

INSPECTION REPORT

ST WERBURGH'S CE AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Kingsley, Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124399

Headteacher: Mrs Heather Peake

Lead inspector: Jeff White

Dates of inspection: 1-3 February 2005

Inspection number: 267728

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: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 130

School address: Holt Lane
Kingsley
Stoke-on-Trent
Staffordshire
Postcode: ST10 2BA

Telephone number: 01538 754700
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Reverend Preb. Lawrence Price
Date of previous inspection: 22/02/1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is smaller than average with 130 pupils on roll including 19 in the Foundation Stage, of whom six are pre-reception.. Pupils are drawn from the village of Kingsley and several outlying villages. There are no pupils of minority ethnic heritage. In four of the last five years the percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals has been below average. In the wards that contribute the greatest number of pupils, census information indicates a lower than average percentage of adults with higher education. However, the number of pupils with special educational needs, including one pupil with a statement, is smaller than the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly average.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
17242	Jeff White	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, music, physical education
13256	Richard Barnard	Lay inspector	
4287	Brian Allaway	Team inspector	English, information and communication technology (ICT), geography, history
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school. Overall achievement is good and standards by the age of eleven are above average in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). The school is well led and the quality of education is good. Pupils are keen learners, develop good relationships and generally behave well. Good value for money is provided.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good overall and consistently effective in Year 6
- Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are very good
- Pupils are very well cared for and their views are valued
- Links with the community are strong
- Marking and pupils' targets are not consistently sharp enough
- Strategic planning is not sufficiently precise

The school has improved well since it was inspected six years ago. Standards in ICT were unsatisfactory by Year 6 and are now good. Provision for special educational needs (SEN) has improved and pupils are now making sufficient progress. Other improvements have been made in creative and personal development in the Foundation Stage. A higher proportion of the teaching is now good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	B	A	A
mathematics	C	B	B	B
science	B	A	C	B

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of free school meals*

Achievement is good overall. Children enter the school with broadly average attainment, make good progress in the Foundation Stage and should exceed the early learning goals in communication, language, literacy and mathematical development by the time they enter Year 1. They are on course to meet the learning goals in all other areas of learning. In Years 1 and 2 standards are above average in reading and average in writing, mathematics, science and ICT. Progress in these year groups is largely satisfactory over time but some good achievement was seen in lessons. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is uneven but satisfactory overall; standards are average in the core subjects and ICT. Progress accelerates in Years 5 and 6 and overall standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils in Year 5, including the high proportion of pupils with SEN, achieve well and standards are average overall. In the work seen in other subjects standards were largely satisfactory. Throughout the school pupils with SEN and those who are the most able achieve well.

Pupils' personal qualities and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are cultivated well. Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good. Relationships are very good in Year 6.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in mathematics in Year 6. Mathematical development is also taught very well in the reception class. Lesson planning is usually good throughout the school and teachers and learning support assistants (LSAs) work well together, for example, when teaching pupils with SEN. In many lessons there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills, for instance, when explaining their thinking. Pupils usually work diligently and co-operate well. Interaction between pupils in Year 6 is excellent. There is scope to sharpen up marking and the use of individual targets so that pupils can be more aware of how their performance could improve.

The curriculum is good overall and enriched extremely well by a wide range of extra-curricular activities. The quality of care is very good and pupils' personal development is monitored very well. Assessment procedures are improving and now need rationalising. They are currently too complex. Partnership with parents is good and links with the community and other schools are very effective.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. Budget reductions and a high staff turnover have been managed well and there is a clear commitment to improving pupils' personal and academic development. A good range of monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' performance is undertaken and has been used to make improvements. However, strategic planning lacks precision because the School Development Plan is too wordy. Governance is good overall and statutory requirements are met. Governors are well informed and support the school well.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The majority of parents who expressed a view are happy with the school. Most pupils like the school, feel they are treated well and that their views are valued.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Sharpen up marking, the use of assessment findings and targets so that pupils are more aware of how they can improve their performance
- Make strategic planning more precise, especially in relation to how standards and achievement will be improved

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good overall. Standards in Year 6 are above average in English, mathematics, science and ICT.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading, are good throughout the school
- Pupils achieve well in speaking and listening
- Children in the reception class are on course to exceed the learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development
- Standards of presentation and the quality of handwriting are frequently not good enough

Commentary

1. The average of Year 2 pupils' performance in the national tests over the last three years is above the national median in reading and close to the median in writing and mathematics. Standards in the current Year 2 generally match these results. In 2004, when compared with performance in similar schools, the school did especially well in reading and writing. Standards in reading are better than at the time of the last inspection and similar in writing and mathematics. The average performance of pupils in Year 6, over the last three years, is above the national median in English, mathematics and science. When compared with schools with similar free school meals' eligibility pupils in 2004 did well across the board. Given that a third of this particular cohort did not join the school until the junior years, the free school meal indicator is more reliable than reference to prior attainment. Overall standards in the core subjects are generally similar to those described in the last inspection report but are significantly better in ICT.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	16.1 (18.0)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.2 (15.1)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	15.8 (17.3)	16.2 (16.3)

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 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.6 (27.7)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.2 (28.1)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.0 (30.2)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 15 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Over time, and in much of the work seen during the inspection, pupils generally achieve well although it is sometimes inconsistent, especially in Years 3 and 4. Pupils with SEN

achieve well because of the good liaison between teachers and support staff and the direct help given to pupils as part of a group or individually. In much of the work seen the most able pupils were challenged sufficiently. Occasionally, in mathematics more could have been expected of them.

