

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Edleston Primary School**

Crewe

LEA area: Cheshire

Unique reference number: 111170

Headteacher: Mrs C Farrall

Lead inspector: Mr A H Markham

Dates of inspection: 22 – 25 March 2004

Inspection number: 256037

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	233
School address:	Edleston Road Crewe Cheshire
Postcode:	CW27HB
Telephone number:	01270 255665
Fax number:	01270 251937
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Roberts
Date of previous inspection:	28 June 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This average size primary school is situated in the centre of the town of Crewe in Cheshire, in an area of mainly terraced housing and small businesses. There are 233 pupils in the school in nine classes. All but one of the classes have pupils from two age groups. The proportion of pupils with special learning needs is above average compared to that found nationally. Their main difficulties are moderate learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties and social behavioural problems. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups with English as an additional language is higher than the average for primary schools nationally (12 per cent). These are mainly from Chinese and Bangladeshi families. Specific support is given to those pupils with English as an additional language. The number of pupils claiming their entitlement to free school meals is broadly average. Children enter school when they are four into the reception class. Most children have some pre-school experience, but their attainment on entry is well below average. The rate of pupil mobility is well above average.

The school is part of the Crewe Excellence in Cities initiative and has extensive links with the community. In 2003 the school was awarded the Basic Skills Quality Mark and has Investor in People status.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1390	Mr A H Markham	Lead inspector	Mathematics Art and design Physical education Personal, Social and Health education English as an additional language
19342	Mr T Heavey	Lay inspector	
11528	Mr M Wainwright	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Geography History
23276	Mrs M Mann	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Music Religious education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an **effective** school. The teaching is good and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school works hard to overcome the barriers to learning presented by the pupils' well below average attainment on entry, high rate of pupil mobility and the social deprivation in the locality. Parents are very satisfied with the school. The school provides **good** value for money.

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

- The headteacher leads the school well and has developed the staff into a hard working committed team.
- Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good.
- The curriculum is good and enriched by a very wide range of extra curricular activities.
- Standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 are well below average.
- Standards in mathematics are below average.
- Handwriting and presentation of work in Years 3 to 6 are unsatisfactory.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils who consequently behave well and have good attitudes to learning.
- Good links with the community make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school cares for its pupils very well.
- The coordinators' monitoring role is under-developed.
- Attendance is well below average.

The school has made good improvement overall since the last inspection. All of the recommendations in the previous report have been successfully tackled apart from the requirement to raise standards in writing and improve the quality of pupils' handwriting. Leadership and management are now good. A long-term perspective is given to strategic planning. Financial management is now well organised and the budget closely monitored. Teaching has improved. Procedures for assessing the progress made by pupils are good and teachers use the information well to plan work that matches the pupils' capability.

### 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	B
Mathematics	E	C	E	D
Science	D	D	E	B

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

**Overall pupils achieve satisfactorily.** Children in the reception classes make very good progress from a low starting point and achieve well. However, by the time they enter Year 1, many do not attain expected standards in communication language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In other areas of learning attainment is close to expectations. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make steady progress and their achievement is satisfactory. Performance in the end of Year 2 tests over the last two years has generally been close to average compared with similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 2 pupils are achieving standards that are close to average in speaking and listening and reading, but below average in writing and mathematics. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' make steady progress and overall their achievement is satisfactory, but standards are adversely affected by the high rate of pupil mobility. By

the end of Year 6, standards over the last three years have generally been well below or below national averages, but have compared better with those in similar schools. The present Year 6 pupils are on track to attain standards that are below average in mathematics and science, but well below average in English. The weakest area is in writing where pupils' skills are undeveloped because they are given insufficient opportunity to write at length. Standards in information and communication technology have improved. By the end of Year 2, standards are average, but standards in Years 3 to Year 6 are below average overall because pupils have had less time to benefit from the impact of the new computer suite. Standards in art and design are above those expected.

**Pupils' personal development is good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall.** Pupils have good attitudes to work and the majority behave well. Attendance levels are well below average.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The overall quality of education is good. Teaching is good throughout the school.** Examples of very good lessons were seen in all three sections of the school, including the Foundation Stage, and in these lessons pupils learned very effectively. Teachers give close attention to developing the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. They have good relationships with pupils and use an effective range of teaching strategies to make lessons interesting so that pupils enjoy their learning and generally work hard.

The curriculum is well organised and benefits from good use of the local community. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. Pupils are very well cared for and their progress in learning is carefully monitored in order to plan appropriate support and guidance. Support staff are used well to ensure that children with learning difficulties are given equal access to all areas of the curriculum. The school works well in partnership with its parents.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and management of the school are good.** The headteacher has a clear vision for the school's advancement. She develops the expertise of staff well and has successfully created a hard-working team with a commitment to improvement. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior staff. Procedures for school self-evaluation are well organised and information is used to inform strategic planning, but coordinators are not given enough opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in their subject. The governing body supports the school satisfactorily. Governors have a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, fulfil their responsibilities well and ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

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

Parents have very positive views about the school and the provision made for their children. Most pupils have very positive views about the school and enjoy taking on responsibility.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise standards in writing in Years 3 to 6.
- Raise standards in mathematics throughout the school.
- Improve the quality of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work in Years 3 to 6.
- Develop the role of coordinators in monitoring the teaching and learning in their subject.
- Continue to make efforts to improve pupils' attendance.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

Standards attained at the end of Year 6 are **well below average** compared with those expected nationally, but they are **average overall** compared with those in similar schools. Pupils make good progress from a low base and achievement is **satisfactory** overall. There is no significant difference in levels of achievement of boys and girls or minority ethnic groups.

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

- Children in the reception classes get a good start to their learning.
- Performance in tests in English, mathematics and science is well below average compared with all schools, but is close to average compared with similar schools.
- Standards of work seen are below average in mathematics throughout the school.
- The standard of pupils' writing in Years 3 to 6 is below average.
- Pupils achieve well in science.
- Standards in ICT have improved and are average by the end of Year 2, but below average by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in art and design are above average.
- The handwriting and presentation of work of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is not good enough.

