

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hednesford, Cannock

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124252

Headteacher: Mr Andrew Cook

Lead inspector: Mr Malcolm J Weaver

Dates of inspection: 7-11 June 2004

Inspection number: 257938

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4-11
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 416

School address: Reservoir Road
Hednesford
Cannock
Staffordshire

Postcode: WS12 1BE

Telephone number: 01543 512400

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Keith Jordan

Date of previous inspection: June 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the outskirts of Hednesford in an average socio-economic area with the attainment of children on entry to school being average. The school has 416 boys and girls with slightly more boys than girls on roll, including 53 children attending the Reception classes full time. The majority of children entering the Reception year have previously received some form of pre-school education. The greater majority of pupils are of white-British heritage with only seven pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Three children speak English as an additional language but none receive funded support or are at an early stage of learning English. Thirty pupils have special educational needs. Proportionally, this is well below average. The majority of pupils with special educational needs have specific or moderate learning difficulties. Four pupils have a statement of special educational needs and this is broadly average. The proportion of pupils that are eligible for a free school meal, six per cent, is below average. The number of pupils joining the school after the Reception year and leaving before the end of Year 6 is low. The school recently gained the bronze level Eco School award. The headteacher has been in post for one year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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32447	L Bradbury	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language
19897	A Evans	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Information and communication technology Physical education
10611	M James	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English Design and technology

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This good school has made rapid improvement since the appointment of the new headteacher. Standards are now average in English and science and above average in mathematics. Teaching is good overall, with examples of very good practice taking place. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher provides very good leadership overall and has brought an excellent and sharply focused vision for the school's development; key senior members of staff are very effective in their roles.
- Standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology have improved significantly over the last year.
- Standards in music are below average.
- Provision in the Reception year is good overall but there are too few resources in this year group for the children's physical development outdoors.
- The role of many subject leaders is not fully developed and governors are not sufficiently involved in setting the school's direction.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good and enables them to achieve well.
- The caring Christian ethos provides very well for pupils' moral and social development and personal welfare, resulting in pupils' very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships.
- Pupils' awareness of living in a multi-cultural society is underdeveloped.

The school has made good progress since the time of the last inspection. A three-year trend of considerable underachievement in tests in English and mathematics has been reversed during the current year. Very effective strategies have been implemented for improving the quality of teaching. Significant improvement has been made in the quality and use of assessment in English and mathematics, resulting in good achievement and much higher standards in these two subjects. Substantial improvement has been achieved in information and communication technology following the introduction of much improved resources and new teaching methods.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	D	D	E
Mathematics	D	E	E	E
Science	C	D	C	E

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average; E is very low. Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement is good. Standards in English, mathematics and science have risen significantly during the current year. In the Reception year, standards are above average in all of the areas except physical development, where standards are average. In Year 2, standards are above average in reading, writing, listening and speaking, mathematics, art and design, geography, history and religious education, and average in science and information and communication

technology. In Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics, art and design, geography, history and religious education, and average in all other subjects except for music, where they are below average. Pupils of all abilities are achieving well because of the effective implementation of many good strategies to improve the teaching and the curriculum introduced over the last year. The early indications of the 2004 test results in Year 2 and Year 6 support these findings and show good improvement compared to previous years.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, social and moral development and relationships are very good. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory but most pupils' awareness of other cultures is underdeveloped. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching is good, and examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection. Reception children make a good start to their learning and this is built upon well in Year 1. Pupils' learning is good throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Assessment of pupils' work in English, mathematics and information and communication technology is good but systems are not sufficiently developed in most of the other subjects to enable staff to be fully aware of the standards being achieved. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities that are enhanced by many visits to places of interest and by visitors to school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management. Weaknesses in teaching have been rigorously dealt with and staff confidence and morale has been raised. He is very effectively supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher and key senior staff but the role of several subject leaders is underdeveloped. Governors are very supportive of the school and, although not sufficiently involved in its strategic development, receive good information to help them to improve their role. They fulfil statutory duties well and there is full compliance with all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value the support and care shown to their children. Pupils enjoy school; they know how to improve and say that learning is fun. Inspectors agree with these findings.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise standards in music.
- Improve the provision for children in the Foundation Stage to learn through physical activity outdoors.
- Develop further the leadership and management role of subject coordinators.
- Develop and implement effective assessment arrangements for all subjects that currently do not have them.
- Improve the provision for pupils' multi-cultural awareness.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is good overall. During the current school year, standards in Years 1 to 6 have improved in the key subjects of English, mathematics and information and communication technology. Pupils throughout the school achieve well because of the improved quality of teaching. Standards in the Reception classes are above average in all areas of learning except physical development and children achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 6 are above average in mathematics, geography, history and religious education.
- Standards in information and communication technology have improved and are now average throughout the school but standards in music are below average in Year 6.
- Standards in Year 2 are above average in reading, writing, mathematics, art and design, geography, history and religious education.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.8 (26.3)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	25.2 (25.1)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.5 (27.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 52 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The results for Year 6 pupils in the 2003 national tests were below average in English, well below average in mathematics and average in science. Year 6 pupils' rate of improvement has remained below the national trend over the last five years. When compared to schools with similar numbers of free school meals, standards have consistently been below or well below average over the last five years in each of the three subjects. When compared to the standards they achieved when they were in Year 2, their progress was poor. This trend of underachievement has been rigorously addressed by the headteacher; improved teaching and expectation now clearly shows that underachievement has been halted, standards have risen and pupils are now achieving well.
2. The inspection findings show that the headteacher's specific focus on driving up standards and the quality of the initiatives he has introduced have led to substantial improvement since his appointment in 2003. These initiatives have significantly improved the quality of teaching and the quality and use of the assessment of pupils' work to shape the subsequent lessons, especially in English and mathematics. Less focus has been placed on science where standards remain average. Standards have improved in information and communication technology and are now average because of the introduction of good quality equipment and an improved confidence in teachers' skills. The effective strategies

