

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MATTHEW'S CE (A) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 124346

Headteacher: Mr A Griffin

Lead inspector: Mr K Williams

Dates of inspection: 21st – 24th February 2005

Inspection number: 267893

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: | 93 |
| School address: | Lightwood Road Rough Close Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire |
| Postcode: | ST3 7NE |
| Telephone number: | 01782 394890 |
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| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr Robert Gunn |
| Date of previous inspection: | 5 th – 8 th July 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Matthew's is a Church of England (Aided) Primary School with ninety-three boys and girls on roll, which is smaller than other primary schools. The school draws pupils from across and beyond the parish and few live within the designated, rural catchment area. The pupils join the reception class at the beginning of the autumn term. Their attainment on entry to the school varies from year to year but, overall, it is above average. Almost all of the pupils are of white backgrounds and no pupils are learning English as an additional language. Twelve pupils have been identified with special educational needs, two of whom have a Statement of Special Educational Needs. No pupils are eligible for free school meals.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|--|
| 21074 | Keith Williams | Lead inspector | Foundation Stage; mathematics; science; information and communication technology; art and design; music |
| 32658 | Nicky Bolton | Lay inspector | |
| 30396 | Chris Scola | Team inspector | English; design and technology; geography; history; physical education; special educational needs; personal, social and health education |

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REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|--|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS | |
| STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS | 8 |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 11 |
| Teaching and learning | |
| The curriculum | |
| Care, guidance and support | |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community | |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 15 |
| PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 17 |
| AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE | |
| SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 28 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

As a result of the good leadership, management and teaching, the school provides a **good standard of education**. The pupils achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The pupils achieve well, particularly in the core subjects, because they are well taught
- The headteacher, staff and governors have a shared vision for the school and a common sense of purpose to continue to improve
- The school has a very positive and caring ethos that encourages excellent attitudes and behaviour and promotes the pupils' personal development
- The pupils' work is marked conscientiously but the comments are not sufficiently aimed at informing them about how they can improve
- The pupils' learning is enhanced by a very good range of activities outside the formal curriculum
- There are too few opportunities for the pupils to develop their creativity and independence in art and design and design and technology
- More could be done to seek the views of parents

Overall, the school has made good progress since it was last inspected. The high standards in English, mathematics and science have been maintained and the school has responded well to the key issues of the last report. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen and the planning for design and technology (DT), geography and history ensures a broad and balanced programme for these subjects. The role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened and the planning is now much better matched to the pupils' differing needs.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| English | A | D | B | C |
| Mathematics | A | C | B | D |
| Science | A* | C | A | A |

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. The A in the table above means that the results were in the top five per cent nationally.*

The results for English, mathematics and science in 2004 compare favourably with other schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, the results for English were average, in mathematics they were below average and, in science, they were well above average. However, because the number of pupils in each year group is usually small, the results should be interpreted cautiously, as they can vary from year to year. This is also reflected in the results in recent years for pupils in Year 2. In 2004, the results in reading, writing and mathematics were well above average when compared with all schools nationally and they were above average when compared with similar schools.

Inspection evidence confirms that the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of attaining the higher levels, **achieve well**. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school varies from year to year but, overall, it is above average. They make good progress in Reception and most are likely to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the year. The pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to make good progress and achieve well and standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. In other subjects, standards in ICT, art and design and DT are in line with what is expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6 and they are above those expected in history and physical education.

The pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good**. Their attitudes to school and behaviour are excellent. Attendance is well above the national average and the pupils are very punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. The teaching is good and contributes to the good start made by the children in the Foundation Stage and the pupils' good learning and achievement in Years 1 to 6. The staff cope well with challenge of teaching classes of mixed age and ability. The core subjects are particularly well taught and the pupils respond enthusiastically to their teachers' high expectations. Occasionally, in art and design and design and technology, the activities are over-directed by the teachers, which limits the opportunities for the pupils to develop their own creativity and individuality. The pupils' work is marked regularly, but there is too little emphasis on letting them know how well they are doing and how they can improve.

The school provides a good curriculum, enhanced by a very good range of enrichment activities. The care and welfare of the pupils are very well managed and they are offered good support and guidance. The school benefits from good links with parents and the local community and very good links with other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development and, together with staff and governors, has created a very positive ethos in which all pupils, including those with special educational needs, can learn and achieve well. There is a very strong sense of teamwork. The work of the governing body and the management of the school are good.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents and pupils have very positive views of the school. Parents are particularly pleased that their children are making good progress, expected to work hard, encouraged to be mature and enjoy a good range of activities outside of lessons. A few parents expressed concerns about bullying, but inspectors found no evidence to support this view. Inspectors support the view of some parents that more could be done by the school to seek their views. The pupils confirm that they learn new things in lessons, are expected to work hard and there is an adult in school they can turn to if they are worried.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that the pupils have enough information so that they can improve their work
- Increase the opportunities for the pupils to respond creatively and imaginatively in art and design and design and technology
- Improve the ways in which parents are consulted

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Pupils' achievement is good overall. Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils achieve well, particularly in the core subjects, because they are well taught
- The school ensures that those pupils with special educational needs are well provided for so that they can achieve their potential
- The pupils have limited opportunities to develop their creativity in art and design and design and technology (DT)

Commentary

1. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school varies from year to year and covers a broad range but, overall, it is above average. The good provision in the Reception class enables the children to make a good start to school and the majority are on track to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of Reception.
2. The number of pupils in each year group is usually small, so the interpretation of test results requires caution, as they can vary considerably from year to year. Despite this variability, the results in the National Curriculum tests for seven and eleven year olds have been regularly above or well above the national average in recent years. The results for pupils in Year 2 in 2004 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with all schools nationally and above average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was similar to that found in other schools in reading, well above average in writing and above average in mathematics.
3. Inspectors found that the pupils' achievement in Years 1 and 2 is good. They are well taught and, by the end of Year 2, standards are well above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 17.3 (17.4) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| writing | 16.3 (16.2) | 14.6 (14.6) |
| mathematics | 17.5 (17.9) | 16.2 (16.3) |

