

INSPECTION REPORT

STOKE-ON-TERN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stoke Heath, Market Drayton

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123399

Headteacher: Mrs J Wright

Lead inspector: Miss J H Sargent

Dates of inspection: 13th - 15th June 2005

Inspection number: 267996

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: Community
Age range of pupils: 5 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 136

School address: Rosehill Road
Stoke Heath
Market Drayton
Shropshire
Postcode: TF9 2LF

Telephone number: (01630) 638 332
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr Peter Haines
governors:

Dates of previous 5th - 7th July 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stoke-on-Tern Primary School is smaller than other primary schools, having 136 pupils on roll. There are slightly more boys than girls. The school serves a farming community, but also draws pupils from a local military base and from a Travellers' site. A significant minority of the pupils attending the school live outside the school's catchment area. The majority of pupils are from a white British heritage, with a small number of white Irish or other white backgrounds. A very small number of pupils are from other ethnic groups. No pupils speak English as an additional language. There is a very high level of pupil movement in and out of the school at times other than the usual time of admission, sometimes affecting more than half of a year group. The school is classified by the local authority as being in an area of rural deprivation; however, the percentage of pupils known to qualify for free school meals is below the national average. Twenty-one pupils are identified as having special educational needs (this proportion being below the national average) mainly concerned with dyslexia and moderate learning difficulties. Most pupils have had experience of pre-school education. Attainment on entry to Reception varies from year to year, often significantly, but is broadly in line with what is expected. The school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and the National Healthy School Standard in May 2005.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21113	Miss J H Sargent	Lead inspector	Science Geography History Personal, social and health education
9928	Mr A Dobson	Lay inspector	
10120	Mr P Crookall	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Religious education
30691	Mrs K Yates	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English Art and design Design and technology Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 5
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	6 - 10
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10 - 15
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	15 - 16
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17 - 28
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **satisfactory school** with several important strengths. It gives satisfactory value for money. Leadership and management and the quality of education provided are satisfactory. Pupils behave well and have good attitudes to learning and the provision for their personal development is very good. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and promotes satisfactory levels of achievement. Standards are satisfactory overall, but vary from year to year because year groups can be small and because the school has high levels of pupil mobility.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but children in Reception and pupils in Year 6 receive good teaching.
- The school's monitoring and self-evaluation of its work lack rigour and clarity of focus and this sometimes reduces the effectiveness of school improvement work.
- Teachers' planning does not always address the needs of all pupils because too little use is made of assessment, affecting the achievement of a significant minority of pupils.
- Children in their Reception Year achieve well because the provision is good, with the exception of the provision for outdoor play, which is unsatisfactory.
- Pupils are well cared for, behave well and most have good attitudes to learning.
- Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.
- The roles of subject leaders are underdeveloped.
- Resources for learning are unsatisfactory overall because of shortcomings in library provision, computers and outdoor play equipment for Reception children.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Since the last inspection in July 1999, the school has improved its provision for design and technology and this now meets requirements. The level of investigative work undertaken in mathematics and science has been improved and the school has effectively developed the use of literacy and numeracy in other curriculum subjects. Provision for Reception children is now good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection, but there was less very good teaching seen than in the previous inspection. Teachers still do not always match work well to the needs of their pupils. Standards at Year 6 are lagging behind those at Year 2, but are significantly affected by high levels of pupil mobility.

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	E	B	D
mathematics	B	E	C	E
science	C	E	C	E

*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.*

Pupils' achievement is **satisfactory overall**. The varying number of pupils involved in national tests each year requires the above table to be viewed with caution. Standards can and do vary from year to year, reflecting the small groups where one pupil's score can have a disproportionate effect on the overall results. In 2004, over half of the pupils in Year 6 had joined the school after the usual time. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are satisfactory in English, mathematics and science. A detailed work scrutiny undertaken during the inspection indicated that there are times when work is not well matched to pupils' abilities and there is some underachievement for a minority of pupils in English, science, geography and history. In Reception, children are on course to meet the goals that they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year and some will exceed them. In work seen, there was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs receive sound support and they achieve at satisfactory levels. Standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory overall. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally-agreed syllabus. **Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social and cultural development, is very good.** Attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good and contribute positively to pupils' achievements. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **satisfactory quality of education**. **The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall**, with pockets of good and very good teaching. Good teaching for children in their Reception Year and in Year 6 ensures that children learn basic literacy and numeracy skills quickly in Reception and make good progress in their final year. In some work in English, too little is expected of higher-attaining pupils and in science, history and geography, some lower-attaining pupils struggle to complete the same work as their peers. Teachers have started to involve pupils in working towards agreed learning goals in mathematics, but this development is too recent to judge its effectiveness. Insufficient use is made of assessment to inform teachers' planning and this contributes to some pupils achieving below their capabilities. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum with good opportunities for all pupils to participate in additional sporting and arts activities. Provision for children in their Reception Year is good overall, but the use of outdoor play to promote physical development is unsatisfactory because of a lack of resources. Resources are unsatisfactory overall because of shortcomings in library provision and computers. There are good links with the local community and local schools. Partnerships with parents are sound. The school's arrangements for the care, welfare, health and safety of pupils are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership, management and governance are satisfactory. The headteacher is working towards a stronger team approach, following the recent appointment of a new deputy head. The strategies to bring about school improvement are satisfactory, but sometimes lack rigour and clarity of focus. The school does not make full use of available performance data or information from monitoring of teaching. As a result, some improvement work is not far reaching enough. Supportive governors ensure that the school's work meets statutory requirements. The roles of the curriculum co-ordinators require further development to bring about improvements in subject management.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are happy with the school and feel that their children are happy, well taught and well cared for. Many parents bring their children from further afield because they have chosen Stoke-on-Tern Primary. Pupils enjoy coming to school and speak well of their teachers. They feel confident that they have someone to turn to if they have a problem. Younger pupils are well cared for by older ones. Pupils say that they enjoy participating in sporting activities.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop more rigorous strategies for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school.
- Review and develop the monitoring and assessment of pupils' attainment and progress and its use in informing teachers' planning in order to provide pupils with appropriate challenge.
- Further develop the roles of the subject co-ordinators.
- Improve resources for information and communication technology (ICT), the school library and outdoor play for Reception children.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards attained by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with those seen nationally in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Achievement is good for children in their Reception Year and for pupils in Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards and achievement are adversely affected when teachers' expectations are insufficiently high.
- Pupils in Year 6 achieve well in information and communication technology because they receive good teaching.
- Reception children achieve well and make good progress towards the early learning goals for young children.
- Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall because work is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' abilities.

Commentary

1. Standards at the school are affected by the relatively small year groups and the high levels of mobility seen in its pupil population. A significant number of the pupils join their year groups after the usual admission times and for some year groups this figure can be as high as 63% by Year 6. This makes it more difficult to compare standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 than in other schools because the data is not comparing results over time for the same group of pupils. Statutory targets set by the school for standards in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 are sometimes inaccurate. Changes in the pupil population and weaknesses in the school's assessment and tracking systems result in the school making inaccurate judgements about pupils'

future attainment. Inspection judgements on current standards are based on work seen in lessons, discussion with pupils and an extensive review of pupils' work.