implemented in English, mathematics and information and communication technology have also been used well to raise standards to above average in art and design, geography and history. However, standards in music are below average because teachers' skills and knowledge are underdeveloped and their confidence is weak, resulting in pupils making unsatisfactory progress. Standards are average in all other subjects inspected in full.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.4 (14.6)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	14.6 (13.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.1 (14.8)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 60 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. In Year 2, the results of the national tests in 2003 were below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. This shows an improvement in standards attained over the two preceding years, where standards were well below average overall in all three subjects. However, when compared to similar schools standards remained well below average in all three subjects over the last three years and on occasions were in the bottom five per cent nationally in reading and mathematics.
4. Current standards in Year 2 are now above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening and mathematics. This demonstrates very good progress over the last year, following the initiatives introduced by the headteacher that have led to an improved quality of teaching. Standards are above average in geography and history, while standards in science are average.
5. Standards in the Reception class exceed the national goals for early learning in all areas except physical development, which match the national goals and are lower than the other areas because a lack of outdoor resources limits the progress that children might otherwise make. Overall, this demonstrates good progress because of the consistently good teaching when taking into account children's average level of attainment on entry.
6. The headteacher has been particularly effective in driving up standards throughout each key stage while fully ensuring that the good school ethos is maintained. Strategies have placed clear emphasis on an improved quality of teaching that provides work for all pupils that is well matched to their individual learning needs. As a result, all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs and, those with English as an additional language. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well in English and mathematics but more challenge could be given in science, geography and religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very good. Their behaviour is very good and no pupils have been excluded from school during the last year. Pupils' moral and social development is very good, while their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory; their multi-cultural awareness is underdeveloped. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils display very well developed, positive attitudes and good behaviour that support their learning well.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development motivates them to work hard and enjoy school.
- Pupils' awareness of living in a multi-cultural society is underdeveloped.
- Relationships between pupils and teachers are very good.
- Attendance is above the national average.

Commentary

- Children in the Reception classes settle to their work quickly, understand the routines and expectations and develop very good attitudes and behaviour. They are keen to undertake roles of responsibility such as clearing away and returning the register to the school office. They listen well to their teachers, offer their ideas and are keen to become involved in the many activities provided. The effective support they receive enables them to develop their social and emotional skills very well, exceeding the goals expected of them by the time they enter Year 1.
- Pupils in Years 1 to 6 enjoy school because of the interest shown in them and respect paid to them by teachers and adults in school. Pupils are enthusiastic, respond well to questions and instructions and work hard to do their best. Their very good behaviour and good interaction with adults and classmates ensure that they develop their social skills very well. Pupils have very good understanding of right from wrong and show respect for people and property. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory overall. They are taught well in religious education and acts of collective worship contribute well their awareness of spiritual aspects of life. Pupils receive satisfactory support in learning about British culture and mostly study Western European artists in art and design but they have too few links with other cultures to enable them to develop an effective awareness of living in a multi-cultural society.
- The high quality of relationships throughout the school ensures very good collaboration between pupils, and children in the Reception year, when working in pairs and in groups where they share resources well. They support each other effectively and provide good encouragement and sincere praise when their classmates do well. Pupils' behaviour is very good throughout the school and when playing in the small playgrounds. They value their friendships with adults and other classmates and develop very good social qualities. No disruptive behaviour was observed during the inspection and the good quality support from a teaching assistant for a pupil with known behavioural difficulties enabled the child to fit in and learn well.
- Attendance has improved during the current school year and is now good. Unauthorised absence is below average. Pupils arrive in school punctually and lessons start on time. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and punctuality are effective.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.7	School data :	0.1
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The overall teaching is good with some good examples of high quality teaching seen during the inspection. The school provides a good curriculum with a wide variety of enrichment activities. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well because of the good quality support provided for them.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is now good overall. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Assessment systems are good in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and in the Reception year but are underdeveloped elsewhere.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good, and often very good in many classes, and is having a positive impact on raising standards.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge overall and plan lessons effectively.
- The effective use of assessment in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and Reception ensures work is well matched to pupils' individual abilities.
- Teaching for pupils in the Reception classes is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress.

Commentary

11. The quality of teaching remains good overall, as reported at the time of the last inspection, and has improved in some important areas. The work provided in all subjects is now matched to the individual abilities of all pupils, with higher-attaining pupils receiving well-planned work. Standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology have risen rapidly over the last year as a direct result of these effective strategies, including the teaching of pupils in similar ability groups in English and mathematics, where work within each group is also well matched to pupils' individual abilities. Teachers' marking is generally effective and pupils are very clear about how they might improve. Where teaching is good or better, pupils are enthusiastic in their learning, and effective strategies are implemented for individual, paired and group work that enables pupils of all abilities to achieve well. Unsatisfactory teaching was evident in one class where pupils received insufficient guidance in developing their investigation skills in science and in using the computer accurately to access e-mail addresses. Some teaching in music, though satisfactory overall is not as effective as it could be, particularly for the more able, because of the teacher's limited subject knowledge.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 53 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	9 (17%)	30 (57%)	11(21%)	2 (4%)	0	0

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

12. Because of the very effective work undertaken by the headteacher in determining standards in Years 2 and 6, teachers now have a very clear focus on how well their pupils are learning and use their good subject knowledge well to develop this learning further. Teachers are enthusiastic and their planning of lessons and use of resources are effective, although too little use is made of classroom computers to reinforce pupils' learning. Good quality assessment has been developed in English, mathematics and information and communication technology which teachers use effectively to plan their lessons including well-planned learning objectives. This has ensured that the previous underachievement in these subjects has been rigorously tackled. Whole-school assessment in other subjects is underdeveloped. Assessment is generally satisfactory in science.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and classroom teaching assistants. The good quality individual education plans contain clear learning objectives and they are used effectively by members of staff. The plans are good because they are fully measurable and tailored very firmly to individual pupils' learning needs. Pupils with English as an additional language, although not at an early stage of English acquisition, are also well supported and achieve as well as their classmates.
14. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Reception classes is good. The teachers have a secure understanding of the social, emotional and educational needs of the children and plan an appropriate range of activities. They have high expectations for children's work and behaviour and this contributes to the good progress the children make. The teachers have a pleasant, helpful and encouraging manner with the children, and use praise as an effective way for encouraging children to do well and improve further. Most effective use is made of the classroom space available, but insufficient outdoor space and resources limits children's physical development. Procedures for recording how well children are doing are thorough, and the teachers and the classroom assistant complement each other well in ensuring that the children are provided with tasks that are suitable to their needs.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good and is enriched well by a wide range of learning opportunities. The range of after-school clubs is satisfactory. Daily acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements. The accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and balanced with a recent emphasis on driving up standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology in particular.
- The planning for pupils' personal, social and health education is good and contributes well to pupils' achievement.
- Provision for higher-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good.
- The curriculum is complemented well by a wide range of visits and visitors to school.
- The accommodation is good and is used effectively to promote pupils' learning.
- The curriculum and resources support learning well but deficiencies in the outdoor provision for Reception children limit learning opportunities in the Foundation Stage.