#### **Commentary**

1. Results in national tests are generally well below national averages. Performance fluctuates, but there has been a gradual improvement in recent years overall. In the tests for pupils in Year 2 results rose slightly from 2000 to 2002, there was a slight dip in 2003, but results still compared reasonably well with those in similar schools. In 2003 standards in reading and writing were well below the national average, but average compared with similar schools. Standards in mathematics were well below both the national average and those in similar schools. Standards in science, as shown by teacher assessments, were average compared with similar schools.
2. Performance in tests at Year 6 in English and mathematics has generally been well below average over the last four years. There has been a slight upward trend in performance, but results dipped in 2003, particularly in mathematics. Performance in science has been similar over the last four years. Overall, performance compares better with similar schools and is generally close to average, although results in mathematics are the weaker area. The school did not achieve the targets it had set for attainment at Level 4 in English and mathematics or the target for Level 5 in English, but the target for Level 5 in mathematics was achieved. The targets for the present year are suitably challenging.
3. The majority of children enter the reception classes with levels of attainment well below average. Because of the effective teaching they receive, children make good progress in all areas of learning and achieve well. By the end of the reception year, most meet the standards expected in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and creative development, but standards are below those expected in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.
4. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 continue to make good progress as a result of effective teaching, but standards are generally below or well below those expected. Whilst teachers work hard to raise standards, the high rate of pupil mobility has a marked effect on standards in the school.
5. In English, standards are below average by Year 2, but well below average by the end of Year 6. The weakest area is pupils' writing, particularly in Years 3 to 6. In Years 1 and 2, whilst standards in writing are below average, there are signs that they are rising. Good attention is



being given to developing pupils' skills. Pupils in these years write lengthy accounts, punctuation is generally used satisfactorily and handwriting is neat and well formed. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of pupils' writing is well below that expected and their handwriting and presentation of work is not good enough. Teachers give good attention to the structure of writing and the use of writing frames, but too much work is carried out using work sheets and pupils are given insufficient opportunity to write at length. Standards in reading throughout the school are better and in general are close to average. The situation is similar with regard to pupils' speaking and listening skills. Pupils listen to instructions carefully and participate in class discussions enthusiastically.

6. In mathematics, although pupils make good progress, the work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are below average throughout the school. Pupils' numeracy skills are not well developed and a high proportion of pupils are working at levels below and sometimes well below that expected for their age group.
7. In science, although standards are below average overall, pupils achieve well. Most pupils have a reasonable understanding of the need to make tests 'fair' and are developing an awareness of a wide range of topics and scientific vocabulary.
8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average by the end of Year 2 but below average by the end of Year 6. The computer suite is a relatively new introduction and the older pupils have had less opportunity to benefit from regular lessons to develop their basic skills. This situation is gradually being remedied and there are signs that standards are rising. Pupils achieve particularly well in art and design and standards are above those expected.
9. Pupils apply their mathematical and ICT skills to other subjects satisfactorily, but opportunities to develop their writing skills in subjects such as history and geography are missed.
10. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily. Their needs are identified, tasks are suitably challenging and, when necessary, additional support is provided. This enables pupils to access the wider curriculum and make steady progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups with English as an additional language make good progress and their achievement is similar to their peers. They are given good support, both within the class and by a teacher from the ethnic minority achievement team. The small number of pupils recognised as gifted or talented are presented with work that is suitably matched to their capability and consequently their achievement is satisfactory.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.6 (15.0)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	13.5 (13.7)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	14.1 (15.6)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 33 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	25.4 (25.5)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.3 (26.7)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.4 (28.0)	28.6 (28.3)

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

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. The school's strong, positive ethos develops a strong sense of personal responsibility in pupils as they progress through the school and, as a result, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Despite recent improvements attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils like coming to school and are keen to learn.
- Relationships across the school are based on politeness and respect.
- Pupils behave well.
- The school is effective in promoting pupils' personal development.
- Too many parents take their children out of school in term time.

### **Commentary**

11. The great majority of pupils declare that they like coming to this school – a view supported by parents. Pupils of all ability levels work eagerly together and respond well to appropriate challenges set by teachers. In consequence they are all able to contribute in lessons and participate enthusiastically.
12. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Children of all backgrounds play and work together harmoniously. All adults apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and, as a result, pupils' behaviour is good. Teachers give pupils clear guidance about right and wrong actions from the start of their life in school, which effectively supports their moral development. Occasionally the behaviour of a small number of pupils with special educational needs is disruptive. However this is rare, and unacceptable behaviour is managed well in most lessons. Bullying is rare and pupils have confidence in the firm manner in which it is dealt with. Involvement in the Excellence in Cities (EiC) Programme [a government funded initiative to support the raising of standards] has enabled the school to deploy a Learning Mentor to focus on pupils who need extra support. He gives support to individual children in the classroom or by withdrawing them for personal guidance. This is effectively improving the behaviour of the targeted children. The six exclusions involving two pupils in this academic year were imposed as a last resort in the face of serious misconduct and were properly recorded by the school.
13. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are taught from the start to take turns, to make choices and to share resources. Pupils help teachers to prepare the classroom for lessons. They act as monitors, take registers, man the doors and support younger children as 'buddies', or look after the Friendship Stop in the playground. Pupils elected by their peers to the School Council take their responsibilities very seriously. Action has been taken on requests from the School Council which shows the pupils that their views matter.
14. Good use is made of visits and visitors to enhance pupils' cultural experiences and as a result their cultural development is good. For example, pupils' families introduce other cultures into the school. They dress in ethnic clothes, prepare meals from different countries and celebrate various religious festivals. Pupils develop an awareness of the plight of children in other countries. For example, they sponsor a child in Brazil to give him the opportunity to receive a good education. Nearer home the pupils demonstrate their concern for the disadvantaged in society by raising significant sums of money for local and national charities.
15. Attendance is unsatisfactory. However, there are signs that the school's actions to improve the situation are beginning to have an effect. The school's procedures to promote attendance are being rigorously applied and a strong message is conveyed to parents about the problems created by the removal of children from school during term time. The Learning Mentor is working

with those pupils having an attendance problem and giving support to parents. The attendance rate has improved markedly since September 2003, especially in Years 3 to 6. Good punctuality and brisk movement between activities means that little time is lost from lessons.