3. Children get off to a good start in the Foundation Stage and achievement is good in all the areas of learning. The teaching is especially effective in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development. This accounts for the above average standards in these areas. Consistently good teaching in Year 6, including very good teaching seen in mathematics, is the key reason why pupils' standards are above average. The teaching has high expectations, is well planned and relationships are excellent. In addition, thorough analysis of pupils' performance has led to identifying where they could improve, for example, in problem solving in mathematics, and successful action has been taken. Standards have risen in ICT and are now above average in Year 6 because of improved teaching, better resources and improved staff expertise. In the core subjects and ICT good leadership has also contributed significantly to the subjects' development.
4. Reading is taught well throughout the school and begins in the reception class where pupils have lots of opportunities to look at and talk about books and also learn to recognise familiar words and letter sounds. Pupils' progress in reading is monitored well in the rest of the school, not only in group reading sessions but also in the effective use of a home reading diary. The breadth of fiction available for the most able readers is too narrow. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills. In the reception class children respond well to talking about their experiences, for example, when talking about trains. In the rest of the school discussion is a regular occurrence, for instance, at the start of mathematics and science lessons. An especially good feature is the encouragement of pupils to explain their thinking or reasoning, for example, when solving number problems. Other than in Year 6 pupils' handwriting and the quality of presentation are careless too often.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attitudes and behaviour are good overall. Personal development is good due to the good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils enjoy school and their activities
- Strong moral and social provision is improving standards of behaviour, although it is occasionally no more than satisfactory in some lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5.
- Pupils develop good relationships and by Year 6 their personal qualities are very well established

Commentary

5. Standards are similar to those described in the previous inspection report. The pupils like school and say they are happy and secure. They are very keen on after school activities and talk keenly and proudly of their sporting achievements. About 30 girls and boys were observed rehearsing their maypole dancing with great enthusiasm and interest. The Nature Club has developed an excellent reflective area.

6. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons are generally good. Pupils apply themselves to work and concentrate well. They respond well to questions and are eager to please their teachers. On a few occasions, especially when with teachers they are not accustomed to, several are restless and find attention difficult. This was particularly noticeable with pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 where several boys present significant behaviour problems. A clear set of rules and the consistent application of the positive behaviour policy is helping to manage these pupils well and limiting disruption in lessons. Pupils are very positive about the rewards system and are proud to show their stickers. The strong moral and social provision is reflected in the very good behaviour at playtimes. This is helped by the good supervision, the range of playground activities and spaces provided. Pupils and parents show few concerns over bullying and very secure systems ensure potential incidents are dealt with promptly and effectively. There have been no temporary or permanent exclusions over the past two years. Pupils know right from wrong and what to do if squabbles or accidents happen. There is no evidence of any sexist or racist behaviour.
7. Relationships throughout the school are good ensuring all members of staff and pupils all work together well in a happy atmosphere. Achievement, success and effort are celebrated in rewards and displays around the school. Pupils' understanding of becoming good citizens is encouraged well such as through the provision of a very effective School Council. Their ideas include the introduction of a rota system for football in the playground activities and developing ideas for sponsorship to raise money for charities. Issues relating to personal development are raised well in regular lessons and assemblies. Strong development of self-esteem and confidence is having a very good impact on pupils' personal development, with pupils in Year 6 showing very mature and responsible attitudes. They undertake a range of duties such as prefects, monitors and House Captains with pride and relish, for example, with older pupils (Buddies) supporting younger ones in the playground. This development is enhanced by the provision of a very popular residential visit at the end of the year. Good steps are being made to improve pupils' understanding of ethnic and cultural diversity including use of visits and visitors but there is a lack of appropriate books and artefacts.
8. Attendance levels are above the national average. There are no unauthorised absences. Punctuality of the great majority of pupils is good, allowing lessons to start on time. The very thorough systems to monitor absences and recognition by the school and parents of the importance of regular, prompt attendance have resulted in consistently good levels of attendance for the last three years. Good attendance supports the fact that the pupils like coming to school and supports their good achievements.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.5	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall. Teaching and learning are good. The curriculum is good and enrichment opportunities are very good. Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Links with parents are good and links with the community and other schools are very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall and assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is particularly good in English, mathematics and ICT
- Teaching in the reception class is very good in mathematical development
- Teaching has improved since the last inspection
- Marking is not consistently thorough enough