Commentary

15. Curriculum planning has improved since the time of the last inspection with a whole-school curriculum map¹ now in place. This ensures that the work provided caters effectively for pupils' learning in all subjects as they progress through the school. The curriculum is well balanced in each year group, while ensuring that standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology are driven up without loss of time or provision in other subjects. Effective development of pupils' skills in mathematics is accomplished through planned opportunities in mental mathematics at the start of the day. This planning and the setting of pupils into specific attainment groups English and mathematics in Years 1 to 6 has a substantial impact on pupils' learning.
16. The planning for pupils' personal, social, and health education, including drug awareness and sex education, is a strong feature that takes account of pupils' needs well. Pupils learn how to behave and develop very good social skills throughout the school, not least in the playground where pupils cooperate in an orderly and considerate way. The effective provision for higher attaining pupils, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language ensures that all pupils achieve well according to their individual abilities. Work is well matched to all pupils' abilities and higher-attaining pupils are well catered for by a coordinator who ensures that work in all classes and across the curriculum is sufficiently differentiated² in all teachers' planning. She monitors pupils' progress, discusses their gains and records these findings well. This is very good practice and ensures that most of the learning needs of the higher and highest attaining pupils are provided for, although it focuses mainly on their academic learning. Plans are in place for developing the physical and creative provision in the forthcoming autumn term.
17. A wide range of visits to places of interest are organised for all year groups that are effectively linked to the curriculum, such as to Chester in connection with pupils' Roman studies in history. A good range of visitors to school is arranged, such as an artist in residence, grandparents talking of their experiences in World War 2, theatre groups and musicians. A satisfactory range of after-school clubs is provided and is well attended.
18. The school building is used very effectively by staff and adult helpers. Most classrooms and corridors are bright and displayed with pupils' work and posters of interest. Many classrooms are generous in size and allow practical activities to be undertaken. The computer room is of good size and suitably temperature-controlled. The school grounds are of good size and used well for sports, summer fairs and lunchtimes. The playgrounds are small, but because of the very good interaction between pupils, no concerns are evident.
19. The curriculum for children in the Reception year is good overall, with detailed plans that incorporate all of the national goals for early learning to be taught to children before they enter Year 1. Lesson planning is comprehensive, and the children have access to a wide range of interesting activities and learning experiences. Members of staff cope well with the limited space in one classroom and provide well for the children. The outdoor facilities for children in the Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory, as they were at the time of the previous inspection, which limits their physical development, but the members of staff make good use of the school hall to compensate for this.

Care, guidance and support

¹ The curriculum map refers to planning that provides an overview of what is taught in each subject in each year group.

² Differentiation refers to planning or provision aimed at meeting different learning needs, including the more and less able and those with special educational needs.

The standard of care is good and pupils are well guided and supported. Pupils' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships throughout the school are very good with the result that pupils feel safe and valued because of the way they are treated.
- Induction³ arrangements for children entering the school are good.
- Good child protection procedures are in place.
- Academic guidance and support effectively promote good achievement.

Commentary

20. Relationships between pupils and their teachers and helpers are constructive and trusting and pupils are confident to turn to them for assistance. Members of staff are very good role models for pupils. They treat pupils with respect and most demonstrate that they value pupils' ideas and contributions, resulting in pupils being secure and willing to make their ideas known in lessons and in assemblies. Pupils' views are also expressed through the school council and circle times⁴, where school council members discuss ideas and are developing their skills in seeking to represent the views of pupils throughout the school. The school is currently seeking ways to involve pupils further in improving the quality of the school community.
21. The school's close links with its main partner Nursery enable it to be well informed about new pupils before they transfer. A series of meetings with parents and the staged induction process are sensitive to young children's needs. Newcomers are teamed up with the older pupils so that they receive support and experience a happy start.
22. Pupils' welfare needs are well attended to and child protection procedures are well implemented. Confidential records are held securely and communication with social services is good. The procedures to ensure pupils' safety are generally satisfactory. The school pond is not securely fenced and, while pupils closely observe instructions not to enter the area, there is no effective means for preventing siblings entering when summer fairs are held. Although members of staff are vigilant, there is a concern for pupils' safety at the start and the end of the school day because the car park is cramped and there is little other communal space available for pupils when leaving the school site.
23. Pupils' achievement is improving because of the growing effectiveness of the school's good initiatives and strategies. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attainment, are identified and well supported. The introduction of whole-class termly targets is providing an objective focus for teachers and pupils, although this applies more to English and mathematics than to other subjects. Through tests and assessment teachers have a good knowledge of how pupils are achieving and this knowledge is used well for targeting, 'setting' and planning activities. The marking of pupils' work motivates

³ Induction refers to the arrangements for receiving pupils new to the school and helping them settle and make friends.

⁴ Circle time gets its name from the seating arrangement. During circle time, pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. Only one person speaks at a time and there are no interruptions. Respect for other viewpoints is promoted so that pupils gain confidence in sharing their thoughts and experiences.

pupils well because it includes the award of points that accumulate and lead to the presentation of certificates of achievement.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a satisfactory partnership with parents. It has satisfactory links with other schools and its links with the community are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The parents value the work of the school.
- Information for parents is good but parental involvement in pupils' learning is limited.
- The community is used well to enhance learning and personal development.

Commentary

24. Parents are pleased with the quality of education and care that is provided. They say that their children like school, achieve well and that staff are approachable. Parents are becoming increasingly confident about the school's provision following the headteacher's appointment. The inspection team agrees with parents' perception.
25. Almost one quarter of parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire feel insufficiently informed about pupils' progress. Inspectors found the quality and sufficiency of the information to be good. Pupils' end-of-year reports are very detailed. Formal opportunities are provided each term for parents to discuss their children's progress; parents of younger pupils attend these in good numbers but the attendance of parents of older pupils is much lower. Teachers are accessible to parents daily and use pupils' reading records as an effective means of communication with their parents. Parents are advised of achievement targets set for their children and achievement certificates are now sent home on the day they are awarded. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to the periodic reviews and target setting for their children's development. Newsletters are published weekly and are written in a friendly and communicative manner. Parents are informed of the curriculum to be followed, including useful brief guidance that enables them to know what their children are to study each term. The school has commenced using questionnaires to gauge parents' satisfaction and issues feedback of the findings to parents. A good number of parents attended a recently introduced surgery to discuss their views of the school with the headteacher.
26. The church plays an important role in the life of the school. Visits are made to the church to consider the symbolism of Christian artefacts in religious education and features of church design in art and design, and visits by the vicar contribute much to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Fieldwork and visits to places of interest enhance learning particularly in history and geography. Theatre groups and other specialists such as a percussionist and a potter share their knowledge and expertise with the pupils. Charities are supported and the school choir sings at a local nursing home.
27. A few parent volunteers help in school and many help with transport. A parents and teachers association is effective in raising considerable funds to improve school resources. The school does not arrange workshops to help parents support their own children with work at home, and parents are not invited to events such as celebration assemblies. This

results in a limited involvement in helping their children at home. Opportunities are taken for work experience placements to be provided for students from several secondary schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership and management. The leadership and management of key staff are good. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has introduced very effective strategies for raising staff confidence and standards of work since his appointment one year ago and has ensured that strengths in teaching are developed.
- The headteacher's clarity of vision, sense of purpose and high aspirations are excellent.
- The school improvement plan is an effective tool for driving up standards and ensuring that the whole-school provision is led and managed effectively.
- Performance management⁵ is very effective in developing staff.
- Subject leaders are keen to develop their role, but some of their work is underdeveloped.
- Financial controls and planning are very good and well matched to school improvement planning.
- Governors' role in setting the direction of the school's work is underdeveloped.

