

INSPECTION REPORT

ST CHRISTOPHER PRIMARY SCHOOL

ALLESLEY

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 103652

Headteacher: Mr I Jones

Reporting inspector: R E Helliwell - 5535

Dates of inspection: 29th January - 1st February 2001

Inspection number: 181819

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Allesley Old Road Allesley Coventry
Postcode:	CV5 9JG
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Dunkley
Date of previous inspection:	February 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr R E Helliwell 5535	Registered inspector	Science; Art and design; English as an additional language.	What sort of school is it? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? How high are standards? - The school's results and pupils' achievements.
Mr P Widdowson 13485	Lay inspector		How high are standards? - Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Mr P Clark 20326	Team inspector	Mathematics; Design and technology.	
Mrs F Ruddick 24007	Team inspector	English; Geography; History.	
Mr T Prosser 22669	Team inspector	Information and communication technology; Physical education; Special educational needs; Equal opportunities.	
Mrs G Wilkinson 2749	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Religious education; Music.	

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATOR	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Christopher Primary School is a community school which caters for 457 boys and girls from the ages of three to eleven years. It is much above the average size for primary schools. Children begin, part time, in the Nursery aged three years and full time in two Reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they become five years of age. The school is situated to the west of Coventry in an area comprising a little low-cost, rented accommodation but mainly medium-cost homes which are owner occupied. The area's social profile is about average nationally. Most pupils' families live within the locality; a few live outside this area.

About nine per cent of families are entitled to claim free school meals, around the average nationally. Ninety-two per cent of families are white, of mainly British heritage. Twenty-two pupils speak English as an additional language to the one used at home. There are 56 pupils registered as having special educational needs - about 12 per cent. However, there are only three pupils with statements of special educational need - this is below the average nationally and includes one who has physical difficulty. Taken as a whole, at entry children have around the average understanding of words, letters and numbers. The school is full. There is a waiting list for entry, and nearly all pupils begin and complete their primary education here.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is very effective. Since the previous inspection it has maintained some aspects of good or very good quality, such as teaching and leadership, and improved standards in line with national trends. Standards in English and mathematics are above national averages¹ at the end of the juniors. From entering the infants, most pupils make steady progress to maintain higher than average standards in English and mathematics. Nearly all pupils' behaviour is very good, and most are positive about lessons. The school has an income somewhat above the national average but it is spending wisely and providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Results in English and mathematics in national tests are well above national averages at the end of the infants and above them at the end of the juniors²: they are improving at rates similar to all schools nationally. Very many pupils' oral skills are very good.
- Standards in music and information and communication technology are above national expectations³ at the end of the infants and juniors stages. History is above average at the end of the juniors.
- Standards of teaching are good on the whole, and have improved recently in English and mathematics. Teaching in the Foundation Stage⁴ is of very good quality.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good on the whole.
- Pupils are very well cared for.
- Leadership and management of the headteacher and his senior team are very good.

What could be improved

- Although broadly in line with national expectations, the quality of work in science is not as strong as in English and mathematics⁵ at the end of both key stages.
- Art and design work is below the standards expected at the end of both infants and juniors stages.
- Pupils' work is not routinely monitored in all subjects, or matched well to National Curriculum levels in either key stage.
- Mostly, marking quality is below the standards set out in the marking policy.
- The governing body does not have clear procedures for obtaining first-hand evidence of the daily work of the school. (Health and safety visits are the exception.)

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

¹ National averages refer to the percentages of pupils nationally who achieve particular levels in English, mathematics and science in National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments at ages seven and eleven.

² Key Stage 1 - Infants (5-7) and Key Stage 2 - Juniors (7-11) are the two key stages in addition to the Foundation Stage.

³ National expectations (the expected standards) are set down in the National Curriculum as levels which the average child is expected to achieve by a particular age.

⁴ The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the Reception Year when most are five years of age.

⁵ The three core subjects are English, mathematics and science.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1996. Since then, it has followed a useful action plan to improve the systems for making and evaluating its decisions about spending. Consequently, it has made somewhat better progress with improvements than would reasonably be expected. Reports to parents have improved in quality to become much clearer about pupils' attainments and rates of progress; the special educational needs provision now closely matches the government's recommendations. Standards in geography are now satisfactory, but art and design work is still unsatisfactory in both the infants and juniors. All these aspects were recommended for improvement at the previous inspection.

In addition, teaching quality has been strengthened further to keep pace with recent developments. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have provided useful guidance which has resulted in more direct teaching. Systems are now in place for more effective analysis of pupils' attainments and rates of progress in English and mathematics, but not yet in other subjects. The governing body now is more involved corporately in making strategic decisions and contributing to a useful school improvement plan. The quality of this is much improved. There is now better provision for work in information and communication technology - this has led to improved standards. The library stock is more up to date and better organized. The high standards of good behaviour have been maintained. Since the previous inspection, a Nursery class has been opened and the building has been modified to include access for those with physical difficulties.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	B	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	C	B	B	
science	C	C	C	C	

Most children make good progress in all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum and by the time they are five exceed national expectations. In the infants, National Curriculum results in 2000 were very high in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. In science, teacher assessments were very high but the results were not reflected in the quality of pupils' work in Year 3 during inspection. Neither is the work in the current Year 2 as high as expected by previous results. Test results in English and mathematics have improved over the three previous years broadly in line with all schools. Standards rose more sharply in 2000 because more higher attainers reached a higher level. National Curriculum test results have exceeded targets; those for 2001 were revised upwards by governors. For example, targets set for 2000 were for 75 per cent of pupils to attain Level 4 or better in English, and for 72 per cent to do so in mathematics. The proportions who did so were 89 and 84 per cent respectively. Taking the quality of teaching into account, targets set are still somewhat low for 2002. The inspection found that standards in English and mathematics are above average. Also, standards in science have improved but are not as high and remain at the average nationally and when compared with similar schools.

Standards are around those expected in design and technology and history at the end of the infants, and in geography, physical education and religious education at the end of both key stages. They are better than average in information and communication technology and music at the end of both key stages, and in history at the end of the juniors. Inspectors are unable to assess standards in design and technology at the

end of the juniors because there is insufficient evidence. In art and design, standards are below those expected at the end of infant and junior key stages. After entering the National Curriculum, most pupils make steady progress until they leave, and the good teaching sustains the above average standards in English and mathematics. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons. Those with English as an additional language usually make steady progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good: a substantial majority has positive attitudes about school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good: nearly all pupils behave very well, are obedient and willing to help when asked.
Personal development and relationships	Good: most pupils co-operate and are friendly to each other, gain in maturity and are sympathetic to others.
Attendance	Good: it is above the national average.

Children quickly learn good attitudes in Nursery and Reception classes, and nearly all maintain these positive relationships in the infants and juniors. The school is very orderly and settled. It is free from racial tension. Attendance has been above national averages over recent years.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

Across the school, teaching is good on the whole and largely meets the needs of all pupils. Ninety lessons were observed in whole or in part. In 94 per cent, teaching quality was satisfactory or better; in 67 per cent it was good or better; in 39 per cent - two in every five lessons - it was very good or excellent. Teaching is strongest on the whole in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception) and in English where it is mostly good or very good. In mathematics and information and communication technology, it is usually of good quality. Teaching in art and design is weak at both key stages - most teaching seen at inspection was unsatisfactory owing to poor progression in teaching suitable skills and a lack of grasp of the requirements of the Programmes of Study. This has led to poorly imitative work that limits pupils' originality. In mathematics, teaching in one lesson was of unsatisfactory quality at inspection, but numeracy skills are being taught well on the whole. Literacy skills are being taught very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good: a broad range of learning opportunities is provided. There is a good range of extra-curricular sports activities provided for the juniors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is a good amount of provision and it matches pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory: the grant is used for its intended purposes. Teaching is sound, but partnership between class teachers and support teacher are not as effective as desirable.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good on the whole. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good; for spiritual development it is satisfactory; for cultural development it is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are cared for very well. Most teachers know the pupils very well; all staff make useful contributions. A child with physical difficulties has full access to the curriculum and is very well supported by the care assistants.

Child protection procedures are very good. All staff members are trained and know the important systems for dealing with any issues which arise. There is very little bullying - none occurred during inspection and the school's records show very few incidents. Most parents' views of school are very positive and the school's partnership with them is a good one.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: the headteacher gives a very strong lead and he and the governors work well together. The senior management team works very well to support the school's improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. It fulfils its duties fully. However, it is not systematic in recording its visits or in reporting back on them to committees.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors its performance well. Pupils' attainments are well tracked in English and mathematics: the school is compared with all local schools and action is taken to improve weaker aspects.
The strategic use of resources	Strategic planning is good. Successful attempts are made to link spending to desired improvements. All grants are used for their intended purposes.

There is more than adequate accommodation, enough class teachers, and some useful, good quality classroom assistance, especially in support of pupils' literacy skills. Resources are of good quality and there are sufficient on the whole. The headteacher and governors have refined understanding of value for money principles and apply them well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Their children are making good progress. • The teaching is good. • They feel comfortable in approaching the school with queries or problems. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few are concerned: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - about how well work is matched to prior attainment; - that recently the school's relationships with its community appear less strong; - about a small amount of aggressive behaviour; - that their complaints are not taken seriously. • A substantial proportion doubts if an interesting range of activities outside lessons is provided.

Only a small number of parents (28 - six per cent) attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. One-hundred-and-thirty-two (28 per cent) returned the questionnaires. The evidence shows that a substantial majority of parents strongly supports the school. At the pre-inspection meeting, about one-third of those present - about two per cent of the parental body - strongly expressed some concerns. Without reference to the sources, all those comments have been reported to the headteacher, who is considering them. Inspectors found that pupils' behaviour is very good on the whole, that bullying is infrequent, and that most parents believe the school is approachable. There is harmony between nearly all pupils and, in class, clear evidence of good relationships and a lack of racial tension - no incidents of racial harassment were observed at play or lunch-time breaks. Parental opinion is divided between whether there is too little or too much homework. The inspectors judge that there is a suitable amount of homework provided for pupils of these ages. There is a wide range of extra-curricular sports activities provided, with every child in the juniors entitled to attend: there is little on offer to the infants. On the whole, inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Most work is matched to pupils' prior attainment. Evidence at inspection showed positive relationships with the community.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The standards which pupils achieve in National Curriculum tests in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of the infant stage - by age seven years - are well above those achieved by all schools nationally and have improved in recent years at a similar rate to national trends. Standards are similar to those reported at the previous inspection. Work in class is similarly above national expectations but not quite as high overall as National Curriculum test results show. Teacher assessments in science indicate similar high levels of achievement, but do not mirror work in class which is only average. At the end of the juniors - by age eleven - results were above national averages in 2000 in English and mathematics; the school is on course to maintain these standards in 2001. These are similar to the standards reported at the previous inspection. By comparison, results in science were in line with the national average; the standard of work in class is average and suggests that test performance will be similar in 2001. The school does not set targets in science and, although standards have improved in recent years, they have not made gains against the national averages. The targets set for English and mathematics have been exceeded, in English by 14 per cent and in mathematics by 12 per cent. The targets set for 2001 are somewhat low, taking into account the overall quality of teaching and the progress made in recent years.

2. At entry to the Nursery - aged three - most children have knowledge of words, letters and numbers which is normal for their ages: most then make good progress during the Foundation Stage. At entry to Year 1 and to the beginning of the National Curriculum, standards are above average: most pupils exceed the expectations laid out as 'Early Learning Goals' for the Foundation Stage. Across the infants and juniors, most pupils make steady progress to maintain the standards achieved at the outset, owing to the good teaching in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those with English as an additional language make steady progress. On the whole, lower and average attainers make rather more rapid progress than higher attainers. In music, most pupils make good progress. In art and design, most pupils make only slow progress and their progress is also slow in developing the skills of scientific enquiry.

3. In the infants, most pupils read and write well. They are acquiring a good base in letter sounds, write with interest and spell with reasonable accuracy. A substantial majority recognizes numbers in place value, has good recall of simple number bonds such as $20 - 8$ or 2×4 , and is gaining an understanding of a range of different ways to solve mathematical problems. In science, work is not so well recorded. Often, it is limited by simple, undemanding worksheets and too little guidance about what to record. Pupils rarely make simple predictions of likely outcomes, or give enough explanations in scientific terms about what they find out. In the juniors, pupils' writing becomes richer in content, more accurate and develops a good use of adjectives and adverbs. Many write interesting and extended accounts of stories and about their work in subjects such as history. In mathematics, most pupils' recall of mathematical bonds, table groups or shapes is accurate and swift. In science, however, as in the infants, pupils know much more than they record. They do not provide enough scientific explanation; the vocabulary they use is not sufficiently scientific, and only in some classes do they provide sufficient scientific explanations for their experiments and investigations.

