

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Thursfield Primary School**

Harriseahead. Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124086

Headteacher: Mr. P. W. Brown

Lead inspector: Malcolm Johnstone

Dates of inspection: 20.06.05 – 23.06.05

Inspection number: 268123

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:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	274.5
School address:	Chapel Lane Harriseahead Stoke-on Trent Staffordshire
Postcode	ST7 4JL
Telephone number:	01782 512301
Fax number:	
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. Robert Mack
Date of previous inspection:	22. 03. 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school situated in a residential area to the north of Stoke-on Trent. There are 269 pupils who attend full-time and 11 who attend part-time in a room in the school. These children are taken in at the beginning of the spring and summer terms. The pupils' families live in a mixture of housing, including private and rented accommodation, although about a third of the pupils are not from within the designated catchment area of the school. Attainment on entry is generally low. The number of pupils who take free school meals is below average but the numbers who are eligible is higher. Almost all the pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage, with none at the early stages of English language acquisition. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs (7 per cent) is below the national average. One pupil has a statement of special need. A wide range of learning difficulties is represented, although most have moderate learning needs. The school has Dyslexia Friendly status and received the Basic Skills award in 2005

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21 11 4	Malcolm Johnstone	Lead inspector	Mathematics; Information and communication technology; Personal, social and health education and citizenship; Geography; History
95 45	Kevin Greatorex	Lay inspector	
42 87	Brian Allaway	Team inspector	Special educational needs; English; Art and design; Music
21 85 8	John Pryor	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage; Science; Design and technology; Religious education

The inspection contractor was:

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

**This is a good school.** Good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well and attain good standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils make mainly good progress across a broad and relevant curriculum. The headteacher leads the school well with strong support from all staff and governors. Parents are pleased with the school and pupils are happy to attend. The school provides good value for money.

### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above the national average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6
- Teachers plan lessons well, manage pupils very effectively and have high expectations of them
- Pupils' behaviour, attitude to work and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good
- In most subjects, the use of some unchallenging worksheets inhibit learning opportunities
- The provision and teaching of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is good
- There is a very good family atmosphere in the school; care arrangements and links with parents are very good
- Some lessons are too long and the pace of learning slows
- Marking is not used consistently enough to help pupils improve their work

Improvement since the previous inspection has been good overall. Standards are not quite as high, although this reflects declining attainment on entry rather than any deterioration in the quality of teaching. The headteacher retains a teaching and subject commitment but this has been reduced. There is now a clear homework policy, pupils' handwriting is better and library provision is good. Performance data is used much more to track pupils' progress. Support staff are used more effectively and governors are now much more involved in all aspects of school development.

## STANDARDS ACHIEVED

### Year 6 results

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

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average*

*Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals*

Standards are good by the end of Year 6 and **achievement is good**. Pupils of all abilities, including those who have special needs and the higher attainers, make good progress as they move through the school.

Attainment on entry to the Reception classes is generally below average but the full ability range is represented. With good teaching, children of all abilities achieve well, although a significant minority is unlikely to reach all the goals expected for children of this age. By the end of Year 2, standards are similar to the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By

the end of Year 6, current standards show improvement on those outlined in the above 2004 National Curriculum results table. Standards are above average in English and mathematics and similar to the national average in science. The school has done well to keep abreast of rapidly rising expectations in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards remain in line with the national average at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Good work was seen in history, geography, design and technology and music.

At all stages, pupils' attitudes to learning and their behaviour are very good. Pupils develop very well as mature and sensible pupils with a strong work ethic. Attendance and punctuality are good. **The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good**

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are mostly good** across the school. Teachers have high expectations, plan most of their lessons well, manage pupils very effectively and use a good range of resources well to stimulate learning. Pupils respond well to the teachers and show commitment to their work, concentrate and work productively. The very good relationships inspire confidence in the pupils to 'have a go' without fear of failure. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are keen to improve their teaching. Assessment is used well to focus in on how well pupils are doing and to plan the next stage of learning. However, the use of marking to help pupils improve is inconsistent. In most year groups there is an over-reliance on worksheets that inhibit opportunities for pupils to explore their own ways of recording what they have learnt and to follow their own lines of enquiry. On a few occasions, lessons go on for too long and pupils begin to lose concentration

The curriculum is good and there are very good opportunities for enrichment. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy and very good links are made between subjects. These links make learning more interesting and meaningful for the pupils. There is very good provision for personal and social education, care, guidance and support. Links with parents are very good and there are effective links with other schools and the community. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The headteacher provides good leadership and the school is well organised and soundly managed.** Teamwork is good and firmly rooted in a commitment to further improvement. Financial planning is good and administrative staff support the running of the school very well. Governance is good; governors meet all statutory requirements and support the school well.

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

Parents are happy with what the school offers. Pupils enjoy school and partake enthusiastically in all that it provides. They say that they feel safe and are confident in approaching teachers should they have a problem.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The school should:

- Reduce teachers' reliance on worksheets that limit opportunities for pupils to extend their thinking and apply their skills more effectively

- Ensure that the good marking policy is applied consistently across the school
- Cut the length of some lessons to ensure pupils remain focused on their work for longer

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Standards are above average by the end of Year 6 and pupils of all abilities achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school.