Commentary

- English and mathematics are taught well and consequently pupils generally achieve their potential. Lessons are well structured and the pace of learning is usually brisk. Work is well planned to meet the range of needs and teachers and support assistants work well together to ensure that pupils with SEN achieve well. Teaching assistants are well briefed and deal with pupils sensitively, especially those who have behavioural problems. Good use is made of well-focused questions not only at the beginning of lessons but also at or near the end. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 6 the teacher drew pupils together before the end of the lesson to check on how well they were doing in relation to the lesson’s objectives. Following some precise questioning she then set the pupils further challenges. Pupils throughout the school enjoy ICT. The computer suite is used regularly and pupils also use computers at lunchtimes. Lessons are well prepared and instructions are clear. The work is suitably demanding.
- In general, pupils learn well. They work diligently and are acquiring key skills in literacy and numeracy and ICT. They respond well to applying their skills, knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. They invariably work co-operatively with one another and most can be relied upon to work independently.
- A wide range of practical activities supports children’s mathematical development in the reception class. Apart from direct teaching of skills, role-play, games and rhymes are also used to develop children’s knowledge and understanding particularly of number. Assessment is used well to ensure that the work is well matched to children’s abilities.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	3	15	7			

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

- The last inspection judged teaching to be satisfactory overall and good in 60 per cent of lessons. Seventy-two percent of teaching is now good or better. In the last inspection there were significant weaknesses in teaching in ICT, SEN, and the development of pupils’ independence. All these aspects of teaching have improved and are now good.
- An important feature of the good teaching in Year 6 is the quality of marking, especially in English. Pupils gain from the teacher’s comments that indicate how they can improve their performance. However, marking of this quality is not consistent throughout the school and it is not seen as an essential tool of assessment. A range of other procedures is used for assessing pupils’ performance and new and better tracking arrangements have recently been introduced. The time is now right for the school to rationalise its assessment arrangements and make better use of the information gathered.

The curriculum

The quality and range of the curriculum are good and meet the needs of all pupils well. There are very good opportunities for enrichment. The accommodation and resources are used well to support the curriculum but some resources in English are worn and outdated.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils' personal development is very good
- The range of extra-curricular activities is wide
- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection
- Sensible cross curricular links have been established

Commentary

14. There have been significant improvements in the provision for ICT, including a rise in pupils' attainment. The curriculum for the youngest children now provides an appropriate range of activities across all areas of learning.
15. Curriculum planning is good and uses national guidance well to ensure that, by and large, pupils achieve well in English, mathematics and science. Planning in the non-core subjects takes account of the needs of all pupils in the mixed age classes. Useful cross-curricular links ensure that literacy, numeracy and ICT are developed well in areas such as science, geography and history. The curriculum is further enhanced by the addition of French in Years 3 to 5 and German in Year 6. The best classrooms are organised well and provide stimulating and lively learning environments.
16. There is good quality of opportunity for all pupils. Pupils with SEN are supported well by their teachers and by skilled teaching assistants. Individual education plans (IEPs) are monitored carefully and pupils' progress is recorded regularly. The school provides an appropriate range of strategies to respond to the few pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour. Very good support is given to those pupils whose self-esteem is low.
17. Pupils' learning is enhanced very well by their participation in a wide range of after school clubs, which include creative arts and sporting activities. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in competitions with other schools. The Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to participate in a residential visit and experience a range of outdoor activities.
18. The promotion of the pupils' personal development is a very positive feature of the curriculum. Teachers and teaching assistants support the school's strong sense of community and the pupils are happy and secure and are eager to learn. Relationships are good and very good in Year 6. Pupils are confident to express their ideas and opinions when talking to adults. The school council has provided an excellent forum for the school to respond to pupils' views.
19. Accommodation and resources are adequate overall. The external play area used by children in the Foundation Stage is too small and restricts the range of physical activities that can be provided. The library is small and its stock of books is too limited. However, the school has plans to improve the provision. Many of the children's fiction and reading scheme books are in a poor condition. Much of the large equipment for physical education needs replacement.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. The provision of support, advice and guidance based on the monitoring of pupils' achievement is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and acting on their views is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Care and welfare of pupils is of high priority
- Induction arrangements are very good
- Ongoing support and guidance are good especially in relation to pupils' personal development
- Pupils' views are valued very well
- Standards have improved on those described in the previous inspection report.