2. Attainment on entry to the school can and does vary from year to year. Currently most children in their Reception Year are likely to achieve most of the early learning goals expected for children of this age and a small number are likely to exceed them. Children achieve well in Reception because of the good teaching that they receive.
3. The variation in pupil numbers and generally small numbers in each year group mean that national test results from a single year should be viewed with caution, as a single pupil's results can have a disproportionate effect on the school's overall result. In 2004, results for pupils at the end of Year 2 indicate that standards were well above average in reading and writing and above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, the results for 2004 indicate that standards are above average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Trends over time offer a more secure view of the school's performance. Taking the years 2002 to 2004 together, standards in reading at the end of Year 2 are well above average. Over a similar period, standards in writing are above the national average. In mathematics, taking 2002 to 2004 together, standards are below the national average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.7 (16.3)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.0 (15.7)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.9 (15.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 27 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were judged to be very good in reading and good in mathematics by the end of Year 2. In writing, standards were good, but no pupils attained at the higher Level 3. The findings of the current inspection are that standards of work seen are satisfactory in reading, writing, mathematics and science. For the current Year 2, in writing there are few pupils attaining the higher Level 3.
5. Standards for pupils at the end of Year 6 fluctuate from year to year. In 2004, results for pupils at the end of Year 6 were above the national average in English and in line with the national average in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, results are less favourable, being below the national average in English and well below in mathematics and science. Taking the years 2002 to 2004 together, standards are in line with the national average in English and below the national average in mathematics and science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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English	27.7 (23.8)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	26.8 (24.6)	27.0 (26.8)
science	28.8 (26.6)	28.6 (28.6)

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

6. The previous inspection judged standards at the end of Year 6 to be very good in English, good in mathematics and satisfactory in science because too few pupils reached the higher Level 5. Work seen in this inspection is judged to be in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science.
7. Teachers set broad learning objectives which are appropriate for the mixed ages and abilities in their classes. However, the work that is set does not always take full account of the range of capabilities within each class. Work in English and mathematics is matched to pupils' needs at three levels, but there are times in English when there is too little challenge for higher-attaining pupils, making their achievements unsatisfactory. In work seen in science, history and geography, pupils in most classes are expected to complete the same work whatever their capabilities. The effect of this has been that most higher-attaining pupils achieve well, working at a good pace. Pupils of average capabilities achieve at satisfactory levels and pupils who find the work more difficult complete very little work because it is too advanced for their learning needs. These pupils achieve at unsatisfactory levels.
8. Unsatisfactory levels of challenge also contribute to some pupils having a negative attitude towards learning in some lessons. Unsatisfactory assessment procedures and weaknesses in marking mean that teachers plan without being fully informed of pupils' capabilities and previous learning. Sometimes the work set does not challenge pupils appropriately or enable them to achieve at the highest levels they can. Weaknesses in marking also mean that pupils do not know how to improve their work and move towards achieving at higher levels. Pupils with special educational needs achieve at satisfactory levels.
9. Standards in information and communication technology are satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. High quality teaching for pupils in Year 6 by the recently-appointed, knowledgeable co-ordinator is helping these pupils to achieve well. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally-agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology are now satisfactory, having improved since the previous inspection. Given the time constraints of the inspection it was not possible to make firm judgements about standards in other subjects.
10. Increasingly the school is ensuring that the pupils' language and literacy skills and their competence in mathematics and information and communication technology are enabling them to make progress in all areas of the curriculum. The scrutiny of work undertaken during the inspection gave evidence of the effective promotion of writing and numeracy skills in science, geography and history, enhancing achievements.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' have a positive attitude to school and behave well. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils are keen to learn and when lessons are interesting, pupils respond well.
- Behaviour is very good in assemblies, the dining room and in the playground.
- Older pupils develop a good sense of responsibility through opportunities to help in the running of the school.
- Pupils grow into confident and sensible individuals as a result of very good provision for personal development.
- Procedures for promoting attendance are effective.

Commentary

11. Pupils enjoy school and know they are there to learn. When the teaching is stimulating, pupils are attentive, keen to participate and work hard. When the teaching is less interesting and lacking in energy, a small minority of pupils, whilst not disaffected by school, are more content to fiddle and engage in low-level conversation than be actively involved in the lesson.
12. Behaviour is good overall and often very good. Pupils are very attentive in assemblies and very well behaved in the dining room. Playgrounds have a very friendly atmosphere. Pupils report that they are treated fairly, but there is an inconsistency of approach by teachers to behaviour generally. In some classes, low-level background noise from a minority of pupils is left unchecked and this has a negative impact on the climate for learning in some lessons. Movement around the school is very orderly. Pupils told the inspectors that bullying is not an issue in the school and that the staff sort out any problems, such as name-calling, quickly. In the most recent reporting year, there was one temporary exclusion. There have been no racial incidents.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No. of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	120	0	0
White – Irish	3	0	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	1	1	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	4	0	0

No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0
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The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

13. The school provides good opportunities for older pupils to take on extra responsibilities. House captains for each of the four houses in the school ensure that pupils enter and leave the hall in a well-organised manner, both for assemblies and at lunchtime. This supervision is friendly and effective and gives the older pupils valuable experience in taking responsibility and provides the school with a strong family atmosphere. Pupils are also responsible for setting up the hall for assembly, monitoring the use of big equipment in the playground and maintaining the library. Pupils engage in these extra responsibilities very conscientiously.
14. The school is very good at developing the pupils into well-rounded individuals. Speaking and social skills are developed well in class discussions and through the many opportunities within lessons for pupils to discuss and collaborate. This effectively develops an appreciation of other people's point of view and the importance of sharing and taking turns. Moral issues are discussed regularly in assemblies, religious education and personal, social and health education lessons. For instance, during the inspection, pupils were considering the concept of bravery. The presence of pupils with disabilities within the school provides the opportunity for pupils to learn very effectively about care and how to show respect to others. By Year 6, pupils have developed a good sense of right and wrong, are polite and well mannered and can confidently express sensible opinions.
15. Periods of reflection during the act of collective worship provide good opportunities for pupils to consider spiritual matters and pupils treat these periods seriously. Visits to the local church give pupils a very good insight into the rites of the Christian church and the significance of Christian symbols. Pupils study the works of famous painters such as Lowry and Picasso and visit art galleries. Pupils are given good opportunities to learn to play violins and recorders and these experiences provide pupils with a good introduction to Western culture. The study of other cultures is less well developed, although satisfactory.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.9	School data	0.5
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.