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

- Standards are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6
- Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills effectively in support of other subjects
- Children achieve well in the pre-Reception and Reception classes
- An overuse of worksheets places limitations on pupils' achievements
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well

#### **Commentary**

1. Most pupils enter school with below average attainment, although the full range of ability is present with some children entering with good early language and mathematical skills. Children achieve well in the Reception and pre-Reception classes and most are likely to attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. A significant minority, however, are unlikely to reach all the goals expected.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (17.9)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.5 (16.4)	14.6 (14.6)
Mathematics	15.6 (18.9)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 46 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. In 2004, the school was part of a national pilot of teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2. Due largely to teething problems with the assessments, including the teachers in the school being too cautious with grading pupils' work, standards in relation to national averages appeared to decline steeply from what they had been in previous years. Inspection evidence and the school's tracking data shows that current standards are similar to the national average in reading, writing, mathematics science and the standards of the current Year 3 pupils too are more realistically at this level. Girls have tended to do better than boys in tests over the past three years but this is not significantly different from the national picture and in the lessons



observed and scrutiny of pupils' work there was little variation. The trend in the school's results over the past few years has been in line with the national trend.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.4 (27.4)	26.9 (26.8)
Mathematics	26.9 (26.6)	27.0 (26.8)
Science	28.1 (29.2)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 50 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In the 2004 National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Year 6, standards were similar to the national average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Inspection evidence shows improvement and current standards are above average in English and mathematics and average in science. There are fewer pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in the current group of pupils and a few more pupils are working at the higher levels. Boys have tended to do a little better than girls in national tests over the past three years but, when coupled with evidence from the inspection, this is not significantly different from the national gender difference. The school is on course to reach the realistically challenging targets it has set for the pupils. While standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are not quite as high as they were at the time of the previous inspection, this needs to be set against a backdrop of variation in standards of attainment on entry.
4. Pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well over time. This is substantiated by evidence from the inspection and the school's detailed tracking systems. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher National Curriculum levels is comparable with the national average and reflects the generally good level of challenge provided. On occasions, the use of some less demanding worksheets with the higher and average attaining pupils limits opportunities for them to apply their skills more effectively and achieve even more. As a result of good teaching and support, pupils who have SEN do well and make good progress against the individual targets set for them.
5. The school has kept a strong focus on the development of ICT and built up resources and teachers' expertise well since the previous inspection. Standards are rising and are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills well to support work in other subjects and this results in some high quality work in history, geography, design and technology and music.

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

Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are very good. Pupils' personal development and the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also very good. Attendance and punctuality are good.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and enjoy being at school
- Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school
- Pupils' take responsibility very well and develop a very mature outlook

- Relationships throughout the school are very good
- Pupils enjoy school and are keen to attend

### Commentary

- Pupils' attitudes and values have been developed well since the previous inspection and are now very good. From the earliest stages, children come happily to school and are eager and ready to learn. They are fully prepared to work hard and participate fully in all activities. They show good levels of independence and persevere well with their tasks. Pupils are consistently considerate to each other and to adults; for example, pupils were seen helping each other around the playground and holding doors open for adults and other pupils. They work in co-operation and in collaboration very well.
- Pupils rise to the challenge of high expectations set by the school and, as a result, their behaviour in lessons is consistently very good. When pupils arrive at school, in assemblies, in the dining hall, on the playground and even in the closely confined cloakroom areas, very good behaviour is consistent. In the assemblies observed during the inspection, behaviour was excellent.
- Personal development is very good overall. Spiritual and cultural development is good and pupils consistently show respect for the values and beliefs of others. Moral and social development continues to be very good and the youngest children quickly learn right from wrong. The range of extra-curricular activities develops considerably their awareness of living in a community. Pupils relate well to each other and work successfully as members of a team.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.6	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

Attendance continues to be good. The school works well with parents and makes them aware of the need for regular attendance. There is no unauthorised absence. Pupils arrive on time and many of them are early enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the school day. There have been no exclusions. All the above aspects of the pupils' development have a major impact on their academic achievement and progress.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and there is a broad and relevant curriculum. There are very good care arrangements and links with parents. There are good links with the community.

#### Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall with a high degree of consistency across the school. Assessment is good.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good and result in enjoyable and productive learning
- Teachers work together very well and are keen to improve their teaching
- Assessment is used well to plan the next stages of learning
- Teachers are skilful at linking learning across subjects
- Pupils with SEN are well taught with effective support from classroom assistants
- The use of too many worksheets limits learning opportunities and the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent
- A few lessons are too long and some pupils lose concentration

## Commentary

9. Teaching is good overall and helps pupils of all abilities to achieve well. Teaching and learning in the pre-Reception class and the two Reception classes is good and helps pupils achieve well. This gives all children a good start to their work on the National Curriculum. On the basis of the lessons observed and a scrutiny of pupils' work over the past year, teaching in all subjects across Years 1 to 6 is mostly good with a high degree of consistency across the school. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are mostly good and pupils of all abilities make good progress in the two subjects as they move through the school.
10. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to the teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Relationships are very strong and all teachers show a high level of commitment and care for the needs of all pupils. This is exemplified in the good teaching and support they give to pupils with SEN. The small number of classroom assistants, who make a good contribution to the achievements of these pupils in particular, enhances this support and ensures that they make effective progress towards the specific targets set for them in their good individual education plans.
11. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this enables them to pose challenging questions and develop the correct subject vocabulary. All teachers are keen to improve their teaching, for example, they attend relevant in-service training regularly and all teachers were responsive to feedback from inspectors after lesson observations. Lessons are planned and organised well and there is an orderly and strong work ethic. Pupils show engagement, application and concentration and are keen to do their best. Classrooms are stimulating places to be and enhance the potential for learning. Resources are used well, for example the new interactive whiteboards further stimulate pupils' interest and understanding and classroom computers are used well to extend and consolidate work in most subjects. In an ICT lesson for pupils in Year 1, pupils were fascinated by what they had achieved when programming a 'pixie' (a programmable robot) to move in simple steps towards a finishing point on a map grid
12. Assessment is good and is used well to plan the next stages of learning and match work effectively to the needs of the pupils. All teachers share the objectives of the lesson with the pupils so that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. These are then revisited in order to assess how well this has been achieved. Pupils have targets to aim for in literacy and numeracy so that they are able to measure their own progress.
13. Teachers are skilful at linking learning across subjects and this gives greater meaning to the activities. In a lesson for Year 5 and 6, for example, pupils used their knowledge of a geography study of St Lucia to develop illustrations in art and design and compose simple music rhythms using percussion instruments.