Commentary

20. The very good care and concern for pupils' needs are appreciated by pupils and their parents. The very thorough and sensitive approach to child protection procedures and the good evaluation of health and safety risks, enable pupils to feel secure and to work in confidence. In addition, their welfare is assured by good security arrangements, fire precaution arrangements, good first aid procedures and good supervision of pupils at break and lunchtimes. Pupils feel that they have a supportive adult to speak to if they have worries or concerns.
21. The induction arrangements ensure that pupils quickly settle into the reception class. Pupils who have only been in the school for two weeks have quickly settled into routines and play happily and confidently in the playground. Pupils who move to the school are given excellent support allowing them to make new friends and quickly be part of the school family.
22. Personal development is supported very well as pupils move through the school. Members of staff know the pupils and their backgrounds very well. Academic support and advice for pupils are generally good but especially so in the reception class where assessment procedures are good. All pupils especially those with SEN are supported well to take a full part in the life of the school. Arrangements are provided to give pupils and parents good support and advice in relation to the transfer to secondary school.
23. Pupils feel that members of staff value their views and this gives them confidence to discuss issues and raise questions. A very good relationship between all members of staff and pupils helps ensure pupils and their views are valued. They are consulted with very well; for instance through the School Council where they are confident to raise issues such as the condition of, and locks on, toilets and when improvements are to take place.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a good partnership with parents, which has a positive impact on pupils' achievements. Links with the local community and local schools are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are encouraged to and do play an active part in their children's education

- Good quality information is provided to parents
- The range of community links is wide
- The quality of the partnership has improved on those described in the previous inspection.

Commentary

24. The great majority of parents respond well to opportunities to be involved in their children's education. The family learning initiative and family links nurture programme are good examples of the positive way the school seeks to encourage parental involvement. The Parents' Association provides good financial support and arranges many social events for adults and children. Funds provided are used well to support school development priorities, such as musical instruments and playground facilities. Parents provide good help in school in areas such as reading. They ensure the prompt and regular attendance of their children.
25. Annual reports give good information on progress and achievements and targets for improvement give parents good advice on how they can help their children at home. These are particularly helpful in relation to the youngest children in the Foundation Stage. The school is open to parents; teachers are available at the end of the day and issues are dealt with promptly and to good levels of satisfaction for most parents. Parents are given good information before their children start school in the reception classes and this helps them to settle quickly. The school administrator is an important point of contact and information who is highly valued by parents. Parents of pupils with SEN are well informed and play an important role in their education. Although a minority of parents expressed some dissatisfaction with the school the inspection found that the school does much to promote stronger links. During the period of the inspection governors commented that there was perhaps scope to improve communication with these latter parents.
26. The school plays an important part in the life of the local community and uses it very well to support learning. Pupils contribute very well to local church and social occasions especially with their singing and dancing. The local area is used very effectively to support learning in subjects such as history, geography and science through a range of visits and walks. Local clubs support the provision for sport well. The school provides a very good range of facilities for the community such as sports pitches and holiday play schemes. The partnership with the local schools, especially the local cluster, benefits pupils very well, for example, in relation to sport and in providing very good support as pupils move to secondary school. The family learning initiative uses the resources of a local college to good effect.
27. The school, with support from local council services, provides **family learning and nurture programmes**. Both make a positive contribution to the pupils and parents involved. The programmes enable the school to forge close links with parents. There are very good opportunities, through a series of special workshops, to provide parents with skills that help them to support their children with their learning and education in general.
28. The nurture programmes have recently been set up in partnership with the local education authority's behaviour support team. It complements and enhances the school's personal and social education curriculum and involves small groups of parents who volunteer to attend weekly workshops with trained staff from the behaviour support team. A session was observed during the inspection and was well planned with a very positive response from the parents attending. The course of workshops is successful in

helping parents to develop strategies that will support their children at home, for example, raising self-esteem and working towards specific behavioural targets and outcomes. This programme is clearly having a positive effect on the children concerned and this is endorsed by the parents and the headteacher who monitors the programme closely.

29. The local council provides through its 'Adult and Community Learning Service' specialist staff from a local college of further education a programme to help parents understand how to support their children's learning, both in school and at home. The programme is currently operating in the school with a literacy focus. A series of weekly workshops are provided and these are very well attended because the Year 1 and 2 class teacher manages the programme very well and the pupils in her class are currently targeted for this workshop. It is a very successful and positive experience with both parents and their children working together on literacy tasks such as making story sacks, finger puppets and learning particular skills that will enable the parents to enhance what is already being taught in school in literacy lessons. During the inspection, 17 parents attended a workshop during one afternoon and the children clearly benefited from seeing their parents working with them on joint tasks that can also be shared at home to support their reading and writing development. Overall, the headteacher and staff are very committed to their parents and to the local community and these programmes are testimony to this aim.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and staff work well as a team
- Budget reductions and staff changes have been managed well
- The commitment to improving the school is good
- A good range of procedures is used to monitor teaching and pupils' performance but there is room to sharpen up strategic planning