Commentary

28. The headteacher, who has been in post for only a year, has had a substantial impact on the quality of teaching and learning and on the leadership and management of key staff. He has introduced strategic initiatives that have revitalised teaching and ensured that low standards in English, mathematics and information and communication technology have been overcome. As a result, teachers are confident and the pupils' achieve well. The headteacher has set all staff a very good role model in monitoring planning, assessing pupils' work and monitoring teaching and learning, ensuring that all members of staff are fully aware of standards in each subject by Years 2 and 6. Effective documentary guidance has been put in place to enable all staff to evaluate more accurately the quality and standard of pupils' work by comparing it to the National Curriculum attainment levels.
29. The headteacher's vision for the school is very clear and has raised staff's self-esteem. All staff and governors are fully aware of the school's performance and information about school and national trends. He has ensured that effective assessment systems have been set up in English, mathematics and information and communication technology, though there has been insufficient time to draw up effective systems for all other subjects except for science, where they are satisfactory. Some senior managers have been empowered to fulfil roles of responsibility effectively, such as the role of coordinating whole-school provision for higher-attaining pupils, and a deputy who provides very good support and leadership towards achieving the school aims.
30. The school improvement plan is primarily for one-year duration only in order to address the primary aim of driving up standards particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. However, it appropriately identifies other subjects to be

⁵ Performance management refers to arrangements for evaluating and improving the quality of teachers' work. It has replaced appraisal.

evaluated and developed over the medium-term. The short-term plan very clearly identifies the headteacher's vision for school development. Coordinators now produce their own action plans and each term evaluate and report in detail on the progress against the identified actions. This regular monitoring is having a major and beneficial impact on staff confidence and skill in evaluation, and indicates how significantly the headteacher has raised the staff's vision and expectation. Performance management is linked to school priorities very well. Teachers have clear objectives set for them and they are well supported in achieving these through in-service training.

31. Subject leaders are all keen to develop their roles of responsibility, with the headteacher providing very clear models of how to monitor standards and match against National Curriculum levels, the effectiveness of actions taken and what more needs to be done. As a result, members of staff are now aware of how well the school is achieving in the core subjects. Subject leaders for English, mathematics and information and communication technology have had opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, together with some observations carried out by the coordinator for higher-attaining pupils. While this is good, many of the subject leaders have yet to conduct formal scrutiny and moderation of pupils' work, and to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons.
32. The school systems for planning, monitoring and control of the school budget and expenditure are very effective. These ensure that the priorities of the school improvement plan can be achieved. All recommendations from the last audit report have been implemented.
33. Governors receive good quality information on the academic targets, the school's rate of improvement compared to national and similar schools, and the school's financial position. Governors fully support the effective work undertaken by the headteacher and senior staff and, although much better informed since the headteacher's appointment, recognise that they have not been sufficiently involved in setting the direction of the school. They have now become more aware of the strategic planning and implementation of essential plans that enables them to have a clearer perspective on the work of the school and the progress being made.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	981,726
Total expenditure	999,455
Expenditure per pupil	2,402

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	96,570
Balance carried forward to the next	78,841

34. The previous financial year carry forward was over twice nationally recommended guidelines. The headteacher has ensured that these excessive reserves have been spent well to improve the quality of accommodation and provide good quality resources to improve the quality of education provided. The current carry forward is now within guidelines, taking into account the already agreed financial commitments to be paid within the forthcoming academic year. Governors are now fully aware of the school's financial targets and are awaiting decisions regarding the potential building of an on-site Nursery. The headteacher implements the principles of best value effectively.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Provision for children in the Reception classes is good. Induction procedures for children entering the school are effective. The consistently good quality of teaching and curriculum enables children to achieve well. The leadership and management are good. The coordinator gives a clear vision to the work in Reception classes and ensures that assessment is used effectively to provide children with suitably demanding work, and a rich and varied range of learning experiences is achieved for children of all abilities. The good provision encourages very good behaviour of the children. Improvements have been made in most areas since the time of the previous inspection.
36. Children enter the school with a wide range of abilities but overall their skills, knowledge and understanding are in line with those expected. The majority of the children in the Reception year are working at higher than the expected levels in most areas and they have made good progress. In physical development, the children's progress is hindered by a lack of suitable outdoor apparatus. This shortcoming was identified in the previous report and the matter has not been dealt with.
37. One classroom is rather small for the numbers of children present but it is well organised and well used. Colourful displays of the children's work enhance its appearance. It is a warm, welcoming environment and the children clearly enjoy being there. Their attitudes are very good, they are happy and this helps them to learn well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to exceed the national goals for early learning by the time they leave the Reception year; their achievement is good because of the good quality of teaching.
- Children have very good attitudes to their work and they behave very well.
- The children play well with each other and they readily take turns.

Commentary

38. The well-planned routines, the good teaching and the welcoming ethos of the Reception classes help the children feel safe and well cared for and, as a result, they have settled very well into school life. Because of the clear and supportive routines, children are able to achieve appropriately in relation to their individual abilities. They have learned how to behave in school and be part of a social group. They are eager to explore new learning and are able to concentrate on the work they undertake. The children are prepared to work with their classmates, take turns and share fairly. They are able to move confidently around the classroom, and the school, and they ask for assistance where necessary. The teachers know the children well and they respond very appropriately to individual needs. The children are continually encouraged to be involved in a range of activities and, where necessary, they are effectively reminded about such things as sharing and politeness.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children are making good progress with their writing skills.
- Children show good appreciation of books and enjoy reading.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Children are on course to exceed the national goals by the end of the Reception year and they are achieving well.