4. By the end of both key stages, most pupils speak and listen very well. They express themselves confidently and with clear meaning. In the infants, good progress is made in acquiring information and communication technology skills which are better than average by the age of seven years, and these standards are maintained in the juniors. Most pupils handle data well and understand how computers are used to find information and record their work. In religious education, most have acquired suitable information about Christianity and other faiths by the time they are seven or eleven years of age. There is insufficient evidence of design and technology for inspectors to make a judgement about standards at the end of the juniors: standards are in line with expectations at the end of the infants. Pupils make simple models from their own designs. In geography, pupils in both infants and juniors know something of the

environment and how humans affect land usage: work is broadly in line with national expectations at both key stages. In history, progress is quite rapid; pupils build more quickly on the average levels of understanding they have by age seven to acquire more knowledge and understanding than is expected by the age of eleven years. They know much about historical evidence by age eleven, for example. By ages seven and eleven, in music, many pupils have better than average knowledge of sounds, how they are made and how they are performed. In physical education, most acquire reasonable degrees of body movement and use equipment quite skilfully. Some pupils achieve standards in skipping at Key Stage 2 which are quite high. At the end of the infants, standards are in line with national expectations; by the end of the juniors, standards are above national expectations.

5. Standards in art and design are not high enough at the end of both infant and junior key stages. By the ages of seven and eleven, fewer pupils than are expected control paint well, draw with appreciation of shading and express their own ideas. Many pupils' drawings and paintings are poor imitations of the work of other artists, rather than their own individual work that reflects an appreciation of other artists' style and techniques. Skills are under-developed throughout both key stages and progress is slow for all groups. This low achievement also was stated at the previous inspection. However, on the whole the school has maintained its high standards and average levels of attainment over recent years.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Most pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, have positive attitudes towards school which impact well on their learning. Similar attitudes were reported at the previous inspection. They enjoy coming to school and find much of the work interesting and challenging. In lessons, most are attentive and concentrate well on their tasks, and work productively in the time given. They share resources well and are successful in working independently and collaboratively in pairs and in small groups. For example, they discussed sensibly and recorded similarities and differences in a lesson dealing with prejudice. Pupils willingly participate in discussions and answer questions enthusiastically; this allows teachers to be clear about what they know and understand. After school, many older pupils enjoy participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities provided by the school, including French, football, netball, rounders, basketball, cross-country, choir and gardening clubs. This contributes considerably to their personal development.

7. Taken as a whole, behaviour is very good. This is similar to the standards reported at the previous inspection. In the classrooms, pupils settle quickly, are attentive and show respect for their teachers and other pupils. At playtime, pupils are lively and boisterous, but during the inspection there was no evidence of rough or aggressive behaviour, isolation, harassment or racial tension. When the whistle goes at the end of playtime, pupils respond immediately and line up in a quiet and orderly manner before being escorted back into school. At lunchtime, there is a friendly and sociable atmosphere in the dining hall. Pupils are polite and well mannered. They move around the school in an orderly way, hold doors open for adults and other pupils, are helpful to visitors and respectful of property.

8. Nearly all pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are well aware of the standards of behaviour expected of them. Pupils of all ages are involved in establishing their class rules and rules for behaviour at playtime. They consider the impact of their actions on their classmates and develop respect for the feelings and values of others. This is very evident in the good levels of courtesy, consideration and support most pupils show to each other. For example, in the 'Pupils of the Week Assembly', pupils listened attentively as the individual awards were read out and genuinely applauded the recipients.

9. Pupils' personal development is good. Relationships between pupils and between all adults in the school are good. Teachers are accessible: pupils feel comfortable to approach them with any problems or concerns they may have. Pupils work and play happily together irrespective of age, gender or ethnic origin. Levels of harmony and inclusion are high. Teachers know their pupils well and this helps nearly all in their personal development. Pupils have individual classroom responsibilities and these are extended in Year 5 when some volunteer to help in the library. In Year 6, some pupils have additional responsibility for setting

up equipment in assembly, looking after sports equipment and collecting litter. Some also are involved in organising their own stalls at the annual summer fête where they are given responsibility for arranging games and collecting items to sell. Here, the younger children normally are assisted by older pupils. The school is planning to establish a school council to enhance the opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take on additional responsibility in contributing to the daily life at school.

10. Since the previous inspection, above average attendance at the school has been maintained. Attendance is slightly above the national average with no unauthorised absence recorded. Most pupils come to school on time; good attendance and punctuality have a positive impact on attainment and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is good on the whole. The better than satisfactory standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained and in some respects have improved. Ninety-four per cent is satisfactory or better; 67 is good or better; 40 per cent is very good or excellent; six per cent is unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching in English is strongest - most is of good or very good quality. Literacy skills are taught well. Most teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good. In the infants and juniors, most is good or better with teaching in the juniors marginally stronger. Across the school, teaching in mathematics is good - numeracy skills are taught well. It is also good in information and communication technology. It is broadly satisfactory in science. Insufficient teaching was seen in design and technology, geography, history and religious education to make an overall judgement of its quality. However, in a majority of the lessons seen at both key stages, teaching was good. At inspection, in one lesson of art and design teaching was satisfactory, but in the remaining four it was not. Also, in one lesson of mathematics, teaching was of unsatisfactory quality. The liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers ensures that support within class and through withdrawal is well targeted with minimum disruption to continuity. The co-ordinator and support staff plan in partnership with class teachers so that in the main the support provided is in line with the regular class work. Particularly in English, pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result. Also, there is a high level of awareness of these pupils' needs amongst most class teachers. Awareness of gifted and talented pupils is emerging; a teacher leads on this aspect. However, as yet such pupils are not systematically identified nor are their needs fully met.

12. All teachers make at least satisfactory and mainly good relationships with pupils which are based on fairness and consistency, coupled with high expectations for living together. Consequently, nearly all pupils behave well and often very well in lessons. Nearly all mirror their teachers in their personal relationships and get on well with their peers. Consequently, in nearly all lessons, there are good levels of productivity and positive working atmospheres. These are enhanced by good liaison with, and management of, support and teaching assistants. This group supports teachers well, and as a whole adds good value to the teaching. For example, in group work to provide pupils with opportunities to learn literacy skills, the revision was well paced, relationships and control were strong and pupils progressed well. Just occasionally, there is a tendency to sit passively during whole-class teaching, and so valuable extra support is not provided.

13. In the strongest lessons - in about two out of every five - teaching quality is very good. Its main characteristic is a very strong grasp of the Programmes of Study which enables teachers to ask suitably challenging questions and provide good amounts of detailed information. This, in turn, leads to teachers giving good quality advice and guidance to pupils during the course of their work. Often, this very good teaching has pace - there is little time for pupils to be passive. In addition, high levels of pupil and teacher interaction occur; for example when every child is asked to respond by holding up their own answer, rather than having to wait to be asked. In these very good lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils should be able to do, and this is well judged so that the demands are both realistic and challenging for pupils of all levels of prior attainment; thereby, the higher attainers get their opportunities, and the lower attainers get plenty of revision and extra support.

14. For example, in an English lesson in the Reception Year, the planning was clear and the teacher followed it closely. This produced a lesson with pace, variety and balance. Good eye contact was established and many varieties of learning opportunities were presented. These kept everyone interested. Many tasks were quickly introduced, such as holding up 'fans' with each child's selection of their answer to questions about sounds such as 'ch', 'sh' and 'th'. This type of task ensures all children must respond; no-one can opt out. Also, instruction was rich in content, yet balanced by many chances to revise. This met the needs of all children of higher and lower attainment so all made rapid progress. The lesson concluded with good revision of the intended teaching points which ensured everyone consolidated what they had learned. This is very good quality teaching.

15. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, or where it is satisfactory overall but might to advantage be strengthened further, these are the points worthy of note - they occur to some extent in about one in every three lessons. There is a lack of assessment, particularly in some foundation subjects, which leads only to moderate or slow progress because many pupils' prior learning is not sufficiently built on. Sometimes, the pace of teaching drops and this leads some pupils to a lack of interest and reduced productivity. Occasionally, work is not so well matched to higher attainers, or they are asked to complete work which is easy before progressing to suitably challenging work. This slows their progress. In unsatisfactory teaching, often, teachers have failed to grasp the requirements of the Programmes of Study.

16. For example, in a lesson on art, related to Klimt's work, only passing reference was made to the artist's techniques of the use of colour, texture and shape. The Programmes of Study call for pupils to use other artists' work as reference for their own. The teaching led only to pupils making superficial copies of aspects of the originals. Therefore, pupils made little progress in understanding how they might become more skilful artists in relation to expression and communication of their own ideas.

17. Most teachers set homework in line with the published policy. In total, there is enough. That related to English and mathematics is the most effective - related to the 'booster' classes in particular. That for science is not as effective as it should be: it is not often related to revision at the end of a series of lessons on a particular theme, or to suitable revision and preparation for National Curriculum tests or other assessments.

18. Assessment is a weak feature in many foundation subjects and in science. Because of this, teachers are unaware of some of the necessary improvements. This shows most plainly in science, but also in such subjects as art and design, design and technology and religious education. Coupled with this, much marking is often weak. Although there are a few exceptions where examples of good practice are to be found, on the whole it is not matched well to the school's policy. Not all work is marked, there are insufficient positive comments, not enough guidance is given, and too few helpful explanations serve as reminders. Poor marking itself leads to loss of opportunity for teachers and pupils to focus on teaching and learning objectives for future improvement. Assessment is not a weak feature in teaching pupils with English as an additional language. These pupils are properly targeted, using information from their assessments. Support teaching for English as an additional language is never of unsatisfactory quality and utilises information well which is drawn from pupils' records. However, its quality sometimes lacks a refined partnership with teaching. This results in too little discussion with pupils about meanings in relation to what is taught and insufficient refined examples of word patterns and sounds. Thus, pupils do not have enough chances to consolidate their learning or check to see if they understand.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?

19. The quality and range of the curriculum provided is good: it promotes the aims of the school well. Whilst the statutory curriculum is in place, daily acts of collective worship do not always meet statutory requirements. This occurs when opportunities for reflection and prayer are missed. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the Foundation Stage are good. Planned activities with teaching focused on particular learning goals promote rapid progress, but some lack of adult involvement and intervention in children's self-selected play activities means that learning opportunities related to physical development are often lost.

20. The school's planned curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. There is appropriate provision for all subjects of the curriculum: the school provides religious education in accordance with the Agreed Syllabus⁶. All subjects are taught in suitable amounts of time. All pupils in Year 5 attend swimming lessons at the local sports centre and swim 25 metres by the time they leave. National strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy have been introduced successfully and contribute very effectively to the improvement of the teaching and learning of English and mathematics and to the subsequent raising of standards of attainment. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities in the juniors - mainly sports related - but there is little provision for pupils in the infants. There are regular sporting fixtures for the juniors which give pupils the opportunity to compete with those from other schools and to develop self-confidence and social skills. All pupils have rights to attend the groups which are open to both genders equally.

21. Good provision is made for pupils' personal, health and social education, including sex education and drug awareness. Teachers present pupils with accurate information which promotes good attitudes towards a healthy lifestyle, and discuss a range of moral and social issues such as tolerance and prejudice. Sex education is taught by the class teacher in Year 4 in mixed gender groups; in Year 6, the headteacher and deputy headteacher work with single gender groups.

22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables most of them to make good progress. Some pupils are assisted in class by special assistants, a few are given suitably modified work and many are given extra attention by class teachers when working independently. The curriculum for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory and enables them to make steady progress. Teachers assess these pupils' language skills accurately and set appropriate targets in their individual learning plans. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language participate in all the school's activities and have equality of access.