Commentary

30. The headteacher's style of leadership is collegiate and staff are involved as far as possible in making decisions. Subject leaders have clearly defined roles and good opportunity to develop their leadership skills. Their leadership has been especially effective in the core subjects and ICT. With the headteacher's help standards in statutory and non-statutory tests have been analysed and action taken to remedy weaknesses, for example, in English and mathematics. Governors share the commitment to improvement and are well involved at an early stage in formulating the School Development Plan (SDP). The headteacher has led pupils' personal development very effectively and this is a significant factor in the permeation of the school's Christian values.
31. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance include observations of teaching and learning, scrutiny of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and scrutiny of curricular planning. Lesson observations by the headteacher and co-ordinators are suitably followed up by feedback to individual staff. Targets for professional development are linked closely to the SDP's priorities. Governors are well

informed about the school's work by not only the headteacher's reports to governors but also by their visits to the school. Each governor has responsibility for a subject or aspect of the school. Links between the governor responsible for SEN and the acting SEN co-ordinator are close. SEN provision is managed well. The school development plan is a comprehensive and detailed document but its considerable length reduces its accessibility. It is not as explicit as it should be in indicating how pupils' standards will be raised and their achievement improved. The school's self evaluation, although too lengthy, is suitably self critical.

32. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities. Despite budget reductions good management has ensured that the overall level of staffing has remained the same and there is a good mix of experience. Governors have committed funds to providing a good level of teaching assistant support. This is a good example of money well spent because the inspection finds that teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The school runs very smoothly due in no small part to the excellent work of the administrative officer.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	342550
Total expenditure	357075
Expenditure per pupil	2705.11

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	8555
Balance carried forward to the next	-5970

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

33. The overall provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The school has a reception class of 19 children, six of whom are pre-reception and are four years of age. There are good induction arrangements and the children settle very quickly to school life.
34. The reception teacher and teaching assistant plan a lively and relevant curriculum and have established a stimulating working environment. During the inspection volunteer helpers and teaching assistants supported and promoted the children's learning well. Children who have SEN receive individual attention and make good progress. Records of children's progress are maintained diligently.
35. Attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year. Currently children in the reception class demonstrate the full range of ability but overall their attainment is average. The children achieve well in all areas by the time they start in Year 1 and almost all of them will have attained many of the nationally expected early learning goals. Almost all of the children will exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development.
36. There have been improvements in provision since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is now consistently good and there are appropriate opportunities for the children to express and explore their own creative ideas. The secure play area is currently too small to enable the full range of physical outdoor activities to take place. This is recognised by the school and the governors have plans to extend the area when a new car park is built.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults promote the children's personal and social development well
- Relationships are very good
- The children are interested in their work and enjoy learning

Commentary

37. Teaching is good and, as a result, children are happy and secure and are confident in the routines and expectations of the school. Adults treat pupils with courtesy and respect and provide good role models for them and as a consequence the children relate very well to each other and are confident to talk to visitors in the classroom. Circle time is used particularly well to encourage the children to be aware of the needs of others. The children's self-esteem is good because adults are clear in their explanations and use praise and encouragement to promote confidence. Children follow instructions well and are particularly good at taking turns, sharing and listening to the contributions of other children. They enjoy making choices and settle well to planned and self-selected tasks and sustain their involvement for reasonable periods of time.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching promotes the children's early reading and writing skills
- The children's speaking and listening skills are developed well
- Imaginative role play activities enhance the children's communication skills

Commentary

38. Consistently effective teaching ensures that children have numerous opportunities to express their ideas and experiences. Following a class story about a train ride children initiated their own conversations about trains. Many children spoke at length about their own experiences and described the main events in the story. Appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of phonics and children apply this knowledge well and use a range of individual letters when attempting their own writing. 'The Post Office' role-play area and the 'Hospital' provide good opportunities for children to pretend imaginary situations and have discussions about what they are doing. In 'The Post Office' children wrote lists and notes. Some children are beginning to write about their own experiences and are confident to read back their own writing. Adults know the children well and ensure that questions are targeted to challenge all of them.
39. The children enjoy books. Reading skills are developed well through informal opportunities but also in group activities when adults work with children in a more focused way. The children gain confidence from recognising key words and known sounds. Many talk about the characters in the story and how information can be found in books. Some of the children are already achieving the national expectations for children at the end of their reception year.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well planned activities enable children to develop a good understanding of numbers
- Games and role play promote children's mathematical understanding
- Very good teaching ensures that all children learn effectively and achieve well

Commentary

40. Well-planned teaching ensures that children are motivated and interested in a range of practical mathematical activities. Appropriate use is made of number rhymes and everyday situations to develop children's mathematical understanding of number, shape and space. Most of the children recognise and count numbers to 20 and many recognise when errors or omissions occur when numbers are hung on the number line. The children are regularly introduced to mathematical language such as 'before' or 'after', 'more than' and 'less than'. Skilful teaching ensures that the older children are

challenged by ordering the numbers between 10 and 20, while the youngest children use their soft toys to help them understand different ways of making five.

