

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WILLIAM RHODES PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Chesterfield

LEA area: Derbyshire

Unique reference number: 112671

Headteacher: Mrs J Seymour

Lead inspector: Mr Brian Holmes

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> September 2004

Inspection number: 268264

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:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	201
School address:	Hunloke Avenue Boythorpe Chesterfield Derbyshire
Postcode:	S40 2NR
Telephone number:	(01246) 234 626
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Malcolm Stewart
Date of previous inspection:	18 <sup>th</sup> November 2002

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

William Rhodes Primary School is smaller than the average primary school, with approximately 160 pupils on roll. Pupil numbers have been decreasing over the last couple of years, but have recently begun to increase again. It was last inspected in 2002, when the school was judged to have serious weaknesses because of high staff turnover and the lack of a stable teaching staff. In June 2003, a member of Her Majesty's Inspectorate judged that the school was ready to be fully inspected again.

The school is in the district of Boythorpe, about a mile and a half from Chesterfield town centre. Most pupils live on the estates around the school in rented council accommodation. Pupil mobility is above average with about 20 per cent of pupils leaving or arriving in the last year. Most pupils are from a white Christian background. There are a small number of pupils whose mother tongue is not English, who are not at an early stage of language development. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average and overall, the socio-economic status of the pupils is below what would be expected in most schools. Pupils enter the school with attainment on entry which is well below average overall compared to what is expected for most children at that age.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, including pupils with statements of special educational need (SEN), is above the national average. There are 52 pupils on the SEN register, with 24 at the school action plus stage. Nine pupils have a statement of educational need. Of the pupils at the school action plus stage, ten have emotional and behavioural difficulties, six have moderate learning needs and five have specific learning difficulties.

There are close links with the local secondary school and with other local schools through the Excellence in Cities initiative. A Pupil Development Centre, whose purpose is specifically to meet the needs of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties, has recently been established at the school.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15215	Brian Holmes	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology History Geography
19558	Michael Hammond	Lay inspector	
7418	Kath Rollison	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Citizenship
4350	Clive Whittington	Team Inspector	Mathematics Science Physical education English as an additional language
23319	Vince Leary	Team inspector	Special educational needs Religious education Music

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

William Rhodes Primary School is a **satisfactory** school, and provides a satisfactory quality of education. The progress made by pupils throughout the school is satisfactory, although, at present, pupils' achievement at the end of Year 6 is still unsatisfactory because they have not yet had sufficient chance to make up lost ground. The school gives **satisfactory** value for money. It is positively regarded both by pupils and their parents. There is a strong ethos of care and raising pupils' self-esteem. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good and she is well supported by the governing body and staff. All pupils are included in activities and a satisfactory quality of teaching and learning and curriculum provision enhances pupils' experiences.

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

- The progress seen during the inspection is satisfactory for all pupils, and for pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes, those with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, it is good.
- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are too low at the end of Year 6 and pupils' achievement at age eleven is still unsatisfactory.
- The school is well led and managed by the headteacher.
- Subject co-ordinators in most subjects are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the quality of provision in their subject areas.
- There is good provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes.
- All pupils are included well in educational activities, and there is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal development and their support, care and guidance.
- There are good links with other schools and with the community.

Since the previous inspection, there has been a **satisfactory** improvement in the school's effectiveness, with good improvement in some areas. Satisfactory progress has been made in raising standards of attainment, although in English, mathematics and science they are still well below the levels expected at age 11. Achievement has improved in the Foundation Stage and by age seven. Pupils' competence in ICT is now broadly in line with what is expected at ages seven and eleven. Good assessment and target-setting procedures in English and mathematics are impacting positively on pupils' achievements. There has been good improvement in addressing the main weakness of establishing a stable staffing structure. A permanent headteacher is in place. There are no unfilled posts within the staffing structure. Through support from the LEA, there is additional staffing in place to support subject co-ordinators in fulfilling their monitoring roles. Significant steps have been taken to improve pupils' attendance, which are beginning to have an effect, although attendance remains below average. There is a good capacity to build on achievements and improve even further.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	E	E	E*	C
mathematics	E*	E*	E*	E
science	E*	E*	E	E

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

*very low in comparison to other schools.*

**Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall by age 11.** Attainment on entry to the school is well below the average expected. In the Foundation Stage, most children make good progress although not all are on target to achieve the goals expected of them at the end of the Reception year. Inspection findings show that by the age of seven, pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and have achieved satisfactorily overall, although their standards are below the levels expected in reading, writing, mathematics and science because there are a larger number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2 class. In the junior classes, pupils' progress is satisfactory, on the evidence of the lessons seen during the inspection, but achievement has not yet improved at a sufficient rate because performance in national tests in English, mathematics and science is still well below average. Inspection findings confirm that attainment for the current Year 6 pupils in English, mathematics and science is well below average because they have not had sufficient time to make up lost ground from earlier disruption to their education. Standards of attainment in religious education are below the levels expected in the locally-agreed syllabus. Inspection evidence shows that pupils are attaining satisfactorily in some curriculum areas by age eleven, notably ICT, geography and history. Pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, make good progress and achieve well.

**Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** The school's ethos promotes pupils' personal development and raising their self-esteem well. Pupils' attitudes, values, relationships with others and with adults are all good, as is their spiritual, moral and social development. Attendance is unsatisfactory although almost all pupils are keen to come to school and the school does its utmost to promote attendance. Punctuality is satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided is satisfactory, with good features.** The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, and good in the Foundation Stage. All teachers have high expectations of pupils' learning and their behaviour, and engage pupils well in their learning. Very good use is made of teaching assistants, with good promotion of equality and opportunity for all pupils. Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics, and are used well to set pupils' targets for improvement. The behaviour of a small minority of pupils does slow learning in some classes.

The school provides its pupils with a **satisfactory** curriculum. It enriches pupils' experiences with a satisfactory range of extra activities in sports, arts, and personal development. There are insufficient opportunities in some subjects for pupils to develop skills and understanding. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. Pupils are well cared for and supported in a caring environment. There is a satisfactory partnership with parents and good links with other schools and the local community.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are sound, with good leadership from the headteacher.** The headteacher provides a very good role model for other staff and leads the school with a clear ethos and sense of purpose for all pupils to achieve their best. Governors fulfil their role and legal responsibilities satisfactorily and have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. Managerial responsibilities have been delegated effectively, with most staff having responsibility for more than one curriculum area. Subject co-ordinators are effective in

supporting other staff, although in subjects other than English, mathematics and ICT, they have not yet had sufficient impact in raising standards of attainment in their subject areas

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

Parents' views of the school are positive. They are pleased with most aspects of the school's provision. Some concern was expressed in the questionnaire about pupils' behaviour and the levels of bullying and harassment. The inspection found no evidence to support the concern about bullying although it was evident that the behaviour of a small minority of pupils is a major concern to the school. The inspection concluded that the school has good procedures for dealing with the bullying or harassment of pupils and manages pupils' behaviour well. Pupils also have positive views about the school. They know that they are expected to work hard and that they will get help from the teachers if they are stuck.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Further develop the role of subject co-ordinators in most subjects.



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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects**

Standards of attainment are below the national average at the age of seven and well below average at the age of eleven in English, mathematics and science. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching have meant that pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 6. Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage from a low point of entry and pupils achieve satisfactorily by the age of seven. However, because pupils have not had sufficient time to make up lost ground by the age of 11, pupils' achievement, particularly in English and mathematics, is still unsatisfactory.

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

- Children achieve well in the Foundation Stage from a well below average attainment on entry.
- Pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, make good progress and achieve well throughout the school
- Pupils' achievement by the end of Year 6 in English, mathematics and science is unsatisfactory.
- Standards of attainment in ICT have improved since the previous inspection and are broadly in line with the average.
- Progress throughout the school is improving, although it has not yet impacted on test results at the end of Year 6.