There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. In the 2004 national test for Year 6 pupils the results were above average in English and mathematics and well above average in science when compared with all schools nationally. In comparison with those schools working in similar circumstances, the results were average in English, below average in mathematics and well above average in science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 28.2 (25.8) | 26.9 (26.8) |
| mathematics | 27.8 (26.6) | 27.0 (26.8) |
| science | 31.4 (28.6) | 28.6 (28.6) |

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

5. Inspectors found that the pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve well and, by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Standards in the core subjects are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
6. The school has high expectations that the pupils with special educational needs will achieve well and makes good provision for meeting the individual needs of these pupils. In lessons, the teachers, teaching assistants and learning mentor ensure that they are fully involved so that they can make good progress towards their specific targets and achieve well.
7. In other subjects, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have risen since the last inspection and are now in line with what is expected of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards are also similar to those found in most schools in art and design and DT. Standards could be higher in these subjects because the highly structured teaching programme provides too little opportunity for the pupils to develop creativity and individuality in the way they approach their artistic and design tasks. Standards in physical education (PE) and history are above average. In PE, the pupils achieve well because the school makes good use of community facilities and extra-curricular activities to provide a broader range of opportunities than might otherwise be possible. The planning in history has improved since the last inspection, so that the pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding progressively and systematically as they move through the school. There is a very good programme of visits to enhance the pupils' learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is well above average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils' excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning have a significant impact on the school's very positive ethos
- Pupils show initiative and enjoy taking on extra responsibility
- A very strong emphasis is placed on the pupils' personal development and their moral development, in particular, is excellent

Commentary

8. Behaviour is excellent during lessons and at playtimes. The pupils move around the school in an orderly manner showing consideration towards others. Boys and girls play together very sensibly and enjoy the playground because of the excellent relationships they have with one another. Older pupils take responsibility for ensuring the smooth running of the school and for supervising younger pupils. A small number of parents expressed concerns about bullying, but the pupils report that there is no bullying, racist or sexist behaviour. There was no evidence of intimidatory behaviour during the inspection and the very low number of temporary exclusions (relating to one pupil) since the previous inspection support this.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 91 | 2 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

9. The pupils have a very good understanding of what is right or wrong and what to do if minor squabbles break out or accidents happen. The consistent and very positive approach to behaviour management from all members of staff, the excellent relationships between the adults and pupils and the prompt, thorough, sensitive and effective intervention to address any potential issues ensure these very high standards. The use of praise and rewards has a very positive impact on behaviour and attitudes in almost all lessons. All pupils and adults work and play together very well. The learning mentor gives very good support to pupils who have particular behaviour or learning difficulties.
10. The pupils have excellent attitudes to school and to work. Pupils of all ages and abilities are keen to learn. They enjoy taking part in the full range of activities provided by the school and virtually all pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic. Throughout the school, the pupils are very attentive during lessons and they listen very well to one another and their teachers. Older pupils speak with great enthusiasm and affection about their school and have many opportunities to make decisions that affect the way it is managed. Very good relationships between pupils and adults create a very positive ethos for learning. Because of their very good personal development, the pupils are very considerate to one another, demonstrated by the very good levels of support that pupils give to their classmates who have special educational needs, enabling them to be fully integrated into all aspects of school life.
11. The school enhances the pupils' very positive attitudes through its very good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. A very strong personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum underpins this. Very good links across the curriculum encourage reflection and increase pupils' understanding and appreciation of other cultures and religions. This spiritual and cultural awareness is promoted very well through literature, humanities, religious education, music, drama and poetry. Very good provision for teaching citizenship is also included within this curriculum. The pupils make active contributions in this role by, for example, their support and funding for a pupil in Bangladesh and through a thriving Amnesty International group. The School Council is very active and through it, pupils make decisions that have an impact on the daily running and management of the school.
12. The rate of attendance is well above the national average. Parents are very keen for their children to attend and to arrive on time and this has a positive impact on the pupils'

achievement. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and the school follows up unreported absences swiftly.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 3.8 | School data | 0.3 |
| National data | 5.1 | National data | 0.4 |

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. The teaching, learning and curriculum are good and there are very good arrangements for securing the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils. Links with parents and the local community are good and there are very good links with other schools.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of the core subjects is good, with a high level of challenge, which contributes to the well above average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6
- Lessons are well planned and the staff cater well for the needs of pupils of different age and ability
- The pupils are very enthusiastic about their learning and they work hard
- Although the pupils' work is marked conscientiously, the comments are not sufficiently aimed at informing them about how they can improve
- The work in art and design and DT is sometimes over-directed by the teachers, which limits the opportunities for the pupils to develop their creativity and independence

Commentary

13. Taking account of the lessons seen, the pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers, the quality of teaching and learning is good. They make a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to school and their progress, learning and achievement. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0 | 10 (32%) | 19 (61%) | 2 (7%) | 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.