41. The children use money and coins in the 'Post Office' and are involved in discussions about shape when rolling out pastry to make jam tarts. This practical activity also enables them to read numbers on the scales as they weigh ingredients. Regular assessments ensure that the teacher has a good understanding of children's mathematical progress.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Imaginative contexts for learning encourage curiosity and help to maintain children's interest
- Effective teaching inspires and motivates the children
- Good use is made of ICT

Commentary

42. Many of the children enter the reception class with a good understanding of the world around them. Adults provide a wide range of opportunities for children to experience the work of people in the community such as the fireman and the police officer. The children have opportunities to build with constructional toys and control simple ICT programmes. Many children understand that the Internet provides useful information as they work with a teaching assistant to search for illustrations of trains. The children demonstrate curiosity and interest in why things happen and how things work. For example, when children were making jam tarts they explained the changes that took place when flour and fat were rubbed together and they understood that the heat in the oven would make the pastry change again. They were also aware of the danger of touching a hot oven. The children are beginning to have an understanding of distant places and maps when they take the toy bear to different destinations and plot these destinations on a map. The well resourced play area enables children to make choices when using a range of construction toys. Adults continually focus the children's interest and extend their knowledge by posing open ended and encouraging questions.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are well co-ordinated and experience a wide range of physical activities
- Good use is made of the school hall
- The external play area is very small and limits the range of activities in which children can participate

Commentary

43. Children enter the Foundation Stage with physical skills expected for their age. Teaching is good and consequently children's achievement is good in most aspects of this area of learning. The children use constructional toys, malleable materials and simple tools well to develop their control over smaller movements. They have opportunities to ride wheeled toys but generally the space and the resources in the outside play area are insufficient to promote the full range of balancing and climbing activities. However, children make good use of space when they use the school hall. They enjoy a wide range of physical activities that include running and jumping and responding imaginatively to music. They show an awareness of space, themselves and others. The use of a parachute provided well-motivated children with exciting opportunities to show that they could move with increasing control and co-ordination and that they could respond to instructions and work very well with other children. They enjoyed chasing and catching games using the parachute. The teacher has high expectations of the children who respond very well to instructions and praise.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils experience a good balance of adult led and child initiated activities
- The quality of role play is good
- The curriculum offers many opportunities to develop the children's imagination

Commentary

44. Role-play areas such as the 'Post Office' and the 'Hospital' provide good opportunities for the children to engage in imaginative role-play. In these activities children co-operate well and share ideas and resources. Adults give status to the role-play by sensitive intervention. Teaching is good. There are numerous opportunities for the children to select their own materials to create pictures. Some pupils chose their own brushes and mixed their own colours before painting pictures of trains. Aply supported by a volunteer helper, some children were encouraged to observe the colours and details of some pot plants undertaking observational drawings. Adults give the children positive feedback about their work and discuss with them how they feel about the work and how it might be developed further.

45. The children use musical instruments well to explore how sounds can be changed and they also compose simple repeating patterns. The children sing songs from memory and enjoy participating in action songs. Appropriate attention is given to providing a wide range of experiences to promote children's creative development. There is a good balance between the teaching of new skills and the children initiating their own activities. The teacher ensures that children have a wide range of opportunities to express and communicate ideas through painting and drawing, role play, construction, and music making.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in reading and writing are above average in Year 6
- Teaching is mainly good
- Speaking and listening skills are developed well throughout the school
- Teaching assistants are used effectively
- Marking is very good in Year 6
- Many fiction and reading scheme books are very worn and old

Commentary

46. Standards in reading are above average across the school. Pupils achieve well in reading and their progress is monitored carefully through group reading and individualised reading activities. Home-school diaries are used effectively and maintain a helpful record of the pupils' reading progress. Pupils with SEN achieve well in reading because they receive regular and systematic support from teachers and teaching assistants. Many of the pupils' reading books are old and worn and pupils are not systematically introduced to some of the more recently published children's fiction.
47. Standards in writing are above average in Year 6 and average in Year 2. Pupils in Year 6 make the most rapid rates of progress because the teacher has very high expectations and the work is relevant and stimulating. For example, Year 6 pupils were considering the use of persuasive text and argument in their letters to the school governors when they were requesting permission to use mobile phones in school! Throughout the school there are varied and interesting opportunities for pupils to write well for a wide range of purposes and these include instructional writing, recounts, story and poetry. Pupils use ICT applications proficiently to present their work in variety of imaginative ways. Appropriate emphasis is given to the teaching of grammar and punctuation and standards are above average. However, other than in Year 6, the pupils' handwriting is frequently poorly formed and presentation is often untidy.
48. Speaking and listening skills are developed well throughout the school. Teachers use open questions very well to encourage pupils to extend their spoken responses. Paired discussions between pupils frequently provide useful opportunities for them to articulate their views and ideas before writing. In a Year 2 class, role-play was used very effectively enabling the pupils to discuss the characteristics of the grandmothers from the story "*Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers*". The quality of the pupils' descriptive writing which followed this activity was good and all pupils achieved well.
49. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the teaching of English. They make good use of every opportunity to prompt and encourage pupils to maintain their concentration. They work with pupils individually and in small groups and are skilled at explaining and reinforcing the main teaching points of the lesson. As a consequence pupils with SEN make good progress. Teaching assistants also provide effective support and encouragement for a few of the pupils who demonstrate challenging behaviour and this support enables them to sustain their involvement in the lesson and make progress.
50. The teaching is generally good. Questions are used well to check on children's understanding and to assess what they know and can do. Lessons are planned well and

the work is matched appropriately to the needs of the pupils. Teachers establish good relationships with pupils and have a good understanding of what they are teaching and, as a consequence, pupils are keen and remain interested throughout the lesson. In Year 6 the teacher marks the pupils' work regularly and provides helpful feedback about how they can improve their work. In this situation the teacher provides a good model of her own handwriting, which has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' writing. In some of the work in Year 3 and 4 the marking is superficial and does not indicate clearly what the pupils need to do to improve further.

