.

#### **Commentary**

1. Attainment on entry to the reception class is broadly average. Children achieve well as a result of the very good planning to match activities with their needs. Parents expressed satisfaction with the arrangements made to enable their children to settle into the school. Both higher attaining and lower attaining children achieve well, as do those with special educational needs, due to good support. Children generally exceed the goals they are expected to reach in the areas of learning by the end of reception. An exception is physical development, where the lack of regular opportunities for outdoor play means the standard reached is not as high, although the children attain average standards. Children are on course to exceed the standards expected in their personal, social and emotional development.
2. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well. Standards in national tests, in reading, writing and mathematics were average in 2003, but above average in 2004. At this early stage of the school year, the indications are that pupils are on course to reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of the year. Standards in ICT are average, by Year 2. The school has recently installed additional laptop computers, giving pupils greater access. This has led to recent improvements in the levels of work being undertaken. In the period since the previous inspection the number of pupils on roll has increased significantly and a number have entered the school in Years 1 and 2. The attainment on entry of a significant number is below that expected. The school has worked hard to enable the pupils to make rapid progress but their lower starting point has meant that average, rather than above average, results were achieved in the 2003 national tests.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.9 (17.9)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.6 (16.0)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.2 (17.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.1 (29.5)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	27.8 (27.5)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.4 (29.5)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. The impact of large numbers of pupils joining the school in Years 3 to 6 has also led to an apparent decline in progress between Year 2 and Year 6. Data indicates that the school's performance is below average. However, there have been significant additions to each year group and analysis of the individual progress of pupils clearly shows that pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well. Despite the disruption caused by moving school, those pupils joining the school at a later stage in their education are doing well, as are pupils who have been in the school from reception to Year 6. Standards were above average in the 2003 national tests in English, mathematics and science, and are currently above average. Standards in English, where the impact of lower attainment on entry has been felt most, are slightly lower than at the time of the previous inspection. Above average standards in mathematics and science have been maintained. The results of national tests in 2004 indicate above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Throughout the school boys and girls do equally well.
4. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also good and marks a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. This is because pupils receive a very good level of support from a part-time member of staff who presents a well-planned, structured programme of work for each individual, particularly in English and mathematics. Class teachers also plan lessons very well to meet the differing needs of individual pupils. The headteacher's commitment to this provision effectively ensures that the activities and support for pupils are of a consistently very high level. Individual education plans include specific targets for pupils' improvement and are used well to assess progress.
5. Higher attaining pupils are catered for effectively and they achieve well. In mathematics in Years 1 and 2 and in science in Years 3 to 6 the percentage of pupils achieving the higher national curriculum levels in national tests was above average in 2003. In English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6 the results were well above average. Observations during the inspection indicate that these pupils are being challenged at an appropriate level and that they are on course to do as well as they possibly can. The consistently good quality of teaching contributes strongly to pupils' good achievement. Teachers have high expectations of all their pupils, whilst at the same time pitching work at an appropriately challenging level. The deputy headteacher effectively monitors and evaluates the quality of classroom practice and has been a strong factor in maintaining good achievement.
6. Pupils' achievement in ICT has improved throughout the school since the previous inspection. However standards remain average at Year 2 and Year 6. As the result of better planning, increased teacher confidence and improved resources there has been a recent improvement. Increased access to recently installed facilities and the more consistent use of ICT to support learning in other subjects are beginning to have a positive impact.

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

Pupils' very good attendance, attitudes, behaviour and personal experiences inspire learning and ensure the very constructive relationships between pupils and with staff. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is well above average.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships form a very strong foundation for learning.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures pupils become mature and responsible learners.

### Commentary

7. Most pupils like coming to school, because they are encouraged by teachers and most parents to attend regularly and on time. These expectations are the norm in the school and form a very solid foundation for learning. However, family holidays taken during term time, which are discouraged by the school, continue to affect attendance and the learning of pupils.
8. Most pupils usually have very good attitudes in lessons; it is rare for these attitudes to be less than good. These pupils enjoy learning, listen attentively, are keen to answer questions and tackle work enthusiastically. Teachers' ability to sustain frequently high levels of interest in lesson content and set suitably challenging tasks ensures pupils of all abilities do well.
9. Pupils are encouraged to value diversity and this was illustrated during an informal discussion when some pupils asked a visitor about his country of birth and why he wore a turban. Discussions were based on mutual respect and indicate pupils' understanding of right and wrong and their maturity, as well as the value pupils place on positive social interaction with adults.
10. Pupils' behaviour inside and beyond lessons complements their learning. Pupils are polite, courteous to adults and frequently adopt a caring and responsible attitude to their peers. They open doors for others and when thanked respond by saying "You're welcome". Around school Year 6 prefects care for younger pupils and take their responsibilities very seriously, ensuring those in their care are very well catered for. These invaluable experiences enable pupils to serve as positive role models, enhance their social skills and enable the school community to learn from one other. They further support equal opportunities, and ensure trusting relationships and teamwork and the school's successful efforts to reinforce its code of conduct.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.2	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

11. The headteacher's influence is very evident through the school's work to promote pupils' personal development. The underlying messages, promoted consistently through the

school, about the importance of living together harmoniously and respecting others, make a real impact and are reinforced through reflection, both in circle time and story time and through social activities outside lessons. This contributes powerfully to pupils' personal development, particularly their moral, spiritual and cultural development, which is very good. There were no exclusions in the previous twelve months.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall. The curriculum is good and there are very good opportunities for enrichment. The care provided for pupils is very good. Partnership with parents is good and links with other schools, colleges and the community are very good.

### Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Assessment is good overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are stimulating and challenging so that pupils are fully engaged in learning; speaking and listening are strongly encouraged and new vocabulary emphasized well.
- Pupils are set targets and their progress is closely monitored in English, mathematics, science, religious education and ICT; assessment is not as highly developed in other subjects.
- Most lessons are very well planned and adapted well for the range of pupils' abilities in each class.
- Resources and time are used effectively to involve pupils and to provide a variety of experiences that help all of them to learn.

### Commentary

12. Teaching and learning are good. The teaching of all subjects inspected is at least good, with some very good. Where teaching is very good, teachers very effectively build on pupils' previous learning and offer challenging tasks to extend their contribution. They ask probing questions and provide opportunities for pupils to explain their strategies in giving answers. Pupils enjoy lessons because they are stimulating and teachers plan them very carefully to engage everyone in learning. Relationships throughout the school are very good so that no time is wasted in managing pupils' behaviour and keeping them focused during lessons. Parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire rightly believe that teaching is good and that their children are expected to work hard.

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	7 (20%)	25 (71%)	3 (9%)	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. Overall, teaching and learning are good in the foundation stage. Activities, generally, are well planned and organised in the expected areas of learning. During the inspection it was not possible to observe teaching in the area of creative development. The lack of outdoor play facilities restricts children's progress in physical development. Learning in the reception class is highly structured so that children often do not have enough opportunities for free choice activities, especially at the beginning of the year when they start school. The inspection was at an early stage of the school year and children had settled well into the routines expected of them.
14. Teachers throughout the school adapt work very well to meet the needs of different groups of pupils in their classes, especially in English and mathematics. The part-time teacher supporting pupils with special educational needs is very well trained and briefed in her role of supporting pupils in targeted withdrawal sessions in literacy and numeracy. The headteacher is committed to ensuring that all pupils are included equally and have opportunities to contribute in a meaningful way. The special educational needs teacher knows the pupils very well; this results in those pupils making good progress towards their individual targets. Pupils enjoy the sessions and are well motivated in trying to reach the learning targets set for them.
15. The outcomes of the assessment of pupils' progress are used well by teachers to plan activities in lessons. Pupils' progress is followed closely in English, mathematics, science, religious education and ICT, and the information gathered is used well to inform future planning in these subjects. However, teachers have less subject-specific information on which to monitor pupils' achievements over time and to build on their knowledge and skills. The school has identified this and it is currently a priority in its development plan with ongoing good quality work to improve it. As the information becomes more precise it can better inform the contents of the annual pupil reports to parents.
16. The computer suite is used effectively to teach pupils new skills and has become a regular feature of the learning experiences of all pupils. Computers in classrooms are used well to reinforce what has been learned in lessons in the computer suite, and there are good links with subjects such as history, geography and mathematics.
17. Most lessons are challenging; the contexts chosen are often stimulating and capture pupils' interest well. Lesson objectives are displayed and explained to pupils at the start of lessons and often used as the focus of well-conducted plenary sessions, demonstrated very well in a Year 6 English lesson where pupils' progress against the learning objectives was checked and opportunities provided for pupils to effectively consider what they had learned. All teaching staff have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. This is evident in the quality of their explanations and in their use of questioning and intervention that results in pupils explaining their reasoning or applying their knowledge to predict and speculate, which was seen in Year 4 and 5 science lesson on solids, liquids and gases. Whiteboards and overhead projectors are used to good effect in lessons to illustrate points and to teach new skills. Speaking and listening are strongly encouraged amongst pupils; this contributes much to their confidence and self-esteem.
18. The deputy headteacher leads a carefully structured programme of lesson observations offering feedback to teachers. In this way the good quality teaching seen at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained and good practice shared. Technical vocabulary is displayed prominently in classrooms and pupils are actively encouraged to

apply the new terms in their responses and their written work. Class discussions are very well managed; pupils are often engrossed in them and they listen carefully to others' responses and say if they agree or not, as seen in a Year 3 and 4 lesson in personal, social and health education on the issue of communicating well when discussing conflict situations. Teachers set homework regularly to extend the learning in lessons. Marking of pupils' work is good: pupils receive much feedback in the form of written comments and correction that helps them improve.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good overall and provides well for all its pupils. Accommodation and resources are good. The opportunities for enrichment are very good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The range of extra-curricular activities is very good and very effectively supports pupils' good achievement.
- Provision for ICT has improved and is now good.
- The provision for personal, social and health education is good, offering well-planned learning opportunities for pupils.
- The outdoor provision for children in the foundation stage has improved since the previous inspection but is not used regularly.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