14. The teaching in the Reception class is good overall; it has a number of strengths ensuring that the children make a good start to school, make good progress and achieve well. The teacher plans to ensure that there are opportunities for the children to have access to all six areas of learning and to the literacy and numeracy strategies. The teaching assistants support individual and group activities effectively and make a significant contribution to helping the children to concentrate on the carefully planned tasks. All of the adults help the children to feel secure, gain confidence and develop good speaking and listening skills. There are good arrangements to assess and monitor the children's progress and the information is well used to plan the next steps that the children need to take.
15. The teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good. The pupils are identified at an early stage and a suitable programme of learning is planned that is very well matched to the pupils' needs. A learning mentor, who knows the pupils very well, supports these pupils very effectively. The targets set for the pupils are highly relevant and address all areas of the curriculum, including the management of behaviour. The specialist expertise of outside agencies is called in and used if necessary. Where appropriate, the teaching assistants are closely involved in the planning for these pupils. Reviews, both formal and informal, are held regularly to check that the pupils are making sufficient progress. The pupils themselves and their parents are closely involved.
16. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is consistently good and has a positive impact on the high standards found in those subjects. The teachers have a good understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and have the confidence to modify their approach in light of the work being covered and the pupils' understanding. A significant improvement since the last inspection has been in the quality of planning. The teachers take good account of the pupils' differing needs and cope well with the challenge of teaching classes of mixed age and ability. As a result, those pupils capable of harder work are given the challenges they need, while those needing extra help receive it. This process is well supported by the teaching assistants, SENCO and learning mentor. For their part, the pupils apply themselves very well to their tasks, enjoy their lessons and are highly motivated. These very positive attitudes ensure that the pupils make full use of the learning opportunities provided for them. Occasionally, in art and design and DT, the teachers over-direct the work, which limits the opportunities for the pupils to develop their own individual responses to the tasks, explore their creativity and investigate the qualities and limitations of the materials they use.
17. The staff have established good arrangements for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress in the core subjects and are developing coherent systems in other subjects. Day-to-day assessment is generally good and the information is used well to plan the next steps in the pupils' learning. While the teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, there are too few examples of the marking being used to inform the pupils about how well they are doing and how they can improve.

The curriculum

The school provides a good curriculum that is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been good improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection.
- Visits into the local community and further afield enhance many subjects
- The school makes good use of its accommodation

Commentary

18. The curriculum is well planned and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum. The school deals very successfully with the mixed-age classes, by using a two-year rolling programme to plan most subjects. Good planning ensures that pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged. Well-planned topics in geography and history now ensure that there is good development of skills in these subjects, an area identified as a weakness in the last inspection. Similarly, the planning for ICT and design and technology has improved. There are good links between subjects, with a strong emphasis on promoting literacy, numeracy and science. ICT is used well across the curriculum, although the school recognises the need to plan this aspect more systematically.
19. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has effective systems to identify those pupils having difficulty. High quality individual education plans clearly lay out suitable targets, which are clear, achievable and manageable. There are good links with support services, reviews are held regularly and parents are kept informed of progress. This ensures that the pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. The recently appointed learning mentor and teaching assistants, who work very closely with the teachers, play a useful and skilled role in supporting these pupils.
20. The curriculum for the few children in the Foundation Stage is good. Activities in all areas of learning are interesting and linked to national guidance. These youngest children receive a good start to their school life. Although the accommodation is limited and there is no designated outdoor play area, the school makes very good use of community and particularly the church facilities to provide for the children's physical development.
21. Many well-planned visits greatly enrich the curriculum. Close links with the local secondary school and sports centre enable pupils to receive specialist coaching in a range of sports and other aspects of the curriculum. Links with the local church are very good. The local area, as well as places further afield, is used well to promote and reinforce learning. For example, Year 1 and 2 pupils visit a local toy museum as part of their learning in history. Visits to the Etruria and Josiah Wedgwood Museums and 'Ceramica' develop the pupils' understanding of the importance of the pottery industry in the history of Stoke-on-Trent. Seashore life and coastal erosion are studied on an extended visit to Llandudno and Year 5 and 6 pupils develop their social skills through adventure activities when they stay at Stanley Head. Parents and people from the local community are closely involved in the life of the school. They join such celebrations as harvest and Christmas services, come into the school to work alongside teachers and accompany the pupils on their visits.
22. All pupils take part in a very wide range of activities outside of school hours. These include sports such as football, rugby, hockey and netball. Despite being a small school, there are many opportunities to compete with other schools in inter-school sports events. All pupils are given the opportunity to learn to play a musical instrument. There is a wide range of out-of-school clubs, including chess, cross-country, ICT,

French and recorders. These enrichment activities are very well attended and add much to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

23. The accommodation is small, but adults use the limited amount of space very well. Very good use is made of the church and other local facilities to deliver a wide curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good steps to ensure the welfare, care, health and safety of its pupils. Pupils are provided with good support and guidance. The school involves the pupils very well in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships in the school are excellent. The staff know their pupils very well and are able to respond to their individual needs
- The very strong, caring ethos of the school enables the pupils to feel secure and valued
- The pupils take an active role in the life of the school and their views are listened to with respect

Commentary

24. The very strong caring ethos in the school contributes to a calm, friendly yet purposeful atmosphere in which pupils and adults clearly respect each other and are able to flourish. The school tries very hard to ensure the physical care of its pupils. It pays very close attention to health and safety issues, for example, and child protection procedures are well-established. The premises are well looked after.
25. The same weight is attached to the pupils' emotional and academic needs. A long-standing and respected member of the school community has recently trained and taken on the role of learning mentor. As well as going into the classroom to support individual pupils when they need it, the learning mentor runs a daily 'drop-in' where pupils can come to discuss any difficulties or problems they might have, whether social, emotional or academic. Support for those pupils with special educational needs is good and the school works very effectively with other local schools to develop its provision for able and gifted pupils. The emphasis is on creating an environment where all pupils are able to learn effectively and achieve their full potential.
26. The staged induction arrangements into the Reception class are good and the pupils are very well prepared for their transfer to secondary school. The teachers back this up by checking on the pupils' academic and social progress half-way through the first term at their new school.
27. The active role which pupils are encouraged to play in the life of the school enhances their personal development. They take on responsibilities enthusiastically, for example, by caring for younger pupils, organising games for them at playtimes, answering the school telephone at lunchtime and showing visitors around the school. The school council is well-established and minutes of council meetings reveal a maturity of discussion – for example, the pupils themselves vetoed a suggestion that they should be allowed to bring electronic games into school for use at wet playtimes.

28. The value the school places on the views of pupils has a positive impact on school life. The pupils are clearly happy, open and confident.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most parents are very supportive of the school
- Very strong links with other local schools benefit the pupils socially and academically
- More could be done to seek the views of parents

Commentary

29. The parents contribute very effectively to the life of the school and to their children's learning. There is a strong group of parent helpers, an active parents' organisation and the parents take very good steps to ensure their children attend school, are punctual and complete homework tasks on time. The home/school diaries are used very well by both teachers and parents. The school is now working on providing parents with more detailed and regular information about the curriculum in order to develop this partnership further.