### Attendance

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

Authorised absence	
School data	6.4
National data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.8
National data	0.4

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

### Exclusions

#### Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

#### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
188	6	0
1	0	0
8	0	0
1	0	0
26	0	0
3	0	0
6	0	0

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

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. The school successfully provides for the needs of all its pupils in a caring environment.

#### Teaching and learning

Pupils' learning is **good** because the quality of teaching is **good**. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is **good** and the information gathered is used well to plan work that meets their needs.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well planned. Teachers use a range of resources and techniques to encourage and engage pupils well.
- Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations of behaviour to which pupils respond well.
- Teachers make effective use of learning support staff to successfully cater for the needs of all pupils.
- Pupils behave well, work hard and have good attitudes to learning.
- Occasionally teachers' class management is ineffective in dealing with inappropriate behaviour.
- Teachers' in Years 3 to 6 do not have high enough expectations of the presentation of pupils' work and handwriting.

## Commentary

16. Teachers plan their lessons well. They make good use of resources to ensure that tasks are interesting and challenging. The objectives of lessons are made clear at the beginning and, in the most effective lessons, teachers check at the end whether they have been achieved. An initial recap of previous work at the start of many lessons ensures that learning builds on previous work and pupils develop a good understanding of the subject. Teachers use a range of strategies to promote learning. For example, pupils cooperate well when given opportunities to work in pairs and groups in PE and in lessons linking literacy with music. Most lessons are delivered at a lively pace and teachers' explanations are clear as a result of their good knowledge of subjects.
17. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils and high expectations of their behaviour. They generally have very effective techniques for maintaining order. They know their pupils well, have a caring approach and work hard to ensure that each individual pupil is supported well in order to enable them to fulfil their potential. This successfully creates a positive learning atmosphere and virtually all pupils have good attitudes to learning, enjoy their lessons and work well. The one lesson judged to be unsatisfactory was a consequence of the teacher's lack of experience resulting in her skills in class management proving ineffective in dealing with inappropriate behaviour by a small number of pupils, but this is a rare occurrence.
18. Teachers give a high emphasis to the teaching of the basic skills in literacy and numeracy and work hard to overcome the problems resulting from many pupils' low level skills on entry. However, in some subjects, particularly in Years 3 to 6, too high an emphasis on the use of worksheets limits opportunities for pupils to write at length. Also, again in Years 3 to 6, teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work are generally not high enough. Teachers generally demonstrate a confident approach to the teaching of ICT and it is being used well to support learning across the curriculum.
19. The staff in the two reception classes work very effectively together. They have a good understanding of how young children learn and present a wide range of stimulating activities to children. They ensure that sessions include a good balance between adult-led activities and opportunities for children to make choices and to explore and learn independently. The result is that children are keen to try new experiences and are developing confidence as learners.
20. Teachers use assessment effectively to inform their planning. They regularly check on the progress made by pupils in the topics being studied. Targets in English and mathematics are set and made known to pupils in order that they can determine how well they are doing. Questions are used well to check that pupils understand their tasks. Marking includes good use of positive comments to develop the pupils' self-esteem, but the use of developmental written comments is less well used.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Support staff are used well to ensure that pupils with learning needs understand their tasks and maintain a satisfactory work rate. Pupils consequently make good progress in their learning and achieve satisfactorily. Support for pupils with English as an additional language is well organised and effective. They consequently make good progress and generally achieve similarly to their peers.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	11 (30 %)	14 (39%)	10 (28%)	1 (3%)	0	0

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

## The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum for all pupils. The range of extra-curricular activities provided is **very good**. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory** overall.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided.
- Close attention is given to equality of opportunity for all.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, gifted and talented pupils and those with English as an additional language is good.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is good.
- Aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory

### Commentary

22. All pupils benefit from the full national curriculum. Due emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy and many effective links are made between subjects. However, subjects such as geography and history are not being used sufficiently to promote the writing skills of pupils in Years 3 to 6.
23. The school gives close attention to ensuring that all pupils are fully included in all opportunities. Their needs are identified and work is generally well matched within the lessons. Pupils' learning is enhanced considerably because the school provides many additional opportunities to boost their basic skills and enrich their learning. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, either within the class or individually so that the curriculum meets their needs well. Pupils having particular gifts or talents are identified and are given good support. Similarly pupils with English as an additional language are provided with tasks and support from which they benefit well.
24. Many additional activities enrich the curriculum. Pupils from both Years 2 and 6 have opportunities to go on residential visits. These provide well for their personal and social development in addition to the activities in which they participate. Visits to museums, art galleries and places of educational interest are used well. These successfully 'bring to life' subjects such as history. For example, Year 2 pupils write about their visit to a Victorian classroom. Use of visiting specialists effectively develops pupils' skills in a range of subjects. Year 2 pupils have developed a good understanding of how felt is made through working with a visiting artist.
25. The school provides a very good range of extra curricular activities and exploits its good links with the community well. For example, pupils benefit from specialist teaching and coaching within school time in gymnastics lessons. Links with Crewe Alexandra Football Club enable pupils to benefit from coaching sessions at the club's training ground. Year 5 and 6 pupils visit the nearby secondary school to use the sports facilities and benefit from the coaching of specialist teachers.
26. The school works hard to overcome the problems presented by the accommodation. There is a limited amount of space and few additional rooms outside the classrooms. The layout of the school means that there is a through flow of 'traffic' in some teaching areas. This is noticeable particularly in the hall where lessons and assemblies are both sometimes disrupted. The hall is too small for some physical education activities and the computer suite is small and narrow so that lessons need to be planned very carefully. Nevertheless the staff work hard to provide a bright and cheerful learning environment, seeking to make the best use of what they have. A good example is the 'Aquarium', which provides a stimulating learning environment for the nurture group and pupils with special educational needs. Resources are satisfactory overall but are good for music and the Foundation Stage.

## Care, guidance and support

The school's **very good** provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils is one of its strengths. Adults in the school provide **good** levels of advice and guidance for those in their care. Arrangements to seek, value and act upon pupils' views are **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The arrangements for pupils' care and safety are very good.
- The identification of vulnerable children is good and additional support is used well.
- The good relationships in the school enable adults to know the pupils well and to listen to them.

