

INSPECTION REPORT

THE REGINALD MITCHELL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124090

Headteacher: Mr A V Stancliffe

Lead inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th July 2005

Inspection number: 268090

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

© Crown copyright 2005

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	221
School address:	Congleton Road Butt Lane Stoke-On-Trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST7 1NA
Telephone number:	01782 296778
Fax number:	01782 296783
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Sue Blood
Date of previous inspection:	18 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Located in Kidsgrove, this medium sized primary school has 221 pupils (113 girls and 108 boys) on roll, the vast majority of whom are from white UK heritage backgrounds. No pupil is at an early stage of learning English. Six of the pupils attend the new nursery part time each morning. Socio-economically, the area in which pupils live is below average. An average percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average but an above average percentage have a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on admission is well below average and pupils represent the full range of abilities. Most pupils benefit from some pre-school education experience. The school received an achievement award in 2001, has dyslexia friendly status and is included in the Leadership Development Strategy.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20891	Sean O'Toole	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Personal, social and health education; Music; Physical education.
14178	Patricia Willman	Lay inspector	
21858	John Pryor	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; Geography; History; Religious education.
29380	Sally Noble	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Science; Art and design; Design and technology.

The inspection contractor was :

Inspire Educational Ltd

The Coach House
132 Whitaker Road
Derby

DE23 6AP

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

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 and subjects	
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	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	16
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a sound quality of education with several good features. Overall, pupils' achievement is good. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are average, above average in mathematics and well above in science. Teaching and learning are mostly good. The school benefits from sound leadership and management, and provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement and progress in Years 3 to 6 are good
- Most of the teaching seen was good
- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 could be higher
- Pupils are very well behaved and have very positive attitudes which create a purposeful ethos
- Teachers do not always take enough account of the needs of the brighter pupils
- There are insufficient links between English and some other subjects
- The school is especially successful in meeting the pastoral needs of the pupils
- Parental support is outstanding

Improvement since the last inspection in January 1999 has been good. Leadership and management have focused on improving teaching and learning and broadening the curriculum. Issues regarding information and communication technology (ICT) and the provision for outdoor play for the Foundation Stage have been tackled effectively. The school is in a good position to improve further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	All schools			Similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	D	D	C	C
Mathematics	E	B	C	B
Science	C	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.*

Attainment on admission is well below that expected for children of this age. Achievement and progress in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory, although by the end of the reception year few pupils attain the expected goals for their age in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Most attain the Early Learning Goals in their physical and personal, social and emotional development and in knowledge and understanding of the world.

Achievement is mostly good and very good in science. Following a decline after the previous inspection, standards in the national tests for Year 6 in English, mathematics and science are rising and the school compares favourably with those in similar contexts. Inspection evidence and provisional results for national tests this year show further improvement. Currently standards are average in English, above average in mathematics

and well above average in science by the end of Year 6. The school sets challenging targets which it usually meets.

Although there was an improving trend at the end of Year 2, performance in reading, writing and mathematics has slipped in the last two years, partly due to an increased proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. Inspection evidence and test results show that standards are below average but achievement is satisfactory. Girls are much more successful than boys, especially in English. When compared with schools in similar contexts, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics. Progress is at its best among older pupils. Those with special educational needs make good gains because they are supported effectively. Throughout the school, more able pupils could do better, particularly in English. Standards in ICT, geography, art and design, religious education, physical education and music are average.

The school makes **very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and relationships are very good. They are polite, well behaved and are outstanding ambassadors for the school. There has been one exclusion. Attendance is now good, and pupils are punctual.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are mostly good, but there are some areas for development, especially in challenging the brighter pupils in English and accelerating learning in Years 1 and 2. Teaching and the curriculum in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory; these children benefit from well planned sessions which include a balance of practical experiences and the direct teaching of skills. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and support staff contribute much to their learning. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is mostly good. Pupils find their lessons interesting and enjoyable. The teaching of English is satisfactory but there are insufficient opportunities for the pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects. Mathematics is taught well but in Years 1 and 2 there is an over reliance on published material which does not meet the needs of the different ability groups. ICT is taught effectively and used well to support a variety of lessons. Pupils listen well, work hard, cooperate effectively and quickly settle to tasks. Assessment in English and mathematics is thorough; staff set suitable targets and make it clear to pupils what they need to do to improve. The satisfactory curriculum includes very strong provision for extra-curricular activities and is enriched well through visits and visitors which enhance learning. The school's resources and accommodation are satisfactory, although access for the disabled is difficult. Relationships with parents are excellent; they are very good with the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are sound. The school is managed well and runs smoothly. Through sound leadership, the headteacher, supported by staff, has improved the use of data to pinpoint the school's strengths and weaknesses, resulting in improving standards at the end of Year 6. Careful analysis of the school's performance has led to a mostly accurate self evaluation which, in turn, has enabled the school to set targets. The school's strategic plans are clearly prioritised. However, the leadership has not focused sufficiently on raising standards in Years 1 and 2. Governance is good. The governing body has ensured that all statutory requirements are met. Finances are used effectively. Good use is made of best value principles.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are highly satisfied with the school and keenly support their children's learning. Pupils are very positive about their teachers and all the school provides.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Accelerate the rate of progress and raise standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Years 1 and 2
- Improve the teaching of brighter pupils, particularly in English, by improving the match of work to their ability and pitching tasks at a sufficiently challenging level
- Improve the pupils' use of literacy skills in religious education, history and geography

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is good overall. By the end of Year 6, inspection evidence shows that standards are average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress
- Attainment in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 could be better
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Brighter pupils in most classes are not challenged sufficiently