## **Commentary**

19. The purchase of new computer hardware and software, together with staff training, now means that the teachers are more confident in teaching ICT. An interactive whiteboard is used well in the current computer suite and laptop computers provide teachers with greater access to the technology to support the teaching of a number of subjects in classrooms. Rightly, parents and pupils feel strongly that children are treated fairly. The school's ethos places children equally at the heart of all considerations. Their views are sought regularly and they actively contribute to decisions made in the school.
20. Overall, the curriculum in the foundation stage is good and enables children to achieve well in all the areas of learning with the exception of physical development. Since the previous inspection the school has fenced a small part of the playground outside the reception classroom and there is now provision for large wheeled toys. However, this area is a small area of bare tarmac. Children do not have regular access and it is not easily visible by adults from inside the classroom. This restricts the children's physical development.
21. The provision for personal, social and health education is good, with timetabled lessons as well as other opportunities, and gives opportunities for pupils to discuss matters of importance to themselves, classmates and the school in general. Year 6 pupils have their lunch at the same time as the reception children and this is mutually beneficial to both age groups, the older pupils taking responsibility for the younger ones well and the young ones having good role models and individuals they can approach with any worries or concerns. At this stage of the year, the older pupils are particularly protective towards the children who have just started school. Year 6 pupils also join the younger children for shared reading, which delights the younger children and is an experience which the older pupils look forward to. There are regular residential experiences which give pupils the opportunity to relate to each other and to adults in a less formal context and develop their social skills and independence. Much is accomplished throughout all subjects. As the result of adults' very good examples and high expectations of behaviour, whether as individuals or in group activities, pupils learn to think in a mature way and to act responsibly.

22. The provision for special educational needs is very good. It is very carefully matched to pupils' learning, emotional or behavioural needs. It is provided through targeted individual or group withdrawal by the special needs teacher. This is rotated so that access to the curriculum is not interrupted on a regular basis during a particular time allocation. The special needs co-ordinator has received very good training and support from the headteacher, who has specialist background in special needs.
23. Often as the result of the school's very good links with the community, a good range of clubs, visits, and visitors enrich the curriculum very well. In particular the links with local environmental groups have led to many learning opportunities for pupils that are linked well to the subjects of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 are given the opportunity of a residential visit. All the clubs are open to younger and older pupils on a rotation basis. Visits and visitors greatly enhance the curriculum and school teams regularly enter local sports tournaments. A sizeable extension, built in two phases, has provided three new classrooms, replacing old mobile units. This extra space is used well, with good sized classrooms and an additional area enabling adults to work effectively with small groups of pupils. Accommodation, resources and staffing offer good support to the curriculum.

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

The provision for pupils' care, guidance, support and well-being is very good, and complemented by good child protection and health and safety policy and practices. The school community continues to learn in a safe, secure and happy learning environment. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to voice their opinions to improve learning and life in school and the wider community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of care, support and guidance provided by the school ensures its pupils grow educationally and emotionally and become responsible and mature citizens of the school and wider community.
- The school community learns in safe and secure surroundings.
- Children new to the school are helped to settle in very effectively.
- The school values all its pupils and listens to their concerns.

### **Commentary**

24. The headteacher and staff are very good role models and provide a consistent and caring learning environment in which there are very good standards of discipline. Pupils are encouraged and helped to achieve mutual respect, communicate, co-operate and be self-disciplined. The school promotes and develops a relaxed and welcoming learning environment.
25. The arrangements for pupils' safety and well-being are secure and supported by a good child protection policy and procedures. Health and safety of the school community are given priority. Staff are led by a very caring and well-informed designated teacher and supported by governors. The provision for pupils' care ensures that the school meets its legal responsibilities and that the pastoral needs of all pupils are met in a sensitive and professional manner.

26. The school does not currently operate a school council, but ensures that it listens well to all its pupils. Pupils responded very positively in their questionnaire. The school seeks pupils' views informally. It values these views and, where appropriate, acts upon them. These arrangements enable pupils to become involved in the school's development. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, whether in lessons or in withdrawal groups, by the special needs teacher. This was seen when Year 2 pupils received individual support from the special educational needs teacher in their comprehension activities, enabling them to work successfully at a challenging level.
27. Induction arrangements for reception children and those pupils who join the school are very effective. Parents agree that arrangements for children starting school help them to settle in quickly and it is clear that new pupils are helped to adapt to school routines well. There is close liaison with the pre-school groups in the village, who use the school facilities frequently and so acclimatise the children to the school environment. There are regular meetings between pre-school and school staff. There are good arrangements to keep parents informed and to answer any concerns they may have about their child settling into the reception year.

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

Parents enjoy a good, productive and purposeful partnership with the school. There are very good links with other schools and the community. This very good partnership with the school's stakeholders ensures that pupils achieve well and grow into mature and responsible citizens.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most parents support their children's learning inside and beyond school.
- The school has very positive links with the local community and with other schools that support pupils' learning very well.
- The quality of information provided through the pupils' annual reports to parents can be improved.

### **Commentary**

28. Parents value the education of their children and frequently support learning in school and home and through the work of the Parents Association. For example, some parents are building a constructive partnership with Year 1 pupils and very effectively supporting their learning as the pupils enjoy sharing their reading books with adults, which helps to improve their reading skills. This contact with adults very effectively contributes to pupils' improved speaking and listening skills, as well as raising their self-esteem. This opportunity also assists parents in developing the skills and confidence which they use extensively to support the learning of their children at home.
29. Despite the location of the school in a rural and comparatively scattered community, there is a very good variety of community links. For example, over a number of years, pupils from the school and neighbouring schools have been researching the history of Anderton Nature Park (salt works). Their investigations have taken them to Ellesmere Port Boat museum and the Lion salt works. Pupils interviewed people involved in the river and industry surrounding it. They used old maps and other information to increase their knowledge and understanding of local history and geography skills. As result, they are becoming responsible learners and having integral involvement with the wider community.