16. The school's attendance has improved this year although it is still broadly similar to the national average for primary schools. The school works hard at promoting good attendance. Parents are regularly reminded of the procedures and the school's disapproval of holidays in term time. Registers are well kept on a computer system and frequently monitored. Any parents of pupils with poor attendance are contacted either by the school or the educational welfare service. Parents of pupils who are absent without reason are contacted on the first morning of absence. These procedures ensure that parents realise the importance that the school attaches to good attendance.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall, but procedures for and the use of assessment are unsatisfactory. The good level of care provided for pupils and the good links with the community contribute positively to pupils' achievements.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning for children in their Reception Year and in Year 6 are good. Procedures for assessment are unsatisfactory and teachers make too little use of assessment to inform their lesson planning.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent across the school, with some pockets of good and very good teaching.
- Children in Reception make good progress because of the good teaching that they receive.
- Achievement is good for pupils in Year 6 because they receive consistently good teaching.
- In the lessons where teachers' expectations of a minority of pupils' work and behaviour are insufficiently high, these pupils do not achieve as well as they can.
- Work is not always matched closely enough to pupils' needs because of weaknesses in assessment procedures and marking.
- Independent and collaborative learning are used effectively in lessons.
- In a small number of lessons, teaching assistants are not used effectively because they are not well prepared for or sufficiently involved in lessons.

Commentary

17. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons seen and was good or better in just over half of the lessons seen. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen. However, in the current inspection, fewer very good lessons were seen than previously.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 27 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	2	13	12	0	0	0

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

18. Teaching of children in their Reception Year is good and they make good progress, particularly in their development of early literacy and numeracy skills. The teacher has a good understanding of how young children learn and she works effectively alongside a student teaching assistant. Together, they have high expectations of all children and give plentiful praise and encouragement to help the children achieve well. Planning is good overall, with the exception of that for children's physical development through outdoor play, which is limited because of the lack of outdoor toys. Staff regularly check

children's knowledge and understanding and their progress towards the early learning goals for young children and provide tasks that are well matched to children's individual needs.

19. For pupils in Years 1 to 6, some good teaching was seen in most classes. However, when taking account of other evidence, such as planning and samples of work, the quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Insufficient teaching was observed to make overall judgements in other subjects. Teaching for pupils in Year 6 was good and often very good and these pupils' achievements are better than those of other year groups. This was particularly evident in an information and communication technology lesson for pupils in Year 6, where they were taught by the knowledgeable co-ordinator and achieved well. Other teaching staff are less confident in this subject and the co-ordinator is working to improve their knowledge.
20. Overall, pupils behave well in lessons and their good attitudes have a positive effect on their learning and achievements. Pupils work well independently and collaboratively and good relationships are apparent. Where teachers' expectations are insufficiently high and lesson content does not capture pupils' interests, some pupils engage in low-level chatter throughout the lesson and fiddle with pencils and pencil cases. This distracts pupils who want to learn and teachers expend a lot of time and energy in keeping order. In these lessons, achievement and progress are only satisfactory because time for learning is not used effectively enough. In most lessons seen, teaching assistants make a sound contribution to pupils' learning. In a small number of lessons, teaching assistants were not used effectively. They were not involved in supporting pupils during the opening and closing parts of the lessons and were not sufficiently well briefed about the tasks they were undertaking or the pupils they were working with. In these situations, the pupils they support did not make adequate progress and did not achieve as well as they could.
21. In the scrutiny of work undertaken, there were instances of similar work being set for pupils of differing abilities. In science, history and geography, some pupils found tasks too difficult because the literacy or numeracy skills needed were more advanced than the level pupils had reached. In English and mathematics, this was not the case. However, there were instances where more challenging work with higher expectations would have enabled some pupils to achieve better in English. Pupils with special educational needs are soundly supported, enabling them to achieve and progress at satisfactory levels.
22. The arrangements for assessing, monitoring and evaluating pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory. Regular assessments are made in English and mathematics, including the use of optional national tests, and the information is recorded for each pupil. Through this information, the school identifies pupils requiring additional support. However, the analysis of this information is not rigorous enough. For example, individual pupils in Year 6 who entered the school in Reception are not identified and tracked to check their progress throughout the school and no analysis is made of how well boys and girls are progressing. Teachers do not use their knowledge of pupils' literacy or numeracy skills effectively when planning work in science, geography or history and this results in some lower-achieving pupils being given tasks which do not take proper account of their literacy or numeracy skills. There are no formal assessments made in foundation subjects.

23. The high level of pupil mobility presents an ongoing challenge to the school as teachers regularly have to plan work for pupils who arrive with only limited records from other schools. The school receives good support from a visiting teacher for Traveller children who completes detailed assessments in literacy and numeracy when pupils are admitted. She shares this information with class teachers so that work can be planned to meet the pupils' specific stages of learning, but this is not always evident in class teachers' planning or in work set, making the school's provision for Traveller children only satisfactory overall. The school has no set procedures for assessing other pupils who are late admissions, making it difficult for teachers to plan appropriate work.
24. Marking of pupils' work is underdeveloped. The best marking indicates to pupils what is good about their work and what needs to be improved, but this is not the norm. Most marking is limited to a tick and a single word of comment and does not promote higher standards. Pupils are not expected to return to work or complete unfinished work and for the most part they do not know what they must do to improve their work. The school has recently introduced a system of targets for classes and groups of pupils in mathematics. It is too soon to judge the effectiveness of this system. The school has firm plans to extend this system to other subjects.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. Opportunities for curriculum enrichment are good. The accommodation is satisfactory but resources for learning are unsatisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and now meets requirements.
- Effective links between subjects enhance learning.
- Opportunities for enrichment of the curriculum are good because they are inclusive and create good links with the community.
- Participation in sports and the arts is good.
- The school's accommodation is satisfactory, but the resources for learning are unsatisfactory overall.

Commentary

25. The school provides a broad and balanced provision for the subjects of the National Curriculum. Provision for design and technology has improved and all subjects now meet statutory requirements, representing an improvement since the previous inspection. There are co-ordinators appointed to plan and manage each subject of the curriculum, although the school lacks the expertise of a musician on the staff. Since the last inspection, the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been fully implemented and provide a good basis for planning and teaching in these areas. More opportunities have been found to develop independent and investigational work in mathematics and science, which was a recommendation in the last report. This is also extending the achievement of more able pupils in these subjects.
26. Personal, social and health education is effectively promoted throughout the school. Sex and relationships education and important aspects of the physical development of young people are fully covered. Matters relating to drugs awareness are dealt with on a regular basis through the relevant curriculum subjects. Pupils develop good social skills as they move through the school. All staff provide good role models for pupils.

Pupils' understanding of good citizenship is well developed through activities such as a study of democracy during the general election and fundraising activities for charities, both local and national. In many subjects pupils have the opportunity to work collaboratively and develop good interpersonal skills, for example in information and communication technology, where they work together in threes to share a computer. Sporting activities also promote a good understanding of fair play and sportsmanship.

27. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. Teachers support Traveller pupils with assistance from the Education Service for Travelling Children. Strategies to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to the planned curriculum are securely in place. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated and make valuable contributions to the life of the school. Very good links have been established with the local high schools which ensure a smooth transition between stages.
28. The introduction of the school's 'enrichment programme' has ensured that more pupils are able to participate in a wide range of activities, enhancing their attainment, in sports and the arts. Musical activities include the teaching of instruments by peripatetic tutors offering violin and recorder tuition. Preparation for a String Festival and the Summer Musical are well underway. Sports activities include girls and boys football and T'ai chi. The school makes effective use of off-site visits and has strong links with the village and the local church. Visits to Kingswood Residential Centre, Liverpool Museum of Life, Walsall Art Gallery and other sites contribute handsomely to pupils' understanding and awareness of life and work outside school.
29. The introduction of a new target-setting system indicates the school's willingness to explore new ideas. However, this is a very recent innovation and will need time and practical experience before it can be properly evaluated. The match of teachers and support staff to the curriculum is satisfactory. The new ICT co-ordinator is offering good support to teaching staff to raise their confidence in the use of ICT across the curriculum.
30. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall, but learning resources are unsatisfactory overall. The space set aside for information and communication technology is very small and the equipment in it requires a better specification in order to support the requirements of some software. The library area is small and reference resources are limited. The limitations of the library area have become more apparent recently because of ongoing difficulties with Internet connections. For children in the Foundation Stage, the lack of a designated outdoor play space and outdoor resources restricts physical development because there are no opportunities to engage in energetic play beyond the usual break times and no wheeled toys available.

Care, guidance and support

Pupils are well looked after at school. The support and guidance they receive in their academic and personal development is satisfactory overall. There are satisfactory procedures for seeking and acting on pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are well cared for in a friendly, safe and secure environment.
- Dining arrangements contribute well to pupils' personal development.
- Pupils do not know clearly enough what they need to do to improve their work.

- Procedures for inducting pupils who join the school after Reception are underdeveloped.
- The effectiveness of the School Council is reduced because it lacks organisation.

Commentary

31. The school is a friendly and caring community with good relationships between adults and pupils. Staff listen sympathetically to pupils' concerns or problems. Supervision is good at all times, particularly in the extensive and well-kept grounds. Procedures for child protection, criticised in the previous report, are now good. Health and safety matters are treated seriously with regular inspections of the premises and equipment. There is a good level of first aid cover. The school is a safe and secure environment.
32. The school's dining arrangements are good. Lunch is a civilised and social occasion for the pupils where noise levels are low enough to allow easy conversation. Good table manners are encouraged. The friendly atmosphere at lunchtime helps pupils to appreciate the social aspect of mealtimes and makes a good contribution to their personal development.
33. The lack of formal and consistent monitoring of pupils' achievements has resulted in most pupils not having a clear idea of what they need to do next to improve academically. Targets for mathematics have recently been introduced but these are not yet well embedded into the school's work. Pupils asked were unable to recall their particular targets. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good although mainly informal. Their effectiveness is based on the good knowledge of the staff, including the headteacher, of individual pupils and their family backgrounds. There is also a good level of trust between the pupils and teachers with pupils reporting that they feel confident to talk to a member of staff if they have a concern.
34. Unusually for a rural primary school, many pupils join later than the normal Reception Year. All new parents are offered a tour of the school and the prospectus gives a good overview of the school. Pupils themselves report that they are made very welcome. However, there is a lack of specific procedures for ensuring that the school quickly builds up detailed records of a pupil's academic and personal development as soon as possible after their late admission.
35. The recently reorganised School Council lacks effective organisation and consequently those pupils who are members are not benefiting as much as they should from the experience. There are no officials appointed, no agenda and no minutes. Meetings are not held regularly. Members are not learning about how meetings are planned, the skills needed to chair a meeting and how to take minutes and as a consequence the work of the School Council has only limited impact. This is a missed opportunity. However, the School Council is seen by the pupils as well worthwhile and is credited with improving playtime equipment.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents and other schools are satisfactory. Links with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents have a good opinion of the school.

- Not enough consideration is given to providing parents with information that will help them to be involved in their children's learning.
- Pupils benefit from good links with the community.

Commentary

36. Parents think highly of the school. They particularly like the accessibility of the staff, the way their children are treated fairly and how well their children mature while at the school. Inspection findings confirm these positive points.
37. The quality of information for parents is mixed. There is a good number of formal meetings for parents to discuss their children's progress and these meetings are arranged at times that are convenient to most parents. The prospectus gives a very detailed outline of what the school stands for and how it is organised. Termly newsletters are well produced, easy to read and give parents a clear picture of the life of the school. However, not enough thought is given to providing information that will allow parents to be more involved in their children's learning. Termly curriculum plans are sent home for each class, but the coverage is inconsistent between classes and none contain enough specific detail to be really useful.
38. Pupils' annual reports are of satisfactory quality overall. However, most pupils' reports do not contain sufficient advice on how work can be improved. When targets are included, they are often too general and the wording is vague and unhelpful. For instance, a mathematics target from a report seen was 'to apply his grasp of mathematical concepts in a wider range of contexts'. A significant number of reports seen contained either educational jargon or errors in word processing.
39. Although the school is in a rural location, pupils benefit from good links with the local community. There are good relationships between the school and the local church, a 20 minute walk away. Pupils visit the church and the vicar visits the school regularly. Pupils make good use of a local sports centre, developing a wide range of sporting skills including swimming and football. Pupils develop competitive skills by playing in tournaments against schools in the local area. Some pupils perform in local singing, string and recorder festivals and this effectively extends pupils' musical skills and boosts their self-esteem.
40. Arrangements such as visits and taster days are effective in helping to prepare pupils for transfer to secondary education. For children entering Reception, there are good links with the on-site nursery managed by the school's governing body and parents report that their children make the transition to full time education with ease.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher and of key staff is **satisfactory**. The effectiveness of management and the governance of the school are **satisfactory**. All statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's procedures for monitoring and self-evaluation lack rigour.
- The role of subject leaders is not yet having sufficient impact on pupils' standards of attainment and achievements.

- The governing body has a good understanding of the school's main strengths and weaknesses.
- Leaders are committed to the inclusion of all pupils in the life of the school.
- All staff are keen to develop their skills through further training.

Commentary

41. The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the school has declined since the previous inspection. This is in part because there have been recent significant changes in the school's staff and the new leadership and management team is still developing. The headteacher has been in post since the previous inspection and parents have a high regard for her and how she runs the school. She enjoys good relationships with staff, parents and pupils which create effective partnerships and enhance pupils' personal development. The headteacher aspires to provide the best for all pupils, but some strategies to bring about continuing improvement sometimes lack a clear focus. The deputy headteacher is recently appointed and has already made a positive impact on the leadership and management of the school. He is extremely knowledgeable and hardworking and supports the headteacher and all members of staff well. Together, the head and deputy have the skills and qualities to help the school to move forward.
42. The role of subject leaders, although satisfactory overall, is underdeveloped in some aspects. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage and ICT are good. In all other areas of the curriculum, leadership and management are satisfactory. Overall, subject leaders are having only limited impact on the standards of work in their subjects. They have not had sufficient training or opportunity to rigorously monitor work or evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning or the standards pupils achieve. This was also found to be a weakness at the time of the previous inspection. Insufficient improvement has been made in this aspect of the school's work since then and this is affecting how well some pupils achieve.
43. Governors are supportive of the school and have a good understanding of its main strengths and weaknesses and the challenges it faces. The governors are beginning to evaluate their own performance and are to attend regular training to enhance their work for the school. Many are closely involved with the school and are frequent visitors. Together with all staff, they believe strongly in equal opportunities and the inclusion of all pupils. This is evident in the way the school cares for the needs of all individuals, including those with special educational needs. Those children who may be in the school for only brief periods, such as Travellers' children and those whose parents are members of armed forces, are also well included in the life of the school. The governing body has been innovative in setting up a Nursery in the school grounds and the good liaison ensures a smooth transfer into the Reception class.
44. The priorities in the school improvement plan are appropriate but are not always sufficiently well focused to have the necessary wide-reaching impact on standards, teaching and learning. As a result, they do not always bring about improvement with sufficient pace. Additionally, the plan fails to identify some important areas which need improvement, for example procedures to monitor pupils' progress and achievement over time, which are unsatisfactory. The school lacks a clear system for the regular collection and subsequent detailed analysis of data on pupils' attainment and achievement. A system for tracking pupils' progress is vitally important in a school which has such a high turnover of pupils. Whilst some analysis is completed on test results, a lack of rigour in this means that some issues are being overlooked.