Commentary

1. Attainment on admission to the school is much lower than normally found and the children have limited skills in communication and mathematics. They make a good start in the nursery and improve steadily in the Reception class. Achievement and progress are at least satisfactory in all of the areas of learning although by the end of the Reception year few children attain the Early Learning Goals in most aspects of their work. Physical, personal, social and emotional development and knowledge and understanding of the world are about average. However, skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are below average.
2. Progress and achievement in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. Pupils steadily improve their basic skills in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence and test results show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Comparisons with schools in similar contexts in 2004 showed that standards were average. There has been a dip in performance over the last two years, partly due to the higher proportion of pupils with learning difficulties in the cohorts. Limited opportunities to solve problems, explain answers and to write in a range of styles inhibit pupils' performance in national tests. Girls are significantly more successful than boys in tests although the school has started several initiatives to improve boys' performance and the level of work in classes shows little gender difference. There is a greater proportion of boys with special educational needs. More able pupils are not as successful as they should be as the work is not always matched to their needs and pitched at the right level. Staff underestimate attainment in science.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.2 (15.6)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.2 (15.1)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.9 (16.3)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. Progress and achievement in Years 3 to 6 are good. Inspection evidence and provisional test results show that standards are rising steadily. Results in 2004 showed that standards were average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. Comparisons with schools in similar contexts showed that standards were

average in English, above average in mathematics and well above average in science. The school has built upon this success through the successful use of data to set targets and a good focus on challenging brighter pupils in mathematics and science. The school has reversed the downward trend in test results following the previous inspection. Inspectors found that standards in English are average and above average in mathematics. Pupils are very successful in science and standards are well above average; they have a very good grasp of using and applying scientific principles and processes. The school sets sufficiently challenging targets and usually meets them. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as they receive support which is matched to their needs. They have well structured targets in their individual education plans and make good gains in achieving them.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (25.7)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	27.8 (27.5)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	30.1 (28.8)	28.6 (28.6)

There were 33 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards in ICT are average and pupils make good use of their skills in a range of subjects. Overall, standards in history, geography and religious education are average, although pupils have insufficient opportunity to extend their thinking and understanding through extended writing. Pupils make good progress in music and physical education and extra-curricular activities contribute much to their competence in these subjects. There are good pockets of work in design and technology and art and design. Standards in art and design, physical education, music and religious education are average.

Pupils’ attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The school makes very good provision for pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is an improvement since the last inspection. As a result, pupils’ attitudes to school, behaviour and personal development are very good. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils hold the school in high regard and are proud of their individual and group achievements
- Relationships at all levels are very good, based on mutual respect and good humour
- Pupils clearly understand the difference between right and wrong and are well-motivated to make the right choices
- Staff are very good role models and consistently promote clear values

Commentary

- The school provides many opportunities for pupils to develop and grow in their spiritual awareness. A structured programme of values is promoted throughout the school. Because this is emphasised through all areas of school life pupils begin to understand the concepts of, for example, “trust” and “respect”. The success of this approach can

be seen in the outstanding attitudes of pupils to each other and to the school community. The caring and supportive ethos in the school encourages pupils to explore and experiment in their lessons, confident that their ideas will be valued. The artwork displayed reflects pupils' creativity and enjoyment of colour and form. Many learn to play instruments and they have opportunities to sing in assemblies, music lessons and in the choir. Pupils who have special educational needs receive good support and participate and learn effectively alongside their classmates.

6. Because the school consistently promotes very good moral and social values, which are supported by parents, pupils clearly know the boundaries of acceptable behaviour within the school community. They firmly disapprove of any bad behaviour and generally respond very well to the school's measures to modify such behaviour. Pupils are not concerned about bullying because they know that someone will help them if they are unhappy. All staff consistently praise pupils' good work and behaviour and this effectively encourages them to try to live up to their teachers' high expectations. There are many opportunities for pupils to learn social skills through their personal, social and health education lessons and this makes a very good contribution to the happy and cohesive community. The day and residential visits, not only enrich pupils' learning, but also make a very positive contribution to their overall personal development and maturity. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the after-school clubs which make a very good contribution to pupils' enjoyment of school. The school council plays an important role in the life of the school. They are a sensible group who take their role very seriously. Because their views are respected, they learn how to bring about improvement. One pupil has been excluded once during the current year as a result of verbally and physically abusive behaviour.
7. The school provides pupils with a wide range of both cultural and multi-cultural experiences. They learn about the lives and beliefs of others in their religious education lessons and show an open and natural curiosity about other lifestyles. For example, in a Year 5 religious education lesson about Islam, one pupil explained that it was important to learn about the beliefs of others in order to better understand and relate to those from different communities. They listen to music from different cultures and they enjoy literature and poetry. They study the history and geography of this country and of other countries further afield. Pupils enjoy gently touching and examining the interesting musical instruments from other countries, keen to find out how they work. They learn how different faiths motivate other communities and through this knowledge begin to develop an awareness and tolerance of our multi-cultural society.
8. During their time in the Foundation Stage, the children make good progress towards achieving the average levels for their age in personal, social and emotional development. They are happy and friendly individuals who behave well and try to please their teacher and the other adults who work with them.

Attendance

9. Attendance has improved in the current year and, at 95.3 per cent, is now better than that found in most primary schools. The school has good procedures for following-up absence and monitoring attendance and most parents are very good at notifying the school promptly about absence.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.5
National data	5.1

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	0.4

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

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British

No of pupils on roll
214

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are mostly good. Assessment is accurate and used to set appropriate targets.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 are good
- The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good
- The more able are not challenged enough, especially in English
- Some lessons lack sufficient urgency and the match of work to ability should be better

Commentary

10. Teaching varies between satisfactory and very good and is good overall. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well. Appropriate individual education plans are used to pinpoint the next steps in learning and teachers and support staff use them well. Withdrawal groups and small group support in the class, work effectively as the pupils benefit from caring and thoughtful questioning and guidance. There are some common areas for development. More able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in English lessons or through the use of literacy skills in history, geography and religious education. Although teaching in Years 1 and 2 is sound the over reliance on workbooks in mathematics results in lack of match of work for pupils of different abilities. Assessment in English and mathematics is accurate and teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously. There are good examples of marking which include guidance for pupils on how they might improve. However, this practice is not consistent.
11. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with several good features. Sessions are planned well and support staff are fully engaged in lessons. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is good as staff understand the pastoral needs of the children and meet them effectively. Relationships between the staff and children are good and there is a positive and affirming atmosphere in both the nursery and reception classes. Basic skills in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are taught satisfactorily although some activities are too formal. The good resources for outdoor play are not used sufficiently.