30. Various artists, poets, and sports coaches visit the school to promote learning and the personal development of pupils. There are good relationships with external agencies such as the speech and language development staff, the occupational therapist and psychologist, which make a very good contribution to the learning experienced by pupils with special needs. Very good relationships exist with parents of pupils with special educational needs, and they are kept very well informed about their child's progress in school, which further supports their learning.
31. Most parents rightly recognise and value the effective written information provided by the school, but the quality of written reports does not include specific targets for academic improvement. Reports currently contain general statements about progress and expectations rather than precise information about what pupils can and cannot do. Consequently, parents are unable to fully support improvement and enable their children to make further progress.
32. Support is given to pupils in Year 6 to prepare them for their high school. There is regular exchange of information and contact is established between staff to exchange, develop and sustain links. This enables pupils to make a smooth transition to the next stage of education and promotes a very effective partnership between schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The quality of management is good. The governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and has effectively led the improvement of provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Effective monitoring of teaching and learning, by the deputy headteacher, underpins their good quality.
- The leadership is successfully managing the increasing roll and the impact this has on the pupils' learning.
- Governors are well informed and play a full part in influencing the school's work.

### **Commentary**

33. The school has a very positive ethos with everybody pulling in the same direction. This sense of purpose has communicated itself to the pupils, most of whom have a very positive attitude to learning and a mature approach. There is an appropriate balance between achieving good academic standards and the development of rounded individuals through a broad and interesting range of experiences. The school is held in high regard by its community and the very good relationships help to extend the opportunities available to pupils. The headteacher leads a sensitive approach to special needs in the broadest sense and her commitment ensures that the school fully meets the diverse needs of all its pupils. This represents a considerable improvement from the previous inspection.
34. The headteacher made the review of special educational needs a priority after the previous inspection. With the effective support of outside agencies and the commitment

of the special educational needs co-ordinator, the writing of individual education plans was reviewed and all teachers were made aware of the pupils' special needs. Procedures are now very good, as is overall provision. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage in their school career and their progress is carefully monitored. The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The co-ordinator ensures that the Code of Practice is followed and is meticulous in ensuring that all records and pupils' individual educational plans are kept up to date. She liaises very effectively with all the teaching staff and ensures that pupils' work is very well matched to their specific needs, either when withdrawn individually or when working in the classroom. The headteacher's effort and commitment are recognized by governors and staff, as well as the majority of parents. She devotes considerable time and energy to her leadership and management roles. Subject co-ordinators lead their subjects well, contribute fully to school improvement planning and effectively support teaching and learning.

35. The deputy headteacher has particular responsibility for the oversight of teaching and learning and is fully committed to maintaining their high quality. Her own teaching is very good and, through a regular programme of monitoring and evaluation, she ensures that good quality is maintained throughout the school. Teachers are given good quality feedback and opportunities to observe and learn from good practice. As the result of the careful analysis of the outcomes of the assessment of pupils' progress, teachers have a very clear understanding of pupils' levels of work and, as a result, carefully match tasks to their abilities, ensuring good achievement. Annual reports of pupils' progress sent to parents could be improved by explaining the targets for improvements in a precise way. Responsibilities for leading areas within the development plan are effectively delegated to individual teachers, who work well with others to move things forward.
36. The school is well managed, responds thoughtfully to issues as they arise and reflects these in its development planning. It is aware of weaknesses and endeavours to improve, seeing them as a challenge rather than a problem. Performance management at all levels is clearly tied in to school improvement as well as the personal development of teachers and teaching assistants. As an example the school has positively tackled the challenges posed by an increase in its roll over the last four years. The roll has grown by over twenty pupils in that time. Many of the pupils admitted were at below average levels of attainment. Adjustments have been made to the teaching of all subjects, in particular mathematics, to fully meet the needs of all pupils. Teaching groups are made up of pupils of similar ability, rather than similar age. In this way, activities are well matched to the needs of pupils and they are making good progress. The increased roll has been managed well by the whole staff, ensuring that a productive climate for learning exists throughout the school.
37. The governing body is well informed with a good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors are supportive of the school and fully involved in decisions, taking steps to address the challenge of the increase in the number of pupils and the consequent pressures placed on the building. Recent additions to the building are providing good opportunities for the pupils. The governors are involved in shaping the future direction of the school and are well organised in a committee structure to carry out their role effectively. Governors and staff are proud of the school, in particular its place in the local community. During the inspection many governors attended the harvest festival, demonstrating their active involvement. Relationships are very good, ensuring that the school and its pupils benefit from a shared purpose and commitment. The governing body

also takes its role of critical friend seriously and holds the school to account in terms of its provision. All statutory requirements are met.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	461,412
Total expenditure	435,200
Expenditure per pupil	2,719

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	41,626
Balance carried forward to the next year	67,838

38. Currently the school has a surplus in its budget of well over the recommended five per cent. Governors have realistic and appropriate plans in place to allocate the funding for ongoing building and maintenance projects and to maintain the current levels of staffing. They share the headteacher's high aspirations and are determined to manage the budget effectively to help take the school forward.