Commentary

39. All children pay close attention to their teachers, listening with interest and concentration to stories, poems and instructions. Many children are beginning to provide detailed spoken comments when asked. Children show a keen interest in books and handle them with care. The majority of the children understand letter sounds and are able to recognise a range of words, which they readily read. They can write their names with good pencil control and many are able to write short phrases and sentences on various topics, such as animals. These skills are at least consistent with, and many are in advance of, the national goals for early learning. The teachers provide an interesting range of books to read to the children, as well as suitable opportunities to develop their speaking skills, both in front of the class and, for example, in the 'Vet's Surgery'. They encourage discussion in all areas of learning such as when children named and described a range of creatures, explaining where they were likely to live and their life cycles as caterpillar and butterfly. Children are encouraged to develop their writing skills through the provision of suitable activities, with particular attention being paid to careful letter formation.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are on course to achieve higher than the expected level, and their progress is good.
- Children's basic knowledge of number is good.
- They are increasingly confident in using mathematical language.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Commentary

40. Children enter the Reception year with average mathematical skills but as a result of well-focused teaching they achieve well and standards overall are above those typically found. Nearly all children can successfully count to ten, while many are able to count up to 20. They clearly understand the idea of counting and can count out an appropriate number of objects with confidence. Most children are able to add two numbers and some are equally confident with subtraction. These latter skills are consistent with the national goals for early learning and have been attained early than expected. In using water and sand, most children understand such words as 'empty' and 'full', and in comparing size they are aware of 'big'

and 'small'. Most children successfully extend their mathematical vocabulary to name a variety of two-dimensional shapes. The work is well planned and carefully matched to the needs of the children. Teachers and support staff develop children's mathematical language well, with many opportunities provided for children to develop their number skills, often within practical activities such as when counting shapes or small figures. A good provision of resources, such as water, sand and number games and number lines, further helps children develop their mathematical language and understanding.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A majority of children are on course to exceed the national goals by the end of the Reception year; achievement of all children is good as a result of the good teaching they receive.
- The children's knowledge of the human body is good.
- They show considerable interest in different types of animals.
- Children readily produce work on the computer.

Commentary

41. The range of knowledge, skills and understanding demonstrated by children are fully consistent with, and often exceed, the national goals for early learning. Children can confidently name the main external features of the human body, such as hand, foot and elbow. Most are aware of the various human senses and can explain the difference, for example between tasting and smelling. They show interest in different animals and they talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about the various small creatures they find. All children can use the computer with the confidence and skill expected for their age. They can, for example, can use the computer mouse to produce and then print a picture of a house by dragging and dropping different shapes accurately into place. Children are provided with a very wide range of experiences, such as looking at pictures and photographs, tackling simple experiments, being taken on trips around the school, using the computer and undertaking practical activities, such as when they are working with food. This is a strong feature of the provision. The classroom assistant provides very effective help to the children in many of these activities.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of children are on course to attain the national goals by the end of Reception; their achievement is satisfactory.
- Skills in using and handling large and small items of classroom equipment are good.
- The lack of larger outdoor play equipment limits the development of physical skills but teachers compensate for this by using equipment in the hall when possible.
- The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.

Commentary

42. The majority of children enter Reception year with average skills. A wide and varied array of activities is provided and children are encouraged to keep busy with them throughout the day. In particular, all adults are keen to emphasise the need for the children to carry out all activities safely. Children's dexterity in handling large and small items in the classroom is developing well, such as when they use construction kits and jigsaws, and undertake threading activities. Manipulative skills are good. Malleable materials, such as playdough, are used successfully, for instance, when making items such as small animals, and letters and numbers. Confident use is made of construction toys, producing a range of houses and vehicles. Most children are happy when further developing their skills through using larger apparatus in the hall. However, the lack of outdoor apparatus means that the children do not have sufficient access to such larger items on a daily basis. This limits the progress they are able to make. Both the teachers and the classroom assistant join in with the children, and demonstrate how to carry out different activities and develop various skills. Despite the good teaching, children are only likely to attain average levels because of the limitations placed upon their learning by the lack of outdoor resources.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children are on course to exceed the national goals by the end of the Reception year; their progress is good.
- The ability to produce a variety of pictures, use imagination, make models and join in with role-play is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Commentary

43. Children enter the Reception year with average skills. After almost one year, they can confidently use a variety of paints and crayons and produce pictures both from direct observation as well as from their imagination to a standard that is good for their age. They have successfully produced pictures of themselves and of their observations of trees and animals. Children sing with enthusiasm and are able to provide appropriate accompaniment when using instruments. They readily take part in role-play activities in the home corners, currently in the form of a shop and a vet's surgery, where they happily take on the roles of the various people involved with equal enthusiasm. Through careful planning, the teachers provide for all the children to have opportunities to take part in all activities. All adults encourage children to develop their independence by the well-planned arrangement of sessions that enables them to move from one activity to another when they are ready. Adults also make sure, however, that the children experience all the activities and that help is always available when it is needed.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. Achievement is good. Teaching, leadership and management are good. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory, with good improvement since the tests in 2003.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in all aspects of English are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6.
- The quality of learning is good; assessment is used very well to provide for pupils' varying needs.
- The use made of literacy in other subjects is good.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in literacy lessons are very good.
- Pupils' presentation of their work and teachers' marking of this work are good.

Commentary

44. Major improvements have taken place since the national tests in 2003, when pupils' attainment was average at Year 2 and below average at Year 6. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are achieving well and standards have risen.
45. Year 2 pupils sit quietly during lessons whilst listening to their teacher reading stories or giving instructions. Pupils' good language skills mean that most of them are able to speak clearly and confidently, often feeling able to provide extended answers and comments. Year 6 pupils listen carefully in a variety of contexts including teacher instruction and class discussion. Many pupils are articulate speakers and provide detailed answers, explanations and arguments. They speak clearly and put their points both confidently and concisely. Whilst several are less confident, most are happy to speak in front of other people.
46. Most Year 2 pupils read their texts accurately, often introducing very suitable expression into their reading, and confidently explaining what they have read. They also use appropriate knowledge of letter sounds that enable them to read words that they do not know and can readily find information using an index. Many Year 6 pupils read with fluency, accuracy and evident enjoyment. They readily talk about what they read, making appropriate reference to characters and events in the stories. They regularly use reference books to find information, and many of them have mastered the skills of speed-reading to help them find that information.
47. In Year 2, most pupils successfully stories, news and poems using capital letters and full stops correctly and independently. Pupils in Year 2 generally spell words correctly and their handwriting skills are well developed, with most joining their letters in a neatly produced script. In Year 6, many pupils successfully write for a variety of purposes. They place good emphasis on the use of adverbs and adjectives to add detail to their writing. Pupils' work in Year 6 is regularly sustained at length. Appropriate imagination, interest and depth are often introduced. Most of them join their letters in a clear and neat handwriting style. Spelling is usually good and they regularly use dictionaries and a thesaurus to improve this aspect of their work still further.
48. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are planned well and organised effectively, with teachers making appropriate use of the National Literacy Strategy. Many opportunities are provided for

pupils to listen to stories and various forms of instruction and teachers provide pupils with frequent chances to speak, sometimes at length, which help them to develop these skills. Teachers are careful to provide appropriate reading books for pupils, and all pupils have books suitable to their needs. They receive appropriate opportunities to read, and suitable support and encouragement is given by teachers and classroom assistants during these times. Pupils are usually keen to read, and even when they find the text difficult they are prepared to tackle the words presented.