14. There are a few generally weaker areas in teaching and learning. These relate to an overuse of worksheets that restrict learning opportunities, for example by channelling pupils' thinking, recording to a tightly prescribed format and limiting the use of more concrete activities to aid understanding. There are good examples of constructive marking but in general there are few comments that indicate to pupils how they might improve. On a few occasions, lessons are too long and some pupils begin to lose concentration.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5 (13%)	22 (56%)	12 (31%)	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 broadly based, well planned and interesting curriculum provides well for pupils of all ages, backgrounds and levels of attainment. A very good range of extra clubs, sporting events, visits and visitors considerably enriches the curriculum.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good opportunities for personal and social education lead to high standards of behaviour and social awareness
- Good links are made between subjects
- The small size of rooms and difficulties of access to outside play areas inhibit some activities in the Foundation Stage

**Commentary**

15. The regular review of the curriculum, based on good quality analysis of pupils' performance and needs, ensures that it effectively meets changes in demand in subjects, such as ICT, and developments in teaching, such as in literacy and numeracy. Good provision is made for health education, including drugs awareness and sex and relationship education.
16. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is securely planned around the six areas of learning identified for that age group. The staff maintain a good balance between work directed by teachers, and activities chosen by the children themselves. As a result the children learn quickly, develop confidence and achieve well. The school makes good use of national strategies in teaching English and mathematics and national guidance, adapted for the needs of the school, for other subjects. Not all staff make the best use they can of the school day, extending some lessons for too long so that the pupils lose motivation and the pace of learning drops. Consistency between classes is generally achieved through the use of joint and cooperative planning in parallel classes.
17. The curriculum is enriched very considerably by a well planned and managed programme of visits to places of educational interest and visitors to the school. These range from artists sharing their skills with pupils in school to residential visits made by Years 5 and 6 pupils to an

outdoors pursuits centre. There is extra-curricular coaching in games, the pupils join in competitions and matches with neighbouring schools, and there are several sessions of dance, of different types, provided. Good links are also made with local industries. A good range of visits linked with the topics being studied supports subjects such as history, geography and religious education. Pupils are given opportunities to learn to play musical instruments and the school musicians and the choir provide concerts which are shared with the local community.

18. There is a strong focus on personal development throughout the school. This prepares pupils well for the next stage of education as they move from Foundation Stage to Years 1 and 2, then into Years 3 to 6 and finally from this school to the secondary school of their choice
19. Pupils with SEN are supported well. Teachers and teaching assistants use the carefully produced individual education plans to focus the support for the benefit of the pupils who achieve well. The school has effective policies for equality of opportunity, racial equality and disability.
20. The committed and well qualified staff, both teachers and teaching assistants, are well matched to the classes with which they work and the tasks they perform. The school encourages further professional training. The accommodation provided both within the building and outside is generally satisfactory and well used. However, some of the classrooms, especially those for the Foundation Stage, are cramped. The outdoor play area set up for them is not as readily accessible as is desirable for young children. The resources for learning are sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. The school is maintained to a high standard of cleanliness

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

All staff take very good care of the children's individual needs and very effectively promote the pupils' welfare, health and safety in a secure and caring environment.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils have great trust in the adults who work in school
- Induction arrangements are very good
- The school involves pupils well in its work

### **Commentary**

21. The school has maintained the very good quality of support and guidance for the children's individual needs. All staff know the children well and are well equipped to offer high quality support when it is needed. They counsel pupils very effectively and provide families with very good support. Pupils are confident to approach staff if they have a problem. High quality, trusting relationships underpin this strong feature of the school's work.
22. A number of effective mechanisms take account of the ideas and opinions of the pupils. The school council is instrumental in providing the opportunity for pupils' views to be considered. Pupils are confident, articulate and keen to be involved. They take the responsibility seriously and have been instrumental in developing a number of initiatives.
23. The very good quality induction procedures enable the children to feel comfortable from the moment that they first start in the school. Parents are given good quality information that enables them to be reassured and in turn to reassure their children.

24. Child protection procedures are effective. All staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in respect of child protection issues. They understand the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused. Health and safety are very well monitored. Site inspections are conducted regularly to identify potential hazards and prepare actions plans for correction. All staff are safety conscious and watch for the security of the children.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are extremely supportive of the school and its work
- The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education
- Parents are kept very well informed with high quality information

### **Commentary**

25. The school has worked hard to improve the partnership with parents since the previous inspection and it is now very good. Parents responding to the questionnaires and those attending the meeting were extremely supportive of the school.

26. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the life of the school and many respond positively. As well as helping in the classroom and around the school, they also help out on outings and visits. Parents have been invited to workshops and learning initiative meetings to improve communication, accessibility and the partnership with parents. Many parents are becoming more confident in their ability to support their children's learning at home.

27. The Parents, Teachers and Friends Association remains very active. They organise many social and fundraising events in support of the school. The school values highly the efforts of parents, visitors and other members of the community for the valuable contributions that they make to the quality of education and the children's learning.

28. The quality of the information for parents about their children's learning has been maintained well and is very good. The annual reports give good information about progress, what the children know, understand and can do. Reports also give the children the opportunity to add their own observations. Targets are set and monitored on a regular basis and children are actively involved in the process. Termly meetings are arranged to update parents about any issues in their children's learning.

29. The school continues to build good links with the community and other schools and colleges. Links with the church are strong. Educational and residential visits are both used regularly and effectively to further extend the range of community support. The school works actively with partner schools to ensure an effective and supportive transition to their new school.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The headteacher provides good leadership and sound management and is supported well by all who work in the school. Governance is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Governors know and support the school well
- The headteacher is a good leader and is an effective role model
- Staff work well together and give good support to the day-to-day management of the school
- The school development planning process is effective
- The monitoring of some aspects of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough

### **Commentary**

30. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school because they receive good levels of information from the headteacher and staff. Effective links have been established between governors and subject co-ordinators which enable governors to keep the School Development Plan (SDP) under review. The SDP is an effective tool for guiding the school's future direction. Governors' knowledge of the school is also informed by parental views, LEA reviews, national tests and community feedback. A number of governors have first hand experience of supporting the working life of the school both in classrooms and through their involvement in extra-curricular activities.
31. The headteacher is well respected by staff, parents and pupils. He provides good pastoral and academic leadership and is committed to raising standards further. Together with staff the headteacher ensures that the school is a well-ordered community in which the pupils feel secure and valued. The day-to-day management of the school is good. All adults provide strong support for the school's routines and expectations. The headteacher ensures that the pupils experience a broad and stimulating curriculum together with opportunities for enrichment through extra-curricular activities. Clear procedures have been established for tracking the performance of pupils, the data is analysed and used well to inform school development planning. The provision for pupils with SEN is good and is managed and co-ordinated well by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Teaching assistants also provide effective support for pupils with SEN. The governor responsible for SEN works closely with the SENCO and provides voluntary support in the classroom. The SENCO liaises well with a range of professional agencies to ensure that pupils' needs are met. She has a good overview of SEN arrangements and manages reviews with parents to discuss pupils' progress effectively.
32. Good monitoring of English and mathematics has taken place over the past few years. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and assessment data have been analysed diligently and some helpful evaluations of teaching and learning have taken place. As a result, co-ordinators' skills are being developed and their confidence is growing. The school has responded well to appropriate guidance and monitoring support provided by local education authority personnel. The monitoring of lessons has led to improvements in the quality of teaching. However, some aspects of monitoring are not rigorous enough, for example, the good marking policy is not applied consistently and teachers use too many worksheets that place limitations of pupils' learning.
33. Arrangements for the performance management of teachers are sound and relate closely to whole school improvements as well as personal development. There are currently two newly qualified teachers, both of whom receive good levels of guidance and support that contribute well to their continuing professional development.

## Financial information

*Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	6891,180	Balance from previous year	8350
Total expenditure	6677,740	Balance carried forward to the next	21,410
Expenditure per pupil	2419		

Governors make prudent use of the budget and monitor spending in line with the priorities in the SDP



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

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

Children's attainment on entry to the Reception class is below average, but covers a wide range of ability. At the time of the inspection there were 30 children attending full-time in two Reception classes and 11 attending part-time in the pre-Reception class. Children are admitted to the Reception class for full-time education in the September of the year in which they attain their fifth birthday. The school provides an effective induction programme that results in children quickly settling into school routines and learning to work and play with each other. Most are well prepared for the work on the National Curriculum when they start in Year 1, although a significant minority of children have not yet overcome initial disadvantages sufficiently to attain all the goals expected at the end of the Foundation Stage.

Teaching is generally good in the three classes. Planning is good and the teachers cooperate with each other and the support staff to ensure that all the pupils achieve well. The six areas of learning identified for this stage of schooling are effectively linked together to maintain the children's interest and to give wholeness to their work. This provides every child with a good range of opportunities to explore the world of learning and children of all abilities are effectively challenged. Pupils with SEN are sensitively identified early and provided with effective help. The high expectations and very good relationships between the teachers and pupils inspire confidence in the pupils which lay the foundations for future independence in learning. Marking is done with the children present so that they know how well they are progressing. Assessment is good and information is carefully used to plan future work to meet the varying needs of the children. The coordination of this stage of learning is effective and its management is good. The staff is kept up to date with developments and takes such opportunities as are available to develop their own teaching skills for the benefit of their pupils. The school has recognized the need for the subject manager to have time to undertake the monitoring and supervision of this area of learning.

In **knowledge and understanding of the world** children learn about features of their own community through local visits, for example, to the Church. They develop their understanding of scientific thinking when discovering which things sink and which float in water play. They learn about a variety of creatures from a farm visit, and of the life story of the frog from observations of the tadpoles they keep in the classroom. They hear a variety of stories from history, and find a basis for geographical knowledge in their work on holidays at the seaside. From looking carefully at themselves and older pupils in the school they learn how people and things change over time. Children know about the importance of a healthy diet, and how they need to protect themselves from bright sunlight. They also know about major Christian religious festivals and recall stories from the Bible. They develop skills to enable them to use simple programs on computers to support various areas of learning.

In **physical development** the teachers provide a good range of opportunities for the development of manipulative skills through using construction toys and various tools used in their creative work. There are regular sessions of dance and movement in the school hall, where they learn to move with a good level of control and skill. They follow instructions well and are very enthusiastic about physical activities. Music is used well for imaginative dance. Play outdoors is less frequent than it might be because it has to be planned for the whole group rather than being made one of the optional activities in a learning session. This is because there is no ready access or ease of supervision for the outdoor play area from the Reception classrooms. Children quickly develop dexterity with the controls for information and control technology.

Regular opportunities are provided for the children's **creative development**. They handle a wide range of materials and media for making paintings, models of imaginary islands, picture postcards to send to a friend. They use a growing number of techniques for joining materials, and work cooperatively on their large models. They know and sing a number of songs which they sing for fun as well as to help in learning about numbers and words. They make music using simple instruments and derive great pleasure and satisfaction from doing so.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and well focussed on this area of learning
- The regular organisation of the classes and the planning of enjoyable activities provide a very secure basis for the children's development.
- Children develop self confidence and the ability to work cooperatively

### **Commentary**

34. As a result of the close attention paid to this aspect of the children's development as soon as they enter the school, they quickly become used to the patterns of the school day. They respond well to the high expectations of their behaviour and soon enjoy working cooperatively with one another. They concentrate well on the task in hand and learn to persevere with work or play. They have a good knowledge of right and wrong, and are eager to follow the right path. Each learning session provides a good mix of teacher directed and pupil chosen activities, so that they learn how to make choices and to stick to them. They are encouraged to help themselves to resources and to tidy up after they have finished. This leads towards a growth of independence. They are keen to learn, respond to challenges and are enthusiastic about new activities. The staff ensure that this area of study underpins everything else that happens in the class and realize that getting this right makes learning in other areas more fruitful and enjoyable.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and most children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year.
- Children make good progress in developing early reading and writing skills.
- Good opportunities are provided for the development of language in both play and more formal occasions.