Teachers' assessments are insufficiently rigorous or regular and some staff have an incomplete knowledge and understanding of exactly where pupils are in their development. This results in some inappropriate work being set, which limits pupils' levels of achievement. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning across the school and provides teachers with areas for development, but these issues are not followed up to ensure that improvement is being brought about. Overall, the lack of a sufficiently sharp focus in observations means that progress in raising the quality of teaching and learning is slow.

45. The programme of staff training and objectives for improving staff performance are linked to appropriate needs. Training opportunities are particularly good for teaching assistants. However, the benefit of this investment is not being fully realised. Where assistants are involved in and regularly consulted about lesson planning and take a full part in lessons, the benefit from training is very good. This is not happening consistently across the school and their overall impact in contributing to improving the quality of teaching and learning is only satisfactory. Induction procedures for newly-qualified staff and those who are newly appointed to the school are satisfactory.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	395,338	Balance from previous year	6,258
Total expenditure	384,921	Balance carried forward to the next year	16,675
Expenditure per pupil	2,692		

46. Financial management of the school is satisfactory. Finances are suitably targeted so that the governors and the headteacher are able to apply the best value they can for its expenditure. Day-to-day financial administration is good and allows accurate monitoring of the budget. The recommendations of the latest audit report have been fully implemented.
47. The principal aid to the school's future development is the commitment of the headteacher and senior staff to work together to help the school to improve and succeed. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour contribute significantly to their success in learning. The principal barriers are the constraints and issues resulting from the high mobility of pupils. The weaknesses identified in the school's systems for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' attainment and achievement mean that teachers' are not always sufficiently well informed about their pupils' previous learning and capabilities and work planned is not always sufficiently well matched to pupils' learning needs.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in Reception is **good**.

There are 14 children of Reception age, who are taught alongside six Year 1 children. They are provided with a good curriculum in all areas of learning except in physical development, where there are insufficient outdoor resources to enable pupils to enjoy appropriate experiences. The trainee teaching assistant makes a valuable contribution to children's learning. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory. On entry to school, the attainment of the majority of children is average overall, although it can and does vary from year to year. By the end of the current year, it is likely that most children will reach the expected standards in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical and creative development and in knowledge and understanding of the world. Leadership and management are good and arrangements for children's admission into school are good. These findings are similar to those found at the time of the previous inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROVISION IN PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IS **GOOD**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Adults and children enjoy good relationships.
- Routines are rigorously established so that children achieve well.

Commentary

48. Teaching and learning are good and all children achieve well. The good relationships and teamwork of the staff ensure that all children enter a warm and caring environment where they settle quickly and readily make friends. Staff praise children warmly for their good work and behaviour and this motivates them well so that they are keen and eager to learn. The majority of children are confident to tackle activities independently, share resources well and concentrate on activities. Those who are unsure are well supported by adults who make learning fun. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and children have a clear understanding of what is acceptable and what is not. The school values parents as partners in children's education and most parents support children well with reading at home. Most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of their Reception Year.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are effectively promoted.

- Children make good progress in their learning of early reading and writing skills.
- Handwriting is well modelled by adults.

Commentary

49. Teaching and learning are good. Adults read with good expression so that most children listen attentively and confidently join in at appropriate places. The student teaching assistant goes over the main points with less confident children so that they have the opportunity to express their ideas and show their understanding of initial and final letters in words. Higher-attaining children speak clearly, listen attentively and read short simple sentences confidently. The teaching assistant questions lower-attaining children well so that they search eagerly for information from the pictures in stories and are keen to discuss their findings. Higher-attaining children write a sentence independently and neatly while lower-attaining children enjoy playing a variety of matching games and make good efforts to recognise sounds in words. Most children demonstrate good pencil control when forming their letters, following the teacher's exact instructions. Achievement is good and by the end of the year most children are likely to reach the expected levels and a small number will exceed them.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources and activities are skilfully prepared to make learning interesting and enjoyable.
- Good relationships ensure all children work well together.

Commentary

50. Teaching and learning are good. There is a good balance of class teaching and group work in which all children make good progress. They develop their mathematical skills in a busy and happy working environment where they work well together. Higher-attaining children solve practical problems, showing a good understanding of numbers up to 13. Lower-attaining children who have shorter concentration spans recognise numbers to 10 and count forwards and backwards in familiar contexts. The teaching assistant uses praise effectively to motivate children so that they are confident to explain their work using mathematical language. Achievement is good and by the end of the year, most children are likely to reach the expected levels.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children enjoy the activities which promote knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Visits and visitors enhance the children's learning experiences.
- Opportunities to develop speaking skills are sometimes missed.

COMMENTARY

51. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well in their understanding of the changes that have taken place over time. Very good use was made of a visit to a local museum and the teacher captured children's interest well in an enthusiastic demonstration of how implements such as a copper dolly, tub, washboard, block soap and flat irons would have been used in Victorian times. Children were amazed and very attentive showing a high level of concentration as each implement was unpacked. Although there were not enough opportunities for children to be involved in speaking about what they saw, they demonstrated excellent listening skills. They were able to make good comparisons between life now and then. Most children achieve satisfactorily overall in this area of learning and are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the year.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

52. Too little teaching was seen for a judgment to be made in this area of learning. However, children were briefly observed working with a visiting teacher as they handled malleable materials with increasing control in their quest to model tiles out of clay. Satisfactory use is made of the hall for physical activity. The spacious playground and grassed area affords children the opportunity to participate in some energetic exercise; however, there are no wheeled toys for children to develop their physical skills further. The school also lacks any large apparatus for children to climb on. The absence of this provision restricts the development of children's physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Activities are thoughtfully planned to develop imaginative thinking.
- Adults make good links with other areas of learning.