23. Visitors to the school, and a range of visits made by pupils to places of interest, enhance the basic curriculum and bring learning to life. For example, all pupils in Years 5 and 6 take part in a residential visit where they experience a range of outdoor activities to develop further their social skills and increase their self-confidence. Pupils visit theatres, museums, farms and local environmental areas to support and enrich many areas of the curriculum. There are good links for pupils and staff with partner institutions. For example, the school is part of the Coventry Education and Business Partnership where major local businesses and industry provide opportunities for a wide range of activities to support the curriculum. The induction programme for pupils coming into school is very good. There is a pre-school play group which uses the infants' dining room every morning to provide children, some of whom later attend school, with a valuable, linked experience. Links with most secondary schools are good and visiting staff talk to pupils about what they can expect when they transfer. An induction day helps prepare pupils well for their transfer into secondary education.

24. Taken as a whole, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The attitudes and values embodied in the school's aims pervade the school and largely govern its actions. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The music, singing and themes within assembly

⁶ The Agreed Syllabus is the statutory scheme, agreed locally, which the school must use in planning and teaching work in religious education.

often create a spiritual atmosphere but, sometimes, opportunities for reflection are missed. For example, when pupils were asked to consider the plight of the victims of the earthquake in India, there was no time given for quiet reflection or prayer. Religious education makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Other subjects within the curriculum provide them with moments when they experience the joys and mysteries of the world. For example, in a Year 3 history lesson, pupils discovered shards of pottery hidden in the sand, representing an archaeological dig, and in a Year 6 history lesson pupils looked at artefacts, including medals and gas masks from the Second World War. These experiences really brought history to life and pupils were both excited and in awe. In class, such experiences are rarely planned and, consequently, opportunities are missed during some teaching.

25. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. All members of staff help pupils to understand the differences between right and wrong and pupils are guided sensibly and firmly if they transgress. Most teachers explain to pupils why certain actions are unacceptable, and pupils show respect for this approach. For example, Year 2 pupils were asked to consider why good behaviour during wet playtimes was so important. Pupils devise their own classroom rules and are also asked to consider the rules at play and lunch times. They understand the need for such guides and know that teachers enforce them consistently. Staff throughout the school set good examples for pupils. These are backed up by the school's code of conduct which re-inforces the importance of pupils' respect for one another.

26. Provision for social development is good. Pupils raise money for a number of local and national charities including Barnardo's, the NSPCC and Save the Children. In addition, at harvest festival pupils deliver food to elderly residents in the community. They participate in numerous local sporting competitions and concerts: recently the school hosted a 'Morning of Music' for five local primary schools. Some short lessons, where pupils discuss personal and social issues, suitably enhance this aspect. For example, during the inspection discussions took place about prejudice: pupils worked with someone whom they perceived as similar and someone perceived as being different. Pupils were enthusiastic about this task. At the end of this lesson, two of them showed a very good grasp of the concept and all others were, to some extent, clear about their studies. In another lesson, discussion about the class note box reminded pupils of the need to work harmoniously, but that when a need arose they could report their concerns in confidence.

27. Provision for cultural development is very good. Pupils learn much about Britain's cultural development through history, and many aspects of world faiths through religious education lessons and assemblies. The Second World War is used effectively in the study of local history, particularly the blitz and the rebuilding of Coventry Cathedral. Pupils experience a wide range of educational visits including art galleries, museums and places of historical and geographical interest. They have visited a mosque, Hindu and Sikh temples and local churches. Visitors into school, including Indian and Caribbean dancers, also have assisted pupils in deepening their understanding of traditions other than those of British heritage. Additionally, the school has a very good range of taped music and musical instruments from other cultures, which are used to refine pupils' understanding.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

28. The school provides a very safe and caring environment for all its pupils. This helps to create a calm atmosphere and good climate for learning. There is a clear policy for health and safety, and termly inspections are carried out by the governing body. Issues which arise are minuted at their meetings and followed up. There are good procedures for dealing with accidents. They are recorded appropriately. Several members of staff are qualified in first aid. Pupils with special medical needs are well known to all staff who follow the school's published policy for dispensing medicine to them. There is a very effective child protection policy which is consistent with the local authority's agreed procedures and governmental guidance. The named member of staff responsible for child protection ensures that colleagues are aware of procedures to be followed: there are written guidelines on how to recognise children who may be at risk. The amount and funding of additional help is just sufficient for current numbers of pupils with special educational needs. The rooms used for withdrawal group work and additional special educational needs support are well organised, well resourced and of sufficient size to accommodate the pupils. The school has obtained good support for pupils with physical difficulties, and access by means of lifts is possible to all parts of the school.

29. The school's procedures for promoting good behaviour are of good quality and work well. Staff follow the behaviour policy and use the rewards and sanctions consistently. A system of merit points and 'Pupil of the Week' awards are used to recognise good behaviour and good work. At the 'Pupil of the Week' assemblies, pupils value the awards: nearly all are very proud to receive their certificates. Pupils say there is very little bullying: during the inspection there was no evidence of any aggressive behaviour or racial tension.

30. Registration procedures are computerised for efficiency. The secretary monitors attendance effectively and liaises closely with the education welfare officer to maintain levels of attendance and punctuality at their high levels. The school provides good quality support and guidance for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. There is a detailed personal health and social education policy and a planned curriculum which covers a range of health, moral and social issues. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good at all key stages. The equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is very good, particularly the integration of a pupil with physical difficulties who has full access to the curriculum.

31. Teachers know the pupils well. Pupils' personal development is monitored closely but often informally. Nevertheless, annual reports provide good quality information to parents about attitudes, behaviour, social development and attainment. Pupils make their own comments on what they consider have been their most significant achievements throughout the year, and help to set their own targets for improvement. The quality of pupils' reports was criticised at the previous inspection. They are now much improved.

32. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainments and progress are satisfactory overall. They are good in English and mathematics but less so in science, the foundation subjects and religious education. Analysis of National Curriculum tests are used effectively in mathematics and English and there is good use of end of year assessment of pupils in English and mathematics through optional end of year National Curriculum tests. In science, a new assessment system is in the early stages of development. There is some informal assessment by individual teachers, but no systematic procedures in the foundation subjects. In all subjects, pupils' work is insufficiently compared with the levels and expectations laid out in the National Curriculum. This means that some aspects of planning are undertaken without sufficient information about the progress which pupils are making.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33. The school continues to have an effective partnership with parents as noted at the previous inspection. This enhances the quality of learning and the progress that pupils make. The majority of parents is very supportive of the school and very many say that children receive a good education in a safe and caring environment. An appropriate home/school agreement has been introduced and all parents have agreed to sign it.

34. Parents are provided with very good quality information through the school brochure, the governors' annual report to parents and regular newsletters. Information to parents shows a termly programme of topics to be taught for each year group. A very successful numeracy day and mathematical workshop have been held recently, attended by over 120 parents. Pupils' annual progress reports give parents a very good indication of what their children know and understand, and the progress they are making. They also include targets for improvement so that parents can support their children's learning at home. Parents are encouraged to contact staff if they have any problems and concerns; the headteacher is always willing to meet parents. There are regular consultations with parents and sufficient opportunities are given for them to discuss their children's learning and progress with the teachers. The school involves parents of children with special education needs in review meetings and keeps them informed about their learning targets so that they may help at home.

35. The school's links with parents are productive. A substantial number of them is actively involved in helping with such activities as reading, information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design. Some help also with educational and residential visits and extra-curricular activities. This level of support provides pupils with additional opportunities and so adds to the quality of their learning. Many parents support their children at home by ensuring that homework is properly completed, and some - but by no means all - hear their children read regularly. The school very much values the contribution that parents make to pupils' learning.

36. There is a very active parent teacher association which regularly raises £3,500 per year through a range of social and fund-raising activities throughout the year for equipment and improvements in facilities. Recent purchases have included equipment for the information and communication technology suite where a bank of networked computers is now installed, staging for plays and physical education equipment. This substantial contribution is appreciated very much by staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. Leadership by the headteacher is very strong, administration is very good and management strategies are varied and effective. The senior management team supports the headteacher very well. Overall, leadership and management aspects are very good - a strength of the school which is reflected in the improvements since the previous inspection.

38. The effectiveness is built around regular monitoring of the quality of teaching, which is supplemented by external agencies to provide a realistic picture of teaching strengths and weaknesses. The effect has been to strengthen teaching quality further since the previous inspection. Leadership and management are supported by very good quality administration, good assessment and clear tracking of pupils' progress in English and mathematics. This has helped to raise standards at about the same rate as all schools nationally over recent years, but accelerated them between 1999 and 2000 in mathematics and English. Further gains have been made by the introduction, three years ago, of professional 'dialogues' for teachers. These are not unlike the performance management structures advocated by the government and introduced recently to all schools. Every teacher is monitored at least once per year, professional interviews take place and personal targets are agreed. This process is weakened a little by the failure to monitor the quality of pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics and match it to National Curriculum levels. This means that performance management reviews are conducted without some of the key information related to teaching outcomes. For example, the inspection team found that the quality of marking overall fell well short of the standards expected by the school's marking policy. Also, without an assessment of the levels pupils attain in their work, comparisons cannot be made between formal assessments, such as end of year tests, the quality of pupils' work and the quality of teaching. In addition, valuable information is lost to teachers and pupils about suitable curricular targets for improving their work.

39. Curricular management is of good quality at the Foundation Stage, in English, religious education, information and communication technology, physical education, music and special educational needs. The co-ordinator manages the pupils with special educational needs effectively, with appropriate procedures for identification, assessment and teaching strategies in place. The criticism in the previous report has been met and there is an improved picture. Assessment of need is sound. Targets are identified and recorded within new individual education plans and appropriate records of progress are kept. Annual reviews are carried out following the local authority format and minutes of the reviews are kept and circulated to all parties. Preparations are well in hand for implementation of the new Code of Practice due in 2002. Curricular management is satisfactory in other subjects; satisfactory beginnings have been made by recently appointed subject co-ordinators, for example in science and art and design. However, there are still aspects in the subjects' management which inhibit improvement. Mainly, these are the lack of established procedures for assessing work and tracking pupils' progress to keep a careful check of standards year on year. Some subject co-ordinators have not yet had time to devise such systems. This is understandable because they have only been in post a short time. However, until assessment systems are improved, there is a consequent difficulty in ensuring standards are raised.

40. The school development plan is a useful tool in bringing together the aims and objectives. It is a good aid for ensuring work remains focused on desirable improvements. Aspects are highlighted for improvement each year whilst others are maintained. This makes the plan manageable. It is backed up by suitable action plans. This good quality plan contains suitable targets which guide improvement well, but is weakened somewhat by too few targets against which success can be measured in relation to improvements in standards of pupils' work. This is especially so in some foundation subjects. However, the plan is greatly improved since the previous inspection. Now all 'stakeholders', including subject co-ordinators, senior teachers and governors have a say in its creation, implementation and evaluation. Coupled with the use of data to track pupils' progress, this creates a clear direction for the school's improvement. Data are monitored well, particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology. The school evaluates its own performance well. It is aware of its data and has suitable strategies in place to redress any weakness.

41. Governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They meet regularly in committees and are well informed of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They monitor the budget well and ensure grants are used for the purposes intended. They have a good grasp of applying value for money principles. Extra funds have been used to increase the numbers of up-to-date computers. However, although they undertake visits during the school day, these are haphazard. They are not monitored to establish their frequency and what aspects they cover. Reporting back is informal, rarely recorded, and so the governing body does not benefit from some of this knowledge. For example, during inspection some daily acts of collective worship did not meet statutory requirements because there was not the opportunity for reflection or prayer. Health and safety visits are recorded in governors' minutes and reflect a more structured and systematic approach to this aspect.