12. Teachers and support staff in Years 1 and 2 work hard to build the pupils' confidence; they make good use of praise and reward. Lessons are planned well and resources are used to support learning. Most lessons begin with a clear introduction and support staff are involved well, working alongside pupils with learning difficulties. Question and answer sessions keep the pupils involved they respond well. However, the tasks set for pupils are not always matched well enough which results in a slow pace of learning.
13. Most of the lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 were good. In the best lessons, teachers set challenging tasks which involve pupils in making decisions about how to organise their own work as in a mathematics lesson in Year 6 when pupils collected a range of data and then transposed the information into a line graph. All teachers explain tasks clearly and pupils understand the learning objectives. In some lessons the teachers set time limits and this stimulates the pupils to work quickly. All staff are good at asking questions which involve pupils of different abilities effectively. A range of methods are used to engage pupils thinking; in a good English lesson in Year 3, the teacher organised a debate to bring alive the story of *Three Little Pigs* with half of the class pretending to be pigs and others acting as wolves. This led to good writing in the style of newspaper reporting.
14. Homework is given regularly and pupils are conscientious in completing it. Pupils are enthusiastic about most of their lessons and especially enjoy mathematics and practical subjects. They speak with genuine fondness for their teachers and other staff, and feel that their needs are met well. The staff have identified the different ways in which some boys and girls learn and have recently taken part in training and purchased resources to more effectively meet the boys' needs.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 45 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0(0%)	4(9%)	25(56%)	16(35%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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

The curriculum

The school provides a satisfactory curriculum which is enriched well through a wide range of opportunities. Staffing, accommodation and resources are at appropriate levels.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides well for pupils' personal, social and emotional development
- There are very good extra-curricular activities
- Creative and physical activities are well represented
- There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to use their English skills in religious education, history and geography

Commentary

15. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There is an appropriate balance between practical work and the direct teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding and this ensures that children make good progress in their physical and personal, social and emotional development. The school has improved the provision for the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. Planning follows national guidelines.

16. The curriculum in Years 1 to 6 is satisfactory. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. There have been good improvements in developing a balance to the curriculum with six teaching sessions in the day. This has led to sufficient breadth in developing most skills although more emphasis is needed on linking literacy skills to subjects such as history, religious education and geography. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily to support a range of subjects. Pupils' skills in ICT are applied effectively across the curriculum. The staff plan the curriculum using national guidelines and have experimented with special days for design and technology and history and geography which provide a good opportunity for pupils to explore ideas in depth. Pupils say they thoroughly enjoy the opportunities open to them, especially in the regular programme of cooking.
17. Staff work hard to enrich the curriculum. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities which include sport and music and pupils relish these opportunities. They compete successfully against other schools and take part in a wide variety of musical experiences. The small but enthusiastic orchestra and mixed choir practise hard and bring pleasure to others through their performances. Staff give freely of their time at lunchtime and after school. In addition, the pupils enjoy residential visits which contribute well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
18. The school prides itself on its care for individuals and its inclusive approach. Pupils are given much guidance about their roles and responsibilities through the school's programme of personal, social and health education. There is good teaching about growth and relationships and an effective programme of teaching about the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs. Healthy eating and lifestyles are promoted well through the school's programme of cooking and sport, and the healthy options available at lunchtime. Staff know the pupils well and identify those with learning and behavioural difficulties providing them with appropriate support and guidance. Individual education plans are clearly written and include guidance for staff on the steps needed to ensure progress. The needs of boys and girls are considered carefully and the school has recently been involved in training and purchasing resources to help to close the gap in the performance of boys and girls.
19. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and there are very good outdoor facilities. The issue of the limited provision for outdoor play for the Foundation Stage has been tackled very well. Resources are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum and the recently refurbished ICT suite contributes to improved standards in the subject. Access for the disabled is very difficult because the school is on several levels. Staffing numbers are appropriate for this size of school. Staff work well as a team and are involved appropriately in training. Some specialist teaching in music and physical education contributes to pupils' progress in these subjects. The limited library facilities hamper pupils' progress in some aspects of reading.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of all pupils. Monitoring procedures ensure that pupils receive good quality support and guidance. Pupils' views have a very good impact on school life.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All who work in the school are fully committed to the care and welfare of each individual child
- There are very good practices to ensure the health, safety and protection of pupils

- Very good relationships between adults and pupils promote sensitive and open communication

Commentary

20. There is a very good awareness among staff and governors of health and safety issues. Regular risk assessments are carried out and actions taken to minimise hazards. Fire drills take place each term and there is good provision for first aid. Child protection procedures are secure and all staff are aware of their responsibilities in respect to this aspect of care. Pupils learn about the benefits of good hygiene and a healthy diet through their science lessons and are taught personal safety skills in personal, social and health education lessons. Teachers emphasise the safe use of resources in lessons and pupils learn about drugs and sex at an appropriate level for their age. Supervision during the mid-day break is very good. Pupils like and respect the mid-day staff and trust them to treat them fairly.
21. Because of the very good relationships between pupils and adults, pupils are confident that someone will help them if they are unhappy or worried about something. Any unsatisfactory behaviour is monitored and, in conjunction with parents, appropriate action taken. Pupils comment that the school is very effective in dealing with any poor behaviour and that measures taken are fair and appropriate. Personal, social and health education lessons provide very good opportunities for teachers to informally monitor and support pupils' personal development and to identify any specific issues that may be troubling them. The systems for academic assessment are satisfactory but not always sufficiently rigorous to effectively target challenging work for the more able. Good arrangements for induction help the children to settle into their new environment and their parents to be confident that their children will be well cared for.
22. Pupils' involvement in decision-making is very good. The school council acts as a channel through which all pupils are able to put forward ideas for improving school life. During the current year, the school council has been instrumental in, for example, providing seating in the playground, more playtime resources and helping to fund the adventure playground. They organise successful fund raising which other pupils support enthusiastically. The council considers that providing these extra resources has helped to improve playground behaviour.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents express high levels of satisfaction with the work of the school and value the contribution it makes to their children's personal and academic development
- Parents feel welcome in the school and are confident that their children are well cared for
- Excellent systems deal with any concerns or complaints parents may have
- The school provides a valuable resource for the local community