30. The annual reports on the pupils' progress are detailed, give clear targets for improvement and reveal a good level of understanding about each child. There is a high level of attendance at the consultation for parents held in the autumn term and a significant number of parents would welcome the opportunity to attend a second parents' evening each year. Letters sent home are informative and well presented. The focus is mainly on conveying important information and more could be done to provide an insight into the life of the school as a community and to celebrate achievements. Most parents are very supportive of the school and feel that it is approachable and the school's leaders, in turn, take the views of parents seriously. However, a significant minority feel that the school does too little to consult parents, a view supported by the inspectors, as there are few formal ways of sounding out parents to ascertain their views on important issues.

31. Links with the community are used effectively to enhance the pupils' experience and learning. Outside agencies, such as police, fire and road safety officials, visit the school regularly. Links have been established with local sports clubs and businesses such as Gladstone Pottery. Relationships with the church and with other local schools are particularly strong and have been developed to enhance provision in a wide range of areas such as sporting, multi-cultural, enterprise skills, and opportunities for the able, gifted and talented.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership, management and governance of the school are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, staff and governors have a shared vision and a common sense of purpose for the school and teamwork is a strong feature
- The school has a very positive and caring ethos in which all pupils are able to achieve well
- Good progress has been made in addressing most of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection

Commentary

32. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by a dedicated staff and effective governing body. He has a clear vision for the school that focuses on promoting a Christian ethos, raising standards and ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential.
33. A strong feature is the way that teamwork is encouraged and promoted. The small staff share many responsibilities, particularly in leading the development of subjects and other important aspects of the school's work. For example, the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has a very high level of personal expertise and this makes her particularly effective in supporting the teachers. The recent appointment of a learning mentor has further strengthened the provision. The headteacher and deputy headteacher work together effectively as the senior management team. Well-trained teaching assistants provide invaluable help as they work alongside the teachers to enable the pupils to make good progress. Across the school, pupils of all abilities benefit from the close working relationships between teachers and support staff and this contributes positively to the progress they make.
34. In this very positive environment and with the very good role models set by the staff, the school is a calm and purposeful place and lessons run smoothly and productively. As a result, all of the pupils, whatever their ability, work hard and achieve well. The headteacher, staff and governors have ensured that the strengths identified in the last inspection have been maintained, including the high standards found in the core subjects. The provision for these subjects has improved due, largely, to an improvement in the quality of teaching and planning. The school has responded well to the key issues. Standards in ICT have risen and the planning for DT, geography and history ensures a broad and balanced programme for these subjects. The role of subject co-ordinators has been strengthened, the planning is now much better matched to the pupils' differing needs, but there remains more work to do to improve the marking of pupils' work and to promote the pupils' independence in art and design and DT.
35. The school benefits from the commitment shown by governors and they make a strong contribution to the school's development. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well, providing the headteacher and staff with encouragement and support. The governors' role in monitoring and evaluating the school's performance is secure. Good use is made of the individual expertise of governors by linking them to important areas of the school's work. Governors visit classrooms, liaise with subject co-ordinators, join in the review of policy documents and ensure that other governors are well informed of progress. These rigorous procedures enable the governors and the headteacher to guard against any complacency and there is a clear focus on securing further improvement. They keep a close check on the management of finances. In the table below, the budget was in deficit due to the deferred payment of money due to the school for the graduate training scheme. A deficit budget was not set and the school intends to carry forward a small surplus into the next financial year.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 282,949 |
| Total expenditure | 298,721 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3,112 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Balance from previous year | -21,700 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | -37,470 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Overall provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children achieve well in the reception class because they are well taught in a supportive and stimulating environment
- Relationships are excellent
- The teaching assistants are well used to support learning
- There is a good balance of activities led by the staff and those chosen by the children, although it is not always clear what the children are expected to learn in the activities they choose

Commentary

36. The children join the reception class at the start of the autumn term and there are currently nine boys and girls in the class, attending full time. The attainment of the children when they first start school varies from year to year and covers a broad range but, overall, it is above average. The children enjoy coming to school, soon settle into the routines of the class and they get a good start to their education. They achieve well in each of the areas of learning, because of the good teaching, and most are on course to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of Reception. The class teacher leads the Foundation Stage well and she has high expectations of herself, the support staff and the children. The planning of the work is thorough and ensures that the children have access to each of the areas of learning and the literacy and numeracy strategies. The teacher, who is new to the Foundation Stage this year, keeps a close check on how the children are progressing and the information gained from these assessments is well used to plan the next steps in the children's learning.

37. A high priority is placed on the children's **personal, social and emotional development** and they achieve well. They arrive from a variety of settings, although most have experience of working and playing alongside other children. The children settle quickly and develop positive attitudes to learning, working hard to complete their tasks and eagerly learning new skills. The teacher and teaching assistant have high expectations of how the children should behave and, as a result, they benefit from the very orderly and supportive environment. Relationships among the children and with the staff and other adults who help are excellent. The classroom is attractive and well laid out to encourage the children to take responsibility for collecting and putting away materials and equipment. They learn to share, take turns and follow instructions and enjoy taking on extra responsibilities, willingly carrying out a variety of jobs in the classroom. The children have regular opportunities to make choices and decisions about their work. While the staff keep a good overview of the children during the free choice sessions, and monitor the progress they make, the planning is not always clear about what, precisely, the children are expected to learn from the activities they select. During breaks and lunchtimes, the children are looked after by the older pupils who ensure that they are fully involved with other pupils in the playground.