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

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

39. Overall provision for children in the foundation stage is good. They are well prepared for their move into Year 1. The children enter the reception class in the September in the year in which they are five. They achieve well because the teaching is good, and the curriculum is generally well planned and organised to provide a wide range of interesting and relevant activities, which are well matched to their needs. An exception is the area of physical development, as explained below. All adults set very good role models for the children and manage them well. There is a good ratio of adults to children, ensuring that the needs of all are well met. The attainment of children entering the reception class is in line with that expected nationally and children achieve well through the reception year so that their attainment is above average in key areas of learning when they enter Year 1. Learning in the reception class is highly structured so that children often do not have enough opportunities for free choice activities, especially at the beginning of the year when they start school.
40. The accommodation and resources inside are good. The outside area is now enclosed and there are large toys but this area requires further development. The small area of bare tarmac is barely big enough for wheeled toys, let alone any climbing or balancing equipment. The children do not have regular free access to the area and it cannot be clearly seen by adults from inside the classroom. Although staff use the wider grounds for whole-class directed sessions, children do not have sufficient opportunities for spontaneous physical or imaginative outdoor play. The classroom layout and displays provide a rich learning environment.

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

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

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

- Staff provide good role models.
- Routines are quickly established and children readily take responsibility.
- Positive relationships are being established and so children feel confident and happy.

#### **Commentary**

41. Teaching and learning are good. Routines are quickly established during the first few weeks in school. At the time of the inspection the children had only been in school for four weeks but they were already familiar with routines. In the early morning they know they sit at tables looking at books or other activities and then to sit on the carpet and to listen. They line up sensibly, singing 'Who's the smartest in our line?' Adults present the children with good role models so children know what is expected. Children put up their hands to answer questions, although at this stage they often call out as well! They are polite to visitors and willing to talk about what they are doing. Sometimes children have little choice in the activities they undertake and much of their work is entirely teacher directed, which limits their opportunities for independent learning. The children work in a calm, controlled

environment so that by the time they enter Year 1 they are on course to exceed the standards expected for children of this age. They are prepared well for the next stage in their education.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers and support staff provide good opportunities to develop the children's language skills, and teaching is good.
- The children achieve well and reach standards that are above those expected for children of this age.
- Whole-class sessions are sometimes too long.

## **Commentary**

42. Standards on entry to the reception class are in line with those expected. Most children entering the class are articulate, confident and willing to talk about what interests them. They enjoy books and stories and know that words carry meaning. Children will attempt to write their own name and some achieve this with accuracy. They make good progress so that by the time they start in Year 1 they have reached the learning goals expected and many have exceeded them, so standards overall are above those expected. Teaching and learning in whole-class and focused groups are good. Whole-class sessions, however, are sometimes too long, so that children sit on the carpet for periods that are beyond their span of concentration. The teaching of sounds is thorough and children are beginning to use this knowledge to help them read and write. A soft toy that goes home on visits and keeps a diary is an effective way of encouraging them to write and of involving parents in their children's learning. They enjoy books, and recall the characters in different jungle stories that they have heard.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Achievement is good and standards are above those that are expected at the end of the reception year.
- Teachers plan a suitable range of activities to support learning, which ensures children achieve well. Mathematical language is carefully taught.
- Incidental opportunities are used well to prompt children's mathematical knowledge and understanding.

## **Commentary**

43. Teachers' direct teaching of the whole class and small groups is good. As a result, learning is good. Teachers ask probing questions to encourage children to think about mathematical concepts, and mathematical language is carefully reinforced. The children therefore develop well in terms of mathematics and the standards they reach are above those expected when they enter Year 1. Teachers stimulate children's imagination using a puppet 'Grandpa Joe' who makes mistakes when counting, so that children delight in correcting him. The children are provided with a good range of mathematical experiences to develop their thinking but, as with literacy, activities tend to be highly structured and adult led. In an observed instance a child was moved on to another activity while still engrossed in the previous one. Incidental opportunities at registration time are used well to reinforce counting skills.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A range of interesting activities is planned to promote learning in this area.
- Staff use questioning effectively to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding of the world about them.

### **Commentary**

44. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. By the time children enter Year 1 they reach standards that are at least in line with those expected for their age, with many exceeding them. A good variety of appropriate interesting activities is planned to stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding. At the time of the inspection the theme was 'The Jungle' and the children were exploring sounds that occur in the jungle. During the children's first visit to the computer suite, the interactive whiteboard was used effectively to introduce the children to a game where they needed to be able to use the mouse. All children observed worked confidently and were proficient at 'drag and click'. During a baking session for harvest, stimulating questions posed by the adults who supported the children in small groups enhanced children's learning.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children have numerous opportunities to develop their fine manipulative skills.
- Despite the best efforts of staff to provide appropriate activities, the provision of outdoor space and equipment is limited and not used regularly.

### **Commentary**

45. Despite good teaching and the improved resource provision, children's achievement is only satisfactory because they lack regular access to appropriate outdoor space, facilities and equipment. Most will meet the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. They have a small enclosed area but the lack of opportunities for using large scale toys and climbing equipment outdoors limits children's physical development. Fine motor skills are well developed and children hold pencils correctly and have good control when, for example, colouring pictures.

46. In a physical education lesson observed, the children developed a satisfactory sense of space and they moved with increasing confidence as the lesson progressed. Other skills associated with hand and finger control are developed well through opportunities provided to paint, draw, print, model and build. The daily provision of fruit also encourages the children to understand the concept of healthy eating.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

47. Artwork on display indicates that children reach expected standards in this area of creative development but as no teaching was seen and no children were observed painting it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. It is also not possible to judge standards or teaching in music. The opportunities for creative play are satisfactory. An imaginary camp site in the 'jungle' (a grassed area close to the school building) had good resources and looked inviting but it was not seen in action.