Commentary

23. The parents who took part in the consultation before and during the inspection speak very positively about the work of the school. Their satisfaction with the school is higher than it was at the time of the last inspection. Staff are easy to approach and always make time for them. Parents consider that their children are making good progress and that they are expected to work hard. They are confident that the school takes very good care of their children. The information provided for parents about the school is very good. Parents are kept up-to-date through regular newsletters and the annual reports on their children's progress are good. Reports provide parents good information about what their children can do, but not always a clear indication of how well they can do it. The consultation evenings provide further information about their children's progress and these are well attended. Because the school provides parents with very good information about what their children will be learning, parents are able to focus their help at home very effectively. They read with their children and encourage them to complete their homework. Several parents help in class and many accompany their children on visits out of school.
24. The parents' association organises a range of very successful social and fund raising activities which benefit from enthusiastic and generous support from parents and pupils. The substantial funds raised are used to enrich pupils' life in school and to enable them to take part in a wide range of experiences which support their learning and personal development. This has a significant impact on pupils' interest and enjoyment of school and on their motivation to do well. The headteacher is available at the beginning and end of the day in the playground for parents to approach with any concerns or ideas for school improvement. The school takes note of parents views and, whenever possible and appropriate, implements their ideas.
25. The school has very good links with the local community. Many local clubs and societies regularly use the premises which successfully raises the profile of the school in the community. The children visit local amenities and they sing to the elderly. Visitors from the community support pupils' personal and social development as well as extending their learning. There are good links with the other schools which effectively promote a happy start to school life and a smooth transfer to secondary education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Overall, leadership and management are sound. Management is good and the school runs smoothly. Leadership is sound; the headteacher and other staff share common goals. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a purposeful ethos in the school in which all are valued
- The leadership of the provision for the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 are underdeveloped
- Finances are managed well and used effectively
- The school makes good use of data to identify its priorities
- Pastoral leadership is very strong

Commentary

26. Staff are well motivated and work together effectively. They are very committed to improvement and the well being of the pupils. Pastoral leadership is especially good and results in well motivated and enthusiastic learners. The headteacher oversees pastoral care very well and parents speak highly of this aspect of the school's work.

27. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good and issues have been dealt with successfully although more remains to be done to bring consistency to pupils' progress and to raise the attainment of the more able. Staff share responsibilities for developing the curriculum and have met with good success in mathematics and ICT although more rigour is needed in extending pupils' English skills. There is regular monitoring of teaching and the headteacher has used the information to set priorities and challenging targets. However, more remains to be done to strengthen the provision at Key Stage 1. The school's strategic plans are well focused and reviewed regularly by the governing body. The headteacher uses his analysis of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses and to evaluate the school's performance. The analysis has been used well to raise attainment in mathematics especially for the more able. The school's self evaluation is mostly accurate. Senior staff have benefited from involvement in the Leadership Programme. Staff have good opportunities for training and are very supportive of those new to the profession.
28. Most aspects of management are good. The school runs smoothly and the administration is efficient and effective. There is an appropriate system for performance management linked to raising standards. The management of the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and the provision for special educational needs are satisfactory. Financial management is good. The headteacher and governing body are prudent in using funds and priorities are costed effectively. Good use is made of the principles of best value when purchasing supplies and services.
29. The governing body has improved its involvement since the previous inspection. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and monitor the school's progress in tackling priorities. The governors are committed to school improvement and are involved in setting targets. They have ensured that the school meets statutory requirements. The policies for racial equality and equal opportunities are good. The school's building is on several levels which makes access for the disabled difficult; the governors have recognised this and are exploring ways of improving the situation.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	626,990
Total expenditure	611,400
Expenditure per pupil	2,830

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	20,150
Balance carried forward to the next	15,590

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

30. The attainment of the children when they enter the recently established Nursery is well below that expected for their age. They have limited literacy skills. Their personal, social and language skills are underdeveloped and they have poor mathematical ability. The children settle well in the nursery and induction into the Reception class is well managed but attainment remains below average and most children are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they start in Year 1. A significant strength is the good provision for personal, social and emotional development. There are good relationships with parents. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is satisfactory with some good features. Assessment is satisfactory. The teacher and support staff form an effective team and both the nursery and reception classes are vibrant and exciting places to learn. Overall, teaching is satisfactory.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships amongst the children and staff help the children to feel secure and develop self confidence
- The children have good manners and co-operate well with each other
- Behaviour is very good
- Teaching is good

Commentary

31. The school places a high priority on developing this area of learning and all members of staff have high expectations. As a result, even the youngest children demonstrate good manners, listen well to stories and each other and play well together. This is evident in the nursery when the youngest children play with kindness and concern when role playing in the café or when sharing food at snack time. In the reception class, 'Jack the puppet' is used effectively to maintain good behaviour and children sustain concentration for long periods of time during whole class work.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Speaking and listening skills are promoted well through a range of stimulating play opportunities
- The process of writing is not taught systematically and there are insufficient opportunities for independent writing
- Assessment is not used effectively to ensure that children make enough progress in reading and writing