#### **Commentary**

1. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment in national tests have improved satisfactorily for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6, although they are still well below average at the end of Year 6. The tables below show the results achieved in the 2003 tests, firstly in Year 2, and then in Year 6. Standards of attainment in Year 2 were below average in reading and in line with the average in writing and mathematics compared with pupils' performance in all other schools. In comparison with results in similar schools, performance was in line with the average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. In science, based on teacher assessments, pupils' performance was below average. The indications are that in the 2004 tests, this improvement has been broadly maintained in writing, with improvement in reading, but lower achievement in mathematics. In the Year 6 tests, pupils' performance against other schools was well below average in English and science, and very low in mathematics. Compared to their own prior learning and that of pupils in similar schools, their performance was below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. The indications are that for the 2004 tests, standards are still well below average at the end of Year 6. However, last year's Year 6 group suffered severe disruption to their education when they were in Years 4 and 5 because of the extremely high turnover in staff, which had severe consequences for the continuity and progression of their learning.

#### ***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003***

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.3 (12.7)	15.7 (15.8)

writing	14.6 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.4 (15.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 24 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	24.8 (23.7)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	23.3 (23.3)	26.8 (26.7)
science	25.5 (24.3)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 34 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

2. Most children begin the Nursery with levels of attainment that are well below average when compared with those of their age group, particularly in personal and social development and in speaking and listening skills. As soon as they enter the Nursery, children begin to benefit from the good provision. Given the very low attainment of many children on entry, the majority are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the end of the Reception class, although they will have made good progress towards them. In two out of the six areas of learning - children's personal, social and emotional development and their physical development - most children will meet the learning goals because of the good teaching and provision.
3. Inspection findings show that by the age of seven, most pupils have achieved satisfactorily, although their standards are below the levels expected in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards in the present Year 2 are unlikely to be as high as for last year because there are more pupils with special educational needs. In the junior classes, pupils are now making satisfactory progress, as seen during the inspection, but for the present Year 6 this has not been enough yet to make up the ground lost in previous years. Attainment in ICT has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in pupils' basic skills, and is now broadly in line with the average at age seven and age 11. In religious education, standards of attainment are below the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus. In some other subject areas observed during the inspection - geography and history - pupils achieve satisfactorily by age seven and 11.
4. Although achievement is still unsatisfactory for the present Year 6, there are a number of factors why pupils' progress is improving throughout the school:
  - There is now a stable teaching staff, well supported by teaching assistants. At the time of the previous inspection, this was a main weakness in the school.
  - Although satisfactory overall, teaching is improving, with good teaching in the Foundation Stage and a good proportion of good and very good teaching in the infant and junior classes.
  - For those pupils with specific emotional and behavioural difficulties, a Pupil Development Centre led by a specialist teacher has been established and the early indications are that this provision is benefiting these pupils and other pupils' learning through a more stable learning environment.
  - In ICT, the development of a dedicated suite and the increasing use of interactive whiteboards are having a positive effect on standards of attainment.

- In English and mathematics, subject co-ordinators are focused on raising standards and there are good assessment procedures which are being used positively to target individual improvement.
  - The school's involvement in the Excellence Cluster, with other local schools, is already benefiting infant pupils through the Nurture Group.
5. The use of literacy, numeracy and ICT in other subjects is satisfactory. Pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge and use of subject terminology in different subjects. They are given satisfactory opportunities to write for different purposes, for example, in science, history, geography and ICT. Numeracy is developing appropriately in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils use a variety of graphs to present information. In geography, they learn about co-ordinates and data-handling skills are developing appropriately in ICT. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of curriculum areas and are also beginning to make more use of ICT to support their teaching through the use of interactive whiteboards. In a number of subjects, the further development of ICT programs has been identified as an area for development, for example, in geography. During the inspection, evidence was seen of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in English, mathematics, science, history, religious education and design and technology.
6. Higher ability pupils, and those who are gifted and talented, achieved satisfactorily during the inspection. Planning to meet their needs is appropriate and effective in all classes. There is evidence from the results of the national tests, however, that these pupils do not attain their best in tests and improvement in their standards in tests is a priority for the school. Pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, make good progress, and their achievement is good. The school is aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses through its assessment and testing procedures in English and mathematics. Teachers plan appropriate work for pupils with special educational needs, especially in English and mathematics.

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

Pupils' attitudes, values, relationships with each other and with adults are all good. The spiritual, moral and social development of pupils is good. Attendance is unsatisfactory even though the vast majority of pupils are keen to come to school. Punctuality is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The caring ethos of the school helps to promote pupils' good attitudes and personal development.
- The good role models of the staff and good behaviour management ensure that pupils know the difference between right and wrong and that the majority behave well.
- Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are good.
- Attendance in school is still below the national average, despite the school's best endeavours. Unauthorised absence is better than the national average.

### **Commentary**

7. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. The vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well behaved, polite and courteous and respond well to the caring ethos of the school. They enjoy school and take pride in their work. Almost all are interested and involved in the lessons and out-of-school

activities. The majority of parents are supportive and happy with the values the school promotes.

8. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is satisfactory and staff deal quickly and effectively with any incidents of inappropriate behaviour caused mainly by a small number of challenging and disruptive pupils. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. There have been no instances of racism. There were 41 fixed term exclusions in 2003-2004 and two permanent exclusions. These actions included 14 boys and one girl in total. This high number of exclusions resulted from action taken by the headteacher when she first joined the school, as a strategy for managing pupils' behaviour and improving school discipline. One of the outcomes of her action was that, in conjunction with the local education authority, a decision was taken to establish a Pupil Development Centre at the school, specifically to cater for the needs of pupils with specific emotional and behavioural learning needs. In the present school year, there have been no exclusions from school.

***Ethnic background of pupils***

***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	89	41	2
Mixed – any other mixed background	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	6	0	0
Black or Black British - Caribbean	1	0	0
Information not obtained	98	0	0

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

9. The majority of pupils work independently or in groups, with good attitudes to learning. They work well together, sharing and valuing each other's ideas, concentrating on the set task. A small number of disruptive pupils, many with severe emotional and behavioural problems, find it difficult to work independently or in groups. Support staff work hard and skilfully with these pupils to encourage their learning and to alleviate their anti-social behaviour.
10. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are good, and have a positive impact on their learning. Pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy an atmosphere where all are valued. They respond well to the help provided, and like being rewarded for doing their best. Pupils are pleased to receive awards in assemblies and pose proudly for photographs for behaviour and work. They are supportive of each other - older pupils help younger pupils with their reading. Pupils of all ages mix well across the school, and pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, take a full and active part in lessons and activities at playtimes.

11. Part of the ethos and philosophy of the Nurture Group ensures that pupils are befriended and supported whenever this is felt to be appropriate. Circle time is also used as a means of resolving difficulties whenever they arise. The development of the Pupil Development Centre is also planned to support this work.
12. Pupils' personal development is good. It is fostered well by the good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong, and benefit from the good role models set by the adults in school. Pupils are encouraged to be honest, trustworthy and well mannered.
13. Members of the student council were more than willing to express their views and say that their opinions are valued in the school. They helped to devise the rules for the new adventure playground. Pupils are encouraged to accept many responsibilities around the school. They collect and return registers, act as monitors, help with the projector and music for assemblies and serve on the student council.
14. Cultural development is now satisfactory and has improved since the previous inspection. The curriculum promotes an understanding of western and other cultures. This included a visit to the Black Country Museum, a visit by an African drummer and a Book Day where costumes from many cultures were displayed and worn. An area for improvement, which will extend pupils' good understanding of their own culture, is the need to develop more understanding of other cultural traditions.
15. Attendance is below the national average and is unsatisfactory. The school puts great effort into improving pupils' attendance by using well-planned strategies concentrating on a target group of poor attenders. Using these strategies, which include first-day absence telephone calls to parents, attendance is beginning to improve and unauthorised absence is now below the national average. The number of absences is a cause of great concern to the school because of the effect on pupils' progress and achievement.
16. The great majority of pupils are keen to attend school and arrive punctually for the start of school and lessons. Arrangements for registration and record-keeping are efficient and fulfil legal requirements.