### **Commentary**

35. Whatever else is going on in the classroom, the teachers and support staff are constantly conscious of the need to develop language skills as a basis for all areas of learning. They talk with the children, encourage them to engage in conversations with both adults and other children and use whatever opportunities arise to develop the children's vocabularies and ability to express themselves clearly. Often this development is from a low initial level of communication. Developing confidence in talking and

listening enables the higher and average attaining pupils to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy. By the end of the Reception year they are well able to profit from the more formal approach to literacy undertaken in Year 1. However, a significant minority are not able to catch up from their initial lower levels of attainment and continue to need the less formal approach. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment achieve well. The children are provided with a plentiful supply of books and opportunities to enjoy them, as a result their reading, and their writing skills develop well.

36. Most children are able to write a recognizable postcard message to a friend with words formed correctly and the spelling if not correct being phonetically reasonable. They learn and use the correct words found in the topics and subjects they study and take a pride in doing so. Children are very familiar with books and recognize their use not only for reading stories for fun, but also a source of information. The emphasis given by the teachers to the good development of language rightly goes alongside the emphasis on personal and social development and successfully provides a secure foundation for further and broader learning.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and children achieve well
- Most of the children achieve the goals expected in this area of learning by the end of the Reception year
- Most children are secure in knowing numbers up to 100

### **Commentary**

37. The higher and average attaining pupils reach the mathematical goals expected of children of their age by the time they leave the Reception class. This is the result of the well planned and imaginatively delivered teaching that they receive. Lessons include a good mixture of teacher led and child selected activities so that learning is enjoyable, as well as being challenging, and the children learn to think for themselves. Lessons often include opportunities for the children to discover their own ways of dealing with practical problems. A good feature of the teaching is that they are not only encouraged to do this, but also they are helped to explain their own thinking. Almost all the pupils are familiar with numbers up to 100. They understand concepts such as “more than” or between when applied to numbers on a hundred board. They recognize coins and handle simple sums both with money and numbers. They learn and use the proper mathematical terms and enjoy mathematical games and puzzles. In their questions, teachers regularly challenge pupils to think, posing problems that are well matched to their level of mathematical ability. The children are familiar with common two-dimensional shapes and can describe them. Their mathematical development is at a suitable level to provide a sound basis for further studies in mathematics as they grow older.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in English are above average by the end of Year 6
- Pupils' handwriting has improved since the last inspection
- Teaching is mostly good and enables pupils to achieve well
- Pupils are provided with stimulating opportunities for writing
- Occasionally undemanding worksheets restrict learning opportunities

## Commentary

38. Standards in English are average in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. However, throughout the school there are a number of pupils whose reading, writing and speaking and listening skills are above average. Higher attaining pupils and pupils with special education needs make good progress and achieve well. Work seen in Year 1 indicates that standards in reading and writing are above average and the pupils have made very good progress during the year.
39. Overall standards in reading are above average and pupils of all abilities achieve well. They have access to a wide range of appropriate books. Group reading activities provide regular opportunities for the teaching of reading and pupils participate well at these times. Home school reading diaries enable pupils, parents and teachers to maintain a shared understanding of the pupils' reading progress. In Years 5 and 6 pupils regularly evaluate the books they have been reading.
40. Handwriting is taught well and practised regularly and standards have improved since the previous inspection. At an early stage, the pupils are taught correct letter formation and they develop a fluent, joined handwriting style as they move through the school. Pupils have good opportunities to write for a variety of purposes and audiences and teachers create lively and imaginative contexts for writing. In Year 2 pupils used the story of *Katie Morag and the Two Grandmothers* well to contrast and compare the characteristics and feelings of different people. In Year 1 pupils discussed a visit to Cannock Toy Museum and ably recalled and recorded their experiences. This work was of a high quality because pupils were very clear about the task and they were provided with opportunities to talk with partners about their ideas before writing. Classrooms in Year 1 and 2 are small but are organised well. Teachers provide environments which are rich in displayed language enabling children to have good access to appropriate vocabulary, dictionaries, captions and labels. Pupils with SEN are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants and make good progress in line with the requirements of their individual education plans.
41. Pupils acquire appropriate skills in grammar, punctuation and spelling and apply these well in their written work. Previously completed work includes a range of poems, recounts, imaginative stories, letters and information articles. The work indicates that pupils are given numerous opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings in their writing. In many cases teachers provide very useful structures and writing frames which enable children to be independent and organise their written work well. Occasionally, however, the use of unchallenging work sheets inhibits children's ability to demonstrate what they know and what they are capable of writing.
42. The pupils' spoken contributions in lessons are good. They collaborate well in group work and listen and respond politely to the contributions of others. In a Year 5/6 class pupils were reflective and articulate as they discussed the thoughts, emotions and reactions to a character in the story of *'Kensuke's Kingdom'* by Michael Morpurgo. Drama and role-play are also used well and enable pupils to articulate their thoughts and

consolidate their ideas before writing; for example, in another Year 5/6 class pupils considered the writing of Jacqueline Wilson as they dramatised ways in which persuasion can be used to resolve conflict. The quality of much of the pupils' writing which followed the drama was powerful and lively.

43. Teaching is good. Lessons are resourced and planned well and take account of the differing needs of the pupils. Teachers use questions well to challenge the pupils and to check their understanding. The purpose of the lesson is shared with the pupils who are given opportunities to review their own progress at the end of lesson. Relationships between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils are very good. Regular assessments are made of the pupils' progress and the information is used well to set targets for improvement. Many pupils are aware of their targets but some targets are not specific enough. Generally pupils' work is marked well to their needs but there are occasions when the school's policy on marking is not used consistently enough to help the pupils improve their work.
44. The co-ordination of English is sound. Work sampling, the analysis of assessments and the monitoring of teaching and learning provide a useful overview of the English curriculum. A well equipped and accessible school library has been developed well since the previous inspection.