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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- There is strong and effective leadership by the co-ordinator.
- Good systems are in place for assessing and tracking pupils' achievements as they move through the school.
- Good quality teaching throughout the school includes planning that takes account of all pupils' abilities very well.
- Good questioning and intervention techniques employed by teachers help pupils' learning and understanding in lessons.
- Effective use of time and resources by teachers includes very good management and encouragement of all pupils in lessons.

#### **Commentary**

48. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well as they move through the school. The main reasons for this good achievement are that teaching is consistently good and the special needs teacher is very effective in supporting those pupils with special educational needs. The leadership and management of the subject are strong and effective, and the co-ordinator has a clear vision of how she wants the subject to develop. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning on a fortnightly basis, and has monitored colleagues' teaching on the theme of 'pupils' writing' during these observations. A dip in standards by Year 2 and Year 6, in 2003, has been analysed and found to be due to the disrupted progress of those pupils who have entered the school at times other than the usual time of admission, many of whom have below average attainment when they join the school. The value added by the school will take time to impact on the standards achieved by these pupils. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress towards their targets as they move through the school are well developed and used effectively to target additional support to those pupils who need it. Pupils' responses to statutory tests are also analysed to help with planning and assessing pupils' future learning needs. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
49. Standards in speaking and listening are above average at Year 2 and Year 6. The positive and supportive atmosphere found in classrooms encourages pupils to share their ideas. This was seen in a Year 3 and 4 geography lesson when pupils discussed in groups similarities and differences of life in this country to that found in India. Pupils have gained sufficient confidence to use a range of vocabulary and expression when they speak in either formal or informal situations. This was seen in Year 6 history lesson, when pupils could confidently discuss with the class and teacher the use of historical evidence when coming to a reasoned explanation of an historical event.
50. Standards in reading are above average at Year 2 and Year 6. Throughout the school all pupils are involved in guided reading activities to help improve and drive standards up. There is also a home reading scheme in which pupils keep their own independent records, including parental comments, and these are monitored by teaching staff. Pupils

enjoy reading and are willing to share their thoughts about a particular book or author they enjoy most. For example, a Year 2 pupil said he enjoyed the books of John Birmingham and could identify where they were kept in the school library. A Year 6 pupil said she enjoyed reading the Harry Potter novels, and how they were written by J. K. Rowling.

51. Standards in writing are above average at Year 2 and Year 6. The school has a clear priority on ensuring writing is developed and used in all areas of the curriculum. Year 2 higher attaining pupils can write legibly using capital letters and full stops, with most of the words spelt correctly. Less able pupils need reminding to use capital letters and full stops when using sentences. Year 2 pupils have written for a variety of purposes such as a story about Tom and Nancy and writing about castles. This is built on successfully as pupils move into the Year 3 to Year 6 classes. By Year 6 pupils can write for a variety of purposes across the curriculum. For example, writing about Greek buildings and architecture, and creatively in a piece entitled 'Escape from the Deathship'. Higher attaining pupils can use paragraphs and correct punctuation in their written work, and write in a neat and legible hand, with very few spelling mistakes. Less able pupils need some help in how to order their thoughts into a written piece using the correct punctuation.
52. The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons was good, with one lesson judged to be very good. All teachers plan effectively for lessons to ensure that all pupils are fully included, with activities and work well matched to their needs. This was demonstrated in a Year 2 and 3 lesson when different ability groups were given different tasks to complete when writing a story plan. All teachers use and employ a good range of questioning techniques and intervention to help pupils overcome any problem they may encounter in their learning. This was seen in a Year 3 and 4 lesson when the teacher helped different groups of pupils write a character sketch that focused on a small detail. The specific needs of pupils with special educational needs are well met, and as a result they achieve well in lessons and make good progress over time. Resources and time are used well by all teachers; for example, in a Year 6 lesson when pupils were learning to write in the style of a classic author. The management and encouragement of pupils by teachers in lessons are very good, and ensure that there is an inclusive atmosphere in lessons, which helps pupils overcome any problems they may encounter.

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

53. The use and development of literacy skills across the school are good. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills across the curriculum in subjects such as geography, history and mathematics. Also classrooms have informative displays that contain specialised vocabulary within a particular subject such as science, history and geography. Writing skills are used effectively across the curriculum to help pupils write for a variety of purposes and audiences.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

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

- Leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Achievement is good and standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good throughout the school.

- Teaching of pupils in groups, based on their prior attainment, is effective, and contributing positively to the good standards.
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good.