Commentary

32. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with some good features. The children's achievement is satisfactory in reading and writing, and good in listening. Although children in the Reception class listen well they have insufficient opportunities for speaking and active learning during large group work. Very few children will attain the expected goals by the start of Year 1. The teachers and support staff provide appropriate opportunities for the children to develop their skills except in writing. The youngest children in the nursery sustain concentration when listening to stories. They are beginning to predict events and can recognise repetition and humour. The older, more able children recognise a few key words and recognise some sounds. Opportunities for independent and imaginative writing in role play are limited although basic skills are taught well.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Basic number skills are regularly reinforced
- Resources are of a good quality and are used well to support learning

Commentary

33. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and has some strengths, including regular opportunities to reinforce basic number skills across a range of learning areas in both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. A variety of number lines and games are used regularly to reinforce early number work and the majority of children recognise numbers to 10 in both the nursery and reception class. A small group of more able children in the Reception class are beginning to relate addition to combining two groups of objects and can reliably find one more or one less than a number from one to ten. Progress is satisfactory overall but the majority of children are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Visits are used well
- Good use is made of a range of stimulating role play areas and the outdoor learning environment
- Teaching and learning are good
- Adults intervene well in role-play to enhance children's learning
- Children are given exciting opportunities to explore other cultures

Commentary

34. Children make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and by the end of the reception year are working at levels which are appropriate for their age. The

children in the Nursery are given good opportunities to sample food from other cultures. They are eager to consume Indian food such as mango chutney and yoghurt dips as part of snack time. There is a good range of resources which reflect a variety of cultures. Outdoor activities allow children to have real experiences of creatures in their natural environment and a range of visits give children a real context and purpose for their learning. An impressive range of stimulating and exciting role play areas help stimulate the children's imagination and develop their speaking and listening skills. These include a café, ice cream stall, seaside, circus and kitchen. The children play well together because the staff regularly intervene and model activities for them. There are regular opportunities for the children to access simple programs on the computer and to develop co-ordination and control using the mouse to move pictures around the screen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children have regular opportunities to improve their physical skills
- A secure, inviting and creative outdoor learning environment has been created
- Movement and dance are well taught and the children demonstrate high levels of confidence

Commentary

35. The children's achievement and the teaching and learning are good and the children are on course to achieve the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception year. Children have regular opportunities to develop and improve their physical skills. There are bikes and scooters available in the outdoor area, which the children ride confidently and with good levels of control. Children show dexterity and good control as they use a range of tools and equipment such as scissors, staplers, brushes and pencils to produce a range of art work. All children in the Reception class dance with impressive levels of confidence, enthusiasm and independence when they share their talents to the school community during the 'family assembly'.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The learning is enhanced by visits
- The children experience an appropriate range of creative activities that include art, music and imaginative play
- The children have insufficient opportunities to use their imagination and own ideas when completing art activities

Commentary

36. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The children enjoy music and play a range of untuned instruments competently. They sing with confidence and enjoyment and are not nervous in performing to a large audience during assembly. A broad range of art activities are regularly available to the children. However, many art activities are over directed by staff and this limits opportunities for creativity and developing independence. Although most children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals they lack confidence in using their creative skills and techniques imaginatively. Visitors to the school such as the fireman, vicar and police are enjoyed by the children. The classrooms are stimulating and attractive where there is a good focus on creative play and care and concern for all; these factors work well to enhance creativity.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English are below the national average at the end of Year 2
- Good use is made of national guidelines to plan lessons
- Higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently
- Literacy skills are not used to best effect in supporting other subjects

Commentary

37. Although standards in reading at the end of Year 2 have improved this year, they have fallen in writing. Standards at the end of Year 6 are average. Throughout the school more able pupils are not challenged enough and these pupils underachieve. Girls do better than boys in all aspects of English. This is in spite of the good range of strategies, and the purchase of new resources, designed to reverse the trend and improve the boys' results.
38. Standards in spelling are average, but pupils' handwriting and presentation are inconsistent and not as good as they should be. In too many cases the marking of books, while successfully applauding effort, does so in an uncritical way so that pupils are not challenged enough to improve and to take real pride in the work they produce. Overall, by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they have made good progress and achievement is good.
39. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and good in Years 3 to 6. In some cases work is not planned to stretch the most able pupils sufficiently. The work for groups of pupils with varying ability levels differs only in the amount of work expected of them. In other cases the planning and delivery of the lessons is innovative and catches the imagination of the pupils and motivates them to achieve well, building on their prior attainments. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and a satisfactory range of strategies for teaching it. They understand the pupils in their classes well. In the best lessons, the teaching is enthusiastic and pupils catch this mood and work hard. In writing poetry, pupils in Year 6 demonstrated a good understanding of words and an ability to use them to create arresting images. In Year 5 the advertisements they produced ready for filming on video showed that many had developed a good ear for dialogue and advertising jingles. Good behaviour in all the classes ensures that no time is wasted. The very good levels of behaviour throughout the school mean that very little time in classes is used in gaining or maintaining order, so that all can be used for

learning. There is good cooperation between the class teachers and the teaching assistants so that pupils are well supported in their learning. This is particularly true of those pupils with special educational needs who are well supported and enabled to perform at levels of attainment which are approaching those of their fellow pupils.

40. The assessment of pupils' work in English and their test results are carefully analysed and targets set for the classes to achieve. But the setting of targets for individual pupils lacks sufficient rigour and sharpness to bring about the required improvements, especially in the work of those with the capacity to do really well. This is noticeable when pupils demonstrate a good standard in handwriting books which is not followed through, or challenged, in the work they present in other English exercises.
41. The subject is conscientiously led and managed effectively. The planning throughout the schools is coherent and pupils progress from class to class readily. There is a satisfactory level of support for teachers. The resources provided for English are sufficient in quantity and quality to support the planned curriculum. There is a good supply of books to make reading attractive to boys including both fiction and non-fiction titles. However, the siting of the library in the corridor does not allow it to be readily used for individual research.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