Authorised absences	
School data	6.6
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absences	
School data	0.3
National data	0.4

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

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory**, with good features. The quality of teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are enhanced by a broad and balanced curriculum, with sound opportunities for pupils to experience an enriched curriculum and good provision for their personal, social and health education and citizenship. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English. Good levels of support, care and guidance and the good quality of pupils' personal development strengthen the ethos and climate for learning in which pupils learn and achieve. The school has also developed good links with the local community and other schools.

## Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning are **satisfactory** overall, with good teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage, and examples of good and very good teaching in all parts of the school. There are **good** arrangements for assessment in English and mathematics.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good encouragement and engagement of pupils.
- There are high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour.
- The pace of learning is slowed in some lessons by the disruptive behaviour of a small minority of pupils.
- Teaching assistants are used extremely well to support pupils' learning and to work with targeted pupils.
- There is good promotion of equality of opportunity and inclusion of all pupils in activities.
- Assessment is thorough and used well to respond to pupils' individual needs.

### Commentary

17. Since the previous inspection, when teaching was satisfactory, there have been significant staff changes and the staffing of the school is now more stable. The quality of teaching is **satisfactory** and is improving. During the inspection, the quality of teaching and learning observed was very good in the Nursery and good overall in the Foundation Stage. It was satisfactory in the infant and junior classes, but with a significant proportion of good and very good teaching in both phases. Both parents and pupils are positive about the teaching staff. Pupils know that they are expected to work hard and that their teachers will help them to make their work better. The table indicates the quality of teaching seen during the inspection in lessons.

#### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 33 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	6 (18%)	12 (36%)	14 (42%)	1 (3%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

18. In the Foundation Stage, the quality of teaching and learning is good in all the areas of learning observed, and very good in the Nursery. Consequently, children in the Nursery and Reception Year groups make good progress and achieve well. Activities are well planned to develop learning in all areas. Assessment and record-keeping procedures are very effective because information is used well to plan lessons. Careful targets are set for different groups, including those children who have special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. Support staff are fully involved in all areas of work in the Foundation Stage and make a significant contribution to children's achievements. Role-play and creative activities need further development in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class to ensure that the skills children acquire in the Nursery are more fully extended.

19. There are some common strengths of teaching that underpin the quality of pupils' learning in the infant and junior classes. Teachers engage pupils well in learning well through a range of different teaching and learning approaches, including the use of talk partners and stimulus material, such as a glove puppet in a Year 3 English lesson. There are high expectations of pupils' learning and their behaviour, which is managed well although there are a small minority who persistently misbehave. In some lessons, the management of behaviour does, however, slow the pace of learning for all pupils in the class. There were lessons where teaching was very good and where pupils achieved well; in a very good mathematics lesson with Year 3 pupils aimed at developing number bonds to 20, effective use of the interactive whiteboard to make expectations clear to pupils and a confident and enthusiastic approach from the teacher resulted in a very good start to the lesson and a brisk pace of learning. Thorough planning to meet the needs of higher ability pupils, good use of ongoing assessment and good deployment of teaching assistants to work with targeted pupils enabled all pupils to achieve well and make good progress within the lesson. In one year group there are low expectations of what pupils can achieve and in a few lessons, planning did not take sufficient account of the low levels of basic skills of some pupils. Most pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning and behave well. They respond well to the opportunities they are given to work on their own, and with other pupils in paired activities. When working on their own, and with others, they show appropriate levels of responsibility and interest in their learning.
20. All pupils are involved well in all classes, and teachers and all other staff fully promote the equality of opportunity for all pupils. Teachers know their pupils well, and plan effectively to meet the needs of lower, middle and higher ability pupils. For higher-attaining pupils, and those who are gifted and talented, provision to meet their needs is satisfactory. Raising the attainment of higher-attaining pupils is a priority for the teaching staff. For pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, the quality of teaching and learning is good, with high expectations for learning and behaviour. Sustained high standards in the management of behaviour have led to pupils with special educational needs feeling more confident and enthusiastic in their learning and to improved behaviour from them. Staff plan thoroughly to meet these pupils' needs and good teamwork with support assistants ensures that these pupils receive effective support and achieve well.
21. Assessment procedures are good. For reading, writing and mathematics, all pupils have end-of-year targets to aim for, which are regularly checked by teachers. Assessment information is used to focus action on improving pupils' performance. In science, there are effective procedures for assessing pupils' development of knowledge, understanding and skills. In other subjects, assessment procedures are satisfactory and are being reviewed by the subject co-ordinators. Day-to-day assessment is sound and marking is thorough and celebrates pupils' successes. However, it does not always make clear to pupils what the 'next step' in their learning is.
22. Homework is used satisfactorily. It is effective in promoting the development of English and mathematics and supporting the further development of pupils' learning in all classes.

### **The curriculum**

The overall quality of the curriculum throughout the school is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for curriculum enrichment through the range of extra-curricular activities, together with the number

of visits for the pupils and visitors to the school, are **satisfactory**, as are the range and quality of resources and accommodation.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good provision is made for those pupils with special educational needs, those whose first language is not English, and for the equality of access and opportunity for all the pupils.
- There are insufficient opportunities in some subjects for pupils to develop skills and understanding.
- Good provision is made for personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- The match of teachers to the curriculum is good, and that of support staff is very good.

### **Commentary**

23. The school's curriculum is generally broad and balanced and is based on nationally recommended schemes, suitable adapted where relevant. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements, including the provision for sex and drugs education and the requirements of the locally-agreed syllabus for religious education. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided are sound. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used effectively in English and mathematics. In subjects other than English, mathematics and science, the range of teaching and learning experiences is satisfactory. In several subjects where the subject co-ordinator has recently taken up position, the schemes of work are under review to improve the depth of subject provision. The limited evidence seen in some subjects indicated that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their skills, for example, in art and design.
24. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from a very good curriculum. Teachers and staff plan carefully to ensure that children soon acquire basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Support staff are fully involved in all areas of work in the Foundation Stage and make a significant contribution to the children's achievements. Role-play and creative activities need further development in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class to ensure that the skills children acquire in the Nursery are more fully extended.
25. There is good curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are identified as early as possible and individual educational plans are reviewed at regular intervals. Pupils have specific targets on their individual education plans to ensure they make good progress in learning. Their achievements are systematically recorded over time and most teachers make good use of this information to plan the next stage of pupils' learning, modifying sequences of lessons so that there is a close match between teaching and the various needs of these pupils. Pupils have full access to the curriculum and to educational visits. The work of the nurture group is effective in raising the self-esteem of pupils in the infant classes by providing them with opportunities to work in a small group. The small number of pupils whose first language is not English are well supported across the school and receive specific support to make the curriculum relevant to their needs.
26. The Pupil Development Centre is a very recent addition to the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs. It will cater specifically for pupils with emotional and behavioural learning needs. It will initially serve the needs of pupils in the school and, later, of pupils from other schools in the local education authority. An experienced teacher



of pupils with special educational needs has been appointed to lead this initiative, and she is also a member of the senior leadership team. The planning for the centre is at a formative stage, so no judgement has been made on the quality of provision it provides. It is, however, likely to support and enhance the existing good provision for pupils with special educational needs.

27. Provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education in the school is good. The Student Council meets regularly and older pupils are given increasing responsibilities. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn respect for the values and attitudes of other pupils and adults and to develop their own self-worth and confidence.
28. The curriculum is soundly enriched by the various activities provided for the pupils. These include a breakfast club, football, French and 'Fabric Fun'. 'Booster Clubs' are available for literacy and numeracy. A sound range of visits and visitors are used effectively to enhance the curriculum and to provide an extended range of learning opportunities. All pupils have access to these activities and benefit from them.
29. The teachers and learning support staff in all parts of the school are experienced and work effectively together to support the pupils' learning. The quantity and quality of resources are generally satisfactory, and resources are used appropriately. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory, and it is used effectively. A number of alterations have been made to the accommodation recently, which are having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning, for example, the ICT suite. The high number of staircases makes access for the disabled very difficult.

## **PUPILS' CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT**

The school's provision for the care, welfare and health and safety of pupils is good. The guidance and support for pupils is good. The involvement of pupils through seeking and valuing their views is good.

## **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The school is a safe and secure environment where pupils are well cared for and where they receive good pastoral support.
- Each pupil has a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, are well supported and fully included in the life and work of the school.

## **Commentary**

30. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and well-being of pupils are good, Members of staff are well aware of the welfare and medical needs of each of the pupils. Health and safety procedures fully comply with local authority and statutory requirements and members of the school management and governing body have a high level of awareness of this aspect. The school has a good child protection policy and its procedures meet the requirements of the local area committee. It exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care.
31. Pupil development is a priority for all staff and governors. The development of a 'Nurture Group', based upon an ethos of care and guidance, offering support to the social and emotional development of infant pupils, is much appreciated by both staff and parents.

The development of the Pupil Development Centre is also planned to support this work. The provision of a Breakfast Club, where pupils clearly enjoy the food and games provided for them, demonstrates clearly the care the school has for its pupils. .

32. Induction arrangements for pupils entering the school are good and include home visits. Transfer arrangements to the local secondary school are good and include visits by Year 6 pupils with their parents, co-ordinator meetings and the sharing of information. Year 6 pupils also regularly visit the receiving secondary school from January each year. The Excellence Cluster, led by Parkside Community School, has resulted in very good relationships between the two schools.
33. The friendliness and courtesy of the staff and the majority of pupils are a strong characteristic of the school. As a result, the school has been successful in developing good and trusting relationships between almost all of the pupils and staff. A small number of pupils have very low self-esteem which the staff are working extremely hard to remedy. The relationships between members of staff and the pupils contribute to the quality of the pupils' experiences and to the generally relaxed atmosphere seen in the school during the inspection.
34. In their questionnaire returns, the vast majority of pupils said they feel they have the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have concerns about their work, or a personal problem. Members of staff provide good responses to such requests and, through their good knowledge of pupils as individuals, provide well-informed support, advice and guidance.
35. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. Parents are regularly informed of their child's progress and are invited to their reviews each term. The systems in place support the good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

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

The majority of parents are happy with the school and the education it provides. Links with parents are **satisfactory** and the partnerships between the school, other schools and the community are **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The open door policy of the school.
- THE QUALITY OF INFORMATION PROVIDED FOR PARENTS IS GOOD.
- Parents are welcomed as volunteers in the school.
- Effective links with the Excellence in Cities initiative through the Excellence Cluster.

### **COMMENTARY**

36. The majority of parents see this as a good school where the staff are committed and care for their children. There are three parents' meetings each year, including one for parents to discuss the annual report. The report includes details of progress, achievement and targets and meets requirements. Pupils also complete an 'Achievements at School' report which includes their targets for the next year. Parents appreciate the open door policy of the school and the accessibility and approachability of the staff if they have any concerns. Each day they bring their children into the school and mix freely with staff and

other children. Parents' involvement in their children's learning is satisfactory. The headteacher and staff have worked hard to encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning, with some success, but there is a small persistent minority of parents who have not responded to the school's efforts.

37. The general information provided for parents is good. This includes regular newsletters from the headteacher giving general information and details of special awards given to pupils. Curriculum booklets, which tell parents what their children will be studying are sent home once a term. There is a comprehensive school prospectus and a well-written and informative Annual Governors' Report to Parents.
38. The Friends of William Rhodes School organise regular social and much appreciated fund-raising events. Parents regularly support school functions and celebrations and a number of parents work in the school as volunteers or help on educational visits. Each week a group of parents come into the school to make and prepare resources for the school.
39. Links with the community are good and these include the local clergy, police, the school nurse, the Chesterfield Forum, Sure-Start, a toddlers group and local shops. Parent governors also provide strong links between the community and the school. Visits and visitors provide good levels of enrichment of the curriculum and support pupils' personal and social development.
40. Strong links exist with the Parkside Community School as a part of the Excellence Cluster. Regular cluster meetings are held with Parkside and other primary school staff and strong cross-curricular links for science and ICT are being created. A recent successful Science Summer School was organised for gifted and talented pupils from the cluster.
41. There are effective links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, with liaison taking place on a regular basis. Parents discuss their child's progress and future targets. They are fully involved in target-setting and have regular informal opportunities to talk to the teachers.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **satisfactory** overall. The headteacher provides **good** leadership and the leadership of senior staff is **sound**. Management is **satisfactory**. Governors fulfil their role in leading and managing the school **satisfactorily**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is fully committed to continuing improvement. Her good leadership is raising standards and achievement.
- The school is self-evaluative: the headteacher and her colleagues identify areas for development and plans to move the school forward are managed effectively.
- Finances are managed efficiently and resources are deployed for the benefit of all pupils in the school.
- All staff are fully committed to inclusion.
- Some subject co-ordinators are insufficiently involved in raising standards in their areas of responsibility.

## Commentary

42. The headteacher provides good leadership. She is perceptive and caring and shows a strong commitment to raising standards in all areas of the school's work. She shows a clear-sighted sense of purpose and works closely with the deputy headteacher and other senior staff to form an effective team which plays a valuable role in the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher is a reassuring presence around the school and this is a major factor in improving the school's good ethos because she has an overview of all that the school provides. In her role as assessment co-ordinator, she has played a major role in establishing clear procedures for assessing, tracking and targeting pupils' progress in English and mathematics, procedures which are having a direct impact on raising pupils' levels of achievement across the school. She also leads the school's involvement in the Excellence in Cities initiative through the excellence cluster with other local schools. The work of the learning mentors through the nurture group is at an early stage of development and is beginning to impact positively on pupils' achievement in the infant classes. All adults in the school are given opportunities to contribute to learning and the general life of the school.
43. The headteacher recognises that her colleagues are a valuable resource. She has been successful in addressing the main weakness identified in the previous inspection – the lack of a stable and professional teaching staff. The professional development of staff is given priority, is managed carefully and is available to both teaching and non-teaching staff. As a result, all feel valued and part of the team. Teaching assistants play a very significant role in the school. They offer suggestions knowing that they will be treated seriously. Similarly, the two newly-qualified teachers appreciate the good support available to them, and equally value the knowledge that they are trusted to develop their own ideas in areas where they feel confident.
44. Efficient systems exist for identifying areas for development, taking action and then monitoring and evaluating the effect of these actions. The school improvement plan is an effective working document created after wide-ranging discussion and consultation, which contributes effectively to school improvement. All staff are fully committed to inclusion and this is a strength within the school.
45. The leadership of the various subject co-ordinators is satisfactory, although in some subjects they are not yet fully focused on raising standards of attainment. In English, mathematics and ICT co-ordinators are involved in monitoring the quality of provision to raise standards of attainment, whereas in other subjects this role is at an early stage of development. Provision has now been made for all subject co-ordinators to be released from class to fulfil this aspect of their role, but as yet there has been no impact of this provision as it is so early in the school year.
46. The leadership and management of pupils with special educational needs are effective. The co-ordinator is the deputy headteacher, who is enthusiastic, highly committed and well organised. She liaises closely with the headteacher and manages and organises provision to a good standard. The early identification of pupils with special educational needs has a very positive effect on their progress. She is currently liaising closely with the teacher responsible for the Pupil Development Centre over the management of pupils with specific emotional and behavioural difficulties.
47. Statutory requirements are fully met, and the governing body performs its role satisfactorily. It has recently experienced a period of instability with a high turnover and

vacancies among the personnel of the governing body. The chair of the governing body, along with a small group of governors, has worked extremely hard to maintain the governing body's role in the school. There is now a full complement of governors with a good range of expertise to work with the school. The governors share the headteacher's vision for the school and governors have a clear view of the strengths and areas for improvement. They are now fully involved in the school's development and adequately hold the school to account for its performance.