### Commentary

27. A strength of the care for pupils is the atmosphere of security and well being that makes pupils feel valued during their time at school. Stringent arrangements for personal safety, well rehearsed child protection procedures, first aid provision and fire precautions together provide a high level of care that promotes a sense of self-esteem. The school has made good a deficiency identified in the previous report by ensuring that regular risk assessments of the premises are conducted and recorded.
28. There are good procedures for the induction of new pupils including those with special needs and looked-after children to ensure they integrate well. Participation in the EiC initiative provides a valuable venue for sharing resources and ideas with the other 23 schools involved. Involvement in the initiative helps to identify and provide for pupils of all abilities and good use is made of resources to support their needs. A Learning Mentor works with teachers, parents and pupils to help overcome barriers to learning, and the coordinator for pupils with particular talents or gifts seeks new challenges for them. A small number of pupils with specific needs are given extra support in a 'Nurture Group' [a support for pupils by staff other than teachers, funded by the EiC].
29. Teachers know their pupils well. Pupils say they feel able to approach adults in the school with their problems or concerns and parents share that view. Some of the concerns aired in discussion sessions are taken up by the Class Council, or fed into the School Council, whose decisions in turn are reported to the governing body. In this way pupils make a good contribution to the running of the school and gain an insight into the democratic process.

## Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's **good** links with parents, other schools and the community continue to make a good contribution to pupils' education.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good quality of information to parents, much improved from the previous Inspection.
- The involvement in the EiC programme has a good impact on school's community links.
- Parents' very positive views of the school.

### Commentary

30. The quality of information made available to parents is good. The Prospectus and the Governors' Annual Report to Parents now comply fully with legal requirements. Parents have two opportunities a year to discuss their children's progress formally with staff. Pupils' progress reports contain clearly written information and the school provides regular newsletters to keep parents up to date with its activities. The monthly newsletter is chatty, informative and popular

with parents. Parents think the staff are approachable and appreciate the open access and feel the staff try hard to deal with any concerns in a very positive manner.

31. Parents express very positive views about the school's relationship with them. They welcome the way the school works to involve them in their child's learning. For example, they like the Reading Diaries and appreciate the way the school obtains their views through an annual survey of parents' opinions. They acknowledge the school's action to improve behaviour and the speedy way it deals with any incidents of bullying. Parents think that their children are treated fairly and are presented with a range of interesting activities.
32. The school's strong links with the community and with other schools are further enhanced through its participation in the EiC Programme. One positive outcome has been the funding of the Learning Mentor posts. The Learning Mentors have strengthened the links between participating schools. For example the transition arrangements between the school and the local secondary school have been made much smoother through joint projects, increased contact with the school and exchange visits. The EiC programme has also drawn the nineteen member primary schools into a tighter partnership, resulting in enrichment through the exchange of ideas and resources.
33. The school makes good use of its position in the heart of the community by striking up partnerships with community organisations. A local gymnastics club is within walking distance and is regularly used by the school for professional coaching for its pupils. Crewe Alexandra Football Club and the nearby Bentley Car Company provide equally useful contributions to enhance the school curriculum. The parents association has called upon the good will of local businesses to donate prizes for its fundraising activities, while various church leaders make regular contributions to the broader curriculum by visiting school assemblies or receiving pupils into their churches.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The quality of leadership and management is **good**. The governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The leadership of the headteacher is **good** and she is supported well by senior staff. Management of the school is **good**. There is a determined approach to overcoming the barriers to learning resulting from the high rate of pupil mobility and pupils' well below average level skills on entry to the school.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads the school well; she works hard to develop the expertise of the staff and create an effective team.
- Performance management is used well to support school improvement.
- The headteacher is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior staff.
- There is a committed approach to ensuring that the needs of all pupils are met.
- Financial management is good.
- The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and gives good support to the headteacher.
- The role of coordinators in monitoring the teaching and learning in their subject is under-developed.

### **Commentary**

34. The headteacher is an effective leader. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. She delegates responsibility effectively and ensures that the particular skills and abilities of staff are employed well. This develops the expertise and confidence of the staff and has successfully created a committed team approach with a determination to improve and a capacity to succeed. For example, the ICT coordinator has worked alongside colleagues to develop their skills and confidence.

35. Performance management is used well. There is a close link between the objectives set for teachers and the priorities in the school development plan. Teachers benefit from regular review of their performance and work hard to achieve the objectives that they are set. The quality of teaching has improved as a result of the effective monitoring and evaluating of lessons. Teachers are given constructive feedback and opportunities to attend relevant training covering particular aspects of the curriculum. New members of staff are inducted well and given very good support both by the person delegated with that responsibility and the rest of the staff. The school has taken appropriate action to address the requirement to remodel the workload of the staff.
36. The school successfully creates an environment where all children can experience success and achieve their full personal, social and academic potential. There is a very caring ethos within the school, which generates a confident and enthusiastic approach to learning in pupils. Relationships are good, with all staff giving careful attention to the needs of the pupils to ensure equality of opportunity. The support given to pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups is well organised. The effective manner in which support staff are used is an important factor in the good progress that these pupils make. Whilst there is a determined approach to raising standards, emphasis is also appropriately given to ensuring that pupils are developed as responsible and caring individuals.
37. The governors effectively support the headteacher and staff. They carry out their statutory duties well and have an enthusiastic and committed approach to supporting and challenging the school. Some governors are linked to a subject and spend time in school. The chair of governors keeps well abreast of pupils' progress at the school, and meets with the headteacher on a regular basis. These procedures give the governors a good awareness of the work being carried out in the school, the areas of strength and those areas in need of development.
38. A clear direction is given to school improvement. Assessment procedures are good and pupils' learning is closely monitored. This ensures that pupils' progress is tracked throughout their time in the school. The procedures effectively support the setting of targets for pupils, particularly in English and mathematics, and are instrumental in supporting the raising of standards. However, although test data is analysed, the performance of particular groups is not yet closely analysed in order to plan support and intervention. Problems with computer software have limited progress in this area, but the school is working to redress the situation.
39. Procedures for monitoring the work of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher and senior staff monitor teachers' planning, scrutinise pupils' work and observe lessons, but not enough attention has been given to enabling coordinators to monitor teaching and learning in their subject. As a result the action plans drawn up for subjects are not well informed by an understanding of strengths and weaknesses in a subject. This is an area for development.
40. Financial planning and control systems are good and spending is closely linked to priorities in the school development plan. The priorities accurately reflect the educational needs of the pupils. Governors monitor the budget carefully and are aware of the financial constraints on the school. They have a clear awareness of the effect that the gradual fall in pupil numbers is having on the budget and an understanding of how impending changes to staff will alleviate the problem.