42. There are adequate numbers of teachers whose experience and knowledge broadly match the National Curriculum and Foundation Stage. Some support staff are well trained and make good contributions, particularly in assisting the teaching of literacy. One of the deputy headteacher's good contributions is a recently improved in-service training programme which has included literacy and numeracy. The school has two student teachers permanently assigned to it during their qualification year. Also, one member of staff is newly qualified. All three speak well of the support they are given. All have 'mentors' who help them specifically. There is some very good teaching taking place here which the trainees witness. Coupled with this, staff relationships, good quality administration and the regular assistance mean that the school is a very suitable place for school-based initial in-service training. There is more than enough accommodation; this is well kept by cleaning staff. Their work enhances the learning environment which is clean and tidy. Learning resources for most subjects are adequate or better. Resources for teaching information and communication technology have been enhanced to good levels since the previous inspection. Also, the building has been suitably modified to enable access for those with physical difficulties.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

43. In order to improve further, headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) improve the quality of work in science so that it matches that in English and mathematics by:
 - ensuring that progression in scientific enquiry is thoroughly understood by all teachers; (Paras. 73, 76, 77)⁷
 - undertaking regular assessment of pupils' work in comparison with National Curriculum levels to reveal curricular targets; (Para. 18, 77)
 - ensuring pupils record the full extent of what they know; (Paras. 3, 70, 75, 76)
 - ensuring work is matched to prior attainment; (Paras. 75, 76)
 - making sure homework is used effectively to revise class work, especially in Year 6; (Paras. 17, 76)
- (2) raise standards in art and design by:
 - ensuring teachers understand the requirements of the Programmes of Study; (Paras. 14, 81, 82)
 - devising an efficient system to monitor standards, year on year; (Paras. 81, 82, 83)
 - providing guidance for teachers to show appropriate, good examples of pupils' work; (Para. 84)
 - ensuring teachers know how skills are taught and improved, year on year, for example in colour appreciation, colour mixing, pencil shading, selection of textures; (Paras. 5, 79, 81, 83, 84)
 - ensuring that the schemes of work follow on from year to year; (Para. 84)
- (3) improve the quality of monitoring pupils' work in subjects other than English and mathematics by:
 - devising a system to assess work regularly; (Paras. 32, 39, 92, 97)
 - recording strengths and weaknesses to identify curricular targets; (Paras. 38, 60, 88, 117)
 - providing exemplars of suitable work to guide staff; (Paras. 38, 117)
- (4) improve marking to bring it more closely in line with the school's policy by:
 - marking all work; (Paras. 18, 38, 55, 59, 77)
 - ensuring pupils date their work - for example in art sketch books; (Paras. 54, 81, 83)
 - increasing the frequency of positive comments and more guidance about desirable improvements; (Paras. 18, 59, 68)
- (5) improve governors' procedures for obtaining at first-hand evidence of the daily work of the school by:
 - monitoring the frequency and range of visits to see the school at work; (Para. 41)
 - planning such visits and agreeing suitable foci for them; (Para. 41)
 - ensuring their opinions of strengths and points for concern are properly discussed in meetings, minuted and, if necessary, acted on. (Para. 41)

Minor issue

During inspection, some acts of collective worship did not meet statutory requirements because there was not time given for reflection or prayer. (Paras. 19, 41)

- Governors should ensure this does not occur.

⁷ Figures in brackets denote some of the paragraphs in which more detailed reference may be found in the main body of the report.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	90
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	56

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7%	32%	28%	27%	6%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	431
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	56

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	22

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000 (1999)	29 (35)	33 (30)	62 (65)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29 (34)	28 (34)	29 (34)
	Girls	33 (30)	32 (30)	33 (30)
	Total	62 (64)	60 (64)	62 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (98)	97 (98)	100 (98)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28 (34)	29 (34)	28 (34)
	Girls	33 (30)	33 (30)	33 (30)
	Total	61 (64)	62 (64)	61 (64)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (98)	100 (100)	98 (98)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000 (1999)	38 (34)	26 (30)	64 (64)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34 (22)	33 (27)	36 (24)
	Girls	23 (25)	21 (22)	23 (22)
	Total	57 (47)	54 (49)	59 (46)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (73)	84 (77)	92 (72)
	National	75 (76)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34 (23)	33 (28)	36 (26)
	Girls	23 (25)	22 (22)	23 (22)
	Total	57 (48)	55 (50)	59 (48)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (75)	86 (78)	92 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	10
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	340
Any other minority ethnic group	10

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.9
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	191.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year (forecast)	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	892,661
Total expenditure	918,957
Expenditure per pupil	1,953
Balance brought forward from previous year	54,296
Balance carried forward to next year	28,000

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	457
Number of questionnaires returned	131

Percentage of responses in each category⁸

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	35	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	48	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	52	13	1	1
The teaching is good.	61	38	1	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	47	11	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	34	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	34	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	47	8	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	40	48	6	3	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	47	2	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	36	21	2	9

Other issues raised by parents

Two per cent of parents (a third of the number at the meeting with the registered inspector) voiced strong concerns. These were not substantially replicated in the questionnaire responses. However, all of them have been raised with the headteacher, without reference to the sources. He is considering them. Overall, there is strong support for the school. Five aspects are strong, including parents' opinions that: their children like school; children make good progress; teaching is good; the school is approachable. Also, parents are aware that the school expects children to work hard. Inspectors agree. They note that parents are not so positive about how well the school is led and managed, but have found that many necessary improvements in these aspects have occurred since the previous inspection. The range of extra-curricular activities mainly comprises sports - and there is a broad range. However, it is mainly sport and confined to the juniors. This may explain parents' somewhat lower response to this question.

⁸ Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, therefore lines may not total exactly to 100.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. The school makes very good provision for children in the Foundation Stage. It has a 26 place Nursery and admits children at the beginning of the academic year in which they become four, on a part-time basis. In addition, there are two Reception classes to which children are admitted full time at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. The Nursery and both Reception classes are well organised and provide stimulating learning environments into which children settle quickly. The Nursery has a friendly and caring atmosphere that is particularly appropriate for children's first introduction to school. Whilst not all children in the Reception classes have attended the Nursery, they have all had some pre-school experience. The school has good induction procedures to support children and their parents on entry. Tests, called baseline assessments, are carried out during the first half of the term following children's admission into the Reception classes. The results of these assessments show that the attainment of the majority of children on entry is average. During the Foundation Stage, the majority of children makes good progress and by the end of the Reception Year exceeds the nationally recommended standards called 'Early Learning Goals' in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, mathematical development, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. The good standards reported at the previous inspection have been maintained well.

45. The quality and range of the curriculum is satisfactory. All teachers in this stage are familiar with and knowledgeable about the government's recently issued Foundation Stage curriculum. They use this information well to guide their planning. The curriculum is provided mainly through well chosen, adult-directed activities and free choice play from a range of pre-selected activities. These are based on the Early Learning Goals and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teachers responsible for the Reception classes plan together and involve support staff. This very much helps the quality of teaching. Also, the nursery teacher plans with the full-time nursery nurse. Regular meetings between all the Foundation Stage teachers provide positive opportunities for them to share and discuss what they are doing and enables them to provide for appropriate steps in learning and gradual acquisition of skills. The relationships between teaching and non-teaching staff in the Foundation Stage classes are good and make a substantial contribution to the well-being of all children. The nursery nurse and the classroom assistants provide good support that promotes children's achievements. In all three classes, weekly and daily planning of the activities to be provided is detailed with clear learning objectives. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good: it is sometimes excellent. Baseline assessments provide early identification of children with special educational needs and are also used to group pupils for some activities. In all three classes - one Nursery and two Reception - teachers and assistants regularly observe and record examples of children's learning, and use the information to guide their planning to encourage their good progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

46. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children have made good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and exceed the standards expected for children of their ages. Overall, the quality of teaching for this area of learning is very good: all adults have high expectations. In the Nursery, nearly all children settle quickly and show good understanding of daily routines as a result of the effective induction systems and relationships that are established. They have good relationships with other children, the adults who support them and visitors. They talk readily about themselves and their play, and join in with discussions about events and experiences in the Nursery. They play happily together and share apparatus and equipment without fuss or argument. They tidy up sensibly when asked. Their behaviour is very good. Nearly all children in the Reception classes sit quietly and are well behaved during registration when adults are talking, sometimes for a long time. They readily answer questions during whole-class and group discussions. Nearly all participate in group and whole-class activities and listen carefully, and without interruption, to adults and each other. They persist at teacher-led activities, directed play activities and

independent play, showing good levels of concentration and perseverance. They show consideration for others in all their activities. Many take responsibility for recording some of the activities they have undertaken. There are well established rules for behaviour in both the Nursery and the Reception classes and these, together with good rôle models provided by adults, make positive contributions to children's very good behaviour. The teachers successfully encourage children to take responsibility for looking after themselves.

Communication, language and literacy

47. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children make good progress and exceed the standards expected of them in this aspect of their learning. Teaching is very good overall. In the Nursery, many activities are planned around stories which foster children's enjoyment of books as well as helping them to understand how stories work. For example, during the inspection the children discussed the story of 'The Rainbow Fish' and through planned rôle play acted out events in the story and imagined how different creatures might have felt. They learn about the sounds that letters make and begin to learn how these are written. They are able to make simple associations between these and their own names. They are beginning to write their own names legibly. Their speaking and listening skills are developed through both well planned activities and informal conversations which they or others initiate. The Reception classes build on this good foundation. A strong emphasis is given to the development of early reading and writing skills through well planned activities based on the National Literacy Strategy guidelines. As a result, children develop a good understanding of letter sounds by learning the sounds and shapes of individual letters. The majority identifies the individual letter sounds in words and gives a range of other words which begin with the same sound. In their writing, many write sentences confidently, unaided, using their good knowledge of letter sounds to write a wide range of words. They are taught to form letters correctly and most write their own first names legibly and accurately. They understand the purpose of capital letters and full stops and often use these in their writing. They are learning to recognize high frequency words by sight and most read simple books fluently. They are beginning to use their knowledge of letter sounds to read unfamiliar words. The teachers provide a range of interesting activities to promote children's listening skills. For example, children enjoy sharing personal news to which the adults listen carefully and with interest. Nearly all listen very attentively to stories and rhymes, and respond well in discussions about characters and events. They speak confidently using complex sentences. Children take books home to read with their parents and are regularly heard to read in school with helpful records kept of their progress.

Mathematical development

48. By the end of the Reception Year, children are making good progress in their mathematical development and exceed the standards expected of them. Teaching is very good overall. In the Nursery, they count numbers to accompany their play and can say them in the right order. They match objects, as for example when putting out place settings in the home corner. They sort objects by shape, size and colour. They know and enjoy joining in with a range of number rhymes and can repeat the actions that go with them. In their play, they use everyday words to describe position, as for example in play with bricks. In play with sand and water, they begin to understand ideas such as full, empty, heavy and light. They recognise simple shapes and understand some of the differences between these, and in their play make patterns with different materials. In the Reception classes, teachers' planning for numeracy activities is based on the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines and has clear learning objectives. The use of correct mathematical language and appropriately challenging questions by all staff help children to make good progress. As a result, they can count forwards and backwards to ten and beyond, and recognise and write numbers to ten. They understand the concept of addition and can find their own ways of recording the addition of sets of objects and discuss what they have done confidently. They understand and can interpret a block graph and use 'more than', 'less than' and number counts to describe differences. They know a range of mathematical terms to describe size and successfully order a range of clothing by size. They are able to compare and measure objects to determine their length. They make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of plane and solid shapes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

49. By the end of the Foundation Stage, a substantial majority of children have made good progress in this area of learning and exceeds the standards expected for their ages. The quality of teaching is very good overall. The provision made for the children in both the Nursery and the Reception classes is characterized by the provision of a wide range of interesting and motivating activities. In their planning, teachers make good links between different areas of learning, related to weekly or termly themes. As a result, children's learning is enhanced. In the Nursery, children explore the properties of a wide variety of materials such as play-dough, water and sand and learn how different materials behave. Outside, as part of the week's theme, they learn about soil and the creatures that live there as they bury 'treasure', or observe different features of the environment when they go on a treasure hunt for rainbow fish. As they play outside, they notice different weather patterns and understand the need to vary their outdoor clothing as a result. In conversation, they talk readily about themselves, their families and events in their lives. In the Reception classes, children know about the different properties of materials. They are beginning to understand the idea of a fair test as they try out which materials will keep water warm as part of their work on the theme of winter. They use this knowledge in different situations, as for example when a child making a fabric collage of a winter scene was able to select correctly fabrics that would keep things warm. They observe and describe differences in the daily weather. In rôle play, they enact the occupations of different people in society as well as those of family members. They have access to computers and headphones to support their learning and use these confidently and with enjoyment. They use tools and equipment purposefully and safely.

Physical development

50. By the end of the Foundation Stage, nearly all children have made good progress to attain the standards expected for their ages. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good. The Nursery has a separate secure area and children enjoy opportunities for vigorous physical activity outside and use a variety of wheeled toys safely and skilfully. They respond quickly to any instructions. They are beginning to learn about their bodies and use space well showing good awareness of others around them. Both Reception classes have access to separate outside areas, but these are not regularly used by children for independent physical development. In the hall, children invent, explore and refine a range of movements in response to musical sounds with good control. They play outside at playtimes very well. They use a variety of tools including pencils, crayons, brushes, glue spreaders and scissors with increasingly good control.