38. The teaching of **communication, language and literacy** is good and builds well on the range of skills that the children bring from home and other pre-school settings. Every opportunity is taken to develop the children's language and literacy through other areas of learning. The pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed well through the good range of opportunities that are provided for them to respond to questions, join in discussions, retell stories and listen carefully as other children speak. Early reading skills are well taught. The children have a good knowledge of letter sounds, recognise a good number of words and use their skills to identify the initial sounds of unfamiliar words. They have a good understanding of how books work and they particularly enjoyed sharing a 'big book' as they read about Biff and Chip's 'secret room'. Parents are very supportive of the home-school reading programme and this has a positive impact on the progress they make. The teaching of writing is good and the children are encouraged to use their developing knowledge of letter sounds to help them to begin to write unfamiliar words independently.
39. The children make good progress in their **mathematical development**. The planning of this area of learning is good, with a strong emphasis on practical activity and making effective use of the children's enthusiasm for counting and using numbers. In one instance, the children took great delight in seeing how far they and their classmates could count in one minute, managing to reach 45 before time ran out. Well supported by a teaching assistant, 'tidying the farm' became a counting activity that helped promote a developing understanding of mathematical vocabulary. Songs and rhymes play an important part in the children's development. The teacher uses a variety of activities and resources to make the learning fun and this has a positive impact on the children's attitudes to mathematics and on their achievement.
40. Good provision is made to develop the children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**. They have regular opportunities to explore the properties of sand and water and use construction toys. The children predict whether objects will float or sink and enjoy testing their hypotheses and recording their findings. They have regular opportunities to use the classroom computers in many areas of learning, for example to carry out counting activities. A fall of snow presents the opportunity for the children to collect snow and see if where they place it in the classroom affects how fast it will melt. They also enjoy making feeding balls to help the birds survive the weather. The children handle a range of tools and materials competently and confidently and they achieve well.
41. The children make good progress in their **physical development** through the many opportunities for them to develop fine and gross motor skills in lessons in the classroom and the hall. They use paintbrushes, pencils and scissors with care and precision. PE lessons in the hall enable them to learn to throw, catch and balance and move in a variety of ways and they use the playground during the warmer months. The school has rightly identified the need to provide access to a designated outdoor area and is exploring the possibilities of funding this. At present, there are few opportunities for the children to climb or to use wheeled toys to develop their skills.
42. A wide range of activities are planned to promote the children's **creative development** and they achieve well. There are many opportunities to listen, participate and respond to music and the children join in hymn singing with enthusiasm and particularly enjoy action songs and rhymes. The dressing-up clothes are well used as groups of children act out stories they have read or have made up for themselves. They produce good quality paintings of hyacinths and enjoyed creating seascapes as part of their topic on water.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well because they consistently work hard and have very positive attitude to learning
- The teaching is good with some significant strengths
- There are very good links with other areas of the curriculum
- The leadership and management of the subject are good
- Handwriting in some pupils' books could be better and more use could be made of marking to inform the pupils about how they can improve

Commentary

43. Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average. This is better than in the previous year because a greater proportion of pupils are now attaining at the higher levels. In Year 6 around half of the pupils attain Level 5; in Year 2 more than half the pupils attain at the higher Level 3 in reading and over a third in writing. Throughout the school, the very high levels of motivation and enthusiasm among the pupils explain why they all achieve well, make good progress and attain such high standards.
44. Most pupils speak confidently because, in all three classes, there are good opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills and the school places great importance on developing this area of literacy. This is particularly noticeable during whole-class discussions, because the teachers' skilful questioning addresses and involves all abilities and ages. In addition, the teachers value what their pupils have to say and the pupils respect each other and listen very well to one another and their teachers. One particularly effective feature of the literacy curriculum is the emphasis it gives to speaking and listening through drama. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Drama workshops, visits to and from theatre groups and the many opportunities the school gives to develop self-confidence, whether speaking in assemblies or performing publicly in a school production, ensure that all pupils achieve very well in this area.
45. Pupils in all year groups have reading and writing targets which help them to focus on any weak area of literacy and take steps to improve it. Parents are very closely involved in the teaching of reading and give very good support. Comprehensive reading diaries are used very effectively for teachers, teaching assistants and parents to monitor and improve the pupils' progress in reading. Although the school has no designated library area, there is a satisfactory range of reading books to support the curriculum, particularly in the younger age classes, and older pupils are very good at using the local library and bringing in their own books. During lessons, pupils in all three classes confidently use the skills they have been taught as they read or closely follow the texts. Interactive whiteboards are used very effectively to promote the pupils' learning in two classes. By the end of Year 6, virtually all pupils are very accomplished readers who

have read and are able to discuss a very wide range of traditional and modern authors, poets and playwrights.

46. The standard of pupils' written work in Year 2 and Year 6 is well above average. Basic skills of writing are very well taught so that pupils know how to organise and develop their ideas. The presentation of work is good across the school and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, the school recognises that there are weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting and this is an area that is being addressed. Grammar and spelling are very well taught and pupils are motivated to improve their spellings. The teachers plan work well to take account of the pupils' abilities. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this enables them to work through all activities. Across the school, the pupils have many opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes and for different audiences. This link with many other areas of the curriculum is a particularly strong feature in the teaching of writing. For example, older pupils compile a school news paper, write various poems such as Kennings, Haikus and Limericks, produce well written reports and accounts and write letters and book reviews. Year 3 and 4 pupils describe how the Tudors lived and give an account of their visit to a Jewish synagogue, while Year 1 and 2 pupils describe the toys their great grandparents played with and keep healthy eating diaries. Much of their writing is attractively presented using ICT. A weakness in the teaching of writing across the school is that marking does not consistently identify how work can be improved.
47. The leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a good overview of English teaching across the school through a very well planned programme which involves all staff in evaluating and monitoring the teaching of English. Drama is now a well-established part of the curriculum. Planning is monitored and has greatly improved, and work sampling has identified areas for improvement such as handwriting. These are significant improvements since the previous inspection. Assessments are regular and thorough. The pupils' progress, in all aspects of the subject, is tracked carefully.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Literacy skills are used very well across the curriculum. Much of the pupils' extended writing practice is carried out in other curriculum areas such as, history, geography and religious education. Science and design and technology lessons also provide a good context for writing and are frequently used for writing plans, instructions and results of experiments and evaluations. ICT is used well to support the teaching and learning of literacy, for example when the pupils use word processing to present their work or the Internet for research.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average because the lessons are interesting and challenging
- There are many opportunities for the pupils to use and develop their skills in other subjects
- The subject is well organised, led and managed