## **Commentary**

54. Standards of work seen in lessons and in books are above those found nationally in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards at the last inspection were judged to be in line with those found nationally in Year 2 but well above the national average in Year 6. When comparing the results for older pupils against those of similar schools, test results show that the school does less well. The school has analysed these results and has shown that a significant number of pupils joining the school from other schools enter the school with lower standards than their peers already at the school. The school is taking very positive steps to enhance the learning of this group of pupils. Overall achievement is good.
55. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a very clear vision for the subject. She provides a good role model and ensures that staff with less confidence in the subject have good resources to support their teaching. Teachers plan their work well and the standard of teaching is good overall and in some cases very good. Pupils are effectively taught in ability sets, which may include three year groups. Within these mixed groups work is matched closely to small groups of pupils so that all pupils are challenged. It is the consistency of good teaching that enables pupils to achieve well. In the best lessons teachers ensure pupils know what they are expected to learn in any particular lesson and at the end of these lessons pupils are supported in evaluating what they have learnt and therefore learning is reinforced. In a very good lesson on shape in Year 4, resources, including computers, were used very well to support and challenge pupils as they investigated all the combinations of flat shapes that could give a total of 12 sides. The open-ended problem, together with the skill of questioning and the enthusiasm of the teacher, resulted in pupils working hard because they were keen to succeed.
56. Systems for assessment are well developed. Day-to-day assessment is good and teachers provide tasks that challenge or reinforce learning that meet the needs of individual pupils. The withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs for number work is very effective. Teaching of this group is very good and is aimed at raising their standards so that they can return to the main sets in their year. They have their own personal targets and work hard to achieve them.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

57. Mathematics and ICT are well linked throughout the school. Pupils often use calculations and illustrate their work through the use of ICT, for example, charts and diagrams in science when recording the results of investigations. The school effectively plans its curriculum to develop good links between subjects.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are above average by Year 2 and Year 6, and pupils achieve well because the quality of teaching is good.
- The outcomes of assessment are used well to plan future work and to match activities to pupils' needs.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Opportunities for investigational work are often led by teachers. The school is focusing on developing such opportunities to enable pupils to lead the work.

## **Commentary**

58. The results in national tests in Year 6 in 2003 indicated above average performance but, in comparison with schools that achieved similar average points scores at the end of Year 2, progress was below average. However the 2003 group of Year 6 pupils included a higher than average number of pupils who had joined the year group as it progressed through the school. When taking into account broadly average attainment on entry to the school, pupils achieve well. Pupils in Year 2 also recorded above average results. Observations during inspection indicate that standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. Results of tests in 2004 also indicate above average standards. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were average at Year 2 and above average at Year 6.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have been supported well by the previous co-ordinator and by the current co-ordinator, who took up her role in September 2004. Teachers have a good knowledge of the necessary elements of the National Curriculum. Lessons are often presented in an imaginative way, for example, in a Year 6 lesson where the teacher explained the functions of different parts of flowers. Pupils were fascinated as they were given the opportunity to examine the parts and to record their findings. In a lesson for pupils in Years 2 and 3, pupils carefully considered a fair test to distinguish the permeability of clay and sandy soils. Teachers plan lessons very well. A feature of teaching is the very good relationship between teachers and pupils, leading to pupils' very good attitudes to their science work and contributing positively to the standards achieved.
60. The co-ordinator has taken on the role recently and through evaluation and review she has ensured that good provision in the subject has been maintained. She has a good understanding of the areas for development because she has used opportunities to monitor standards through the school by scrutinizing pupils' books. She liaises closely with the deputy headteacher, who regularly monitors teachers' subject planning, addressing any issues identified. She has established the need to develop investigational work in the subject. The action plan for the subject suggests that this will enable pupils to make informed choices about the outcome of investigations.
61. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject and are keen to do well. They are very productive in lessons and get through a considerable amount of work. They collaborate well and respect the views of others. These skills can be built upon to enable a greater freedom to carry out investigational work. In many lessons, currently, teachers lead pupils through experiments, stage by stage. A less structured approach should enable pupils to make their own choices about the outcomes of experiments and increase their independence.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the subject by the co-ordinator are good.
- Effective systems are in place to track and monitor pupils' achievements in the subject, and resources for teaching the subject are good.
- Teachers are confident in using all the equipment in the computer suite and they use questioning and intervention effectively to take pupils' learning forward.
- There are good links with other curriculum areas.

### **Commentary**

62. By Year 2 and Year 6 pupils' standards are average. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has introduced effective systems to monitor and track pupils' progress as they move through the school. She has monitored colleagues' teaching and offered them good advice and assistance, and the deputy headteacher is currently monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work on a rolling programme. The resources for the subject are good and include a computer suite and interactive smartboard, with 20 computers based in classrooms and the suite. All the computers are linked to the internet. The school has appropriate procedures to ensure pupils' safety when pupils access different internet web sites. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Since that time the school has invested in considerable resources and planned an effective programme to ensure that appropriate skills are taught to pupils. Over the last two years the resources have been used well and this is beginning to impact positively on standards. Pupils achieve well and standards are on course to improve.
63. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In all lessons seen in the computer suite or when computers were used in classrooms, all teaching staff displayed secure subject knowledge and used the equipment well. All teachers use questioning and intervention effectively in lessons to help pupils grasp a particular technique to help take their learning forward. This was demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson when the teacher used the interactive smartboard to show a group of pupils how to use different backgrounds and animated text for a first page of a multimedia presentation. When pupils are working with computers they treat them with respect, and allow other pupils to use them when they have completed their task. Computers in classrooms are used well to reinforce what has been learned in the computer suite, and are used in different areas of the curriculum. For instance, in a Year 5 and 6 mathematics group containing higher attaining pupils, they worked in pairs using laptop computers to measure and calculate angles to reinforce what they had been learning in the lesson.

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

64. ICT is used effectively to support pupils' learning across different curriculum areas. For instance, in a mathematics lesson, pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 were learning about the recognition of three-dimensional shapes. Pupils' work on display around the school illustrates the use of ICT to present the outcomes of science investigations in graphs and tables, and the presentation of forms of art, using software.