Creative development

51. By the end of the Foundation Stage, nearly all children have made good progress to attain or exceed the standards expected for children of this age. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. The teachers provide a rich range of activities which allows the children to be creative. In the Nursery, the teacher makes good links with teaching children's literacy skills to stimulate their imaginative responses. Nearly all enjoy joining in with simple rhymes and singing, and sing tunefully and enjoy opportunities to play untuned percussion instruments. Most are beginning to clap simple rhythms and follow symbols to play simple compositions using percussion instruments. They know the names of the instruments and use these correctly. Children have daily opportunities to paint pictures from their own imaginations. They use dough to create shapes and models. They have regular opportunities for imaginative rôle play where they act out different characters and events within given themes. They use tools such as pencils, brushes and scissors with satisfactory control. In the Reception classes, children learn the skills of careful observation, as in their independent paintings of winter trees. Every child has the opportunity to reproduce a picture of their choice with individual adult support which both helps them to learn specific techniques and improves their observational skills.

52. The Foundation Stage is organised well. Through regular meetings, the early years co-ordinator monitors medium-term planning and has a good view of standards across the Foundation Stage. She has a good understanding of the curriculum and young children's needs. The relationships between teachers and assistants are very good, and these contribute to the effectiveness of the provision. There is an action plan in place to guide efforts to improve further. Resources are regularly monitored and are good overall. Parental involvement is encouraged and supported, and parents were observed to be relaxed and confident when approaching and talking to all staff or supporting activities in the classrooms. Helpful liaison activities have been established with local playgroups for children who transfer to Reception classes.

ENGLISH

53. In National Curriculum tests in 2000, the school's results in English at the end of the infants, in comparison with all schools, were very high in reading and well above average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, the results were well above average. These represent a slight dip from 1999 results, but are very similar to those of 1998 and 1997. From the evidence seen in Year 2, reading continues to be above national expectations. Work scrutinised during the inspection in writing, although above national expectations, did not match last year's results - it did not match the very high standards. At the end of the juniors, results were above average in comparison with all schools and with schools with similar contexts. However, overall results in English were below those schools whose results at the end of the infants had been similar. In comparison with national averages, the 2000 results at the end of the juniors were an improvement over those of 1999. From the evidence of work scrutinised in Year 6, the school is on course to match last year's results. Most pupils make steady progress; those with special educational needs make good progress.

54. At the end of the infants, most pupils read with confidence and many with good expression. Many use a variety of skills to work out new words and deduce meaning from the context. Most understand the sequence of events and predict what might happen next. In their writing, many use simple punctuation and a few begin to use speech marks. Spelling is often inaccurate but mostly recognisable by the sound of the word. Presentation is not consistently good and work is not always dated and titled. Many pupils have difficulty in keeping their writing in straight lines across the page, especially on unlined paper. Letters are formed recognisably but few attempt a joined up style of handwriting. Many pupils refer to letters by sound rather than by name which can lead to confusion when diagraphs such as 'th' and letter strings like 'ing' are being introduced. As pupils progress through the juniors, most improve the presentation of their work considerably. By Year 6, most take pride in their work and final drafts are neat, writing is well formed and is correctly in a joined-up style. Spelling becomes more accurate in most writing, and nearly all pupils show that they can use dictionaries effectively. Most are able to write in a variety of different styles, for example poetry, plays, story telling, letters, journalistic and relaying documentary evidence. They write for a wide range of audiences and from the point of view of others. For example, they write in 'diaries' about the past and in poetry about the Second World War as a pilot might have felt. Speaking and listening skills throughout the school are very good, and most pupils express their ideas with confidence and clarity of meaning. Most listen respectfully when others are talking and react appropriately to what is said.

55. Since the previous inspection, the National Literacy Strategy has been introduced: this has had a very positive effect on English at both key stages. The quality of teaching is good overall with a substantial proportion better, and lessons are planned to make sure that each has a recognisable framework with a focus on particular learning objectives. The standard of reading has improved and is now good or better throughout. Reading skills are being strengthened by the teaching of letter sounds and group reading sessions. Comments in the home/school reading diaries show that many pupils have a desire to progress. Marking of written work is not now as consistent. Comments sometimes give praise inappropriately and do not always help pupils to improve their work. Recently, the library has been refurbished and the books updated. It is now a very good resource, although not yet used as often as is planned for the future.

56. The quality of teaching seen in sixteen lessons across both key stages was very good or better in eight, with none unsatisfactory. In the infants, in one lesson the quality was satisfactory, in one good, in two very good and in one outstanding. In the juniors, the quality in three lessons was satisfactory, in three good, in four very good and in one outstanding. The good teaching quality overall ensures steady progress by most pupils to sustain standards above national expectations, and maintain the above-average standards the school has been achieving over the last four years.

57. Where teaching is most successful, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject conveys itself to the pupils. They, in turn, become very positive in their attitudes to learning and are eager to improve their skills. Lessons start briskly and pupils' attention is immediately engaged; this pace is maintained through the lessons. Most teachers have high expectations that pupils will behave well, and this sets a good atmosphere for learning with few distractions. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils encourage even the less confident to participate and so gain in self-esteem. This is strengthened further by appropriate use of praise. Many teachers draw on good subject knowledge to ensure that questions are set at challenging levels to encourage pupils to think more deeply and so extend their learning. An appropriate amount of instruction is given to suggest ways in which pupils could widen their knowledge, understanding and use of vocabulary. Shared texts in class are read expressively; this helps to clarify the meaning. Pupils are often encouraged to read along with the teacher which gives them more confidence in their own reading skills. During these sessions, opportunities often arise to draw on pupils' own experiences or to compare their locality with that in the text so that they can more easily visualise settings, such as 'The Jungle Book'. Well chosen resources, such as pictures or artefacts also help in this respect, as in the lesson on Ted Hughes' poem - 'The Iron Man'. Lesson plans are well structured and appropriate focus is given to the points the teacher wishes the pupils to learn. These teaching points are discussed with pupils at the beginning so that they will know what to expect. This increases their sense of achievement when the goals are reached. This sense of achievement also comes when the work set for groups challenges each pupil to further efforts without being either too difficult for some or too easy for others. Participation is increased when all pupils, rather than only a few, respond to questions.

58. In many lessons, teachers provide good rôle models for use of vocabulary and encourage pupils to take pride in their presentation. A good balance of teaching strategies during pupils' activities keeps nearly all interested for the whole lesson. At the end of lessons, very often the main teaching points are re-emphasised and pupils are sometimes given the opportunity to evaluate their own work and that of others. This provides many with guidelines about how to improve their work in later lessons. The intensive 'booster' classes are very effective in consolidating pupils' knowledge and understanding and raising the overall results in the national tests. These work particularly well with lower attaining pupils, who make good progress during these lessons. Homework is used well to consolidate teaching, especially in the 'booster' classes.

59. Where teaching works less well, sometimes pupils are not encouraged to join in reading shared texts and opportunities are lost to increase their confidence. Occasionally, the text being shared is not large enough for all pupils to see clearly and some attention wanders. Also, the connection between the written text and the accompanying illustrations is not always clearly established, and so many pupils are not led into reading a deeper meaning into the story. In some lessons, the teaching relies too much on prior knowledge from the pupils and so provides insufficient instruction. Many of the pupils, especially the older juniors, become very uncomfortable sitting on the carpet for long periods of time, and this makes it difficult for them to sustain their concentration. Time is sometimes lost while work sheets are handed out and pupils 'switch off'. Occasionally, too long is spent on one activity and so an air of boredom sets in which leads to a little distracting behaviour. This in turn requires the teacher to stop the lesson to reprimand some pupils and the pace slackens at this point. Very occasionally, the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject lapses and incorrect information is given, as for example when phrases and sentences are said to be one and the same. Occasionally, questions in class do not offer sufficient challenges for higher attainers to 'dig deeper' for answers. Every so often, explanations of tasks are not clear enough, and so pupils do not know exactly what is expected of them. In some instances, the tasks set for each group are too easy for

some and too difficult for others, and the pupils do not feel that they have achieved something worthwhile. Very occasionally, there is not enough support given to those for whom the tasks prove difficult. On occasions, lesson plans are not kept to and consequently the lesson becomes less structured. In such lessons, teaching objectives stated are often too imprecise for either pupil or teacher to judge how well they have been achieved; for example, 'To learn more about', 'To use different examples of grammar to write a poem'. At the end of a few lessons, pupils are simply asked to read out their work with no opportunity given for the others to comment constructively or to realise how their own work would compare or could be improved. The marking of work very often does not follow the policy guidelines; few comments help pupils to improve their work. Some work is unmarked. In some cases, praise is used inappropriately with no reasons given as to why a particular piece of work is judged 'brilliant!' Although these aspects do not occur with sufficient regularity in all lessons, they are often the reasons why satisfactory teaching is judged no better.

60. The subject is well managed. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been well handled and has had a good effect on standards, both in teaching and in pupil response. The co-ordinator has organised in-service training for all staff which has increased confidence in teaching different aspects of literacy. Staff members have learned to have higher expectations of their pupils and now introduce them to texts deemed too difficult in the past - witness the pupils' great enthusiasm for 'Macbeth'. Liaison with local schools to moderate work against National Curriculum levels has proved a worthwhile monthly exercise in improving non-narrative writing. All pupils in the juniors are given 'booster' classes for the ten-week period leading up to the national tests, and funding is set aside for this. It has proved an effective method of raising standards, particularly for lower attaining pupils. Recently, teachers in Year 3 have helped moderate work in Year 2 to make the move from infants to juniors happen more smoothly. All staff members have been observed teaching in the last year and feedback has been constructive. The co-ordinator has attended an intensive course on self-evaluation and now is training her colleagues accordingly. This is helping staff to focus on how they can improve their skills. Planning is monitored by the co-ordinator and working party across the school but not within year groups. This means that the quality of planning varies between classes, being good in some and less so in others. It also results in an unnecessary duplication of work. Assessment tests are carried out formally twice yearly and statistics analysed to track individual pupils. Informal assessment on a weekly basis allows teachers to plan to cover any areas which need consolidation, but pupils' work is not often enough assessed against National Curriculum levels to identify curricular targets. Drama plays an important part in the curriculum, both within the school and in conjunction with local primary schools. This raises pupils' self-confidence and social awareness. Information and communication technology is well integrated into the curriculum; pupils often produce word-processed work in their literacy lessons. Year 6 pupils produced a very creditable newspaper using this technique. The library is a very good resource, with a wide selection of books and a 'user-friendly' layout. However, it is not used frequently enough to encourage independent learning. This is partly because the computer system is not well 'bedded in' and there is the problem of supervision. Also, at present, the library area is used for 'booster' classes, an appropriate venue for these, but this limits its wider use.

MATHEMATICS

61. Standards in mathematics show an improving picture owing to the school's commitment to raise them. This has been achieved by analysing national test results and successfully targeting areas for further improvement, using additional 'booster' classes and giving the subject more curricular time. Also, good and sometimes very good teaching aids this, as does a structured and progressive curriculum which is planned within the National Numeracy Strategy framework. Results in national assessments at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 show that pupils are attaining standards above national averages and also above those from similar schools. The good standards of teaching sustain these higher than average standards, and so pupils make steady progress throughout the infant and junior stages. The rate of improvement in mathematics is similar to all schools nationally over recent years. No discernible gender differences in performance are shown in the national assessment tests and none were observed during the inspection.

62. Very many pupils' numeracy skills and mental recall of mathematical facts throughout the school are good. In some lessons, pupils use their numeracy skills very confidently to support work in other subjects. For example, in Year 3, pupils record weight accurately, and in Year 6 they understand the terms 'positive' and 'negative' when related to high and very low temperatures. The use of numeracy skills in some other subjects is well planned and this has a positive impact on the overall good standards achieved.

63. Pupils in Year 1 have good knowledge of numbers up to 20 and well beyond, often up to 100. Higher attaining pupils confidently read numbers up to 1000. Most are able to use a range of strategies to find answers to simple addition and subtraction problems relating to giving 'change'. As observed in Year 2, pupils record totals of items purchased, accurately giving change from £1.00 and £5.00. Most pupils identify simple patterns in numbers, selecting odd and even numbers successfully. Most are aware of different methods to undertake calculations and their knowledge of multiplication facts is good, counting in twos, threes, fives and tens. Most pupils identify halves and quarters of given shapes and they are improving appropriate measuring skills, recording accurately to the nearest centimetre. They collect information and draw simple graphs. Pupils confidently recognise a wide range of mathematical shapes, giving examples of their major differences. Higher attaining pupils sometimes complete the same work as other groups before moving on to more challenging tasks. In the parts of lessons where this occurs, their progress slows. Sometimes, lower attainers are given appropriate support in groups by teachers and classroom assistants, who have good knowledge of pupils' learning needs. This enables them to make good progress in such lessons.