- Although the pupils' work is marked conscientiously, the comments do not focus sufficiently on how they might improve

Commentary

49. The school has maintained the well above average standards found at the time of the last inspection. However, the overall provision in the subject has improved because the teaching is now good and the work is well planned to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. As a result, the pupils make good progress and they achieve well. In recent years, the school's result in the national assessments for pupils in Years 2 and 6 have regularly been above or well above the national average.
50. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and they have the confidence to modify their approach according to the work being covered and the pupils' understanding. Lesson introductions are interesting, briskly paced and capture the pupils' interest from the start. The school has identified a need to improve the pupils' mental skills. This increase in emphasis is proving to be successful: as they move through the school the pupils become increasingly confident and competent and, in each class, their ability to calculate mentally and explain their strategies is above that typically found. Rapid questioning keeps the pupils on their toes and ensures that they are all involved. The teachers are clear about what the pupils are expected to learn. They share these objectives with the pupils at the start of lessons, refer to them during the course of the work and use them to summarise the learning in the discussions at the end.
51. Lessons are very well organised and, as a result, they run smoothly and no time is wasted. Although a relatively new feature, the interactive whiteboards available in the two oldest classes are already having an impact on the quality of the teachers' explanations and the pupils' understanding. The teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection because it takes good account of the pupils' differing needs and this is supplemented by the good support provided by the teaching assistants. This benefits all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those capable of reaching the higher levels, and enables them to achieve well. The teachers have high expectations of the pupils' capabilities and provide challenging work. On the occasions when they are faced with difficulty, the pupils work hard, persevere and take great pride in finding solutions. The pupils enjoy their lessons and are highly motivated. They are eager to learn and their very positive attitudes contribute to the high standards and good achievement.
52. The new co-ordinator is quickly gaining an understanding of the work across the school. Good procedures have been introduced to assess the pupils' work and track their progress. Regular tests and less formal assessments contribute to the information available and the senior management team evaluates the school's performance in the national statutory and optional assessments. The day-to-day assessment of the pupils' work is generally good. For example, the discussion sessions and the beginning and end of lessons help the teachers to check on the pupils' understanding and alert them of any misconceptions. This was particularly evident in a very good lesson in Years 5 and 6, where the teacher encouraged the pupils to reflect on what they had learned and what they needed to do next. The teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously. In the best examples, the teachers refer to what the pupils were expected to learn and what they need to do to improve. However, the school recognises that this approach is not applied consistently to develop and extend the pupils' learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

53. There are very good opportunities for the pupils to use mathematics in other subjects. This is a strength of the provision and has a positive impact on their achievement in mathematics and their understanding of the work covered in those subjects. Computers are generally well used and a group of pupils in Years 1 and 2 were observed programming a floor robot, using their skills of measuring and estimation and their knowledge of angles to guide it along the corridor. The pupils measure plants in science and use stopwatches and thermometers to carry out investigations before recording their results in tables and graphs. They use their knowledge of pattern and shape in art and design and DT and there is evidence of the pupils using their mathematical skills in geography and history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average at the end of Years 2 and 6 and the pupils achieve well because they are well taught
- Good use is made of investigations and first hand experiences
- The pupils' excellent attitudes enable them to learn well

Commentary

54. The school has maintained the high standards found in the last inspection. In the intervening years, the quality of provision has improved because the teaching is now good, there is an increased emphasis on practical activity and good use is made of assessment information to plan the next steps for the pupils. The high standards are reflected in the school's results in the national assessments in Year 6 which, in most recent years, have been well above average or, indeed, amongst the top five per cent nationally. As a result of the improved provision, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well.
55. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, and very good teaching was seen in two of the lessons observed in Years 3 to 6. The school has identified the need to improve the pupils' investigational skills, as highlighted in the last inspection, and has placed first-hand experience and practical activity as the central feature of lessons. This is proving to be successful. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were observed investigating how objects can be moved by pushing and pulling. The teacher made the work relevant by referring to the pupils' own experiences, for example with bicycles, and the pupils made good progress in their understanding of how the amount of pull or push and the smoothness surface made a difference. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 planned an investigation to enhance their knowledge of plants and the requirements for growth. The teacher made good use of on-going assessment to determine their level of understanding, clarify any misconceptions and set the scene for their new work. In a very successful lesson, the pupils in Years 5 and 6 showed a clear understanding of the requirements of a fair test as they carried out an investigation to find out if objects of different mass fall to the ground at the same rate. The pupils took great pride in their work, carrying out the test accurately and recording their work neatly. In this, and all of the lessons seen, the pupils' behaviour and relationships were excellent, which enabled them to collaborate

fully with their classmates and share the responsibility for carrying out the activity and recording their findings. Across the school the pupils have a very secure knowledge and understanding of the work they cover.