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

45. Literacy skills are developed and used well across the curriculum. The pupils are regularly engaged in reading for information, writing letters and making notes. Some good cross-curricular links have been established on residential and educational visits. Paired and group discussions are a common feature of the teaching in many subjects and this has a positive impact on the pupils' skill and confidence in speaking and listening.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve well and attain above average standards by the end of Year 6
- Pupils enjoy their mathematics and work hard
- Teaching and learning are mostly good across the school
- Assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress are effective in bringing about improvement, although marking of pupils' work is inconsistent
- Too many worksheets limit opportunities for pupils' to apply their skills

### **Commentary**

46. In the 2004 National Curriculum teacher assessments, standards at the end of Year 2 were judged to be below the national average and below those in similar schools. Current standards are higher and are now similar to the national average. Despite a significant dip in 2004, the trend in results has been in line with the national trend. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average and have improved on last year when they were average. There are fewer pupils with SEN in the current group of pupils. Apart from a sharp rise in 2002, standards have fluctuated slightly from a little above to a little below average, depending on the composition of the various groups taking the tests.

47. The school's comprehensive tracking data, assessment systems and evidence from the inspection show that most pupils, including both boys and girls and those who have SEN and the more able pupils, make generally good progress as they move through the school. Achievement in the lessons observed was largely good. This mirrors the quality of teaching which shows a high degree of consistency across the year groups.
48. Co-ordination of the subject is sound and the monitoring of teaching and pupils' work has resulted in a greater focus on using and applying mathematics and ensuring consistency in the methods of teaching key aspects of number. This has been successful in improving pupils' understanding of number but an overuse of some undemanding worksheets places some limitation on the development of pupils' use and application of their basic number skills. While pupils have a good knowledge of number, shape, space and measures, and handling data, all but the more able pupils find it difficult to understand the process needed to solve a problem using this knowledge.
49. Teachers place strong emphasis on mental calculation, which has a positive impact on the development of pupils' skills. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have a reasonable understanding of place value and this understanding is developed well through to Year 6. Teachers use a good range of resources, including computers, to reinforce understanding in mathematics. The very good relationships that exist between teachers and pupils inspire confidence and have a positive effect on their productivity and love of the subject. Subject knowledge is generally good and enables teachers to introduce and reinforce the correct mathematical vocabulary and to ask more searching questions. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, for example, pupils were challenged to explain how their formula for mixing a cocktail drink in certain proportions could be applied to making drinks for a large group of people. On a few occasions, particularly for the younger pupils, lessons go on for too long and some pupils begin to lose concentration.
50. Teachers set appropriate group targets for pupils based on their ability and pupils are involved in assessing their progress toward meeting them. These are helping pupils gain understanding of their own learning and give a further impetus to their work. Work in books is presented well, although the quality of marking is variable. At its best it show pupils clearly how they can improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

51. Overall, pupils use their mathematical skills well in support of work across the curriculum. Computers are being used increasingly to support mathematical units of work. In a linked geography project on the Caribbean island of St Lucia, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used their knowledge of ratio and capacity to mix tropical cocktails. In topics on the Ancient Greeks, pupils use their knowledge of symmetry to create Geek patterns and in design and technology measuring skills are used to good effect when making a variety of objects. Number and graphing skills are used well in science to record various data, for example, on animals.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on first hand experimentation leading to understanding.
- The school recognizes the need to develop the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in science further.
- Good links are made between science and other subjects on the curriculum
- Some lessons are too long and progress slows down

### **Commentary**

52. In Years 1 and 2, the standards achieved by the pupils are currently in line with national expectations. This is an improvement on the previous year. The pupils profit from the emphasis placed by the school on first hand experimentation, devising the experiments, discussing how to carry them out and making records of the results. In an exploration of wind power, for example, the pupils experimented with different materials to discover its direction and force. The work with wind was also linked with craft, design and technology in designing and making wind powered boats moving on to use the knowledge of materials to design and make a kite or windmill. This approach is continued and refined as they progress through the school
53. By the end of Year 6, standards are in line with national expectations and the pupils achieve well throughout Years 3 to 6. The drop in standards recorded in the 2004 results is the result of a larger proportion of pupils with SEN affecting their ability to handle the tests. Pupils in Year 6 devise methods of categorizing creatures using a very rich collection of resources of live and preserved examples. This was a good development and refinement of skills introduced much earlier in the school. They were introduced to the use of a computer program to help in the analysis. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 were engaged in the first hand study of soil set up to find the answer to the question "What is soil made of?"
54. Science is effectively linked with other subjects. Good use is made of English and mathematical skills to discuss, describe and record what the pupils are doing in science. Their vocabulary is enlarged by the addition of specialist scientific words and expressions. ICT is being used to support science, but it is recognized as an area for further development. Linking subjects deepens the pupils' understanding of how knowledge and understanding of the world about them is interrelated. Pupils are effectively challenged to explain their thinking about the experiments they devise.
55. The teaching of science throughout the school is generally good and never less than satisfactory. In some classes, especially where the time allocated is over long, the pace of learning flags and pupils' progress slows. In most classes, as a result of the careful and imaginative planning and good teaching of the subject, the pupils' attitude to science is good and they work hard. The marking of pupils' work is generally helpful, although inconsistent. The development of the Golden Book record of work, when completed well, is a very useful tool for both pupils and staff to understand how well they are doing. The assessment and monitoring of science is well done, but in some classes it does not always result in specific targets for them to achieve, if their standards are to improve. Pupils with SEN are supported by the conscientious teaching assistants and achieve well.
56. The leadership of the subject, in the hands of a very well informed science enthusiast, is good. The planning is based on national guidelines This is supported by good quality and very varied resources which support the programme of study well.
57. The work in science has a good impact on the pupils' spiritual and personal development as a result of its close links with other subjects. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6; for example, they were fascinated by the range of creatures which they were categorizing and discussed it with accuracy of expression and considerable feeling. In the same way the exploration of expressive language by the younger pupils heightens the sense of wonder when they discuss the nature of the wind.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' expertise and confidence have improved since the previous inspection and much of the teaching is good
- ICT is used increasingly effectively to support learning in other subjects
- The co-ordinators are committed and knowledgeable and have a good vision of how to take the subject forward.
- Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are helping raise standards