Commentary

53. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good use is made of role play as adults and children use language well in the enactment of life in the 'Squatter's Cottage' where they dress up in Victorian clothes and discover what it is like for a family to live in a small dark room. Children are provided with a satisfactory introduction to the songs of different cultures, and they enjoy participating in singing accompanied by actions in preparation for a school music festival. Achievement is satisfactory and most children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the year.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

PROVISION IN ENGLISH IS **SATISFACTORY**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is a keen and effective focus on guided reading sessions.
- Speaking skills are soundly developed, but insufficient emphasis is given to developing listening skills.
- There is insufficient challenge for some higher-attaining pupils.
- Most teachers' marking does not help pupils to improve their learning and achievement.
- The monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress lacks rigour.
- The library does not provide a stimulating environment for learning.
- Good links are made between English and other subjects.

COMMENTARY

54. National test results for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2004 show that standards were well above the national average in reading and writing. For pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards were above the national average. These results are similar to those found at the previous inspection for Year 2 pupils but are lower for Year 6 pupils. Caution is needed when interpreting national test results because the small number of pupils involved in each year means that the results of one or two children can have a disproportionate effect on the overall result. Taking the years 2002 to 2004 together, reading performance is well above the national average for pupils at the end of Year 2 and performance is above the national average in writing. For pupils at the end of Year 6, standards in English are in line with the national average when the years 2002 to 2004 are taken together. Current inspection findings are that standards are in line with the national average for pupils in both Years 2 and 6. This is because a smaller proportion of pupils currently in these year groups are working at levels above those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Overall, achievement is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.
55. In all classes, there is a consistent approach to teaching reading skills. Both teachers and teaching assistants have received training in the delivery of guided reading sessions and are clear about the purpose of activities. Teachers set a good range of activities which are effectively matched to pupils' differing ability levels. As a result, pupils are developing satisfactory comprehension skills and support from booster classes and extra reading programmes are helping all pupils to achieve satisfactorily in reading.
56. Provision for the development of speaking and listening skills is less systematic. Speaking skills are developed to a satisfactory level, but not enough is expected from pupils, especially when they should be listening and responding in lessons. In the best lessons, pupils listen attentively and teachers use questions which elicit thoughtful and detailed answers. In these lessons, teaching assistants are engaged with pupils throughout the sessions, helping them to formulate verbal responses to teachers' questions. In lessons where the noise level is higher and teachers do not have high enough expectations that pupils should listen intently, questions are often insufficiently demanding and one-word answers are expected and accepted too readily. In these lessons, teaching assistants are not always sufficiently well briefed and they are insufficiently involved in helping pupils to learn and achieve well, particularly in introductory and summary sessions.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In lessons where teaching and learning are good, as in a lesson observed for older Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, learning intentions are shared at the outset and returned to within the lesson so that pupils have a clear focus on what they are to learn. In other lessons, learning intentions are not stated at the outset of the lesson or are only briefly mentioned and pupils are unclear about the purpose of the lessons. In good, well-planned lessons where work is well matched to pupils' learning needs, pupils are well behaved and display positive attitudes to learning. Provision for Traveller children is satisfactory overall. The teacher for Traveller children assesses their needs well and the weekly tuition they receive is focused and contributes well to the progress they make. The outcomes of assessments are shared with the school and education plans are completed, but the content of these is not always evident in teachers' planning.
58. In a lesson observed in Year 2, the quality of handwriting was variable, in part because of pupils' poor posture. Most pupils made a satisfactory start in writing their own story about fantasy worlds. However, opportunities to extend the learning of higher-attaining pupils were overlooked and these pupils did not achieve as well as they could.
59. In lessons where teaching is only satisfactory, time is not always used effectively when teachers talk over the low-level chatter of a minority of pupils. Expectations of behaviour are insufficiently high and time is lost in trying to gain these pupils' full attention, at the expense of the majority who want to learn. The pace of learning improves for pupils in Year 6. In a lesson observed, the content was well prepared and captured the interest of pupils of all abilities so that they concentrated very well and their achievement was good. The teacher used his good subject knowledge and varied the tasks set so that pupils of all levels of ability were effectively challenged and gained a good understanding of how to describe and evaluate the style of the author Michael Morpurgo. Higher-attaining pupils ascertained how they might use the author's style to improve their own writing. Lower-attaining pupils made notes and listed questions relating to the opening paragraphs. Pupils in this class had made good use of the Internet to research the works of individual writers.
60. The subject leader is new to the post. Monitoring of teaching and learning, and the opportunity to work alongside colleagues to identify and demonstrate the most effective teaching strategies are at an early stage of development. Whilst the subject leader understands what is needed in the school to raise standards in speaking and listening skills, the monitoring and evaluation of individual pupils' attainment and achievement is not sufficiently rigorous and does not indicate whether individuals or particular groups of pupils are making sufficient progress over time. Marking does not help pupils to understand how they can improve their work and reports to parents do not clearly highlight areas which need further development. Displays throughout the school have only limited impact in promoting pupils' reading skills. Few include questions that encourage children to develop their vocabulary or read for information. The library does not provide a satisfactory base for pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure or for adequate research opportunities. The school has firm plans for the library to be extended and improved in the near future.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

61. Pupils' achievements are enhanced by the use of written work in science, history and geography. In science, pupils record procedures for experiments systematically and

use the associated technical vocabulary meaningfully. In history and geography, teachers ensure pupils record events in a variety of ways, encouraging pupils' awareness of writing in different genres and for different audiences. Pupils use word processing to record some pieces of work.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Oral and mental mathematics sessions do not always help pupils to develop rapid recall of mathematical facts.
- The co-ordinator has been effective in developing a common approach to presentation and methodology across the school.
- The strong emphasis on numeracy has meant that data handling techniques have been under-emphasised at Key Stage 2.
- The use of ICT in mathematics is underdeveloped.

Commentary

62. Standards in mathematics are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards at the time of the last report were above average at both key stages. This represents unsatisfactory improvement in Year 2 and in Year 6 since the previous inspection. However, the last available test results show that the decline in Key Stage 1 results has been arrested, with a significant rise in the number of pupils achieving Level 3. At Key Stage 2, after a varied standard of performance in the intervening years, the latest results show that the school had an average number of pupils achieving Level 4 and Level 5 when compared with all schools. The present cohort in Year 6 has been subject to high mobility of pupils in and out of the school, but has made satisfactory progress overall during Years 3 to 6. A number of pupils, however, have not achieved as well as might have been expected and these pupils have been the focus of additional teaching. An improvement in the quality of planning resulting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has ensured that teachers focus more closely on the needs of individual pupils and prepare appropriately challenging tasks for them. Clear statements of learning objectives in all lessons enable the pupils to remain focused and have a positive impact on learning.
63. Most pupils enter the school with average mathematical understanding, and progress through the school at a satisfactory rate in relation to their earlier attainment throughout Key Stage 1. They are able to recall addition and number facts to at least 10. In Year 2, pupils are introduced to sorting and classifying techniques. They are taught to recognise number patterns and use different strategies to solve number problems. Year 2 pupils enjoy their lessons and experience the full coverage of the National Curriculum. They are taught to articulate their strategies in calculations, for

example when adding 9 or 11. Older pupils use the “Maths Trail” to explore mathematics in the school grounds, identifying shapes and making calculations which they pursue with enthusiasm. In Year 6, higher-attaining pupils confidently calculate percentages in shopping investigations and show a keen interest in their work, individually and collectively.