56. Lessons are well planned – an improvement since the last inspection – and there is a clear emphasis on guiding the pupils through what they are expected to learn. The teachers are ably assisted by the teaching assistants. The planning takes good account of the needs of pupils of different abilities. As a result, the pupils make good progress and achieve well. The newly introduced interactive whiteboards enhance the quality of the teachers' presentation of lessons in those classrooms that benefit from them. The co-ordinator, who teaches science to both of the classes in Years 3 to 6, provides very effective leadership and has a secure understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. There are clear systems for assessing the pupils' work and tracking their progress through end of topic assessments and regular tests.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have risen and are now in line with what is expected at the end of Years 2 and 6
- Good use is made of computers in other subjects, but this is not yet planned systematically
- Staff confidence has improved through training and good use is made of off-site facilities
- Assessment arrangements have not yet been finalised

Commentary

57. Standards have risen since the last inspection and are now in line with what is expected of pupils of this age. The school has worked hard to improve the provision. The pupils now have access to reliable computers in their classrooms, aided by the appointment of a technician in conjunction with the local high school, effective use is made of a computer suite at the City Learning Centre and the staff knowledge and confidence are continuing to improve through the thoughtful use of in-house training. Across the school, the staff are careful to ensure that the pupils have adequate, regular access to the computers. Interactive whiteboards have been introduced to two of the classrooms and they have been embraced enthusiastically by the staff. There are plans to establish this technology in the remaining classrooms. As a result of these improvements, the pupils have made rapid progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding and they are achieving well.
58. It was not possible to observe the direct teaching of ICT during the inspection. The pupils were observed working on computers in each of the classes and discussions with the staff and pupils, together with their previous work were taken into account. The preferred method of teaching the subject is to make use of computers and other technology to support the learning in other subjects. This is supplemented by fortnightly sessions of direct teaching in the well resourced computer suite housed at the nearby City Learning Centre. During a brief observation of one of these sessions, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 used computers to devise a musical composition. Their keyboard and mouse skills were secure and they worked competently and confidently to complete the

task. It is clear that these sessions make a good contribution to the pupils' development and they speak excitedly about the work they have covered.

59. The new co-ordinator, supported by a well qualified and expert graduate trainee teacher, has made a positive impact on the provision and, together, they have been instrumental in securing improvement. The overall organisation is effective in ensuring that the pupils cover the necessary work, on a two-year cycle, and their knowledge, skills and understanding are developed progressively as they move from class to class. The co-ordinator is currently trialling assessment materials which may then be adopted by the rest of the school. She recognises the importance of finalising these arrangements as soon as possible. In-service training, much of it provided by the graduate trainee, is having a significant impact on the quality of the provision.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

60. During the inspection, computers were seen in use in a number of subjects. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 used computers to help develop their understanding of time in mathematics and they operated the 'roamer' (a programmable floor robot) confidently. In an English lesson, these pupils inserted text and pictures into their stories of the 'Three Billy Goats'. In Years 3 and 4, the computer was used well to support pupils with special educational needs as they built a 'word tower', again in English and the pupils in Years 5 and 6 used a digital camera to record their experiment in science. There are regular opportunities to use the Internet to carry out research, for example, in history and for e-mail communication. While good use is generally made of computers across the curriculum, there are some missed opportunities and the school recognises the need to clarify, in the planning for each subject, how and where ICT will be used across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

61. Only one lesson was seen in **geography**, so it is not possible to make overall judgements about the quality of the provision. However, from an analysis of pupils' work, from discussions with pupils and from evidence of work on display, it is evident that there is good coverage of the curriculum. Year 2 pupils, for example, understand that life is very different on a small Scottish island. They conduct traffic surveys and devise ways of making the area around the school safer. Year 3 and 4 pupils have good mapping skills and use these to identify features on Cannock Chase. They understand and can identify how different environmental issues impact on school life. A wide range of visits to various places develops pupils' understanding of and enthusiasm for geography. For example, on their residential trip, Year 6 pupils study the features of a moorland river. They have good knowledge of how industrial development occurs where there are suitable natural materials and transport systems. They draw detailed survey maps of the local common and examine the impact of local leisure activities. Older pupils speak with great enthusiasm about geography topics they have enjoyed, such as the work they have done on the development of the pottery industry.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average

- Very effective links are made with other subjects and a very good programme of visits supports the curriculum
- The planning of the history curriculum and the development of skills has improved since the previous inspection

Commentary

62. Standards in history are above expectations of pupils at the end of Years 2 and 6. The pupils speak with great enthusiasm about their history lessons and they achieve well. The subject is enlivened by links with other subjects, particularly literacy, design and technology, ICT and geography.
63. By the end of Year 2, the pupils understand that Victorian toys are older than their grandparents, were often made of different materials and that a China doll's dress reflected the fashions of the time. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 enjoy their visit to a Tudor Manor and have a good understanding of aspects of daily life in Tudor times. There are good links with ICT and literacy when they use photographs from a digital camera to enhance their word-processed reports. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have a good knowledge of different periods of history such as Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, the Roman Empire, Saxons, Vikings, Victorians and World War 2. They speak with knowledge and enthusiasm about these topics, which are often made memorable by visits and first hand experiences, such as donning Roman armour and being drilled by a real Legionnaire in Chester.
64. The teaching and learning are good. Lessons are now well planned across the school to interest and challenge the pupils. In each class, a good volume of work reflects that a well-planned curriculum is being used to build on and develop the pupils' skills in historical enquiry. In a good lesson on understanding why people in Tudor times explored outside Europe, the teacher provided very appropriate resources which enabled the pupils to research and gain a better understanding of the various factors that motivated explorers. This developed their skills of sifting and interpreting data to draw conclusions very effectively. Across the school, the pupils thoroughly enjoy studying different periods of history and older pupils are particularly enthusiastic. They appreciate the rich history curriculum and particularly enjoy the very wide range of visits they make to study history and the visitors who come into the school. They speak knowledgeably about their use of primary evidence - the school logbooks - to research Victorian life.
65. The subject leader has a great commitment to, and knowledge of, the subject and this has ensured that topics are well planned and that, where possible, there are good links with the local environment. Assessment systems are being developed to build further on the present system of the pupils reviewing their achievement of the objectives of each unit.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

66. It was not possible to observe lessons in **music**, so overall judgements about the quality of the provision are not possible. The available evidence indicates that the pupils have the opportunity to listen to music, sing, compose and perform. They sing enthusiastically in assemblies and have the opportunity to learn a range of instruments in lessons led by visiting specialists. The pupils perform in concerts and services at the

school and take part in a recorder festival. Music is well used to promote the pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, social and cultural development, through, for example, visits to or by the youth orchestra and theatre companies.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pupils enjoy using their artistic skills in other subjects
- The work is sometimes over-directed by the teachers