51. The co-ordinator has been effective in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in English and this has resulted in the production of a helpful action plan.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. There are numerous opportunities for pupils to read, research, and write in subjects such as history, geography and science. Planned opportunities for pupils to discuss and share ideas are strong features of the teaching. Role-play activities in Years 1 and 2 and drama in Years 3 to 6 promote the pupils' speaking and listening skills well. Literacy skills are developed appropriately in the pupils' use of ICT

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall and very good in Year 6
- Standards are above average in Year 6
- The subject is very well led

Commentary

53. Lessons in mathematics are usually well planned with clear objectives for learning. The objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and then, in the best of the teaching, pupils' progress towards meeting them is evaluated later so that they know what needs improving. Lessons invariably begin well with brisk mental/oral work. An especially positive feature is the general use of a range of questions pitched at different levels of challenge to ensure all pupils are involved. Good use is also made of learning support assistants (LSAs) who often sit alongside pupils of low attainment and quietly help them to participate in the oral work. Time is used productively in the good lessons and consequently the pace of learning is good and pupils work diligently. In the main part of the good lessons pupils are grouped according to their abilities and their work suitably meets their needs. In a few of the lessons more could have been expected of pupils who have the potential to reach high standards. Very high expectations in Year 6 results in a progressive level of challenge that ensures pupils achieve very well. In the very good lesson on problem solving pupils of all abilities made discernible progress in developing key skills such as visualisation.
54. Standards in number, shape and measures are broadly average in Years 1 to 5 and most pupils have made steady progress over time in their numeracy skills. In a lesson in Year 2 pupils showed competent knowledge and understanding of shapes including pentagons, hexagons and octagons and in the mental work counted accurately in fives

and tens. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress especially in number, including the use of decimals. They calculate mentally fairly speedily and generally have good understanding of place value, computation and the number system.

55. Throughout the school pupils have regular opportunities to develop their skills in using and applying mathematics, for example, in discussing their work using appropriate mathematical language and, especially, in the upper juniors, developing their own strategies for solving problems. Several of the older pupils evaluate their own efforts well and explain their reasoning clearly.
56. Monitoring of the subject is good and has been spearheaded by the co-ordinator. Monitoring includes scrutinising samples of pupils' work, discussion with pupils, lesson observations and analysis of test results. This has helped to highlight aspects of pupils' work that needs improving, such as problem solving and computation. The co-ordinators' good clear action plan indicates a drive to raise standards and it is very apparent that she supports colleagues very well.

Mathematics across the curriculum

57. Good links are made between mathematics, science and ICT. Pupils construct tables, graphs and diagrams to record their findings from scientific enquiry. In a good ICT lesson in Year 5 pupils improved their understanding of how to check for anomalies using graphical representation.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 6 and pupils achieve well
- The subject is well led
- Not enough care is taken in the presentation of work
- Marking is often perfunctory

Commentary

58. Since September 2004 Year 6 pupils have made good progress. Much of their work is thorough, for example, on food chains and habitats, and they have developed and use a good range of scientific vocabulary. Scientific enquiry is undertaken regularly and pupils have good opportunities to draw scientific conclusions, for instance, in work on dissolving and separation of materials. Low attaining pupils achieve well. For example, in work on dissolving, although pupils' writing was below average, their scientific understanding was good, given their abilities. In a good lesson in Year 6 all pupils developed good knowledge and understanding of light and their explanations of this physical phenomenon were clear.
59. The subject is led by a part-time teacher who has achieved a lot in a short space of time. Initially she analysed pupils' performance and formed the view that standards were not high enough. Subsequently, curricular planning and time allocation were improved and lessons observations were undertaken with a focus on scientific enquiry.

New resources have been bought and the subject is a focus of the local schools cluster group.