**Financial information for the Year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	538303
Total expenditure	492991
Expenditure per pupil	1988

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous Year	25000
Balance carried forward to the next	45312



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

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

41. The overall quality of provision for children in the reception classes is **very good**. Teachers and support staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. Teaching is good or better. The Foundation Stage is well managed, with a strong emphasis on teamwork. Accommodation is good and used imaginatively to stimulate children's learning. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

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

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

- Very good relationships between adults and children.
- Good opportunities for children to develop initiative and independence.
- Good manners and behaviour are promoted well.
- More attention could be given to social skills during snack time.

#### **Commentary**

42. Children enter school with very underdeveloped skills. However, they achieve well and the majority are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the year. Staff establish clear, but realistic, boundaries, rules and routines, which help children to feel safe and work happily. They create a calm, secure environment for learning and interact with the children continually, treating them with courtesy and respect.

43. The difference between right and wrong is effectively communicated in a range of contexts, for example through circle time, stories, assemblies and working with puppets. Skills of independence are promoted well, for example, when dressing and undressing for PE lessons and through an emphasis on pupils engaging in play and collaborative activities which they choose for themselves. Whilst snack time encourages children's understanding of healthy eating, this session could be enhanced by more emphasis on social skills. Currently, the children eat snacks outside. Skills are promoted well at lunch times.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

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

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

- Teaching and learning are good.
- All staff constantly promote speaking, listening and literacy skills.
- There are insufficient specifically planned pretend play sessions to support language skills.

#### **Commentary**

44. Most children begin school with poor communication skills. Many have had little experience of books or writing. Although the majority will not achieve the expected goals by the end of the year, they make good progress because of the very good learning opportunities and good teaching. They listen attentively to stories and handle books carefully. There is a strong emphasis on speaking clearly and learning letter sounds. Children's knowledge of these is developing well

and the majority can identify initial and final sounds in simple words. Early reading skills are developing well.

45. The reception classes are full of colourful and stimulating areas such as the garden centre, the writing corner and the 'outdoor classroom'. These encourage pretend play and promote children's language skills. However, although staff interact constantly with the children and consistently promote language skills very well as the children play, there are not enough specifically planned activities to help enlarge vocabulary and develop language. Early writing skills are developing well. For example, some children make good attempts at writing their own sentences about 'Jasper's Beanstalk', while others sequence stories and form letter shapes. Most children write their own name. Achievement is good.

### **Mathematical development**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Key mathematical ideas are promoted very well in many situations.
- Teachers' good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils result in very good learning.

### **Commentary**

46. Although children's standards by the end of the reception year are below those expected, they make good progress. They experience a wide range of practical and mathematical activities. For example, they join in number rhymes, play games such as 'passing the coin' to music and find and count seeds hidden in the 'outdoor classroom'. They have good experiences in ordering numbers to 10. Teaching is very good. Lessons are taken at a brisk pace and teachers confidently challenge children with questions and activities to match their attainment. All pupils are included and catered for very well. Mathematical vocabulary is promoted well and staff consistently reinforce the accurate understanding of matching numbers to objects. Through the current focus on growing seeds, children enthusiastically measure their plants and are developing a good understanding of shape, size and measure. They achieve well in relation to their poor skills on entry to school.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Early scientific skills are promoted well.
- Children use the computer competently.
- The curriculum is well planned and effective links are made with the other areas of learning.

### **Commentary**

47. Most children begin school with very little basic general knowledge. However, they make good progress and achieve well. Indications are that about half the pupils will attain the expected standards with the remainder attaining certain aspects in this area, for example, in developing ICT skills. Children use the mouse purposefully and a significant proportion can access programs. There are many opportunities for children to build and construct safely. They also learn early geography and history skills. For example, they find out about their own school in Victorian times and make a map of 'The Bear Hunt'. Very good learning opportunities quickly develop the children's natural curiosity and there are many planned sessions for them to find out about living things. They plant seeds and bulbs and watch them grow with wonder and

excitement. They care well for their guinea pigs and wait eagerly for their chickens to hatch! Adults support children very well and introduce them to many new experiences, such as gardening. Good links are also made with RE as children learn to appreciate the world and thank God for it. Teaching and learning are good.

### **Physical development**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good.
- There is good provision for outdoor learning.

### **Commentary**

48. A specifically designated outdoor learning area, which is used imaginatively, enhances children's learning experiences. Skills of climbing, jumping, balancing and manoeuvring wheeled toys are developing well. Most children look set to attain the expected goals by the end of the reception year. Lessons in the hall provide scope for children to move in a more confined space and take account of others. In one such dance lesson, children depicted 'growing like their seeds' with pushing and stretching movements and making suitable shapes. This also provided good links with learning in other areas. Part of the provision for reception children includes a weekly lesson in a nearby gym where larger apparatus and more space can be experienced. Pupils behave well in their PE lessons and teachers join in with the activities. They give the children many opportunities to demonstrate and share their skills with others. Children are taught to hold pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors correctly. They are learning to work in a controlled way and develop dexterity and coordination. They achieve well.

### **Creative development**

Provision in creative development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good opportunities for children to work with a wide range of materials and to develop imaginative skills.
- Good teaching of music.

### **Commentary**

49. Children achieve well and most are on target to reach the expected goals by the end of the year. There are many ongoing creative activities that give children very good opportunities to express themselves. Children's artwork is of a good standard, reflecting developing understanding and skills in the use of colour and the inclusion of detail in pictures. Children know the names of a variety of instruments and demonstrate how to play them. They are very obedient in lessons and watch and listen carefully, usually playing their instruments at precisely the right time! They join in enthusiastically with singing and are mainly in tune. Music is an integral part of the whole day with children enjoying singing number rhymes, listening to music and clapping rhythms of words in literacy. There are many opportunities both indoors and outdoors for imaginative play supported by good resources. These support their creative development.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are good.
- The subject action plan is having a positive impact.
- The quality of writing of pupils in Years 3 to 6 is poor.
- Handwriting and presentation of work in Years 3 to 6 is poor overall.