Commentary

67. The pupils attain standards in line with the expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6 and their achievement is satisfactory. Lessons were seen in each of the classes and the pupils' work on display and in their sketchbooks was also taken into account.
68. The pupils' previous work indicates that, overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teaching was good in two of the lessons seen. The planning ensures that the skills are taught systematically as they move through the school. Lessons are well organised, materials are readily available and the teachers guide the pupils carefully through the skills being learned. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 followed the teacher's instructions precisely to create sculptures of their hands using 'mod-roc'. These pupils are developing a sound understanding of how different materials can be used to create different effects. Similarly, in Years 3 and 4, the teacher guided the pupils methodically through the creation of patterns, using their mathematical knowledge of shape and symmetry to produce pleasing results.
69. However, in both these cases, there was a high level of direction by the teachers, which limited the opportunities for the pupils to develop their own individual responses to the tasks, explore their creativity and investigate the strength and limitations of the materials they were using. The pupils' sketchbooks show observational work, some of which is of a good quality. In the oldest class, the sketchbooks are particularly well used to enable the pupils to develop their skills of, for example, pattern and perspective as well as studying the work of famous artists and linking their work to other subjects such as history.
70. In a good lesson in the Year 5 and 6 class, effective use was made of ongoing assessment to set targets for how individual pupils might improve their work. They worked carefully, confidently and with good attention to detail as they painted scenes inspired by photographs of the local area. Although this lesson was carefully structured, there was ample opportunity for the pupils to provide their own interpretations of the work. For example, they have a good understanding of how different brush-strokes create different effects and they were able to select the most appropriate for their needs. These pupils made good progress and achieved well.
71. The co-ordinator for art and design provides sound leadership and ensures that the subject is well organised and resourced.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses.

- There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection
- Teaching is good
- The leadership of the subject is good
- Pupils' creativity and independence are sometimes limited

Commentary

72. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 2 and 6. A clear scheme of work based on the national guidelines has now been drawn up which develops the pupils' learning systematically as they move through the school. Resources have been considerably improved. There has also been a thorough programme of staff development to raise teachers' expertise and confidence in the subject. These are good improvements since the previous inspection.

73. The teaching is good. The new scheme of work sets out a progression of interesting projects that effectively addresses the National Curriculum requirements and captures the pupils' interest. Links with other subjects provide a good context for the pupils' learning. For example, in Years 5 and 6, the pupils' 'Crashed Cars Project' involved very precise measuring and was closely linked to work in literacy. In Years 3 and 4, an understanding of nets and three-dimensional shapes supported a project on the design of packaging. The pupils remember particular projects such as making bread and healthy sandwiches and designing and making slippers. The subject is also well supported by work outside school such as when pupils used cogs and gears to make moving models in a local museum. A weakness in the teaching is that the subject is taught too prescriptively and the teachers impose tight parameters on the various projects. The pupils' excellent attitudes and enthusiasm merit allowing them a greater degree of creativity and independence, to enable them to design more freely and imaginatively.

74. The subject leader provides good leadership that has ensured that standards have risen and there is now a well-structured curriculum. Portfolios and samples of pupils' work and photographic evidence enable the subject co-ordinator to have a good overview of standards. The very practical workshops that have been run have increased the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject. This in turn has had an impact on their teaching and raised standards.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average
- The teaching is good
- The school makes good use of community and other resources to provide a strong curriculum

- The subject is supported by a very good range of extra-curricular activities

Commentary

75. Standards are above national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6; a significant number of pupils achieve above average standards in a variety of sports and swimming. The pupils do well in competitive sports and games because of skilled and often specialist coaching. Good opportunities are provided for the pupils to receive a balanced programme of physical education through the year.
76. Lessons are well planned and several teachers have high levels of personal expertise in various aspects of the curriculum. This was seen in several good lessons across all age ranges. One teacher's personal expertise in folk dancing ensured that skills were well taught so that the pupils quickly learnt the steps of various new dances. In a good games lesson, the teacher set very clear objectives that enabled the pupils to improve the basic skills of passing and learn that they must select the right throw for the situation and develop control and accuracy. In a good lesson in Years 1 and 2, the pupils improved their balance skills and understood and followed the rules of a game. In all lessons, the pupils' enthusiasm and excellent attitudes ensure that no time is wasted and that every learning opportunity is taken.
77. Despite having very limited facilities at the school, very good use of church facilities and good links with a sports centre and the local secondary school ensure that the full curriculum is delivered. There is also a very good range of extra-curricular provision in a very wide range of sports. Good parental support and the pupils' great enthusiasm and participation in after school activities ensure that all these opportunities are taken. There is also an extended visit to an outdoor centre that gives the pupils experience of adventure activities and further supports the curriculum.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

78. No dedicated personal, social and health education lessons were seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to make overall judgements about the quality of the provision. There is a very strong emphasis in developing the pupils' personal and social skills, which permeates through the whole school. The pupils' excellent attitudes and the very positive relationships, amongst the pupils and with the adults in school, indicate that the aims of the programme are achieved. All teachers follow a well-structured programme that focuses on keeping safe and developing a healthy life style. For example, fruit is now provided instead of unhealthy snacks. The school funds the education of a pupil in Bangladesh. The pupils are responsible for this and they plan and collaborate well to do this. An insight into his life also develops their concept of world citizenship. The work of the school council supports the pupils' personal development when pupils are empowered to take various decisions that affect the running of the school, such as older pupils taking part in the LEA's Playground Leaders Scheme.

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 | 2 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 3 |
| Overall standards achieved | 2 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 1 |
| Attendance | 2 |
| Attitudes | 1 |
| Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions | 1 |
| Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | 2 |
| The quality of education provided by the school | 3 |
| The quality of teaching | 3 |
| How well pupils learn | 3 |
| The quality of assessment | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The school's links with other schools and colleges | 2 |
| The leadership and management of the school | 3 |
| The governance of the school | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 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).