64. In Year 6, all pupils enjoy their work in mathematics, talking confidently about it and using correct mathematical language to explain clearly how they reach a particular answer. As observed in Year 6, pupils select a group of numbers and, using a variety of mathematical operations, for example addition, subtraction and multiplication, endeavour to achieve a given target number using the selected ones. Most pupils achieve the task in the minimum amount of time. All are encouraged to use a range of strategies and are given good opportunities to talk through the various possibilities of solving the problem. Many pupils confidently convert simple fractions and percentages, successfully using their skills to solve everyday problems. All are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows a limited use of information and communication technology to support a range of work, particularly in data handling. This is an aspect for future development identified by the subject co-ordinator in her action plan.

65. The quality of teaching is good overall; in about one-third of lessons it is very good. Teachers' planning is detailed, based on the National Numeracy Strategy, and the very best is informed by careful assessments of pupils' learning in previous lessons. The most effective planning clearly identifies what pupils are expected to learn in lessons, and these objectives are written on the board at the start and end of lessons. This ensures that pupils are clear of what is expected of them and is a key factor in maintaining a brisk pace. All lessons observed during the inspection started with a range of mental questions, and the sharing of ideas about calculations has a positive impact on learning. Most teachers explain new tasks to be undertaken carefully, often supported by an appropriate range of resources. Introductions to lessons are often interesting and are maintained at a brisk pace. Nevertheless, in some lessons pupils remained seated on the carpet for over 30 minutes before moving on to the practical group tasks. This lost time is reflected in the final session, which is rushed and fails to consolidate the learning that has taken place.

66. Pupils' enthusiasm and interest are good and occasionally very good. This was so in a Year 2 class where the class teacher took the rôle of 'shopkeeper' with the pupils as 'customers'. She checked their 'change' and returned to complain when incorrect change was given. This appropriate humour had created interest and helped all pupils with their learning. Nearly all are keen learners, listening carefully to their teachers and willing to answer questions during mental mathematical sessions. Most respond quickly to their teachers' instructions and waste little time in movement between classes for 'booster' sessions or from mental sessions to the start of the main task activities. Nearly all pupils work well in pairs. At inspection, some very good examples of collaboration were observed, where pupils shared the recording of 'scale' readings. They exchanged ideas with each other and, where the tasks were challenging, maintained their concentration well. In nearly all lessons, behaviour is very good and the vast majority of pupils displays good levels of motivation and confidence.

67. The very good teaching, as observed in Years 2, 3 and 6, has a sense of purpose and urgency that holds pupils' interest and encourages motivation. In addition, the use of well-prepared classroom support assistants enriches learning for all pupils. Teachers' relationships with pupils are good, and their sensitive management enables them to establish and maintain very good levels of behaviour. Teachers' methods and organisation are good, often supported by a range of appropriate resources. Where teaching is otherwise satisfactory, sometimes the lessons are too easy, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Therefore, they are not challenged enough and fail to make the progress in learning of which they are capable. Work does not always build sufficiently on previous learning, for example in Year 4 when telling the time in various forms. Scrutiny of pupils' work in some year groups indicates too much use of worksheets requiring undemanding one-number answers rather than allowing pupils to display their knowledge through different approaches. In one lesson, teaching in mathematics was unsatisfactory. This was because the introduction was too long and there was some lack of pace and challenge, particularly to higher attainers. In addition, pupils' seating arrangements prevented some of them from sitting comfortably with proper sight lines to the teacher.

68. The assessment for pupils' attainment and progress has improved since the previous inspection. Careful reviews are carried out in relation to tests undertaken and regular tests related to work completed are used to check individual pupils' progress. The better use of assessment is having a direct effect on raising standards for all pupils. Nevertheless, the marking of books is inconsistent and does not always show what pupils need to do to improve learning. A good start has been made to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Homework is used effectively and is linked to pupils' class work. For example, as observed in a Year 6 class where pupils were asked to record a variety of costs related to the purchase of pizzas with associated toppings and fillings.

69. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator has made a sound start in assessing the school's current position. Teachers' confidence and skills have been improved and a clear plan for the future development of the subject has been written. There is awareness of the need to devise and implement systems to monitor pupils' written work and their progress in relation to national standards. There is the capacity to improve standards even further because of a shared commitment from all staff. A good effort is made to involve parents in mathematics; for example, an evening about mathematics was held and regular newsletters give clear examples of how parents can support their children's work.

SCIENCE

70. National Curriculum test results in science are broadly average at the end of the juniors when compared with all schools nationally and similar schools. Since the previous inspection, standards have remained much the same in comparison to national trends. When comparing standards with English and mathematics, this subject is relatively weaker than the other two at the end of the junior phase. Teachers' assessments of science at the end of the infants in 2000 were much higher than average. However, this is not borne out by pupils' knowledge and understanding in the present Year 3 or in pupils' written work in Year 2. In fact, in class pupils know more than they record, but only enough for a small majority to be on course to attain the average level by the age of seven years.

71. In the infants, pupils label the parts of plants, recognise living things, and some know that foods are needed by animals to produce energy. Many know the differences between living and man-made materials. However, work does not often show that they make simple predictions. Also, most pupils rarely give simple reasons for their observations, or say if what happens is what they expected. Progress in all pupils' work is steady in acquiring new information; it is slow in acquiring the skills of scientific enquiry.

72. In the juniors, some pupils make some progress at the outset of Year 3. They make simple predictions and learn about fair tests. Work improves to be near to but below the standards expected. However, work still does not show a good use of scientific vocabulary or the emergence of giving reasons for their observations and conclusions. In Year 4, most pupils' work shows a marked improvement; some predictions are given. Their work is much better presented and, for example, they discuss how forces are sometimes balanced and how substances melt. Their work now is around the standard expected. In Year 5, many pupils copy scientific information about such aspects as the water cycle and human body. However,

standards are close to what is expected. In Year 6, most pupils' work shows accurate information about such aspects as the needs of plants and micro-organisms. They discuss how to make tests fair when studying solutions of substances. This work has greater variety in how it is recorded, with some examples of plotting results. The standards are broadly in line with those expected. However, many explanations about their work lack scientific accuracy. Nor do many pupils make predictions drawing on previous scientific knowledge. Progress for all pupils across the juniors is slow in developing a good grasp of the skills of scientific enquiry. It is steady for all groups in acquiring a basic grasp of facts about plants, humans, forces and materials.

73. Science teaching is not as strong as reported at the previous inspection. The teachers as a whole do not have the same grasp of the Programmes of Study as previously reported. There are better quality links with information and communication technology now. For example, teaching about the classification of animals in a science lesson was followed closely by a lesson using a computer program to follow up this approach. Seven lessons of science were observed. Taken as a whole, the teaching is broadly satisfactory and some is good. None is unsatisfactory. All teachers make good relationships with pupils whom they treat respectfully. Also, they have high and clearly stated expectations of good behaviour. Consequently, nearly all pupils try to work hard, are obedient and willing. Nearly all lesson plans are clear and are followed to give lessons which flow and have satisfactory balance between teachers' exposition and pupils' activities.

74. The best teaching is characterised by an example in Year 5 in a lesson about earth, sun and moon and how light affects what we see as the moon's shape. Planning is more comprehensive than most other seen because it contains detailed rather than broadly stated teaching objectives. Therefore, the teaching is rich and well informed. The lesson plan shows a good balance between the various opportunities for learning, such as watching and listening, answering questions, undertaking investigation and learning from other resources including reference books. This gives a range of different opportunities for all pupils to learn. The beginning is very well planned to give impact. The room is suitably darkened and light used well to illustrate teaching points related to phases of the moon. The pupils, therefore, are interested from the outset. This interest is further heightened by discussion of their previous work, and their willingness to respond is sustained by very effective use of positive praise and helpful comment about their answers. The lesson flows well, has pace and variety and so nearly all pupils remain engrossed. The teacher ensures that pupils with special educational needs are properly supported so that all make very good progress and the teaching objectives are fully met by the end of the lesson.

75. In teaching which is satisfactory, some parts of the lesson slow pupils' progress, but the good relationships, clear planning and organisation ensure that pupils remain well behaved, orderly and willing. For example, a lesson in Year 2 was planned clearly, but two activities were set at too low a level. Consequently, the work did not record the extent of what the pupils knew. This was especially so for the higher attainers. They were asked only to paint two examples of an animal's young and adult forms in one activity and to match young and adults in another. There was little new here, and so pupils' learning was not extended. This was so for even the lowest attainers. Because the activities were arranged in rotation, the match of work to pupils' prior attainment was poor, and for these parts of the lesson most pupils marked time. Instruction at the outset about change was much better. In this part of the lesson the teacher gave some new information and asked questions which challenged all pupils to provide satisfactory answers. Also, the third activity was well selected and, in the way it was presented, gave all pupils a chance to think through what they knew about how young children grow into adults. The pupils were asked to record their observations in a table - but not asked to write why they had arrived at their findings. Consequently, in all three activities their work did not show the extent of their knowledge or the differences between the work of higher and lower attainers. However, many pupils were beginning or had grasped the main point about change resulting from growth owing to the parts of the lesson which were productive.

76. Pupils' work samples show that in most lessons activities are not suitably matched to prior attainment. Most teachers are unsure of the progression in skills within the Programme of Study related to scientific enquiry. Thus, most pupils' work does not show how they approach investigations and experiment. Too often, they do not attempt to say what might happen and give reasons for this. Moreover,

they do not give scientific explanations or use a wide enough scientific vocabulary. In many worksheets, all that pupils were required to do was record simply what happened. In some work, pupils did say what perhaps would occur, and provided simple explanations. In no year, however, was their evidence of the higher levels expected for each year group, and work was not sufficiently well matched to prior attainment. Homework is not systematically used to revise work at the end of themes or to prepare for National Curriculum tests. This is in contrast to the other two core subjects where homework has a good impact on raising standards.

77. The subject leader is only recently appointed. A satisfactory beginning has been made to subject leadership. However, there has not yet been time to establish some important procedures to enhance pupils' rates of improvement. Suitably, the policy has been reviewed and re-drafted: it is awaiting staff agreement and publication. A nationally available scheme is already established and resources are being arranged to match the various themes within it. This will help teachers to provide better quality lessons. A beginning has been made in the use of assessment exercises so that, eventually, pupils' attainment can be tracked. As yet, there is no regular and systematic assessment of pupils' work. That undertaken by the inspection team revealed poor quality marking and average standards. Higher attainers in particular could do better. Without assessment of pupils' work, it is difficult to gain a clear picture of their progress year on year, or to identify areas for improvement. The inspection team's scrutiny, for example, shows clearly the lack of progress in scientific enquiry. A further contrast by comparison with English and mathematics, is that there are no end-of-year assessments in science and so a further opportunity to assess where pupils are is lost. There has not yet been time for senior teachers or the co-ordinator to observe science teaching. The senior management team has been engaged in numeracy and literacy, and in-service training for staff has focused on these aspects recently. Nor has there yet been time to monitor year and lesson plans. These show low expectations by some teachers, and slow progression in scientific enquiry. There is a clear need for in-service training of teachers - this is well understood by the co-ordinator, but there has not been time because of the focus on English and mathematics. Nevertheless, the subject leader has had productive discussions with her junior link teacher and the subject's working party. There is an action plan in place for its improvement. Governors, however, have not called the subject leader to account for her plans for the future, despite data showing that science is the weakest of the three core subjects.

ART AND DESIGN

78. At the end of both infant and junior stages, standards are below those expected for a majority of pupils. Progress for all groups across the school is slow in both the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills. Since the previous inspection, there has been little improvement.

79. There are some examples of satisfactory or good work in both key stages. For example, in Year 1, there are some freely painted pictures of family members. These show good control, suitable attention to detail and individual approaches. There is clear teaching and discussion, and so pupils show they have properly thought about their efforts. However, the images are their own, not repeated examples of similar images. Elsewhere, examples in the infants often show that work is too directed, resulting in pupils' efforts which are lacking in individuality, and where paint and colours have often been ready mixed and pre-selected - such as in pictures of snowmen in Year 2. Fabric collages show pupils working haphazardly in Year 2 at work which is only at Level 1 - about a year behind where it should be. Progress in the acquisition of skills is slow. For example, black and coloured pencil work shows limited use of line and poor shading techniques, and poor colour mixing leads to less appreciation of it than expected.