48. All points for action from the last auditor's report have been fully addressed. The school's finances are managed very efficiently by the headteacher and the school administrator. The principles of best value are applied effectively and the school considers its spending carefully, retaining a good level of staffing. Day-to-day administration and systems of financial control are both efficient and effective.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	543,322
Total expenditure	577,424
Expenditure per pupil	2,577

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	47,243
Balance carried forward to the next year	13,141

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

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

Most children begin the Nursery with levels of attainment that are well below average when compared with others in their age group, particularly in personal and social development and in speaking and listening skills. This is confirmed by initial assessments carried out with these young children. All the children attend part-time and spend up to five terms in the Nursery. At the time of the inspection, it was possible to observe the beneficial effects of the thorough and sensitive induction procedures and the very good teaching of the different groups of children in the Nursery. Many children who had spent more than a term in the Nursery displayed confident, independent attitudes and good social skills. As soon as they enter the Nursery, children begin to benefit from the very good provision. Activities are well planned to develop learning in all areas. Assessment and record-keeping procedures are very effective because information is used well to plan lessons. Careful targets are set for different groups, including those children who have special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented. As a result, they make rapid progress and achieve well by the end of the Reception class. Leadership and collaborative teamwork are strong. Support staff are fully involved in all areas of work in the Foundation Stage and make a significant contribution to the children's achievements. Role-play and creative activities need further development in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class to ensure that the skills children acquire in the Nursery are more fully extended. Given the very low attainment of many children on entry to the Nursery, the majority are unlikely to reach the expected levels by the end of the Reception class, although they will have made good progress towards them. In two out of the six areas of learning, - children's personal, social and emotional development and their physical development - most children will meet the learning goals because of the very good teaching and provision. The good standards of education for children in the Foundation Stage at the time of the previous inspection have been sustained and improved.

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

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

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

- Teaching and support are very good.
- Good relationships between children and adults.
- The development of independence and social skills.

#### **Commentary**

49. Children achieve very well and develop positive attitudes to learning in response to very good teaching and sensitive support. The very effective well-structured provision in the Nursery helps children to develop early independence and confidence. This is continued in the Reception class where most children make very good progress and are likely to reach the expected goals in this area of learning by the time they enter Year 1. In the Nursery, staff understand children's needs and good relationships develop quickly between adults and children. Teaching support by Nursery nurses throughout the Foundation Stage is very good and because of the high expectations, children are ready to join in activities and enjoy learning. Levels of personal independence develop very

well in the Nursery and are built upon in the Reception class, for example when children tidy away their own materials, and when they work on unsupervised activities or change for physical development lessons in the school hall. Evidence from lessons and from children's work and teachers' plans shows that children begin to understand the need for agreed values and codes of behaviour. Appropriate cautionary stories and rhymes which interest children are selected for this purpose. For example, in one lesson, the story of *The Cat in the Hat* led to a lively discussion during which Reception children contributed pertinent observations, reflecting their understanding of the need for rules.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good opportunities for children to develop speaking and listening skills.
- The positive contribution of teaching support staff.
- The good achievements of children with special educational needs.

### **Commentary**

50. Staff have high expectations for this area of learning and children achieve well as a result of the good teaching. Given the low starting-point when they enter the Nursery, most children are unlikely to meet the expected levels at the end of Reception, but they will make good progress towards them. In the Nursery, staff plan interesting activities which children want to talk about. Resources for a jungle topic included a tree house, a swamp containing toy alligators, wild animal costumes and an exotic African rain stick. This provision for exciting play activities stimulated the discovery of new words which children quickly incorporated into their spoken vocabulary. Reinforcement of the need to listen carefully takes place through group activities and discussions. During the inspection, children in the Nursery and Reception class were observed sitting quietly and concentrating as staff engaged them in a variety of enjoyable experiences such as examining different kinds of fruit or listening to an exciting story. From the start, children are encouraged to take an interest in the written word and recognise some initial letter sounds. In the Reception class, a few children attempt to write words and short sentences independently. The effective teaching of phonic skills and reading enable them to spell out, or write, short words correctly for themselves, such as 'ape' and 'ant', and to find words that rhyme, such as 'bed' and 'red'. The teacher uses a large hand puppet, whose 'voice' she mimics, to aid concentration and make learning fun. The support of non-teaching assistants in group work contributes significantly to children's achievements, particularly those who have special educational needs.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The early progress in counting and number.
- Assessment of progress to help children improve.
- Challenge for gifted and talented children.

## Commentary

51. Provision for mathematical development is always carefully planned and children achieve well. Good teaching and purposeful play activities, number rhymes and songs contribute to children's growing knowledge and understanding of number, size, shape and measures. Some children have a natural ability with mathematics and staff capitalise on this. However, most children are unlikely to meet the expected levels for mathematical development by the time they enter Year 1 and will need more time to do so. They will, however, have made good progress towards them. Once they settle into the Nursery, children achieve well and those of average and higher ability can count accurately up to 10 everyday objects. A gifted and talented register ensures that children of higher ability are properly challenged. Several Nursery children could recognise the 'square' and the 'triangle' shapes in a stepping stone game and are aware of pattern. All staff consistently check children's progress and provide good experiences, guidance and support to help them to improve their work. In the Reception class, children identify numerals to 20. They learn about the correct order and recognise when one number in a sequence is missing. By the end of the Reception Year, some higher-attaining children complete written calculations such as finding 2 more than 4, totalling the amount of coins in a purse and comparing accurately terms such as 'heavier' and 'lighter' and 'taller' and 'shorter'.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of children's curiosity and observation skills is good.
- Some activities in the Reception class do not extend learning sufficiently.

## Commentary

52. Most children enter school with a limited knowledge of the world around them. The varied range of activities and good teaching develop curiosity and observation skills. Children make good progress and achieve well, but only a few will meet the expected goals by the end of the Reception class. Nursery children find out about the features in their own environment and that of other people of the world, as a result of the lively exciting provision. They learn about life in Thailand and the African jungle. They collect and taste the fruits of other countries and compare them with those that are more familiar. They examine a Thai sunshade made out of bamboo and hand-made paper and reproduce their own realistic models. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children are taught to select and use a wide range of tools and collage materials and, with support, are able to design and make attractive composite pictures. From the outset, children in the Foundation Stage become familiar with the use of technology such as computers and language centres. Many children are able to use the mouse, keyboard and cursor with reasonable competence and can complete simple programs on the computer independently by the end of Reception. In the Reception class, some role-play and practical activities are insufficiently developed to extend further the skills children acquire earlier.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT



Provision for physical development is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High expectations of children's independence.
- Children's developing skills during physical education lessons.