49. Teachers throughout the school provide a good range of writing activities for their pupils. They also provide detailed help and support for pupils with spelling and handwriting. Teachers assess pupils' work regularly, with the result that the new work that is given is well suited to their particular needs, including those with special educational needs. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided in all aspects of the subject and they work well for extended periods. Work is well matched to pupils of all abilities and this enables them to achieve well. Teachers also make regular use of information and communication technology to help pupils develop their English work.
50. Very good relationships are developed between teachers and pupils. Teachers provide effective support during lessons, supported well by classroom assistants. Pupils' attitudes to English are very good. Most of them work well independently and in groups when required, and persevere with the work set. From discussions with pupils, they state that they enjoy their writing activities, and many take particular pleasure in writing poetry. Most pupils are keen to produce a neat and careful standard of presentation in their books, especially in relation to handwriting. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and they usually provide both praise and clear advice to pupils about improving their work when necessary. Suitable use is made of homework to give pupils further opportunities to practise and develop their skills.
51. The subject leader supports her colleagues well with advice, when necessary, and is fully aware of the standards being produced in the school. She is a very good practitioner who has made a significant contribution towards identifying recent weaknesses in pupils' performance and in helping to bring about improvements. Her leadership role is good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. The school develops pupils' language skills well in English and in other subjects. Significant amounts of writing are produced in history and religious education, for example, and these subjects are used well to enhance pupils' literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved and are now above average.
- Recent improvement in pupils' attainment has been significant.
- Teaching is good and is a significant factor in pupils' achievement; resources are used well.
- Subject leadership is very good; recent initiatives are helping pupils to achieve well.

Commentary

53. In Year 2 and Year 6, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. Standards in basic numeracy and in the other areas of mathematics are above average. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Standards have improved since the national tests in 2003 when pupils' attainment was average at Years 2 and 6. Good teaching and very good subject leadership are now leading to a significant rise in standards. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
54. Work in the Year 2 pupils' books shows good progress in the use of number and algebra and the use of different standard measures, including the measurement of weight and angles. Pupils receive many opportunities for practical experiences and while higher-attaining pupils problem solving is good, some average and lower attaining pupils find this much more difficult. Most pupils work independently, or in pairs and demonstrate good attitudes to their work and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils, focus well on their work and receive effective support when necessary.
55. Standards are rising because of the sharper focus on developing pupils' mathematical skills, as a result of the improved teaching and support strategies being employed, and good coverage of the mathematics curriculum. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of each of the attainment targets where a strong emphasis is placed on their using and applying mathematics. For example, pupils apply their knowledge well to solve real-life problems, involving topics such as money, time, ratio and proportion. The school's effective planning has ensured that more pupils are able to attain the higher Level 5, which represents good progress. Throughout the school, all groups of pupils have very positive attitudes towards work and present their work neatly.
56. Teaching is good and is enabling all groups of pupils to achieve well, with examples of very good teaching also being seen. Teachers plan their lessons well and place a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' mental calculations and problem-solving skills. The former are developed by means of a variety of strategies, including games and quick-fire

questions. Explanations in whole-class introductory sessions are clear and lessons move along at a brisk pace, which keeps the pupils focused on their tasks. Teachers have high expectations; '*Find a corresponding equation*', instructed a teacher in a Year 2 lesson, and this helped the pupils in learning about multiplication as the inverse of division. Within the ability sets, teachers match work well to differing needs, which provides good challenge for higher-attaining pupils and effective support for those with special educational needs.

57. Teachers make good use of available resources, including the newly installed interactive whiteboards. These resources helped pupils in Years 2 and 4 in recognising multiplication as repeated addition and number patterns. In a Year 6 lesson, the interactive boards helped in the recognition and measurement of angles. In this lesson, the teacher always asked the pupils to explain their strategies and this consolidated their understanding well. Teachers check pupils' progress carefully and offer help and advice as necessary. They ensure that pupils use correct mathematical terms and that they present their work neatly. Regular homework is provided for older pupils. Teachers mark work positively, providing useful guidance as to how improvements might be made.
58. The two newly appointed subject leaders have made a very positive start in managing the subject and recent initiatives have led to rapidly rising standards. These include short mathematics sessions at the start of each day for every class, ability setting throughout the school, improved assessment and tracking of pupils' progress, clear target-setting, and external support. The subject leaders' careful monitoring of planning leads to a more consistent quality of teaching. Teachers make good use of assessment to plan the next steps in learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. There are good opportunities for the pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. In science, for example, Year 5 pupils draw accurate line graphs of water temperatures at timed intervals, and of pulse rates, while Year 4 pupils draw accurate bar graphs of classroom temperatures. In geography, younger pupils conduct a 'parked car' survey as part of a topic on making the local area safer and older pupils use four-figure coordinates accurately to locate features on maps. In design and technology, Year 6 pupils make careful measurements when designing slippers.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Year 2 and average in Year 6.
- There is an appropriate emphasis on scientific enquiry.
- The needs of the more able pupils are not always clearly identified and met in Years 3 to 6 and pupils are not always given sufficient responsibility for designing their own investigations.
- There is insufficient use of information and communication technology; this has correctly been identified as an aspect for development.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Pupils have great enthusiasm for science.