80. In the juniors, there are some examples of reasonable work. For example, the pencil and paint combinations in Year 3. These follow a discussion about the artist Kandinsky. Pupils have grasped some of the principles of Kandinsky's paintings and have used this information in their own, original efforts. Thus, they are producing work derived from their knowledge and not merely imitating or copying the original. Some work about Egyptians, on display in the long junior corridor, has the same satisfactory quality. Egyptian shapes and decorations have been studied and pupils have then attempted their own. They have grasped the idea of the sorts of colours and patterns, and used this information to show their own efforts. This work shows suitable skills in selecting colours and controlling implements to achieve the desired results. Yet none are the same, allowing for individual interpretations.

81. Elsewhere, there are many examples of a misunderstanding of the Programmes of Study. This has led to work based on Van Gogh in Year 4 being poor copies of the original with the techniques used by the artist not being understood. The Programmes of Study call for pupils' own work to be resourced and informed from other sources - not low appreciation of colour and form which this work represents. In a Year 6 class, further evidence of this approach is seen in work related to Clarice Cliff where the approach is to imitate, rather than use the information to inform pupils' own work. In a lesson where pupils did make individual pots, however, they were not taught or reminded of pottery skills. The approach was more suitably original, but the lack of skill in using clay resulted in products which might be more appropriately expected from much younger pupils.

82. Teaching was observed in five lessons. In four, it was unsatisfactory in quality and in one satisfactory. All teachers establish and maintain good relationships and, therefore, pupils respond politely and sensibly. Most planning is clear, but does not show a good grasp of progression in skills or the requirements of the Programmes of Study. This lowers standards. In the satisfactory teaching in Year 4, a good link was made with the pupils' historical study of the Celts. A good introduction clearly explained the purpose of the lesson and reminded pupils about Celtic traditions. Clear advice and guidance was given about the proportions of human faces. A good balance was achieved between instruction and pupils' activity. Most pupils made good progress and moved towards making their own masks based on what they knew of Celtic choices of colour and shape. Only the higher attainers made slower progress than expected. They have the potential to work without such close guidance. Nevertheless, the lesson was largely successful.

83. All teachers make good relationships with pupils, and so their response is to behave well, maintain good relationships with each other and be willing. Praise is often used well, and guidance offered in a helpful way. However, many teachers lack a grasp of how to use artists' work to inform pupils' own work rather than aiming for poor imitation. This often results in parody rather than producing work of skill and originality at levels expected for pupils' ages. Work in sketch books is not dated. This inhibits assessment of pupils' progress. Although some classes keep an end-of-year assessment of pupils' drawing skills, these are not annotated to assess skills or stages of development. Nor are all of them passed on or used well to inform future planning and teaching.

84. The subject leader is very recently appointed. A good start has been made in leading development. However, some important features are not implemented or are causing slow progress. The subject leader has a good grasp of the subject as can be seen from her action plan and work in her own class. Already, she has begun to keep a photographic record of art and design work throughout school. This is not, as yet, assessed against expectations relative to ages, and so no information is available about progress in skills and knowledge. Neither is it shown or discussed with teachers in a systematic fashion. Thus, many teachers have insufficient appreciation of good quality art work. A time-scale for re-drafting the current policy is agreed with the headteacher, and in some years experiments are being undertaken in use of a new, nationally available, scheme. The trials of the new scheme have been left to year groups to decide. Some years are attempting to follow the old policy and scheme, whilst others are using the new one. Thus, the necessary building of skills year on year is lost. Currently, the arrangements agreed for assessing pupils' drawing at the end of each year are not kept and passed on by all teachers. These factors explain the below average results seen and the differences which exist in age-related achievements. Also, there has been little in-service training in the subject which remains weak - as reported at the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. It was only possible to observe two lessons in design and technology during the inspection. Talking to pupils, teachers and the co-ordinator, as well as looking at teachers' planning, pupils' work and classroom displays show that attainment matches expectations for pupils aged seven. Pupils in Year 6 have yet to undertake any design and technology during the current year as it is planned to take place after half term. Therefore, no judgement on attainment is possible. The standard of work seen in the previous inspection has been maintained in the infants. Photographic evidence indicates sound progress in the infants. However, few records are kept of pupils' progress in the juniors.

86. In Year 2, pupils design a crane using a construction kit. They observe similar winding mechanisms, plan their design, test various containers and make prototypes to see which is the most suitable. They are aware that they need to strengthen the lifting arm to enable the hoist to operate successfully. In Year 4, pupils design a range of picture frames, discussing the accurate measurement and cutting a range of materials. Most pupils take care in their work, steadily improving their skills. In Year 5, pupils have constructed a range of models relating to Tudor homes. Construction is of a high quality which increases in complexity, indicating good evidence of evaluation related to improvement in models and designs.

87. Too little teaching was observed in design and technology to allow an overall judgement to be made. In one of the two lessons, teaching quality was satisfactory. In the other it was very good. Here, the enthusiastic teacher has a good knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum and of the needs of pupils. The use of challenging questions and the effective use of classroom assistants, who also have a good knowledge of pupils' needs, enable very good learning to take place. High standards of behaviour are expected, and all pupils respond accordingly. The shared use of technical vocabulary at the start of the lesson, for example 'gears' and 'winding drum', successfully underpins pupils' learning.

88. The newly appointed co-ordinator manages the subject soundly. Resources are satisfactory and easy access to a limited range of construction kits supports pupils' independent learning in a positive manner. Although design and technology is often linked to other subjects, for example mathematics with the accurate measuring in centimetres and cutting out of material to the desired length, many missed opportunities exist to give the subject a higher priority. Pupils' work across the school is not monitored on a regular basis, and identification of specific skills required to aid planning is ineffective.

GEOGRAPHY

89. Standards of work seen are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and progress is steady. In the infants, pupils begin to build up a picture of the world around them - their own homes, the local area and the journey to school. Most identify different types of building and the purposes they serve, such as shops, churches and different kinds of housing. Most begin to recognise parts of the school on a plan and use photographs, pictures and maps to glean information. From this they compare other locations with their own, and suggest why people like to go to the seaside. Using the Kirsty Morag stories - linking with literacy - many pupils begin to think what life on an island might be like and whether they would like it or not. As pupils move up through the juniors, most learn how to look at photographs and pick out man-made or physical features, such as the beach, rivers and buildings. Many begin to realise the effect that activities such as tourism might have on an area, for example more business for local shops, hotels and increased traffic. Some pupils are able to use the Internet to research topics, such as world weather and how it affects people's lives, for example farmers in Jamaica. Most become aware of the effects of human behaviour on the environment and what needs to be done to lessen these. Mapping skills become more proficient and many can work out routes from one place to another using Ordnance Survey maps, identifying features from the key.

90. Since the previous inspection, standards have remained in line with national expectations. Pupils continue to work well in groups and some can undertake individual research. Resources have been reviewed and are now effective in supporting the teaching of the subject. The new requirements for the Curriculum 2000 are being met adequately.

91. It was possible only to observe two lessons; teaching quality in one was satisfactory and in the other good. Judgements on teaching quality are based on these lessons, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of work. Where teaching is most successful, pupils are led into discussing locations and encouraged to form their own opinions. They are given time to reflect on their answers which gives them chances to develop their ideas. Good questioning techniques reinforce this. Planning is sound and gives the lesson a clearly defined purpose so that pupils can understand the point of their studies. Tasks are carefully explained so pupils know what is expected of them. Group work is matched to what each pupil can do already so that all

are challenged into further effort. Pictorial resources are well used to stimulate pupils' responses. Computer software is used well to improve mapping skills and help pupils to understand physical features such as islands, beach, shoreline and rivers. At the end of the lesson, pupils are brought back together to consolidate what they have learnt. However, where teaching is less strong, often opportunities are lost for pupils to evaluate their work and that of others and so improve their skills. The pace of teaching at times is rather slow, and some pupils then begin to lose interest. Work set is sometimes the same for the whole class. This means that it might be too easy for some and too difficult for others, and so pupils are not able to gain a sense of achievement. There is an over-reliance on simple, poor quality worksheets which often restricts the amount of work higher attaining pupils do and therefore hinders their progress.

92. The co-ordinator has only been in post for two terms but has a sound grasp of how the subject should be managed. Geography has not been a particular focus for improvement of late. A comprehensive topic plan has been drawn up as a result of minuted meetings with all year groups. This makes sure that all the appropriate areas of learning are covered. In-service training and good subject knowledge enable the co-ordinator to give staff support, where necessary. Government guidelines have been incorporated into the scheme of work and these have also increased staff confidence. When a topic is completed, the co-ordinator looks at standards of pupils' work so that progress can be determined. Examples of work are then kept as a record. Informal assessment helps staff to plan their lessons, but there is no overall assessment policy as yet. Teachers do not regularly compare work with national expectations. Because of timetable restrictions, there are no opportunities at present to observe teaching. There are good cross-curricular links with literacy in extended writing, art and design and information and communication technology. There is a wide range of computer software which is well used to extend pupils' learning opportunities. Resources are sufficient to teach the subject. Usefully, fieldwork is introduced through trips out for both key stages.

HISTORY

93. By the end of the infants, standards in the majority match national expectations, and a few pupils exceed these. At the end of the juniors, most pupils' work is slightly above national expectations. Across both key stages, progress for most pupils is steady. As pupils proceed through the infants, most begin to realise that time passes and things change, for example toys used by their grandparents and their own modern ones. They look at photographs of people on holiday 100 years ago and identify ways in which leisure has changed. Most pupils recall facts about well known people like Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole, and some show an understanding of how a soldier in the Crimea might have felt. Using events such as the Great Fire of London, most can put facts into the correct historical sequence. Many can use different styles in which to communicate their knowledge and understanding, such as diaries, letters, poems and rôle play to dramatise lives of famous people. In the juniors, many pupils carry out independent research into how people in the past lived, for example in Tudor England. Most learn to recognise how events can change people's lives, for example the Second World War. The majority begins to be aware that historical events can be open to different interpretations and why this is so. They realise that they can learn a lot from artefacts but, again, that there are limitations in the accuracy of such knowledge, and most pupils realise some deductions will be educated guesswork. By the end of the juniors, most pupils write with considerable empathy in the guise of people in the past, for example evacuee children or ancient Egyptians. Many draw on their factual knowledge to bring a realism and freshness to their writing.

94. Since the previous inspection, resources, such as artefacts and books, have improved and have helped pupils to understand and identify more clearly with past events. Pupils continue to enjoy the subject and apply themselves with great enthusiasm to various practical projects. The quality of teaching, as judged by how well the pupils learn, remains good. Standards of work have improved through close links to literacy and information and communication technology. The use of computer programs has extended the pupils' visual awareness of how people lived and worked; for example, pupils are able to 'visit' a Roman villa and carry out some everyday tasks.

95. It was possible only to observe three lessons: the quality of teaching was outstanding in one, very good in another and good in the third. Judgements are based on these lessons, on scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with them. Where teaching is most successful, teachers communicate their high levels of enthusiasm for the subject, make learning fun, and the pupils become eager for more knowledge. Lessons often start briskly and previous knowledge is consolidated. Resources are used well to stimulate pupils' imaginations. Artefacts, for example from the Second World War, also help to bring history alive for pupils in Year 6. Pupils in Year 5 are given the opportunity to taste food the Aztecs might have eaten; this brings an instant sensory contact with people in the past. Very good practical exercises are devised to encourage pupils to understand how sites are excavated. These include 'archaeological sites' where pupils in Year 3 have to excavate shards of pottery from sand trays and try to reassemble them. This helps them to realise some of the difficulties faced by archaeologists in a very realistic way. Good subject knowledge and use of appropriately mature language allow teachers to ask questions of sufficient depth to challenge pupils to think more deeply. Because pupils are usually fully absorbed in lessons, there is no distracting behaviour. At the end of lessons, pupils are brought back to discuss what they have learned, which helps to clarify any misconceptions and consolidate learning.

96. Where teaching works less well, pupils are given too much information to absorb in one lesson and they become less engrossed. Sometimes, pupils are kept sitting on the carpet overlong and they become uncomfortable. This leads to some restlessness and lack of concentration. This also happens when the pace of the lesson is slowed too much while group tasks are given out. Some teaching relies too much on simple worksheets which do not offer enough challenge to higher attaining pupils.