### **Commentary**

53. Children's achievement is very good overall and because of the very good provision and teaching for this area of learning, most children are likely to meet the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year. Outdoor play in the Nursery involves wide-ranging activities to develop children's physical co-ordination. Children show increasing control in using equipment for climbing, scrambling and sliding. They use a good range of large and small apparatus with confidence. Both Nursery and Reception children paint, draw, construct and learn to handle and manipulate a wide range of tools and materials safely and with increasing independence. In the Reception class, children respond well as a result of the teacher's high expectations. They prepare sensibly and safely for physical development lessons in the school hall. They are aware of the effects of physical activity on their bodies and are beginning to understand how good practices with regard to exercise, eating, sleeping and hygiene can contribute to good health. Most children have improving co-ordination skills and were observed to be able to control a ball accurately for their age, using hands and feet. They displayed good and unselfish use of space. Physical development lessons are well managed; children listen and follow instructions carefully and behaviour is good.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Imaginative planning for a wide range of creative skills.
- Good, varied range of learning experiences.

### **Commentary**

54. Teachers are well supported by dedicated and experienced Nursery nurses. Planning is imaginative and all staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the wide range of skills children need in order to develop creatively in the early years. Children learn to use colour, shape and form and to experiment with different textures in 2D and 3D. A few children will meet the expected levels by the end of the Reception class, but the majority will not. Most children achieve well and make good progress, as a result of the good teaching for this area of learning. Nursery and Reception children decorate their classroom and corridor with an array of attractive artwork of a good standard. During lively music sessions, children sing favourite songs tunefully and can tap out simple rhythms using a good range of percussion instruments. Reception children use various materials for different purposes and experiment to create interesting textures and effects, for example when printing patterns with the wheels of a toy bulldozer. Occasionally there

are insufficient opportunities for children to extend their creative skills further in the Reception/ Year 1 class.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **satisfactory** with good features.

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

- Pupils' progress is satisfactory.
- Last year's Year 6 pupils underachieved because they did not have enough time to make up for the unsatisfactory progress they made in previous years.
- Achievement has improved in the infant classes in recent years.
- Guided reading is well managed and improving standards of attainment in reading.
- Pupils' limited vocabulary affects their ability to express and develop their ideas.
- There is a specific focus on writing to raise pupils' standards of attainment.
- Assessment procedures are good at identifying targets for pupils to work towards, but marking does not always make clear to pupils what the next step in their learning is.
- The subject co-ordinator is focused on raising standards of attainment and achievement.

#### **Commentary**

55. Standards of attainment in English seen during the inspection were well below the average for most pupils at age eleven and below the average at age seven. Since the previous inspection there has been satisfactory progress overall in improving standards of attainment by age 11.
56. Pupils in the infant classes are making better progress because of improved teaching and the impact of the strategies put in place as a result of the previous inspection. Reading resources have been improved and guided reading has provided a consistent approach to pupils' development. In all classes, all pupils have writing targets, which are regularly monitored and pupils' progress towards them assessed. The progress pupils were making in all classes at the time of the inspection was satisfactory and achievement is improving. Progress is also good for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language.
57. At the age of 11, there was some improvement in the 2003 national tests, but the indications from the 2004 tests are that standards are still well below average, although the group of pupils involved had suffered severe disruption to their education because of staff turnover when they were in Years 4 and 5. The current Year 6 group are currently working at levels well below those expected and their achievement is unsatisfactory because they have not had sufficient time to make up lost ground. In the 2003 tests for pupils at age seven, pupils attained standards below average in reading and in line with the average in writing, with good achievement in comparison with pupils in similar schools. The indications are that in the 2004 tests, standards of attainment in writing have been maintained in line with the average and in reading they improved to be in line with the average. Standards seen during the inspection were below average because there are a large number of pupils in the current Year 2 class with special educational needs.

58. At the ages of both seven and 11, pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average. Pupils progress, and achieve, satisfactorily. Teachers effectively plan speaking and listening opportunities into lessons. Year 2 pupils responded well with their talk partners to a task where they were devising their own roles for characters in a nursery rhyme. It is a lack of vocabulary which restricts pupils' ability to give extended responses. In Year 6, pupils engaged well with partners when talking about similes and metaphors but their limited vocabulary affected the pace of learning of average ability pupils.
59. Standards of attainment in reading are below average, both at seven and at eleven. Pupils are making good progress in their reading through the guided reading sessions. Most pupils read accurately with varying degrees of fluency and understanding. Understanding is improving through guided reading. In Year 2, 'one-to-one' support from adults helps pupils develop strategies for reading difficult words and pupils are challenged to predict what will happen and recount their understanding of main themes. Year 6 pupils read with accuracy and fluency, but little expression. Higher-attaining pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the main themes and characters in the stories they are reading, whilst average-attaining pupils are more limited in their understanding.
60. Standards of attainment in writing are below average at the age of seven and well below average at the age of eleven. Pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily by the age of seven. For pupils in the junior classes, they are now making satisfactory progress but their overall achievement is unsatisfactory because they have not had sufficient time to make up ground lost in previous years. Writing is a main focus in the school which aims to raise standards of attainment and improve pupils' levels of achievement. Important strategies which the school has put in place to achieve this are:
- A consistent approach to the use and application of basic punctuation, spelling and the organisation of writing.
  - The use of writing targets with all pupils and the moderation of pupils' writing by staff.
  - Targeting pupils for higher levels in Year 2 and Year 6.
  - Planned opportunities for extended writing in a range of different genres and in other subjects.
  - Opportunities to discuss ideas and develop vocabulary with talk partners.
61. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good, particularly in the infant classes, Year 3 and Year 6. Analysis of pupils' work for the previous school year indicates good teaching in the infant classes and satisfactory teaching in the junior classes. Most pupils show positive attitudes to their learning and concentrate extremely well, although a small minority of pupils do challenge teachers with their behaviour. These pupils are well managed by teachers and support staff. Assessment procedures are good overall and pupils have targets for their learning, which are regularly monitored. The marking of pupils' day-to-day work is thorough, but it does not always indicate to pupils what they need to do next to improve their work. The main characteristics of the good and effective teaching are as follows:
- Good levels of enthusiasm from teachers and a brisk pace to learning.
  - Good use of teaching assistants to support individual pupils and groups of pupils.
  - Good use of stimulus to engage pupils' interest and develop their ideas - for example, the use of a glove puppet in Year 3.
  - Planning of a range of activities to develop pupils' basic skills.
  - High expectations, both of pupils' learning and their behaviour.

- Thorough planning which meets the needs of different abilities, including those of pupils with special educational needs and those of lower- and higher-attaining pupils in all classes.
62. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject co-ordinator has recently taken up the post, but she has a clear view of standards across the school in different aspects of the subject, based on her monitoring of provision. She has identified writing as the key area in need of improvement and this is reflected in the action plan she has drawn up to improve standards of attainment. It contains several strategies to improve standards of attainment in pupils' writing. Most of these strategies are already in place and are beginning to have an impact. Reading resources have improved since the previous inspection and the overall quality of learning resources is satisfactory.

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

63. Provision for language and literacy across the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge and use of subject terminology in different subjects. They are given satisfactory opportunities to write for different purposes, for example in science, history, geography and ICT.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

### **MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES**

- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and, as a result, achievement is improving across the school.
- Achievement is still unsatisfactory in Year 6, because those pupils have not had sufficient time to make up lost ground.
- The teaching assistants have a positive impact on the pupils' learning.
- Behaviour management is good.
- The pupils' positive attitudes to learning ensure good progress is made.
- The quality of assessment is good and this is used effectively to plan work and set class and group targets, which ensure that all pupils know what they must do to improve.
- The co-ordinator is effective in working to raise pupils' levels of achievement.