42. When English is used to support other subjects in the curriculum it is effective, but this is an underdeveloped aspect of the subject. The curriculum is carefully planned with reference to the National Literacy Strategy, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. However, it lacks the breadth of interest that is provided when work from other areas of the curriculum, such as history, religious education or geography is used to stimulate writing to the benefit of both English and the other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils achieve well
- Standards, especially for the more able, could be higher at the end of Year 2
- Teaching and learning are mostly good
- The subject is led and managed effectively

Commentary

43. Standards have improved recently and provision is better than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress although standards are below average at the end of Year 2. This is partly due to the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and also the over reliance on published material which offers insufficient challenge for the brighter pupils. Inspectors found that standards are above average at the end of Year 6 and this improvement on the tests results in 2004 has been achieved through better target setting and a strong focus on providing demanding work for the more able. Progress in Years 3 to 6 is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, benefiting from additional support and the school's use of family learning. The trend in improvement has dipped at the end of Year 2 but is rising among the oldest pupils.
44. Throughout the school pupils have an appropriate grasp of basic number. Year 6 pupils apply this knowledge effectively when solving problems. There are pockets of good

work in shape, space and measures and the good links with ICT enable pupils to grasp all aspects of data handling. Pupils say that they enjoy mathematics and this is reflected in their positive approach in lessons, willingness to complete homework and mostly good presentation.

45. Teaching and learning are good overall and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teachers make good use of the National Numeracy Strategy to plan lessons but in Years 1 and 2 there is an over reliance on workbooks which do not always match the needs of the pupils. Staff prepare well and make use of apparatus to help pupils grasp new ideas. Classroom assistants work effectively alongside those with special educational needs and the withdrawal of those with learning difficulties for some lessons in Year 2 has a beneficial impact. Learning objectives are carefully explained although pupils needlessly copy them out before starting work and this wastes valuable working time. Teachers are knowledgeable about mathematics and have taken part in suitable training. They mark the pupils' work accurately and, in the best examples, they guide pupils on how to improve. A very successful lesson in Year 6, in data handling, involved pupils in several practical tasks which required them to accurately record information and present it using line graphs. The pupils worked very hard and levels of cooperation were especially noteworthy.
46. The subject leader has a secure grasp of strengths and weaknesses through careful data analysis, effective monitoring of pupils' work and observations of lessons. The information has been used effectively to sharpen up teaching and to set challenging targets for staff and pupils which have been successfully met in Years 3 to 6. Assessment has improved and staff clearly identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning although this information is not used effectively enough in Years 1 and 2 to set challenges for the more able.

Mathematics across the curriculum

47. The school makes satisfactory use of mathematics to support the pupils' work in other subjects. Good pockets of work in design and technology show careful measurement and the use of estimates to produce attractive footwear. In science, pupils use their graphing skills to present a good range of data which they interpret effectively.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good overall and very good in Years 3 to 6
- Teaching and learning are mostly very good in Years 3 to 6
- There are good opportunities for the older pupils to carry out investigations
- Leadership of the subject is good
- More able pupils in Year 2 could do better

Commentary

48. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and very good in Years 3 to 6. Standards improve well as the pupils move through the school as a result of the consistently good teaching and the emphasis on an investigative and problem solving approach to science. There is a good analysis of standards but this is not linked tightly

enough to setting challenging work for more able pupils in Year 1 and 2. Good links are made with the mathematics and ICT curriculum because pupils consistently use a range of graphs, charts and tables to record their findings when data handling.

49. In the best lessons in Year 3 to 6, the pupils are given interesting problems to solve. In Year 4 the pupils were asked to explore whether the tallest children have the longest arms. The pupils work systematically to solve problems, have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test and draw reliable conclusions. In some lessons, in Year 1 and 2, pupils spend too much time drawing or completing worksheets, rather than working collaboratively, making predictions and finding out for themselves. The pupils have positive attitudes to science and they behave very well. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by both adults and other pupils and they make good progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the detailed scheme of work ensures good curriculum coverage and the consistent development of skills, knowledge and understanding.
50. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator and there is a comprehensive scheme of work to support planning. Accurate assessments are made of where learning and teaching needs to be further improved and staff are well aware of strengths and areas for development in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average by the end of Years 2 and 6 and pupils achieve well
- Good use is made of computers to support work in other subjects
- Teaching and learning are good

Commentary

51. The school has made good improvement in ICT since the previous inspection. Standards are higher and pupils have a good understanding of the role of ICT in society and how to use their skills effectively to enhance their work in other areas of the curriculum. The staff make good use of the ICT suite to teach basic skills and to provide opportunities for pupils to carry out research and to apply their learning. Teaching has improved because of the better resources and regular staff training.
52. Pupils have a secure grasp of each aspect of the subject. They understand the importance of technology in the modern world and competently compare manual and technological methods for their reliability and accuracy. Pupils have secure skills in word processing and use a variety of tools to draft, edit and refine their work. They competently change fonts, colour and alignment, and older pupils import text, graphics and pictures to enhance their presentations. In Year 1, the pupils skilfully program simple robots and this links very well with their work on angles and estimates in mathematics. Data handling skills are secure and pupils create a variety of graphs and charts as well as using spreadsheets effectively. Communication skills are good; pupils have a good grasp of how to use the Internet safely. In a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils quickly grasped how to use sensors to control and model actions as they brought to life characters in a haunted house.
53. Teaching and learning are good and the pupils are enthusiastic ICT users. They work hard and respond with enthusiasm when exploring new programs and techniques.

Lessons are prepared thoroughly and have good pace so that pupils have opportunities to practise new skills. In a good lesson in Year 2, the teacher set a challenging task. The pupils searched the Internet for information about animals and then summarised it. Finally they wrote simple descriptions for younger children in Year 1. This lesson contributed well to the pupils' literacy skills. Staff provide well focused support to pupils of all abilities and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve as well as their peers. The good use of questions to assess pupils' understanding and monitoring of their work helps teachers to pitch their teaching at the right level.