60. On the whole pupils make good progress in their scientific knowledge and understanding. High and low attaining pupils achieve well. For example, in Year 2 low attaining pupils develop their understanding of materials and identify accurately which ones can be changed by force. In Year 5 high attaining pupils draw good scientific conclusions in work on electricity. Only three lessons were observed and in two of these the teaching was satisfactory. However, scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that teaching is mainly good. However, some improvement is needed. Although pupils' work over time, throughout the school, shows generally good if uneven progress the quality of presentation is too often careless and marking is often not evaluative enough. Pupils are sometimes over praised for their work. In some year groups work is not dated, making it very difficult for teachers to judge progress. Positive features of the good teaching seen in Year 6 were the clarity of exposition, very good relationships and good use of time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by Year 6 and pupils achieve well
- ICT is used imaginatively in other areas of the curriculum
- Successful staff training and good leadership has had a positive impact on standards
- The scheme of work is taught well and ensures that pupils make good progress

Commentary

61. ICT has improved considerably since the last inspection at which time standards were below national expectations. Standards are now in line with national expectations in Year 2 and are above in Year 6. Well informed teaching, confident and successful subject leadership and improved resources have all contributed significantly to the pupils' achievement.
62. Pupils use computers with confidence and skill and achieve well. Pupils in Year 6 have constructed graphs, spreadsheets and have analysed data. The pupils demonstrate how to be selective in finding relevant information to support their studies in geography and history. Pupils also have experience of using a digital camera and explain how to include images within their work. Pupils used desktop publishing well when they recreated news pages about the life of Anne Frank. In the area of modelling and control Year 6 pupils know how to use simple commands to cause an event to happen such as a buzzer or a light.
63. Year 3/ 4 pupils use a mathematical programme to develop the concept of symmetry. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of vertical and horizontal symmetry and use a number of image making tools to help them create and rotate their designs. In ICT lessons higher attaining pupils are provided with appropriately demanding challenges. Pupils throughout the school enjoy ICT. They concentrate well and are helped effectively by the teacher if they encounter problems. The computer suite is used regularly and pupils use the computers sensibly at lunchtime.

64. Teaching in the ICT workshop has been consistently good. Teachers are well prepared, give clear instructions and quickly engage pupils in the activity. Clear and manageable assessment records are maintained and demonstrate what the children know and can do. Pupils are clear about the skills they have achieved and know what they need to do next.
65. The recently appointed ICT co-ordinator has provided training for staff, ensured that an appropriate scheme of work is in place and has monitored ICT provision. This has resulted in teachers' increased confidence and skill.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. ICT is used well in other subjects such as mathematics, geography and history. Knowledge and understanding of symmetry, shape and data handling have been improved because of the use of ICT and pupils have made good use of the Internet to research information in the humanities.

HUMANITIES

67. No **geography** or **history** lessons were seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to evaluate the quality of the provision. However, inspectors scrutinised samples of work and held discussions with the pupils. The pupils' work indicates that standards are broadly average, which is in line with the findings from the previous inspection.
68. Strong literacy and ICT links have been established in both history and geography. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have produced good quality, empathetic reports on Anne Frank in their history study of the events involving the Jews in World War II. In a study on the 'Titanic' pupils demonstrated an understanding of chronology and used diary writing to record their findings. In Years 1 and 2 pupils have explored the features of the fictitious Isle of Struay. They discussed the important features on a map and explained how a key and simple grid references were necessary to help locate particular landmarks. These pupils use appropriate positional language and appreciate the function of a compass. Appropriate multi-cultural links were established in a study on St Lucia. Pupils' recall a 'Caribbean Day' when they explored Caribbean traditions and culture. The scheme of work and long term planning in history and geography provide appropriately for a two year programme catering for mixed age classes.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

69. No lessons were seen in music, art and design and design and technology, and only one lesson was seen in physical education, so no judgements can be made about the quality of the school's provision in these subjects.
70. A small sample of work was scrutinised in **art and design** and in **design and technology**. Neck muffers decorated with Egyptian symbols and cartouches showing pupils' initials in hieroglyphics demonstrate careful drawing and designs. In Years 1 and 2 pupils designed, made and evaluated "model" playground equipment; this work was of a good standard. Year 1/ 2 pupils' pictures of Winter trees show competent use of colour. In Year 6, paintings in the style of Van Gogh indicate good brushwork and careful use of pastel. Year 6 pupils' designs in the style of Clarice Cliff also show some careful observations.

71. Very good teaching in the lesson seen in **physical education** ensured that pupils achieved very well in developing their gymnastic skills. Standards were good. The physical education curriculum is broad and enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities including a football club with Stoke City F.C. coaches, Maypole dancing, community events and inter-school matches in football, netball, cross country, rounders, athletics and swimming. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 take part in weekly swimming lessons.
72. **Music** is very much a feature of the school's life. Pupils were heard singing and the standard was good. About 40 pupils are learning to play the recorder and the school participates in recorder festivals. Peripatetic instructors teach strings and brass each week. The school performs a variety of musical activities in the community including singing and the use of instruments in the local church and performance in Lichfield Cathedral Recorder Festival. In the singing observed during the inspection pupils performed well in two-part singing.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73. **Personal, social, and health education** permeates the life of the school and is enhanced by the opportunities pupils' have to express their views, for example, in circle time and in the School Council. Pupils' personal development is very much a feature of the school's Christian ethos.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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