64. The standards of teaching and learning are satisfactory overall throughout the school. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed and some of the lessons were good. The good lessons have good pace and challenge for all pupils and opportunities for independent learning. In classes of mixed ages, care is taken to ensure differentiation of work within the topics taught, ensuring that the needs of pupils are closely met and monitored. However, the quality of teaching in the oral and mental part of the lessons is often underdeveloped, at times lacking pace and energy, so that pupils do not develop rapid recall of mathematical facts. Pupils with special educational needs have their own programmes and receive satisfactory, and often good, support from the classroom assistants. A recently-introduced assessment system is used to set targets for pupils which appear at the front of their workbooks. The scheme is very new, however, and needs to be further refined to identify the needs of individual pupils more accurately.
65. The strong focus on numeracy skills has improved pupils’ learning and achievement and there is a common standard of presentation and methodology throughout the school. However, as a result of this emphasis, other areas of mathematics receive less attention and as a consequence, data handling is under-represented. The co-ordinator recognises this and has firm plans to remedy the situation. The emphasis on presentation and methodology in mathematics followed the findings from monitoring of lessons by the subject leader. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics is underdeveloped. No lessons were seen which made use of computers and this work was under-represented in samples of work seen.

Mathematics across the curriculum

66. The school provides pupils with a good range of opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding confidently. They recognise the importance of the subject in many aspects of life. Pupils make good use of their mathematics as part of their work in other subjects. Examples of these are shown in accuracy of measurement in design and technology, graphs in geography and history, and graphs and calculations in science.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Investigative science is given prominence and pupils have a good understanding of how to conduct an investigation and how to ensure fair testing.
- Too little is expected of lower-attaining pupils and work is not well matched to their learning needs.
- Pupils’ positive attitudes to science make a good contribution to their achievement.
- The subject leader has only a limited knowledge of standards because there are no clear systems for monitoring and assessing pupils’ work.

- There are good links with other curriculum subjects.

Commentary

67. In 2004, teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 indicated that standards in science were very high. For pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2004, standards were broadly in line with the national average. Taking the years 2002 to 2004 together, attainment at the end of Year 6 is below the national average. However, there are indications that standards in science are improving. At the time of the previous inspection, no pupils at the end of Year 2 attained at the higher Level 3. In 2004, standards at the end of Year 2 were in the top five per cent nationally with an above average proportion of pupils attaining at Level 3. For pupils at the end of Year 6 at the time of the previous inspection, few pupils were attaining at the higher Level 5. In 2004, the proportions of pupils attaining at both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 were in line with the national average. Standards of work seen during this inspection were broadly average for pupils in both key stages.
68. The school has worked hard to improve teaching and the curriculum in science by increasing the amount of time pupils spend on problem-solving and investigative science. Progress and achievement in this aspect of science are good. Pupils of all ages have a good knowledge of fair testing and through the use of a common planning format, they learn how to control conditions when testing. Pupils learn to hypothesise, use appropriate technical vocabulary and give reasoned explanations for what they discover and they apply this effectively in lessons. For example, in a lesson about sound for pupils in Years 1 and 2, a pupil reasoned that a chime bar sounded different when the bar was held because it could not vibrate. Pupils enjoy science, particularly where they are engaged in practical activities. They have good attitudes and work together well to carry out investigations and this contributes positively to their achievement. The coverage of the science curriculum is satisfactory and good use is made of ICT, for example in recording data from investigations.
69. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall across the school. Where teaching is good, there are good links with other curriculum subjects. Pupils are all fully engaged in learning and work effectively, independently and collaboratively, on imaginative and interesting activities which draw on skills from across the curriculum. For example, in a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 about eating healthily, pupils worked as nutritionists, chefs and advertisers to investigate and promote healthy diets. 'Advertisers' used literacy skills to write leaflets; some pupils put together storyboards to use when making a video recording using digital technology. 'Chefs' organised a survey to see which ingredients would make a popular salad. The lesson was buzzing with activity. However, where teaching is only satisfactory, insufficient attention is paid to the needs of lower-attaining pupils. Pupils are all expected to complete the same activities. Whilst higher-attaining pupils achieve well and pupils attaining at average levels achieve satisfactorily, lower-attaining pupils leave work incomplete and do not work with adequate pace because they do not have the required levels of literacy or numeracy skills.
70. The science co-ordinator is recently appointed and leadership is at an early stage of development. There are no formal assessment procedures for science and no monitoring of work or teaching has been undertaken. Plans are being drawn up, but science has not yet been identified as a focus for the school improvement plan. The subject meets statutory requirements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and supportive and this is having a positive impact on the provision.
- Good use is made of computers in other curriculum subjects, although its use in mathematics is underdeveloped.
- Pupils in Year 6 benefit from very good teaching and achieve well.
- Some computers are out of date and require upgrading to meet the full demands of the curriculum.
- There is no formal system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

Commentary

71. At the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are average. This is in line with the findings of the previous report and represents satisfactory progress. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make use of the computer to write short pieces of work. They practise keyboard skills and develop coordination in mouse control. They learn to write their names and use an art program to create pictures. All strands of the national curriculum are covered and there are good links with other areas of the curriculum. Older pupils draw pictures on the screen developing skills in using art tools when following the style of Mondrian. Spatial concepts and accurate instruction and directions are reinforced by learning to control floor turtles.
72. Exploration of the Internet provides pupils at Key Stage 2 with the opportunity to discover information about the subjects they are studying. For example in history, when studying early settlers in Britain, pupils used a site about excavations at Sutton Hoo in Suffolk. The site provided details of life in Anglo-Saxon times which pupils were able to report and record in their books with illustrations downloaded from the Internet. In design and technology, pupils gain expertise in exploring flow charts to control the light in a lighthouse. They also write short programs to draw geometrical shapes on the computer screen. Year 6 pupils make good use of their skills in their presentations covering a wide range of topics, including healthy eating.
73. The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory overall and very good for pupils in Year 6. The very good teaching is based on the co-ordinator's secure subject knowledge and good lesson planning. All members of staff have received recent training but several lack confidence and are being given further support by the co-ordinator. Pupils have positive attitudes in lessons and the standard of behaviour is good. They work well in groups sharing ideas and taking turns to operate the computers. They enjoy the tasks and use their knowledge well to meet the challenges offered. Pupils join discussions sensibly and are prepared to listen to the views of others. The younger pupils enjoy the excitement and wonder of the world of technology.
74. Hardware and software resources are in need of upgrading. Although there is a small computer suite available, much of the equipment is out of date and unable to support recent software. Good use is made of the one interactive whiteboard available and there are firm plans to extend the provision of interactive boards.
75. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has only recently assumed responsibility. On the basis of his audit of the resources, he has a

development plan ready to put into operation. He supports his colleagues well and monitors the progress of the pupils but assessment procedures for the charting of pupils' work have yet to be developed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

76. ICT is used well in subjects across the curriculum. Links with English are made through word-processing and reading. Links with art are forged in Year 2 with pictures created in the style of famous artists, such as Mondrian, making use of rectangular and triangular shapes. In Key Stage 2, the Internet is used to search for information in history and geography. Further examples of ICT occur through work with graphs, such as in science, when pupils used computers to record the cooling rate of chocolate.