#### Commentary

50. The school's results in national tests compare unfavourably with all schools. However they are better when compared with similar schools and there has been a steady rise in standards since 1999. Bearing in mind the level at which pupils enter the school and the high rate of pupil mobility, achievement by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory. Good learning is taking place in Years 1 and 2 but is not maintained well enough in writing in Years 3 to 6.
51. Pupils make steady progress in reading in Years 1 and 2, and attainment is close to average overall by the end of Year 2. They enjoy reading and talk about their interests with enthusiasm. Most pupils read with reasonable accuracy and understand what they read. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. Some lower attainers are very hesitant, struggling with some words, but using suitable strategies when necessary. Most pupils are well aware of how the contents section is used to find information and the difference between an author and an illustrator. By Year 6, most pupils read confidently, and those with average and high attainment have a good understanding of what they read. Lower attaining pupils are more hesitant, often struggle and need help to decode words such as 'sign'. Overall standards are close to average.
52. In all lessons pupils listen well, and most confidently contribute orally. In some lessons teachers have to strike a balance between preventing pupils calling out and polite, shared participation. They do this well, although occasionally insufficient is done to ensure that the less-confident pupils contribute. Displays show pupils participating in role-play. The use of drama enlivens learning in other subjects and develops a deeper understanding of life in the past. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils effectively dramatised the lives of poor people in Tudor times in their work in history.
53. Pupils improve their writing skills steadily in Years 1 and 2, but overall standards are below average. However, there are clear signs that standards are improving. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to write both in literacy lessons and in other subjects. They explain diagrams of lifecycles, write instructions of how to ride a bicycle and compose adventure stories. They write lengthy accounts of the story of Cinderella, many of them using correct basic punctuation. Handwriting is generally well formed with many pupils using a cursive script and work is presented neatly. By the end of Year 6 standards in writing are well below those expected because pupils are not given enough opportunities to write at length. This limits their progress. In literacy lessons they analyse passages of writing for structure and content and show reasonable understanding in discussions. Writing frames are used to plan pieces of work, but these rarely lead to pupils producing written work of any length. There is not enough emphasis on recording and redrafting work. Much of the pupils' writing is recorded on worksheets and the handwriting and standards of presentation of most pupils are poor. Many Year 6 pupils work in pencil and are not yet joining letters. Teachers' marking of work is not sufficiently helpful in raising standards. A scheme to improve handwriting is in place but the impact is seen so far only in Years 1 and 2.

54. Teachers understand and implement the literacy strategy well. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. Lessons are stimulating and pupils show good attitudes to learning. The Year 2 teacher provided a good role model when she read, so that pupils who were asked to read extracts did so expressively. Teaching assistants support pupils with learning difficulties effectively in lessons so that they are fully included. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is satisfactory overall, although some good lessons were also seen. Pupils are grouped according to their prior attainment and teachers relate well to their particular groups. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and manage them very well so that pupils are attentive and they try hard to achieve well. There are examples of some teachers making effective use of self-evaluation to amend the content of the lesson as a result of the learning in the previous lesson. This ensures that activities are suitably matched to the capability of pupils and learning improves as a result.
55. The recently appointed subject coordinator has not had an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning, but she has prepared and already implemented part of a suitable action plan. She is aware of the need to improve standards in writing, is keen to encourage pupils to write for pleasure and has instigated a creative writing club.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

56. Good cross-curricular links are made, for example in role-play activities, which enhance speaking and listening. However over-use of worksheets in subjects such as geography and history in Years 3 to 6 means that writing skills are not well promoted.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are below average.
- Teaching is good overall, but an overuse of work sheets results in some work lacking challenge.
- The school works hard to overcome the problems caused by high rates of pupil mobility.
- The presentation of some pupils' work is unsatisfactory.
- General assessment is used well to monitor pupils' progress and plan intervention strategies, but marking is used less well to develop learning.
- Although the quality of subject management is satisfactory, the coordinator has too little opportunity to evaluate teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

57. Pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average. More than half of the present Year 6 pupils have joined the school at other than the normal time of entry. This has a marked detrimental effect on standards, which are below average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The school works hard to overcome this problem. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are grouped according to prior attainment and pupils with special educational needs are supported well. Most pupils are making steady progress from a low base, but work often lacks suitable challenge to raise standards to required levels. This has a limiting effect on achievement, which is just satisfactory.
58. Teaching is generally effective and helps pupils to learn well. In lessons, the pace is brisk, pupils are well managed and teachers make good use of praise and encouragement to boost the pupils' self-esteem. Teachers' explanations are clear, showing a good understanding of the subject. They tell the pupils what the objective of the lesson is and use questions well to ensure that pupils know what they have to do. This results in most pupils moving to their tasks quickly, persevering in their work and maintaining a good rate of effort. The overuse of worksheets,

which are often at too low a level, limits the development of pupils' presentation skills. As a result, when they are called on to produce work requiring them to use these skills the work is sometimes untidy. In lessons, pupils benefit equally from what is on offer. There is no difference in the performance of boys and girls.

59. Assessment procedures are well organised and test information is used well to track pupils' performance and identify any who are not making the expected progress. This enables intervention to be planned effectively. Individual targets are set and made known to pupils and their progress is regularly monitored with a view to revising the targets. Analysis of test results is carried out to indicate areas of the curriculum requiring more attention. However, although teachers mark pupils' work carefully and use positive comments to develop their self-esteem, the use of constructive, developmental comment to develop pupils' understanding of how they can improve is limited.
60. The subject coordinator is very enthusiastic. Although she has not had an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school she has a good awareness of the areas requiring attention and has drawn up an action plan which is being implemented effectively.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

61. Teachers provide a satisfactory range of opportunities for pupils to use and develop their mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, they make effective use of tables, charts and graphs to show results in science and in design and technology.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Overall, good teaching helps pupils to achieve well.
- Good coverage of all aspects of the curriculum.
- Monitoring of the subject is not well developed.