Commentary

60. High teacher expectations in Years 1 and 2 enable pupils to achieve well and attain above average standards. Current standards in Year 6 are average reflecting some inconsistency in the teaching between classes. Pupils' achievement in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall. The assessment strategies, although broadly satisfactory, are not sufficiently used to diagnose the various learning needs in Years 3 to 6. This is leading to a lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 in some lessons and to them not always understanding what they must do to improve. There is evidence that this is gradually being tackled by the teachers and their managers. Teachers' marking is often encouraging and beginning to target necessary improvements. Exemplar pieces of work are used well to support pupils' learning.
61. There is too little opportunity for pupils to design their own scientific enquiry. While work scrutiny shows that pupils are encouraged to write up their investigations independently, investigations are predominantly teacher directed. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, weak teaching was evident in a lesson about fair testing when there was too much dependence upon the teacher and not enough opportunity to experiment and investigate. Although there is some evidence of information and communication technology being used to support pupils' work, its use is inconsistent and in need of further development.
62. Work is generally well planned to meet the needs of the average and less able pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriately challenging work. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on sound, less able pupils were given the opportunity to explore different ways of making sound, the effect of vibration and ways of changing the sounds made.
63. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils respond well to instruction and expectation and work well independently and collaboratively as required. They are very enthusiastic about their work, keen to show what they have done and talk knowledgeably about their investigations. Even where learning was unsatisfactory, pupils were able to identify a number of reasons as to why they had not achieved their objective.
64. The subject leader provides clear leadership and her management is satisfactory. She has established an appropriate action plan to develop the subject based on national guidelines. Assessment systems are at an early stage and are not giving sufficient support to action to raise standards. The subject leader has analysed national test data and monitored teachers' planning. She has not monitored lessons to establish the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching. The new marking scheme sets out very clearly what pupils have achieved and what needs to be done to achieve higher grades but it is not always evident that this impacts upon pupils' next piece of work.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good** and has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection because the good teaching enables pupils to achieve well.

- Pupils have access to good quality resources but more use could be made of classroom computers.
- Subject leadership is very good and is having a significant impact on raising standards.
- Information and communication technology is being increasingly used to enhance learning in other subjects.

Commentary

65. As a result of good teaching, pupils in Years 1 to 6 achieve well. Standards are now average, and have improved significantly since the time of the last inspection because of the high quality resources and teachers' increased confidence. Boys and girls achieve equally well.
66. Teachers' subject knowledge in using information and communication technology as a tool to enhance teaching and learning has improved significantly, although at times this could be developed further. Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards and digital projectors to model tasks and to motivate the pupils. Classroom computers, however, are used on too few occasions to support what pupils have learnt in the computer room and to develop their use of information and communication technology in individual research. Teachers manage lessons in the computer room well, maintaining a good balance between direct teaching of skills and independent learning. They ensure that all groups of pupils are fully included in learning and often use classroom assistants well to support individual pupils.
67. The quality of resources now available to pupils is of a very good standard. It has ensured that pupils experience all aspects of the subject and use computers across a range of other subjects to enable them to achieve well. Year 2 pupils have developed effective skills in using programs including that of accessing files, modifying and saving their work, such as selecting and altering fonts in order to suit the purpose of their writing. The work planned and undertaken by Year 6 pupils builds on this well and ensures that pupils are now provided with a systematic development of skills in using computers across the curriculum, where they are developing high levels of confidence in accessing various programs, Internet, emailing, and in presenting data and information in various forms.
68. Improved leadership has ensured that the key issue at the last inspection has been successfully addressed. Provision for the subject, in terms of improved resources, planning, staff training and teaching, has improved significantly. The subject leader holds a regular drop-in session, when colleagues can ask for help and advice. A clear action plan builds on this improvement. She monitors teachers' planning, pupils' work and the quality of teaching and learning in lessons with the view of establishing strengths and areas for improvement while sharing good practice. Assessment of pupils' work is good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The effective use of information and communication technology enables pupils represent data accurately in mathematics by means of computer-generated graphs and pictograms. They use multi-media presentations in history, and in geography they show good graphical modelling skills in which they generate accurate plans of their classrooms. Pupils use publishing programs in literacy effectively to edit letters to make their vocabulary more interesting and they use drop-down menus confidently, but the use of computers is underdeveloped in science.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the previous inspection and are now above average.
- Teaching is good and enables all pupils to achieve well.
- The school has recently gained an environmental awareness award.

Commentary

70. In Years 2 and 6, all groups of pupils achieve well and standards are above average. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection for Year 2 but is an improvement for Year 6. Boys and girls attain equally.
71. Teachers provide a strong emphasis on developing all pupils' mapping skills and older pupils have the opportunity to develop these when orienteering during a residential visit to Stanley Head, a local outdoor education centre. The strong focus on developing the pupils' use of correct geographical terms is successfully achieved, such as Year 6 pupils applying their knowledge to the features of a river and its valley from source to mouth. Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand the ideas of a map as a view from above and draw simple maps of local streets. There are many opportunities for the pupils to develop literacy skills through extended writing and teachers use available resources very well to enhance learning. This was particularly evident in some very good lessons in Year 2, where the teachers made excellent use of multi-media presentation, aerial photographs, maps and posters, in order to stimulate pupils' interest in learning about a Scottish island.
72. Year 6 pupils have good understanding of geographical features of the locality and make effective use of their literacy skills to record features of Hednesford town centre and some of its problems. They have a good knowledge of Ordnance Survey map symbols and understand the importance of a map key. They use co-ordinates accurately to locate map features. They investigate the characteristics of settlements and the origins of place names and they compare Hednesford with a village in rural India. Pupils understand how weather is an important factor in people's choice of holiday locations.
73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' environmental awareness and the school recently gained the bronze level Eco School award. Whilst teachers do much to develop pupils' observational skills when looking at photographs of localities, opportunities to promote the reasoning skills of higher attainers are sometimes missed, particularly as there is no agreed assessment system to track and target pupils' performance.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average because of the good teaching that enables all groups of pupils to achieve well.
- Effective use is made of visits and visitors to enrich learning.
- Literacy skills are developed well.
- The subject leader's monitoring role is under-developed.

Commentary

74. Teaching has successfully ensured that above average standards have been sustained since the last inspection, with boys and girls achieving equally. All groups of pupils are enthusiastic about history. Teachers make very effective use of visits to places such as Chester, Shugborough, the Black Country Museum, the Museum of Cannock Chase and Tamworth Castle in order to enrich learning. They utilise the knowledge and expertise of visitors whenever possible, such as in pupils' learning about the ancient Egyptians and Tudors. Teachers use drama and role-play effectively to enhance learning about events such as The Great Fire of London. They emphasise the need for the pupils to find evidence about the past and they provide good opportunities for the pupils to research information themselves from a variety of sources. In Year 6, pupils successfully used the Internet to access primary evidence in the form of the local 1881 census, to find out about aspects of life in Victorian Hednesford and learned how people from various parts of the country came to Hednesford to work in the mines.
75. Teachers develop pupils' literacy skills widely in history lessons. Year 2 pupils, for example, write good accounts of their visit to Shugborough, and older pupils write imaginative letters in the role of Anne Boleyn in the Tower of London, and as Athenians and Spartans in ancient Greece. Higher-attaining pupils are appropriately challenged, such as in Year 1 where they wrote about differences in the styles, materials and surrounding features of old and new houses. Useful links are made with other subjects whenever possible, such as effective collage work linked to the story of Odysseus.
76. Although subject leadership is satisfactory, the subject leader's role in monitoring the quality of teaching and standards throughout the school is underdeveloped. Procedures for improving the assessment of pupils' progress, although at an early stage of development, form part of a clear action plan for future implementation.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good across the age and ability range, although there is scope to challenge higher attainers further.
- Teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good.
- Pupils' spiritual development is promoted well and pupils' attitudes are very good.
- Assessment systems are not yet established, but marking is good.