### **Commentary**

58. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and the school has done well to keep pace with the rapidly rising national expectations. The subject leaders have had a significant impact on the development of the subject and are good role models in their own teaching and enthusiasm for the subject. They have been highly successful in raising the profile of the subject across the school. The school has no designated computer suite but has built up resources well, investing in laptop computers and interactive whiteboards. These have provided more opportunities for pupils to build up their knowledge and skills effectively from year to year. Coupled with increasing staff confidence and expertise, this has helped raise standards, which are now similar to the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6. A good assessment system is helping teachers plan activities that build on what pupils know, understand and can do and helps to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered. The system provides a good record of pupils' achievements and involves pupils in assessing their own progress.
59. Pupils in Year 1 are introduced effectively to early work on control and modelling. In a lesson for pupils in Year 1, for example, pupils used programmable toys successfully to plot simple routes around a map grid using a sequence of basic directions fed into the toy. Pupils were fascinated by the activity and were proud of their achievements. Pupils in Year 2 organise and classify information to present their findings in a topic on animals using computers to generate relevant text and pictures, which they then print out. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have reasonable keyboard and mouse skills which they use successfully to access a number of programs to support their work in literacy and numeracy. They access the Internet to research a variety of topics and exchange information with others in a variety of ways, including e-mail. In work on the classification of animals, pupils in Years 5 and 6 successfully use a 'flexi-tree' program to help devise their own categorisation system. Most older pupils highlight text, change fonts, re-order and edit text. They use spreadsheets, for example, to cost a party for ten people and use object based graphics programs to design their ideal classroom. The more able pupils use multimedia programs to organise, refine and present a set of linked pages with images, sound and text and explore the effects of changing data in a spreadsheet.
60. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and have worked hard to extend their skills and expertise by attending a good number of internal and external training events. The recently acquired interactive whiteboards are



used well to develop pupils' understanding and to model group tasks. Lessons are well planned and organised and pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively. Pupils respond to this well, for example, in a Year 2 lesson, when pupils were working in threes to enter data into a program, one pupil sensibly acted as reader, one as scribe and one entered data into the computer.

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

61. Computers are used increasingly well to support work in other subjects. In a mathematics lesson for pupils in Year 2, pupils use sound mouse and keyboard skills to work on a multiplication program. Pupils in Year 3 use a computer program to reinforce understanding of decimals and pupils in Years 5 and 6 research information on Islam in support of their work in religious education. In English, pupils in Years 5 and 6 use the Internet to research the life of a famous author. In connection with work in science, pupils in Years 5 and 6 create good slide presentations on animals.

## **HUMANITIES**

No lessons were seen in **history** and **geography**, although in both subjects, pupils' work was sampled, teachers' planning scrutinised and discussions were held with pupils. On the basis of this evidence, the work seen is similar to national expectations with examples of good quality work evident in both subjects. The standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained.

A good range of visits supports work in both subjects and this helps pupils develop appropriate skills; for example, a visit to a local village by Year 2 pupils produced good quality mapping work and awareness of similarities and differences between city and village life. Pupils' literacy skills were linked well to the visit when pupils wrote letters of thanks to people in the village. Mapping skills are developed well throughout the school and are reflected in the more sophisticated maps produced by pupils in Year 6 as part of a topic on Stoke-on Trent. The topic also developed good knowledge about the effects of environmental change.

In both subjects, good cross-curricular links are planned in order to give the work greater interest and meaning. In history, for example, when studying the Ancient Greeks, pupils in Year 6 used mapping skills to locate key features and art and design skills when recreating patterns and designs on Greek pottery. In work on a contrasting distant locality in geography, teachers linked work skilfully to work in mathematics. They used information pupils had acquired on Caribbean cocktail drinks to work on ratio and proportion when pupils mixed their own tropical cocktails using proportions of various juices.

Co-ordination of both subjects is sound. Work sampling and monitoring of teachers' planning provides a useful overview of coverage in the subjects but there has been no opportunity for the co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by observation of lessons. New assessment systems are being introduced to more effectively track pupils' progress in the subjects.

## **Religious education**

Provision is **satisfactory**.

## **Strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching about Christianity is covered well

- Teaching is carefully based upon the local Agreed Syllabus.
- The school makes good use of local resources.

### Commentary

62. Pupils throughout the school attain standards in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate a sound understanding of a range of stories from the Bible, as when they discussed the stories from the Old Testament that they would use as the basis of designs for stained glass windows. Older pupils have a similar knowledge and understanding of aspects of Islam and Judaism. They relate these religions to each other as well as to their own experience where possible, as when they were investigating the place of rules and laws in religions and societies. Pupils talk with confidence about the religious topics they are studying, though in some cases they become confused between one religion and another because the distinctions have not been brought out carefully enough
63. Teaching is generally satisfactory and in some cases good. Teachers are careful to match the work to the pupils' understanding, finding out what the pupils already know and understand before embarking on new learning. Pupils respond well to this approach and behave very well. This means that the pupils make good progress and achieve well. Older pupils are challenged to think hard when relating knowledge about religions to everyday life, as when groups of Year 5/ 6 pupils were researching the Five Pillars of Islam and relating them to the idea that all communities need sets of rules to live by. In the more effective lessons, instructions are clear and pupils find the work challenging and exciting and work well together. When instructions are less clear then groups tend to break up, spending time discussing what they are supposed to be doing rather than doing it.
64. Good use is made of computers for finding out about religions. Good use is also made of the links between the school and the local Church, especially when pupils are learning about ceremonies such as baptism or marriage. Teachers make good use of skills from other subjects such as literacy to support the work in religious education.
65. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visits to places with religious connections, such as the Methodist Museum, or from visitors who bring special insights into the school. Many of these are principally concerned with cultural issues, and more could be done to broaden this to include understanding religious issues, which are often of particular importance to the visitor's way of life. As a result of careful planning and preparation the pupils show a good level of respect for the beliefs and practices of different faiths and a sound understanding of them. These also figure in the good quality displays around the school, which add to the pupils' learning.
66. Religious education is soundly and sensitively led, and teachers are kept abreast of latest changes in the Agreed Syllabus. The resources for religious education match the needs of the syllabus and provide first-hand experience for the pupils.

### CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Only one lesson was seen in **art and design** and none were seen in **design and technology**. It is, therefore, not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of the provision. A scrutiny of pupils' previously completed work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils all indicate that standards are as expected for the pupils' ages in both subjects. In an **art and design** lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, following a visit from a local artist, pupils dyed fabric successfully using the tie and dye technique. The resulting designs were of a good quality. The technique was taught carefully which

enabled all pupils to complete their designs successfully. Displayed art and design work around the school and pupils' sketch books indicate that the pupils have regular opportunities to do observational drawing, painting, printing and collage work. Some colourful plate illustrations had been well designed by pupils who had worked in the style of Clarice Cliff.

One of the good features of the teaching in the school generally is the way in which subjects are linked together to their mutual advantage. Topics in science are also utilised as the basis for work in **design and technology**. For example, a study of the effect of wind on various materials in science was then utilised for designing kites and windmills in Year 1. In Years 5 and 6 the baking of Simnel cakes and the designing and making of special containers for the cakes was linked effectively with religious education. Discussions in citizenship/circle time lessons prompted the activity of designing safer cars and the design of model World War 11 vehicles supported work on that period in history. The planning of work in craft design and technology is imaginatively based on national guidelines well adapted to the particular needs of the school's curriculum. Recently there has been a move towards planning and assessment, based upon skills progression. A number of the skills identified also have links with other subjects, such as measuring linked with mathematics. This is being adopted as plans are revised through the school, and follows a Design and Technology Day throughout the school to raise awareness of skills as a basis for planning.

## **MUSIC**

The provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Above average standards have been maintained since the previous inspection
- The quality of teaching is good
- The quality of pupils' singing is very good

### **Commentary**

67. Lesson planning is good and all pupils participate enthusiastically. Standards are above those normally expected and pupils of all abilities achieve well. Teachers' enthusiasm for music has a positive impact on the children who maintain their interest throughout the lessons. In a Year 2 class the pupils listened carefully to the range of sounds made by a number of hand-bells and then ordered the bells successfully from the highest to the lowest note. The teacher used questions well to check that the children could hear the difference in pitch between the bells. The pupils then had opportunities to compose music by conducting groups of pupils as they rang the bells.
68. Year 5/6 pupils learnt a calypso song as a part of their study of St Lucia. They played a range of percussion instruments to accompany the song. Their singing was tuneful and spirited. All pupils concentrated and contributed ideas very well throughout the lesson. The skilled intervention and support from the teacher enabled the pupils to improve their rhythms and gain a sense of achievement. Pupils also explored a range of rhythms which could be played on drums. All pupils had access to a drum and considered the different sounds which could be achieved by striking the drum in different ways. Pupils

were introduced to appropriate technical vocabulary such as 'echo', 'rondo' and 'improvisation'. Pupils' listening skills developed well as they considered ways in which they could echo the teacher's drum rhythms.

69. The school is resourced well for music. There is a good range of pitched and non-pitched musical instruments. The co-ordinator has reviewed the school's scheme of work to ensure that the pupils experience continuity and progressions in music as they move through the school. The quality of singing in assembly and in the school choir is very good. Pupils respond sensitively to the different moods of the songs. There is good provision for pupils to learn to play musical instruments and many pupils have opportunities to perform both within the school and in the local community.

## **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a broadly based physical education programme
- Lessons are well planned and based on national guidance
- Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and this helps them make good progress in lessons

## **Commentary**

70. Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is similar to the judgement of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, most pupils demonstrate clear control of their bodies in their own space as well as being able to use apparatus effectively. All pupils have a sound knowledge of how physical activity is part of healthy living. By the end of Year 6, pupils work well together to create good and interesting sequences of gymnastic activity. They are enthusiastic about their work and cooperate well with each other. They demonstrate a good control of their bodies with a variety of activities.
71. The teaching observed was satisfactory overall and some was good. Teachers generally provide good demonstrations of activities, and also encourage pupils to demonstrate good style to their colleagues. The very good behaviour found throughout the school means that very little time is wasted in establishing and maintaining order and ensuring that all pupils participate. In some games training sessions a few dominant pupils monopolise the resources so that more diffident pupils are left out.
72. The curriculum for physical education provides pupils of all abilities with a good range of activities appropriate to their needs. These are well balanced through the year and during their time in the school. All pupils swim weekly for a term every year, so that by the time they leave Year 6 practically every pupil can swim the required 25 metres. Gymnastics and dance happen throughout the year, and athletics, cross-country running and the various games at appropriate times in each year. Outdoor and adventurous activities take place during the residential week in an outdoor pursuits centre in the summer term in Years 5 and 6.
73. The school provides a very good range of sporting activities outside the curriculum at various times in the school day. A significant feature in the physical education programme is the

importance given to dance. This is also linked very effectively to other areas of the curriculum, such as Tudor and Greek Dance linked to history. Other forms of dance are provided for physical activity and enjoyment. The subject is enthusiastically led and managed; the resources and the accommodation meet the needs of the curriculum.

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

Because no specific lessons in the subject were seen during the inspection it is not possible to make a secure overall judgement on the quality of provision in the subject. From discussions with pupils and general observations of teaching, however, it is clear that the school places a high priority on this aspect of pupils' development and achievement is very good. There is a significant emphasis on the development of self-esteem, pride in achievement and relationships in all lessons. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong and what is fair and unfair. They recognise how others are affected by their behaviour. Pupils recognise and share their own feelings and the older pupils handle them in a positive and mature way. There are appropriate policies on sex and relationships education, racial harmony and child protection, and these are applied consistently.

Pupils are prepared well to play an active role as citizens. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 distribute parcels locally to senior citizens and older pupils operate the computer library loan system. Pupils have opportunities to serve on the school council and participate in discussions involving one other person and the whole class. They share their opinions on matters important to them. In science lessons, they show care and concern for the needs of other living things and the importance of a healthy diet and lifestyle.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
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).*