## **HUMANITIES**

*Work was sampled in geography and history. Religious education was inspected in full.*

65. In **geography** and **history** only one lesson was seen in each subject. Planning documents, previously completed work and displays around school indicate appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum requirements in these subjects. For example, in a Year 2 and 3 classroom there is a display about Boudica and her revolt against the Romans. In a Year 3 and 4 classroom there is a display of pupils' work and artefacts on the human and physical features found in India. In a good Year 6 history lesson, pupils were achieving well in understanding how an archaeologist gathers evidence to find out how Anglo-Saxon people lived. In a good Year 3 and 4 geography lesson, pupils were achieving well in learning about the differences and similarities of life in Chembakolli in India, and Cumberbach in Cheshire.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development.
- Staff value the contribution that religious education makes to the life of the school and pupils' personal development.

### **Commentary**

66. As at the previous inspection, standards are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils achieve well. Staff recognise the different nature of religious education in comparison with other subjects and lessons are approached with sensitivity. Teaching is good and sometimes very good. Pupils often work in groups that are different from their working groups for literacy and numeracy and this is effective in supporting pupils' personal development. Teachers sometimes pose difficult and challenging questions for pupils to discuss with each other. Pupils' ideas and thoughts that emerge are accepted and valued. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils had props of a large candle, loaf of bread and a picture of a shepherd. After looking at these in literal terms pupils tried very hard to interpret the sayings of Jesus: 'I am the light of the world', 'I am the good shepherd' and 'I am the bread of life'.
67. In a Year 6 lesson a strong spiritual atmosphere was created when considering special artefacts found in a Christian church. Pupils closed their eyes while the teacher described entering a church from the west door. As they opened their eyes, the teacher had uncovered an impressive oil painting looking up the nave of a church.
68. Work in books and on display demonstrates that pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and Islam. All work was well presented and reflected the value that is given to the subject. It is, however, the sensitive teaching and the opportunities for thought and discussion that contributes most to the spiritual and personal development of pupils, which in turn adds to the very good ethos of the school.

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

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

69. Scrutiny of work around the school and discussion with pupils and staff confirm that appropriate elements of the **art and design** curriculum are covered. Pupils are able to experiment with the styles of famous artists such as Rodin, Kandinsky, Gaughan and Monet. Pupils are keen and enjoy their work. There are many examples of works by famous artists on display around the school. The art and design work observed is often linked to other cultures, for example, an African theme based on 'One big family – life in an African village.' The work contributes very well to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils. Talented pupils have been identified and are being nurtured through additional curricular work. There are cross-curricular links, for example, with history, geography, music and personal and social education. Work on display at the entrance to the Year 1 and 2 classrooms shows the imaginative use of re-cycled materials to create collage. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the future, clearly set out in the school's improvement plan.
70. The school follows a recognised **design and technology** scheme of work, which gives the staff adequate support. The co-ordinator has plans to develop the subject, and planning indicates that the subject is covered appropriately at different times in the school year.
71. In **music**, pupils sing well in assemblies, and singing played an important role in the harvest festival. The quality of singing observed was good. The choir is well supported, around 50 to 60 pupils singing at the harvest festival. Pupils have the opportunity to learn to play musical instruments, supported by a visiting specialist teacher.
72. In the one lesson seen in **physical education**, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 participated in good quality gymnastics exercises using small apparatus. The scheme of work covers all aspects, including provision for outdoor adventurous activities for older pupils. A range of good quality sporting opportunities is offered to pupils outside normal lesson times. These include tag rugby, badminton, gymnastics and kwik cricket. Pupils with particular talent are identified and nurtured, for example, some pupils currently represent the county in gymnastics. The school offers teaching to those pupils who, by Year 5, have not attained the 25-metre swimming standard. Accommodation supports the subject well, offering appropriate indoor and outdoor facilities. There is a modern well-equipped hall, good sized playground areas, and adjacent playing fields for outdoor activities. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. Resources for the subject are of good quality.

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

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- There are strong and effective links with other subjects of the curriculum.
- The subject is led and managed well.

### **Commentary**

73. The programme for personal, social and health education and citizenship is taught consistently throughout the school with well-planned opportunities for pupils to consider

issues during 'circle time' sessions. It is a valuable part of pupils' learning, supported well by the school's very positive ethos, which values individual pupils' contributions. The programme helps pupils learn about family life, health and hygiene, drugs awareness and their environment. Sex and relationships education is also covered well.

74. The quality of teaching is good and pupils achieve well. In the lessons observed, for pupils in Years 3 and 4, pupils shared personal views and feelings in an open and very supportive atmosphere. Matters shared in this included feelings about happiness and anger and how they might be represented through music and art. Pupils discussed, in a mature way, how they might deal with conflict situations. They were engrossed in their work and showed considerable respect for the views of others. The teacher effectively introduced challenging questions and built upon her very good relationship with the pupils.
75. Pupils are helped to become more aware of themselves and more sensitive to others. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to take on a number of responsibilities. In particular they care for pupils in the reception class and the school arranges a dinner sitting for these year groups, to build the relationship. Pupils know that they are valued by their teachers, and this helps them to develop a strong respect and sensitivity to others.
76. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well, offering good advice and support to colleagues.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