Commentary

77. Pupils' achievement in Years 1 to 6 is good and standards attained are above national expectations. This is similar to the findings at the last inspection. Teachers effective planning ensures that work is matched to pupils' abilities. Where teaching and learning are very good,

teachers have high expectations and develop pupils' awareness and use of appropriate vocabulary, and abstract concepts. The subject is effectively linked to real-life situations and concepts are explored in assemblies. For example, a Year 1 assembly on prayer was followed by a lesson on St. Francis, where pupils were encouraged to bring subjects for prayer before introducing the way in which St. Francis used prayer.

78. The locally Agreed Syllabus is covered well and includes the study of Christianity, Islam and Judaism, that are also linked to real-life situations. Visits are made to places of worship for particular faiths, but there is insufficient provision for enabling pupils to learn about living in a multi-faith society. The school syllabus supports the Christian ethos of the school community very well, particularly by the good quality of school assemblies where a calming and peaceful atmosphere is set and pupils' learning about spiritual matters such as prayer is effective. Displays are also used very effectively around the school to support pupils' developing spirituality.
79. Assessment systems are not established and pupils' attainment and achievement have been monitored through samples of work only. The subject leader has been involved in monitoring pupils' work informally, but has not yet had opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in lessons. As such her role is underdeveloped. The marking scheme is a major strength, however, and pupils know how they can improve their work. Teachers apply it consistently in Years 3 to 6, and give helpful and encouraging comments to support and further pupils' learning, but it does not always impact sufficiently upon following work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

80. **Art and design**, and **design and technology** were not a focus of the inspection and were sampled. Only one **art and design** lesson was seen but from a scrutiny of pupils' work it is evident that a variety of media is used with clear evidence of progress through this academic year. In the lesson seen in Year 6, teaching and learning were very good. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, were actively engaged on independent tasks. They were given opportunities to evaluate and modify their own work and encouraged to do their best. In Year 6, Central European rugs have been used as an inspiration for work on pattern, and Victorian artefacts as a stimulus for charcoal drawings incorporating tone and perspective. Wax and dyeing techniques have been very popular and used successfully in Years 3 to 6, while Aboriginal style paintings have inspired a mural in the entrance hall. The standard of presentation of displayed artwork across the school is very good and celebrates pupils' individual achievement well. Much work in art supports other curriculum areas and in Years 1 and 2, for example, there were examples of natural materials like leaves and twigs used to produce autumn pictures. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. Assessment requires development and the coordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor lessons.
81. Only two lessons were seen in **design and technology**. In Year 1, the pupils successfully examined, cut and tasted a variety of fruit and then began planning a fruit salad prior to making it. In Year 5, pupils examined a number of stringed instruments before planning to make their own. Teaching in these lessons was satisfactory and pupils showed good attitudes to their work. A study of other plans and samples of work shows that the curriculum is satisfactory. Younger pupils make cards with moving features, puppets and winding mechanisms, and older pupils make moving monsters, money containers, biscuits and slippers. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has been informally involved in monitoring pupils' work but has not had opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in lessons and whole-school assessment is underdeveloped.
82. Only two **physical education** lessons were observed during the inspection, both being games lessons in Years 4 and 6. Teaching and learning in one lesson was satisfactory and of very good standard in the other. Standards in games are broadly average, although skill levels vary widely. Pupils enjoy their games lessons and participate with enthusiasm. They

make satisfactory progress in developing basic skills in racquet games and cricket. Whilst higher-attaining pupils were observed as having reasonably good hand and eye coordination and good ball control, other pupils are much less proficient. School records show that 88 per cent of pupils are able to meet the national requirement of 25 metres unaided in swimming by the time they leave school. The curriculum is enriched by a number of sports clubs. Competitive matches are played against local schools. Leadership and management are satisfactory but the subject leader has not had opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in lessons and whole-school assessment is underdeveloped.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low in Years 3 to 6; skills of composition are at an early stage of development.
- The introduction of a new music scheme has given staff the confidence to teach music and some examples of good teaching are evident.
- There is evidence of support for multi-cultural development through music.
- Leadership is good but assessment is underdeveloped.

Commentary

83. Standards are below average in Years 3 to 6, particularly in composition, because of a lack of confidence and skill among some of the teachers. This indicates a drop in standards since the last inspection. For example, Year 4 pupils involved in composing signals were required to add a couple of notes to a starting note but there was no consideration given in the teaching to anything beyond pitch. Composition is at a very early stage of development and Year 6 pupils, although achieving satisfactorily overall, found difficulty in composing graphic scores. However, they responded positively to the teacher's expectations and made generally satisfactory progress. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2.
84. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good examples of teaching seen, and plenty of active involvement in music making. The introduction of a new music scheme has now given many of the staff the confidence to teach the music curriculum proficiently, with evidence of collaborative work in composition using tuned percussion instruments. Where teaching is satisfactory, the learning needs of the majority are broadly met but the more able pupils are not always challenged sufficiently. Teaching and learning for pupils in extra-curricular recorder groups is good, and although at an early stage, shows that attention is given to broader musical development including aural skills, link with rhythm and notation. Pupils in these groups were able to sight read proficiently from the few notes they know because the teacher explored every aspect of the piece before they played. Some multi-cultural development is evident through the music curriculum, which covers the influence of African drumming and the study of a range of instruments from other countries.
85. Leadership is good and management satisfactory. The subject leader has a clear vision for developing music in the school and is responsible for introducing the new music scheme. She acts as a good role model with the recorder groups and the choir, which is at an early stage of development, and has a realistic awareness of how pupils learn. Whole-school assessment systems are not yet in place and the coordinator has not had opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in lessons.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. The school promotes pupils' personal, social and health education well and includes work on sex education, drug awareness and pupils' personal safety. The school has not considered, other than in Year 6, however, the feelings of some pupils to changing for physical education in mixed gender groups in classes where pupils are maturing quickly. The school programme promotes their social and moral interaction very well and ensures that pupils gain good self-esteem and develop healthy and happy life-styles. The school council is having a satisfactory impact on pupils' maturity as council members and develops their skills in working democratically toward representing their schoolmates.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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