54. The subject leader has a good understanding of standards and has worked well with staff and governors to improve the provision. Careful timetabling means that pupils have regular opportunities to use the suite to extend their basic skills. Simple but effective recording of pupils' progress and attainment provides staff with guidance on what to teach next.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. Pupils regularly use the Internet for research in a variety of subjects, especially history, geography and science. They produce artwork in the style of several famous artists making use of the computers tools to explore techniques such as Pointillism. As part of their work on healthy lifestyles, pupils in Year 6 created an effective guidance leaflet about safety in the sun incorporating text, pictures and graphics. Drafting and editing skills are enhanced through the use of word processors and this work is sometimes used to stimulate more effective writing by boys.

HUMANITIES

56. Inspectors observed one lesson in each of geography and history, and four in religious education. In addition, inspectors analysed planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects. They examined a variety of pupils' work. Planning for history and geography is based on national guidelines. The standards achieved in **geography** throughout the school are generally average. Pupils at the end of Year 6 have a rather limited knowledge of geographical facts. Appropriate use is made of the locality to develop the geographical skills of the younger pupils in the school. The pupils also look at different sorts of houses and homes. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have a satisfactory understanding of rivers and mountains. They use maps to identify where in the world particular mountain ranges are to be found. Their understanding of their own region is increased through visits to places such as the Black Country Museum, which supports work in both geography and history. Good use is made of the Internet to gather information and to extend pupils' view of the wider world. The resources for geography are sufficient for the needs of the current curriculum. Appropriate support is provided for pupils with special education needs so that they achieve well.
57. Standards in **history** are average but in Year 6 less time is spent on the subject than in other year groups and opportunities are missed to accelerate pupils' learning and to use history as a springboard for extending pupils' literacy skills. More able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are introduced to the idea of the past through looking at homes and seaside holidays that people enjoyed in times gone by. Good use is made of photographic evidence and the provision of everyday objects from the past to help the pupils to imagine what it would have been like to have lived a long time ago. Topics include looking at historical characters such as Guy Fawkes and Florence Nightingale and events such as the Great Fire of London. In these topics

pupils are introduced to techniques of finding out from books and similar sources of information.

58. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 study ancient civilisations. Good use is made of ICT for finding out information. The school's extensive programme of cooking helps pupils to appreciate recipes from other cultures and times. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the wives of Henry VIII and some aspects of life in Tudor times. In Year 5 learning is brought to life through a visit to the Black Country Museum as the starting point for understanding about life in their own community 150 years ago. All the pupils are very familiar with the story of Reginald Mitchell, the designer of the Spitfire, who is a local hero and after whom the school is named. In Year 6 there is a study of World War 2 and the following years but there is insufficient opportunity for pupils to extend their historical understanding through extended writing and research.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are inconsistencies between classes in teaching and the curriculum
- The pupils' knowledge and understanding of religion is hampered by the lack of contact with living faiths

Commentary

59. Standards in religious education are generally in line with the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus. They are better than that in those classes where the teaching is imaginative and challenging as well as being well organised. The teaching observed was at least satisfactory and in some cases good. Where the teaching is good the pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and take a pride in recalling the information they have gained, using it to deepen their understanding of the subject. The tasks they are given to do engage their thinking at levels appropriate to their age and understanding. Where the teaching is less successful the pupils take less pride in their work because the tasks set are undemanding and more appropriate for younger pupils with less capacity to understand. Overall, the pupils' achievement in religious education is satisfactory.
60. A new scheme of work has been devised based on the Local Authority Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum has a good balance between Christianity and those other major faiths with which the pupils may expect to come into contact. There is a good balance between gathering information about the practice of religions, such as Islam, Judaism and Christianity including, for example, the rites of passage marking the time when a boy becomes a man, or when someone becomes a member of that faith. When the teaching catches the imagination of the pupils they become very interested in the subject. A group of younger pupils discussed the Jewish rites of Bar Mitzwah for boys and Bat Mitzwah for girls, demonstrating a clear understanding of the significance of the celebrations and using the correct terms accurately. However, older pupils have insufficient opportunities to explore religious ideas and the work set for them is undemanding. Work is not always finished and is light in quantity. Opportunities for pupils to visit places of worship have not been pursued in recent years, though visits to the local church have been undertaken in the current year. This lack of first hand acquaintance with a religion either through a visit to a religious place or through a visit

from a member of a faith community reduces the effectiveness and breadth of the teaching and learning of the subject.

61. In some cases the same themes are tackled in both religious education and in personal, social and health education (PSHE), such as linking the story of Zacchaeus, a tax gatherer whose life was totally changed when he met Jesus, with the pupils' own experience of events in their lives which had caused a great change to them. The subject is led and managed by an enthusiastic and well informed coordinator. A programme of development for the subject has been decided upon and training and support provided for staff.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. Inspectors observed three lessons in art and design and one in design and technology. Three lessons in music and four in physical education were observed. In addition, inspectors analysed planning and talked to the teachers and pupils about the subjects. They examined a variety of pupils' work, watched several other musical activities. In **design and technology**, the work seen is at an average level and evidence shows that pupils achieve well. Pupils in Year 1 appropriately design and make model playground equipment using straws and plasticine. Pupils in Year 2 use computer generated designs to make very attractive two-dimensional, multicoloured 'dream coats' for Joseph using a range of materials effectively. In Year 3, pupils produce working 'moving monsters' using hydraulics. In Year 5 and 6, there are pockets of above average work and pupils competently design, make and evaluate their products. These include three-dimensional fantasy footwear for famous characters, chairs that hold the weight of a teacher, slippers and a range of working cars and boats. The oldest children show real enthusiasm and enjoyment of the subject. Planning is detailed and ensures good coverage of the curriculum. The school also places a high priority on the teaching of food technology and pupils throughout the school have good opportunities to cook. Tasks are well linked to other areas of the curriculum and provide good opportunities for curriculum enrichment and pupils' personal, social and health education.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6
- There are some good links with other subjects

Commentary

63. Pupils experience a suitable range of art and design activities and make satisfactory gains in their learning. Boys and girls of all abilities enjoy exploring ideas using a variety of media. Skills and techniques are developed consistently through the school. There are some good pockets of work including the use of ICT to create interesting leaflets about healthy lifestyles using photographs and pictures. As part of their work on religious symbols the pupils created their own special signs and gained an appreciation of the importance of artefacts in some religions. Art and design is often used to illustrate work in other subjects as in the pastel drawings of Egyptian gods as part of their work in history.

64. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are planned thoroughly and pupils are encouraged to explore tone and texture using paint and printing techniques. The pupils are keen and interested and maintain concentration for extended periods. The oldest pupils work hard to represent their observations accurately and produce some pleasing work in the style Warhol. Pupils in Year 2 were taught how to use watercolour to create cityscapes based on a *View from Brooklyn Bridge* by Teo Tarras. In work linked to ICT Year 4 pupils designed a variety of signs and interpreted them in three dimensions. Older pupils have a good grasp of Victorian designers through their studies of Morris and they produce intricate prints.
65. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The school uses national guidelines for the subject and this ensures a suitable balance of opportunities. However, skills are not always developed consistently and there is some repetition in style and technique between year groups. Assessment is at an early stage of development. Pupils sometimes have opportunities to adapt and improve their work and this could be usefully extended.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well
- Teaching and learning are good
- The subject is well led and managed

Commentary

66. The school has improved its provision since the previous inspection. Standards are average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils of all abilities enjoy their musical experiences and pupils and parents are proud of their achievements. The very good extra-curricular activities, including the choir and orchestra, contribute to the good provision. A good number of pupils are involved in learning a variety of instruments which include brass, strings and woodwind. They practise conscientiously and make good progress, benefiting from the input of specialist teaching and the enthusiasm of the subject leader. Practices are attended regularly and pupils show much appreciation of their peers' performances. A small and enthusiastic group of recorder players achieve good standards, playing tunefully in a range of styles.
67. In the lessons seen, the teaching was effective and pupils made good gains in learning. Pupils are attentive and active participants. They listen well to instructions and try hard to refine and improve their performances. In a good lesson in Year 1, the pupils quickly learned a new song and several confidently sang on their own or with a partner. Pupils kept a steady beat and were aware of changes in the mood and tempo of the music. The teacher moved learning on at a good pace and expected much of the pupils. Good use was made of support materials. In a successful lesson in Year 5, the teacher used her good musical knowledge to set challenging tasks for the pupils. They responded by composing their own music to accompany nursery rhymes. Making good use of instruments they produced work of good quality and worked hard to improve their timing and accuracy in reading music. ICT is used appropriately to aid composition. Pupils use standard notation as well as pictures to represent their work.
68. The subject leader has a good understanding of standards through the school and has been active in promoting and improving the provision since the previous inspection. Music is taught regularly and the staff have benefited from training and support from

the subject leader and the introduction of a published scheme of work. Assessment is appropriate and staff record the pupils' achievements accurately.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well
- Teaching and learning are good
- Extra-curricular activities contribute much to pupils' progress

Commentary

69. Standards are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils experience all aspects of the physical education curriculum. Swimming lessons are provided for pupils in Years 2 and 3 and by the time they leave the school most pupils attain the appropriate standards for their age and have a satisfactory understanding of water safety.
70. Pupils are enthusiastic about their lessons and thoroughly enjoy the very good opportunities provided through extra-curricular activities in football, dance, netball, athletics and cricket. These activities contribute much to the success of the school in sporting competitions. Pupils apply good effort and practise hard to improve and refine their skills. In a good lesson in Year 6, the pupils rapidly improved their throwing skills as they practised using shot and javelins. They were taught well to hold the javelin in a balance and to follow through effectively. The teacher used his good subject knowledge to emphasise technique and this led to success for pupils of all abilities. Girls were as successful as boys. In a Year 1 lesson pupils made good gains in learning how to throw and catch a ball as the teacher gave good and clear instructions and guidance. Teaching is successful because the use of demonstration by staff and pupils enhances performance. Staff use praise to encourage the less confident pupils and this means that all are involved and fully engaged in learning.
71. The school benefits from extensive grounds and a good range of outdoor equipment for play. Resources are good and used effectively. Teachers willingly give their time for extra coaching and pupils respond enthusiastically and develop very good sporting attitudes. This was seen to good effect in a cricket practice when the players spontaneously applauded the efforts of bowlers, fielders and batsmen. In some lessons the teachers make good links with mathematics and science by emphasising the benefits of diet and exercise in a fitness regime and accurately measuring throws. Sports coaches also regularly visit the school providing good expertise.
72. The subject is led and managed effectively. Timetables include good opportunities for all to take part and a simple but useful record of attainment is kept. On-going assessment in lessons is used to encourage the pupils to challenge themselves.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

73. The school's programme in **personal, social and health education** focuses on helping pupils to understand and develop good values. The provision has a significant impact on pupils' behaviour and attitudes, and is a strength of the school. Pupils, parents and governors value highly this aspect of the schools' work.
74. The school has adapted a published scheme of work for personal, social and health education and each week there is a different strand for pupils to explore. Good links are

made with assemblies to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils take their role as school councillors very seriously and are proud of the impact made by this body on improving the school. A good example has been the development of outdoor play areas and extra-curricular activities which the pupils thoroughly enjoy. They enjoy taking responsibility and older pupils contribute much to making dinner time a sociable and pleasant occasion.

75. The school promotes healthy eating and lifestyles very well. There is a very good range of sporting activities and a large number of teams so that all can be included. The extensive programme for food technology is much enjoyed by pupils and they learn many new recipes and gain a good understanding of food types and balanced diet. Water and fresh fruit are always available. Pupils are encouraged to be mature and sensible and they discuss their problems and any issues during circle times. Older pupils have a good programme of study related to puberty and growth and are taught about the beneficial and harmful effects of drugs. The school makes good use of outside agencies to support this aspect of teaching.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
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	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
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	1
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
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).