### **Commentary**

62. Although standards are below the national average, they compare favourably with similar schools. Pupils achieve well. This is due to effective teaching and a good curriculum, which focuses on investigative work to support pupils' knowledge and understanding. This aspect shows improvement since the last inspection.
63. Pupils enjoy the practical lessons and have good attitudes. For example, Year 1 pupils excitedly, but systematically, make sandwiches from the cress they have grown, whilst Year 2 pupils talk enthusiastically and knowledgeably about plants and how they reproduce.
64. Scientific vocabulary is promoted well and pupils are encouraged to use it. Year 6 pupils show confidence in attempting to use scientific terms. Teachers gently correct pronunciation, where necessary, but also give suitable praise, thus boosting these pupils' self-esteem. Pupils listen attentively and are keen to learn.
65. Thorough planning, effective use of resources and good class management exemplify good teaching. This was seen mainly throughout the school, but particularly in Years 2 and 6 where teachers also showed very good subject knowledge. Occasionally, where teaching was less effective, this was the result of the ineffective management of pupils. This slowed the pace of learning.

66. Monitoring of the subject is underdeveloped. The coordinator has not had an opportunity to observe lessons, scrutinise pupils' work and monitor teachers' planning. The school is aware of the need to develop the monitoring of classroom practice to ensure parity across the mixed aged year groups. However, assessment procedures are good. The analysis of test results and end of unit assessments has enabled the coordinator to draw up an action plan, identifying the need to ensure appropriate match of work to pupils' prior attainment, plus other areas for development.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Action taken to raise the quality of teaching is good.
- Some good use of ICT across the curriculum.
- Good improvements to resources but the size and shape of the computer suite is inhibiting on occasions.

### **Commentary**

67. There has been recent good improvement to the resources for the subject, with a new computer suite and hardware. This has resulted in raising standards of pupils in Year 2 to expected levels. The impact of the suite is yet to be fully realised in Years 3 to 6 and by Year 6 standards are still below the expected level.
68. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers prepare lessons well, explain tasks clearly and show confidence in their use of the large screen. For example, in a lesson with Years 3 and 4 the teacher clearly demonstrated how to use the 'Dazzle' program so that most pupils achieved the task of producing symmetrical patterns quickly and effectively. However the size and shape of the suite restricts learning to some extent. Teachers have to manage pupils effectively in order to overcome the problems created by the restricted space. The use of laptops in addition to PCs ensures that in most cases one or two pupils work at each machine. However in one lesson some pupils were grouped in threes, two of them without seats. The atmosphere was hot and unpleasant, not conducive to good learning. Most pupils co-operate and share fairly but the time they are allocated on the keyboard is limited, slowing down their learning.
69. The subject coordinator has been active. She has attended courses and passed on her knowledge to other teachers. She has also worked alongside colleagues in lessons, which has resulted in increased confidence of all. Pupils' acquisition of skills is assessed and recorded and pupils also note their own progress.

### **ICT across the curriculum**

70. Good use is made of ICT across the curriculum. Classroom computers are used to support learning in a range of subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils matched numbers to their names in a mathematics lesson and pupils in Years 4 and 5 used their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes to create branching databases. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 also researched information about Viking longships in history and a pupil with special educational needs in Year 3 made effective use of the computer to succeed in spelling words correctly in literacy. Yearbooks show pupils using computers in a design and technology project. Practical work in music and dance is recorded on video so that pupils see their work, enjoy it and assess how to improve their performance.

## HUMANITIES

71. No lessons were seen in geography and only one in history and it is therefore not possible to judge the quality of provision. Inspectors had discussions with pupils, looked at teachers' planning for these subjects and samples of pupils' current work.
72. In **geography**, the work of pupils throughout the school shows basic coverage of the subject, although better in Years 1 and 2, where, for example, knowledge of their local environment is supported by simple map work. Wider knowledge of the world is developed through the travels of Barnaby Bear. Pupils are presented with good opportunities for using their literacy skills by writing postcards, letters from Norway and persuading others to visit Dublin.
73. Little recorded work was seen in Years 3 to 6, although that seen is matched to the planning. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 consider an area they wish to improve. They use sketching skills, maps and written descriptions of the features. Other pupils use Venn diagrams and define 'urban' and 'rural', using and promoting numeracy and literacy skills. Overall, however, there is little support for literacy. Some worksheets used in Years 3 and 4 are also used by Years 5 and 6, resulting in insufficient challenge for the older pupils. A discussion with some Year 6 pupils showed that their knowledge of the subject is very sketchy.
74. In **history**, only one lesson was seen. This involved some research on the Internet, but the organisation of the lesson was inappropriate so that the pupils' initial enthusiasm was not harnessed and built on sufficiently well and time was lost. Books show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a wide range of experiences. For example, study of the Victorians is linked to the history of the school. Pupils learn about The Great Fire of London and famous people such as Samuel Pepys and Florence Nightingale. They make good use of their writing skills to compare hospitals, their own lives with those of Victorian children and answer questions to reinforce their knowledge of The Fire of 1666. Displays of work show their knowledge is also reinforced by work in art and design. In Years 3 to 6 the majority of recorded work is on worksheets so that pupils have few opportunities to write more than a few sentences. In Years 5 and 6 there is very little work recorded and work sometimes lacks challenge. In discussion, Year 6 pupils show very limited knowledge, referring to one or two features of history with no depth of knowledge or understanding.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in RE is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good coverage of Christianity and Judaism.
- Good range of visits and visitors into school to support pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- There is limited coverage and recording of work relating to the Islamic and Hindu religions in Years 5 and 6.
- In Years 3 to 6 there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills.

### Commentary

75. It was only possible to see one lesson, which was satisfactory overall with good elements in the oral sessions. Skills of speaking and listening were promoted well. Discussions with pupils and staff, plus analysis of displays and work, suggest that standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 show sound knowledge of the special events in the life of Jesus. They retell stories such as Noah's Ark and recount, vividly, some of the miracles Jesus performed.



76. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 continue to study the Old and New Testament with additional support from a local vicar who enhances learning in Year 5. He teaches a series of lessons based on 'Bible Explorer'. By the end of the course, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the main events and stories in the Bible. Work for this course is recorded in a comprehensive workbook. Whilst Christianity and Judaism are taught effectively, there is much less evidence of written work about Islam and Hinduism, which are the other two religions studied. Opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills are missed because most tasks are work sheet based.
77. In discussion, pupils in Years 5 and 6, showed good knowledge and understanding of Christianity and Judaism. They have an adequate grasp of the major beliefs and observances of Christians, Jews and Muslims. Pupils are gaining an understanding of and respect for people's differing beliefs.
78. Pupils enjoy this subject. For example, a voluntary 'Friday Club', at which pupils meet together with a teacher for lunch and discussions about Christianity, is well attended. Visits to a mosque, a synagogue and churches of different denominations, plus visitors into school to lead assemblies, enhance pupils' learning. The subject is making a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal and spiritual development.

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

79. Only one lesson was seen in each of art and design, design and technology and music, it is therefore not possible to judge the quality of provision in these subjects. Inspectors looked at teachers' planning, samples of pupils' work and talked with pupils.
80. In **art and design**, the many examples of pupils' current and past work attractively displayed around the school indicate that standards are above those expected. Throughout the school pupils achieve well.
81. Pupils develop good skills in the use of a wide range of media. Year 1 pupils have made effective use of paper to make attractive collages linked to their stories about Cinderella in literacy. Older pupils use charcoal and ink well when creating pictures of the local area in the style of Lowry. Year 5 and 6 pupils' patterns based on the Beatles 'Yellow Submarine' show good use of colour, tone and shade. The work in batik displayed around the school is of high quality. In the lesson observed the Year 1 pupils used their observational skills well when drawing and painting a range of plants using pen, pastel, crayon and paint. The high level of concentration they displayed reflected their interest and enjoyment of the subject.
82. There are many examples showing where art has been taught effectively through other subjects. Chalk and pastel pictures of the Great Fire of London by pupils in Year 2 show very good observational drawing skills and the display of their work depicts the event well. Computer generated art features strongly around the school. Pictures and repeat patterns created using the Dazzle program are bright and colourful. Paintings on the theme of relationships based on the work 'Nurse reading to a little girl' by Mary Cassatt support the development of pupils' personal and social skills.
83. Visits to museums and visits by artists make a very good contribution to the curriculum. Pupils in Year 2 have been shown how to make felt by a visiting artist, and successfully created pictures linked to their work on mini-beasts in science. Older pupils have created attractive line drawings of machines after their visit to a museum.
84. In **design and technology** (DT) pupils receive a broad curriculum. They enjoy DT and are delighted to demonstrate their moving toys and the very good maze games they have created. The design element of the subject has a high profile with many good examples of planning and improvements. In the lesson seen, work was well matched to pupils' prior attainment and there

were good links with geography. For example, pupils used atlases competently to discover where ingredients for making their specific types of bread came from.

85. Planning and assessment are good. The coordinator is very knowledgeable and conscientious and monitors planning and work, but has not observed lessons. Assessment sheets, to record progress at the end of units, are being implemented and a DT Club has been established.
86. In the one lesson seen in **music**, teaching was very effective. The teacher's subject knowledge was strong and there were high expectations of what pupils could achieve. Within the lesson, the pupils composed a Tudor pavane. This was based on the rhythmic patterns of syllables in words such as 'Mary Tudor', using tuned and untuned instruments. Pupils showed good understanding of what was required but, above all, much enjoyment in everyone being involved and working together. They successfully created their own class composition and recorded it with skilful guidance from their teacher.
87. Good links are made with other subjects. For example, in literacy, pupils created a choral presentation of a poem, accompanied by musical instruments to support the performance effectively. A choir performs on special occasions such as Christmas and Easter and a group of Year 2 pupils are learning the recorder. Resources are plentiful and the coordinator is knowledgeable. She has introduced a new commercial scheme to help and guide colleagues. The staff have welcomed this scheme and indications are that it is being implemented effectively.

## **Physical Education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school makes very effective use of links with the community to ensure pupils receive a broad curriculum.
- Teachers plan their lessons carefully and overcome the difficulties presented by the accommodation well.
- Pupils have good attitudes, work hard in lessons and their achievement is satisfactory.
- Not enough attention is given to monitoring teaching and learning in the subject.

### **Commentary**

88. The standards being attained by pupils are average overall. The school has made a determined effort to overcome the restrictions on physical activities presented by the accommodation and makes very good use of links with local schools and sports clubs. As a result pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
89. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 regularly attend the nearby secondary school to use the sports hall and outside areas. They showed good attitudes to the subject in a team building and orienteering session and put a high level of physical effort into their work. A link with a nearby gymnastics club has improved provision in this aspect of the curriculum. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are consequently developing good gymnastic skills and a number of them successfully achieve a bronze, silver or gold award. Links with local sports clubs such as Crewe Alexandra Football Club ensure that pupils receive good quality coaching. The school participates in a range of competitive team games with some success. This is very creditable considering the difficulties presented by having no field and having to play all their games at other schools.
90. In the limited number of lessons observed teaching was good. Lessons are well planned and teachers have a good understanding of the different elements which make up an effective lesson. In a lesson with Year 2, the teacher and learning support assistant overcame the

difficulties presented by the small sized hall well and gave good attention to safety. By the end of the lesson pupils showed satisfactory small games skills; most could roll a ball with reasonable accuracy and throw a beanbag to a partner in order that they could catch it. A very positive feature of a dance lesson with Year 4 was the teacher's use of a camcorder to film the pupils' routines in order to enable them to evaluate their own performance. Pupils participate in swimming lessons, but the number of pupils who achieve the standard expected by the time they leave the school is below average.

91. The school is aware that subject management is in need of development. Whilst the coordinator has drawn up an action plan she has not been given an opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the subject.

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

92. No lessons were seen during the inspection in this area of the school's work. Consequently, no judgements are made about overall provision. However, the school is working towards the Healthy School Award and teachers' planning indicates that good attention is given to this aspect of pupils' learning. The ethos in the school is warm and friendly. A feature of the work of the school is the way it works to ensure that each child is cared for well. Planning shows that this area is mainly taught through other subjects in the curriculum. Careful attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of the value of a good diet, sex and drugs education and personal health and safety. Pupils are given opportunities to express their views, and this develops their confidence and sense of responsibility. Older pupils care well for younger children. They relate well to their peers and to teachers, and develop a mature and sensible attitude to school life. The members of the School Council take their responsibilities seriously and make positive suggestions about how to improve the school.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4
<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	6
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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