HUMANITIES AND CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

77. The work in geography and history and in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education meets statutory requirements. These subjects, together with personal, social and health education and citizenship, were not specific areas of focus for the inspection and only a limited range of evidence was sampled. As a consequence, there is insufficient evidence to make overall judgements on the quality of the provision.

Geography

78. No lessons were seen during the inspection. Geography is taught through a series of topics, mainly based on national guidance. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils access an interesting range of activities which make good use of the local environment. They compare what they know about their locality with other parts of the world. The older pupils benefit greatly from residential visits. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that in some classes, pupils are too often given the same tasks. Sometimes too little is expected of lower-attaining pupils and this affects how well some pupils are able to achieve. Tasks are suitably matched to the needs of average- and higher-attaining pupils but are frequently too demanding for lower-attaining pupils and their work is left incomplete so that their achievements are unsatisfactory. Marking of pupils' work does not identify this issue, indicating that teachers' expectations for these pupils are unsatisfactory.

History

79. Only one history lesson was seen during the inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning documents indicates that pupils are receiving a satisfactory curriculum and that history is being used well to develop literacy skills. Good use is made of the local environment and also of visits further afield to enhance the work done and make lessons more exciting. A recent visit by pupils in Year 1 to a local museum gave them a valuable insight into life in Victorian times, which they compared to life in the present day.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory** and meets the requirements of the locally-agreed syllabus.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too little use is made of written work to record pupils' learning in religious education.
- The lack of written work means that there is no reliable system for the assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- There are strong links with the local church.

Commentary

80. The organisation of the timetable during the inspection meant that only one lesson was observed in religious education. An inspector also accompanied Year 5 pupils on a visit to the local church where pupils learned about baptism. Teaching in the lesson seen was good, but it was not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. No written work or records of assessment were available for scrutiny. In the lesson observed in Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching and learning was good. Pupils were engaged in a discussion about belonging to groups, such as their family or church. There was a good standard of discussion in which pupils were able to make considered contributions and articulate them. They were able to describe their own experiences and make comparisons. The emphasis was on the Christian faith but reference was also made to Islam and the Jewish faith. Reflection was encouraged with the opportunity for silent prayer at the end of the lesson.
81. Strong links with the local church have led to a series of five visits to the church where the vicar has introduced older pupils to the colours and festivals of the Christian year and explained some of the services that take place, such as baptism, confirmation, marriage and funerals. The vicar has a very good rapport with the pupils, who were keen to ask questions. Opportunities for visits to other places of worship have been found to be difficult to organise in this rural area.
82. The daily act of corporate worship makes a significant contribution to the school's provision for religious education. The planned themes continue the Christian theme with stories from the Old Testament of the Bible used to illustrate moral and spiritual issues. The scheme of work has only recently been adopted and is currently being used to develop discussion topics. The subject leader is new to the role and is working conscientiously to bring about improvements. She has introduced the locally-agreed syllabus and has focused attention on discussion activities but has not yet promoted the use of written work to provide opportunities for more accurate assessment of pupils' work. Resources for religious education are satisfactory. They are being extended to compensate for the difficulties in visiting different places of worship.

Art and design

83. No art and design lessons were observed during the inspection. A scrutiny of pupils' work, including that on display, indicates that standards are satisfactory throughout the school and that the pupils achieve soundly in this subject. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to look at the work of other artists. Pupils in Year 2 have worked in the style of Mondrian and in Year 6, pupils have worked with water-based pastels to produce designs based on the work of the Russian artist Kandinsky. Little use has been made of sketchbooks but pupils experience using a range of media to express their creativity. Pupils visit local art galleries to consider the work of different artists.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

84. Planning documents and photographic evidence show that pupils are given a suitable range of activities covering the full range of the curriculum. In the one lesson seen in design and technology for pupils in Years 5 and 6, teaching and learning were very good and pupils achieved very well. This was because the lesson was very well prepared and incorporated the use of the interactive whiteboard to illustrate the difference between beam and arch bridges. Very good use was made of the correct technical vocabulary and the teacher's excellent classroom management skills resulted in pupils being very well behaved and well engaged in the learning process. Very good opportunities were provided for pupils to try ideas out, so that they discovered the importance of distribution of weight. The lesson had challenge that sustained pupils' interest throughout and the teaching assistant was well deployed, working alongside pupils.

Music

85. The organisation of the timetable during the inspection meant that only one lesson was observed, given by a peripatetic teacher. Other observations were of singing practice in preparation for the end-of-year musical and in assemblies. No other evidence, either written or recorded, was available in school.
86. In the observed lesson, Key Stage 1 pupils received good training in simple rhythm exercises and played percussion instruments in time to their singing. However, there was no attempt to develop singing skills by improving the accuracy of pitch. The quality of singing in assembly is hearty and enthusiastic but not always tuneful. All pupils observed enjoy making music. Good attention is given to instrumental tuition which is provided by visiting members of the local authority's music staff. Over 40 violinists and many recorder players receive tuition. During the inspection, preparations were being made for an appearance at a music festival in Market Drayton. Key Stage 2 pupils are preparing to perform an end-of-term musical, trained and directed by the visiting staff and school staff. Pupils hear the music of different composers, performers and cultures in assembly, but opportunities to promote listening and appraising skills in assemblies are overlooked.
87. The headteacher is acting as subject leader. There is no member of staff with musical expertise and visits by the peripatetic staff are supplemented with a commercial scheme used by the class teachers. There is no assessment for the subject. There is a good supply of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, keyboards and violins.

Physical education

88. In PE, the extensive grounds offer good opportunities for tag rugby, football and cricket. All classes make good use of the facilities at the local Maurice Chandler Sports Centre where they have good opportunities to take part in sporting activities not possible at the school. Parents and outside coaches support the school well when pupils are involved in competitive sports. Older pupils play in tournaments against local schools.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

89. No lessons were observed in this area of the school's work and so no firm judgements can be made about provision. The staff have a very positive approach to the work and plan carefully for the lessons. The subject is a priority for the school because of the high level of pupil mobility. Circle time is used to discuss issues which arise in school, such as bullying. Discussions also cover a wider range of issues, such as those raised by the recent devastating tsunami. The school works successfully to promote pupils' personal development and encourages them to make an active contribution to the life of the school. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibilities as house captains during assemblies and lunchtimes. They also supervise the use of the big playground equipment and keep the library tidy. Older pupils receive good opportunities to learn about sex and relationships education, and all pupils are taught about drugs awareness and healthy eating. Pupils across the school co-operate very well together and show a very good awareness of how to behave in a community. However, pupils do not gain full benefit from the School Council because there is a lack of organisation and they do not learn how to organise and participate in effective meetings. Older pupils were successful in a local competition about democracy which was held during the recent general election campaign. They developed a good understanding of how the election process works.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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