## **COMMENTARY**

64. The standards of attainment for pupils at the end of Year 6 are well below average. This is a similar picture to that seen in the previous inspection in 2002 and by HMI in June 2003. There was some improvement in the 2003 test results, but the indications are that in the 2004 test results the trend of well below average standards has continued. Analysis of work produced by last year's Year 6 pupils shows that progress over time was poor. For Year 6 pupils last year, there was severe disruption to the quality of their education when they were in the lower and middle junior classes because of high staff turnover and instability. Achievement is still unsatisfactory in Year 6 because the pupils have not had sufficient time to make up lost ground in terms of their performance in tests. However, lesson observations during the inspection show that there is now good progress made in

lessons, indicating improvement in standards of work, with higher-attaining pupils making good progress through appropriate levels of challenge.

65. At the end of Year 2, the 2003 tests showed pupils' standards of attainment to be in line with the national average. The indications of the provisional results for pupils in the 2004 tests show that standard are now below average but that a satisfactory level of achievement has been maintained. The high number of pupils with special educational needs in this year's Year 2 means that standards are still below the national average. However, the progress shown over the past two years is being maintained.
66. The standard of teaching is generally good, and two lessons seen were very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In most lessons observed, all pupils were given work that was planned effectively to ensure good progress in their learning. The overall quality of assessment is good. School, class, group and individual targets are set to ensure that all pupils know what they must do to improve. Teaching assistants play a very positive role within all classrooms, and are equally committed to raising achievement.
67. Pupils' attitudes are generally good, and in many lessons they are very good. Because of the good teaching, pupils are interested in the subject and most try hard. They co-operate and work constructively together, and in many lessons, opportunities are provided for them to share ideas and learn from each other. A small minority of pupils have behavioural difficulties, but these are generally managed very effectively.
68. The subject co-ordinator is effective and is working effectively to improve standards across the school. Assessment, tracking and target-setting procedures are focused clearly on helping pupils to raise their level of attainment. She is fully aware of the main areas in need of development and has an appropriate action plan in place to address these areas for improvement in pupils' learning. The quality and quantity of resources are satisfactory.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

69. The use of mathematics in other subjects is **satisfactory**. Numeracy is developing appropriately in other subjects. In science, for example, pupils use a variety of graphs to present information. In geography they learn about co-ordinates, and data handling skills are developing appropriately in ICT.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and for whom English is not their first language, make satisfactory progress.
- Pupil achievement is unsatisfactory because they have not had enough time to make up lost ground.
- The management of pupils' behaviour is good.
- The teaching assistants have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
- The management role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped.

## COMMENTARY

70. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is not their first language, make satisfactory progress. Standards for those pupils in the current Year 6 are well below average, based on an analysis of their work and observation of lessons. This is similar to the results of the 2003 national tests, which were also well below average. The indications from the results of the 2004 tests is that standards for the previous Year 6 were also well below average, with very few pupils attaining the higher than expected levels. Pupils' achievement, on the evidence of the inspection therefore, is still unsatisfactory, because these pupils have not yet had enough time to make up lost ground. Pupil progress in Year 2 is satisfactory, although standards of attainment are below average because there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Standards in the 2003 teacher assessments were below average and the indications from the 2004 teacher assessments are that standards continue to be below average.
71. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching. Where teaching is good, learning has a brisk pace and tasks are well matched to pupils' different abilities. Pupils are well motivated by tasks that involve them through first-hand experience. Teaching assistants have a positive impact on pupils' learning. Relationships are invariably strong and pupils are always encouraged to do their best. When given the opportunity, pupils co-operate very well, helping and supporting each other. Pupils have positive attitudes to science and they enjoy the subject. In just a few lessons, the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils affected the progress in learning for the class. However, overall behaviour management is good. Assessment procedures are developing effectively. The use of information and communication technology within the subject is developing well in Year 6, where pupils have investigated the importance of different foods.
72. Although the inspection was early in the new school year, there are displays in a number of classrooms which effectively reinforce the science covered. These include one on materials and their properties in Years 3 and 4, a graph of 'Favourite Foods' in the 'café' area in Year 2 and 'Keeping Healthy' posters in Years 5 and 6. These indicate that there is satisfactory development of the learning opportunities in the programmes of study.
73. The leadership of the subject co-ordinator is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a sound understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. These are encompassed in an action plan for development, including further development of opportunities for pupils to improve their skills of enquiry and investigation through practical science. Her management role is insufficiently developed at present, although she now has time allocated to allow her to monitor teaching and pupils' work. The quality and quantity of resources are satisfactory.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There has been a good improvement in provision since the previous inspection.
- Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, based on the evidence available.
- There is good leadership and management.
- Assessment procedures are in place but have not been formalised to systematically record pupils' progress.

## **Commentary**

74. Pupils' standards in ICT are broadly in line with the average both at age seven and 11. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue, make satisfactory progress. This represents a good improvement since the previous inspection, when pupils' attainment at both age seven and eleven was judged to be well below average. The areas for improvement in 2002 have been fully addressed - staff are more confident in their delivery of the ICT requirements and there is a full range of software to match the demands of the scheme of work. In addition, there is a dedicated ICT suite and all classes have regular, timetabled lessons aimed at developing pupils' ICT skills and capabilities. The evidence of pupils' attainment during the inspection was limited because it is early in the school year. Most of the evidence available related to pupils' achievements in the communication strand of the subject. From the lessons observed and the analysis of pupils' work, it is clear that pupils' basic skills have improved and that the scheme of work is much more thoroughly planned to provide the necessary coverage of all aspects of the programmes of study and develop pupils' learning continuously and progressively.
75. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate basic levels of ability in a number of different aspects of the subject. They word-process confidently and show the ability to edit and amend text. They use shape and repeat tools in their graphics work and combine images with text in some of their work. Pupils in the junior classes make sound progress in undertaking the use of a range of different applications to develop their knowledge and understanding. By Year 6, pupils undertake their own Internet research and import digital images into a text document. They produce database files on British monarchs and create simple spreadsheets in which they use simple formulae to plan for a party. In their control work, they input instructions into a program to operate a clown model.
76. The quality of teaching and learning, observed through lessons and the analysis of pupils' work, is satisfactory. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and apply it to provide pupils with appropriate learning experiences which build on their prior learning. In the ICT suite, good use is made of demonstration to show pupils exactly what is expected of them and most pupils, as a result, are clear about what they need to do. Pupils' learning is satisfactory. They are given sufficient time to practise their skills and most show sound knowledge and understanding of the programs they are using. Some pupils, however, for example in Year 6, are not as confident in some aspects of the work. Most pupils show good attitudes to learning with computers. They work well at the computers, either independently or in pairs, and respond quickly and enthusiastically when the class teacher involves them in the lesson.
77. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The headteacher is currently the subject co-ordinator, supported by a newly-qualified teacher who will take over the responsibility in due course. The scheme of work has been reviewed, provides more

thorough coverage of the statutory requirements and builds on pupils' prior learning experiences. The headteacher monitored all teachers in the ICT suite and, as a result, identified the need to improve the use of the interactive whiteboard. Assessment procedures have been put in place although there is, as yet, no formal process for recording pupils' achievement in ICT.

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

78. The use of ICT across the curriculum is **satisfactory**. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use ICT in a range of curriculum areas and are also beginning to make more use of ICT to support their teaching through the use of interactive whiteboards. In a number of subjects, the further improvement of ICT and the improvement in ICT programs for subjects have been identified as an area for development - for example, in geography. During the inspection evidence was seen of the use of ICT to support pupils' learning in English, mathematics, science, history, religious education and design and technology.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' social and moral development.
- The subject's contribution to their spiritual development is underdeveloped.
- There are good links with literacy.
- Assessment procedures are underdeveloped.
- There is a good range of resources, including books and artefacts.

### **Commentary**

79. Discussion with pupils in Year 6 indicates that although their achievement is sound, standards of attainment are below the levels expected in the locally-agreed syllabus. For example, they are only just beginning to link religious teaching with their own lives. They know, for instance, that some of the Bible stories provide us with examples of how to be caring and considerate to others. Links to pupils' spiritual development are underdeveloped. Whilst they learn the facts about different religions, pupils are not given enough opportunities to consider ideas and differences of faith and belief.

80. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where the teaching is effective, good use is made of links with literacy such as discussion and writing. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on why the Bible is important to Christians, it explored how a Christian, Mary Jones, used the Bible to guide her through life. Pupils linked this to their own experiences of life and some talked about the importance of having a religious belief. They worked effectively in pairs on oral and writing activities. The lesson made a significant contribution to the pupils' social and moral development. In the other lesson observed, greater depth could have been given to pupils'



learning about special religious meals by considering a broader range of foods and their purpose. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support learning, with pupils word-processing some of their work

81. The religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the locally-agreed syllabus. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is aware of the need for staff development, monitoring and evaluation. Some teachers do not have the confidence to discuss the broader and deeper meanings of the religions being studied. Resources are good, with artefacts and books on all religions being studied. There are limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the subject to enable the co-ordinator to have a clear picture of standards across the school. Assessment procedures are currently underdeveloped.

## Geography

82. No lessons were observed during the inspection, so evidence was gained from an analysis of pupils' work, curriculum plans, and a discussion with the subject co-ordinator. From this limited evidence, the provision in geography is **satisfactory** and pupils achieve satisfactorily, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. There is satisfactory coverage of the programmes of study with a satisfactory balance between increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of people and places, and developing their geographical skills. Opportunities to develop literacy skills are used; for example key terminology in their rivers topic by Year 6 pupils and postcards from the seaside by Year 2 pupils in their 'Seaside' topic. Numeracy skills are applied to drawing maps of pupils' routes from home to school and developing their understanding of co-ordinates. The use of ICT to support pupils' learning is not yet fully developed.
83. Pupils in Year 2 show sound understanding in their work of the similarities and differences between Chesterfield and the seaside. They express their likes and dislikes of the local environment and produce maps and plans of their classroom and the local area around the school. By Year 6, most pupils have continued to progress satisfactorily and show understanding of rivers, applying key terms such as 'precipitation' in their correct context. They make appropriate comparisons between Chesterfield and a contrasting locality, Skegness. The curriculum co-ordinator provides sound leadership and has identified appropriate priorities for development, including the development of resources to improve pupils' geographical skills. She does have release time to monitor the quality of provision in the subject, but this is at an early stage of development.

## History

84. One lesson was observed during the inspection, in Year 6, and evidence was gained from an analysis of pupils' work, curriculum plans, and a discussion with the subject co-ordinator. From this limited evidence, the provision in history is **satisfactory** and pupils achieve satisfactorily, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Analysis of pupils' work shows that in both the infant classes, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their historical knowledge and understanding through their study of the past. Visits are used effectively to enrich pupils' learning experiences, for example a visit to the Black Country Museum by Year 5 and Year 6 pupils in their work on the Victorians.
85. In Year 2, most pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the differences between the past and the present in their topics and draw simple conclusions about life in the past, such as that 'they had no electricity'. By Year 6, most pupils show appropriate

understanding about change over time in Victorian Chesterfield. They describe characteristic features of life in the Victorian period, and make satisfactory use of opportunities for biographical work, empathising, for example, with the 'Life of a chimney sweep' to deepen their understanding. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership and management. She has begun to monitor pupils' progress by regularly sampling the work of three 'nominated' pupils and has established a procedure for assessing pupils' progress after each topic they study.

## **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

During the inspection, insufficient work was seen in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education to make overall judgements about provision across the school.

### **Art and design**

86. A survey of pupils' work and the small number of lessons seen indicate that by the age of seven, pupils have explored an appropriate range of art and design styles and techniques. They decorate their classrooms and corridors with colourful and attractive paintings and collage pictures. Year 1 pupils make hedgehog designs using straws and sticks. In Year 2, pupils are encouraged to use their imagination to build up a composite picture around a cutout object such as a 'bird' or a 'palace'. Some observational drawing takes place, but opportunities for pupils to develop drawing skills further are limited. By the age of 11, pupils have explored ideas and collected visual and other information to develop their work. Art is used effectively across the curriculum to make collages of Viking ships in history and skeletons in science. The inspection took place during the second week of the school year when very little art was seen in junior classrooms. Simple sketchbooks are used in some classes and encourage pupils to adapt and improve their work. These include a satisfactory standard of computer-generated pictures. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop and extend further their art and design skills. The role of the co-ordinator is currently at an early stage of review and development. Procedures for assessing art and design and monitoring teaching are in place but have not yet been put into practice.

### **Design and technology**

87. No lessons were seen in design and technology. A survey of work done demonstrates that pupils generate ideas soundly and know what to do next, based on their experience of working with materials and components. Older pupils collect and use information, use labelled sketches and models, and pay attention to the quality of finish and function. By the age of seven, pupils make controllable vehicles, using construction kits. Older pupils develop this work. They recently took part in a challenge with other schools and won an award. They were required to make a vehicle that was controllable and would move up a ramp. A model of an Apache helicopter for the US army, with a variety of functions, was designed and made by Year 6 pupils. Pupils construct shelters, such as a tent, to be used for a particular purpose. Designs are carefully labelled and written accounts demonstrate that pupils are aware of the constraints associated with the use of different materials and techniques. Food technology includes designing and making fun-shaped open sandwiches. Pupils use their own recipes to make scones. The co-ordinator for design and technology works closely with the teacher responsible for art and design. Their roles are being developed and procedures for assessing design and technology and monitoring teaching are in place. These will be put into practice later in the year.

## Music

88. In **music**, there was too little evidence to be able to evaluate overall provision. Pupils experience a suitable programme of activities. Year 6 pupils spoke enthusiastically about their music lessons. They enjoy listening to music and singing songs. However, singing in assembly, although enthusiastic, lacked expression. Throughout the school year, pupils have the opportunity to perform in a number of musical activities such as the celebrations of major religious festivals, school productions and performances. The boys were particularly enthusiastic about their forthcoming participation in a musical workshop at the local community school. Some pupils benefit from the chance to learn to play brass instruments, and musicians visit the school to give the pupils opportunities to listen to accomplished performances

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

89. **Physical education was sampled** during the inspection, so no judgement is made on provision, standards of pupils' work or the overall quality of teaching.
90. Two lessons were seen. The quality of teaching and learning in both lessons was satisfactory. In one lesson, pupils performed different movement patterns and in the other, throwing skills were developed appropriately. In both, pupils made sound progress in their work. Although behaviour management is good, the behaviour of a very small minority of pupils affected progress in one of the lessons. The leadership of the subject co-ordinator is satisfactory, although her management role is underdeveloped.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL, HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP (PHSEC)

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Pupils undertake a good range of responsibilities enthusiastically.
- Pupils discuss feelings and share their views with others sensibly.

### Commentary

91. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to learn respect for the values and attitudes of other pupils and adults and to develop their own self-worth and confidence. They are accustomed to discussing school rules and how they can be improved. Many pupils are articulate and listen to the views of others. Younger pupils understand well the rules of 'Circle Time', that they never speak when someone else is speaking or make fun of another person's views. Older pupils enjoy discussing issues and making decisions when faced with a moral dilemma such as when a friend is tempted to steal. During discussion, they consider some of the reasons for inspecting schools and feel that it is important to 'find out if schools are as good as they should be'. Pupils have good opportunities to take on responsibility. An active student council operates in the school. It is an effective forum for debate and decision-making and has its own budget. Currently this stands at £60, which is to be spent on books for the school. A recent school visit to a

local shopping centre focused on the effects of dropping litter. Pupils selected and measured a small area of ground and counted the chewing gum stains. They compared their findings in different locations and reflected on the health and environmental implications.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>6</b>
Pupils' achievement	5
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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