97. The management of the subject is sound and helped by the specialist knowledge of the co-ordinator. He and the working party make sure that the Programmes of Study are covered in appropriate depth using a variety of different approaches. The scheme of work has been amended to include some of the Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidelines. There has been some monitoring of pupils' work with outside assistance. Each year group is given topics to study, but the planning of these is left to individual teachers. This leads to some variation in the quality of planning - some being detailed and thorough and some too general. There is a good level of subject knowledge in many of the staff, but not all feel totally confident in teaching history. There has been no in-service training for some time. Each class has an organised trip at least twice per year, and effective use is made of local sites and museums. An 'Ancient Greek' soldier was invited into the school to stimulate pupils' knowledge of this period. Resources have been audited recently and now support teaching of the subject effectively, for example good quality books, interesting artefacts, videos and a wide range of computer software. Often, rôle play is well used to bring history to life, and groups of pupils dramatise events in assemblies. There are very good cross-curricular links with literacy, information and communication technology and art and design. Informal assessment is carried out often at the end of a topic and a tick list is kept of pupils' attainment, but there is no overall assessment policy for the subject. The monitoring of progress is not well established and work is not compared to national expectations, relative to age, on a regular basis.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

98. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are above national expectations. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. These standards reflect the rigour and enthusiasm with which the school has approached the teaching of information and communication technology. A new suite of 16 computers has been installed during the last school year, and each class is timetabled on a weekly basis to have access to this resource. Pupils have opportunities to develop further their skills on other computers placed in classrooms around the school, although during the inspection these machines were not often in use.

99. Pupils begin to use the computer as soon as they start in Reception. They learn mouse control and to recognise letters on the keyboard. They experiment successfully with painting packages and draw a picture linked to their topic on winter. In Year 1, pupils know how to use the space bar, delete and arrow keys and make good use of the on-screen concept keyboard to help them write sentences. By the end of the key stage, pupils use a simple word processor, save and retrieve their work. They are confident when instructing a moveable toy and can explain the function of operating a tape recorder.

100. By the end of the juniors, most pupils are competent in a range of skills and are familiar with a variety of programs. Working independently and in pairs, they combine text and pictures. They have good experience in handling data and enhance their numeracy skills by doing so. Such an example is noted in Year 5 when data are interpreted to establish the nutritional values of different foods. Also, in Year 6, pupils use new software to establish a database linked to their science work on the classification of animals. By the age of eleven, they have a good understanding of word processing and use spreadsheets. They use the computer to write reports, stories, labels and enhance programmes for events taking place within the school. They highlight, change text, import pictures and combine text with graphics, placing emphasis on the layout. Throughout the juniors, pupils learn to control devices using computers; pupils in Year 3, for example, use sensors to test transparencies of materials, and in Year 6 they measure the change in temperature as ice melts and boiling water cools. Modelling techniques are less well developed. For example, there are too few opportunities to use computers to calculate using spreadsheets. Throughout the juniors, pupils are observed using the Internet to research topics and to select and print appropriate extracts from texts. All Programmes of Study are attempted and pupils' learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs, is sound.

101. Where computers are used to enrich teaching and learning across the curriculum, the level of competence is good overall. For example, pupils in Year 1 use the concept keyboard to help them write sentences linked to their work on materials in science, and in Year 6 to find information to use in history topics. A further instance is noted in Year 5 where pupils are given the opportunity to apply the skills they have developed in the literacy lessons through reading and recognising features of the Aztec traditional story. They compare these with the features identified in the story of 'Beauty and the Beast'. Pupils in the juniors are skilled in accessing web-sites to obtain information to support their work and have developed the skill of first trying to confirm that the web-site that they are using is a reliable one.

102. The quality of teaching is good overall; in five lessons seen, none was unsatisfactory. All teachers have high expectations, and pupils are provided with a good level of challenging tasks. There is good pace which impacts positively on pupils' learning. Lessons are well organised and managed to enable all pupils to gain access to the computers. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and give clear instructions. Work is clearly targeted at appropriate levels of attainment, which give pupils a clear idea of what is expected of them. There is effective monitoring of pupils' work and progress, both individually and in pairs. The good teaching found within the school ensures that high standards are maintained within both key stages. As a result, nearly all pupils are enthusiastic about their information and communication technology work. They explain procedures well and some of the more experienced are able and eager to help others. This is noticeable throughout the school. Relationships between pupils are good, resulting in pairs sharing the computers sensibly without any undue problems. These computer-based activities offer pupils good opportunities to work with minimal supervision, use their initiative and often to take control of their own learning.

103. Leadership of the subject is good. The subject leader has a clear vision of improvements needed in resources to raise standards further, and these have been identified well within the subject action plan. There is a recently revised whole-school scheme of work in place, which gives a clear view of learning steps and increasing skills in pupils' learning, and clearly meets statutory requirements. It is well used to support work in other curricular areas, and good use is made of external expertise, such as visits to the computer control module at the Rover Partnership. There, pupils are able to design and produce alarm systems. The assessment of pupils' progress is being developed, and the subject leader has undertaken some sampling of pupils' work. However, neither the co-ordinator or senior teachers have yet had the opportunity to observe lessons being taught.

MUSIC

104. By the end of both infants and juniors stages, pupils' attainment exceeds national expectations and they make good progress. The school has maintained successfully the good standards reported at the previous inspection. 'Celebration 2000' - a musical performance by children from Reception to Year 6 - produced dozens of letters of appreciation from parents.

105. In the infants, pupils enjoy singing a range of tunes and know the words and tunes to many songs and hymns. They sing accurately in unison and show a good sense of pitch. They use untuned percussion instruments to reproduce rhythmic patterns and follow a graphically notated score to play simple compositions which they have made. Most pupils correctly identify a range of percussion instruments and can select instruments to represent particular sounds or ideas in their compositions. They clap loudly or softly in response to visual signals. They have the opportunity to listen to a range of musical pieces and are beginning to have an appropriate appreciation of different musical moods.

106. In the juniors, pupils extend their repertoire of known songs and hymns and respond to the musical moods of different pieces through the 'modulation' of tone and volume. Nearly all are able to sing songs with complex rhythms in unison. They sing in parts effectively. They sing well in assemblies and also in classroom lessons with good diction, both with an instrument and unaccompanied. They listen to a range of music by different composers and make personal responses to the music, for example by painting pictures. They compose their own music from a variety of stimuli, including work by artists. They make considered choices about the instruments they will use and rehearse, improve and perform their compositions using graphical notation. They are learning conventional notation, and in a Year 3 lesson pupils were able to sing musical phrases correctly. In the juniors' assembly, all pupils listened attentively to a visiting small orchestra and many could correctly identify sections of the orchestra and all the instruments.

107. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers provide stimulating and challenging tasks to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Lessons are planned carefully with clear learning objectives and are effectively organised. In the best, teachers work through the planned activities at a good pace which maintains nearly all pupils' interest. Pupils learn a range of songs, hear a variety of music and use and learn about musical instruments from other cultures. This makes a good contribution to their cultural development. The opportunity to sing, hear and reflect on a range of recorded music contributes to their spiritual development. Pupils enjoy all aspects of their music lessons and participate with lively enthusiasm and good concentration. They listen attentively to recorded music. When working with instruments, they use them properly. They are able to organise themselves into groups when required and can negotiate aspects of musical composition. They are acquiring a good knowledge of musical terminology. Extra-curricular musical activities enhance provision and add greatly to pupils' knowledge and enjoyment. In the juniors, fifty-two pupils learn to play a variety of instruments and there is a school choir that has been regularly invited to sing with the Coventry Youth Orchestra.

108. The subject leader has specific subject expertise and she uses this good knowledge effectively to promote music well throughout the school. There is a good scheme of work and this, together with assistance with lesson plans for teachers, enhance the good teaching and learning. The co-ordinator monitors teaching. She also teaches in other classes and is involved in school musical events. This combination gives her a good grasp of standards. She regularly scrutinises teachers' termly plans and is aware of the need for assessment of pupils' work. Presently, she is trialling a new system which involves all staff. She has developed effective links with neighbouring schools and uses these productively to extend the musical opportunities of the pupils here. Resources are of good quality and sufficient overall in range.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

109. During the inspection, it was possible only to observe lessons being taught in the aspects of gymnastics and games. However, examination of teachers' planning and other evidence such as a portfolio of recorded activities, demonstrate that pupils are provided with access to all strands in the National Curriculum. By the end of both key stages, attainment is in line with that expected of pupils' ages. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory and most pupils attain the national swimming standard of 25 metres by the time they leave the school.

110. By the end of the infants, pupils perform a range of controlled movements. They show changes in quick, slow, strong and light movements in response to instructions in gymnastics. They confidently explore different ways of travelling using stretching and curling shapes, both on the floor and on the apparatus. Pupils' skills in passing and receiving the ball with the feet are developed in games lessons, and

all are becoming proficient in aiming their passes. Pupils in all lessons quickly change into their physical education clothing and they know the importance of warm-up exercises at the beginning. In the juniors, it was only possible to observe two games lessons being taught. One of these was unavoidably transferred from the playground to the hall because of the rain. In both, a clear progression of teaching skills occurred with passing skills in rugby football and basketball being practised. Most pupils pass accurately using two hands and quickly find a space to receive the returned pass. They listen well to instructions and both boys and girls of all prior attainment make sound progress. Most pupils participate enthusiastically and work hard to improve their skills.

111. Most teaching is satisfactory and some is good. Teachers make lessons enjoyable and pupils respond with enthusiasm and good attitudes to work. They have good relationships with their pupils and lessons are characterised by humour and a willingness to work hard. Teaching, especially in the juniors, conveys a good sense of atmosphere, pace and enthusiasm which have a good effect upon pupils' responses and progress. Most teachers have a sound knowledge of the subject which enables them to build on skills effectively from year to year. Planning is properly based on the local authority's scheme of work, which gives very good guidance and ensures appropriate coverage of the required elements. The school offers an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, which are well supported by pupils and staff. This enhances the standards achieved.

112. The leadership and management of the subject are effective and the curriculum is appropriate. The scheme of work provides useful guidelines for steps in learning, increase in pupils' skills and lesson planning. Helpfully, the co-ordinator monitors the medium-term plans to ensure coverage is full. Currently, there are no agreed procedures to assess or record pupils' progress and attainment to indicate what pupils know, understand and can do. The school is well resourced, both in accommodation and equipment, and good use is made of outside specialists to help with such aspects as dance. Recently, this has focused on dancing from India and the Caribbean. Pupils are provided with the opportunity to visit centres to observe games being played by such teams as the England basketball team and the participants in the European Indoor Athletics competition. Also, they are given the option to attend an outdoor adventure weekend in Wales or in Birmingham. The co-ordinator has in place a sound development plan for the subject and is keen to improve even further this curricular area.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages meet the recommendations of the Coventry Agreed Syllabus for pupils of their ages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards are below those found at the time of the previous inspection when they were described as above the expectations.

114. Pupils in Year 1 learn about Christian festivals and celebrations, such as Christmas and harvest. Also, they begin to understand the importance of celebrations in other faiths and the special rituals that accompany them. For example, pupils learned about the significance of honey given to a baby born into the Sikh faith as a reminder of the sweetness of prayer. They also understand that people have different feelings and emotions and that these can be expressed in different ways. They know about the festivals of Easter and Christmas. However, the emphasis upon the use of simple, poor quality worksheets does not provide pupils with the opportunity to extend their knowledge and understanding, particularly the higher attainers.

115. In the junior stage, pupils successfully extend their knowledge of the range of world faiths to include Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism. Pupils in Year 4 build on their understanding of prayer from Year 2 to think in greater depth about the rôle of prayer in Christianity. In Year 5, they know about the significance of the Bible to a Christian believer, and they know something about the sacred books of other faiths. In Year 6, pupils deepen their understanding of Sikhism through a study of particular customs. In discussion followed by personal writing, on the theme of reconciliation and forgiveness, they showed a good understanding within the context of their own and others' lives. Where pupils have the opportunity to work in this way, they extend their understanding and knowledge. However, teachers often rely on completion of simple worksheets of questionable quality as practical work for pupils, and these do not support their study of themes in sufficient depth.

116. Mostly, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good strategies for gaining pupils' attention. For example, in Year 1 the teacher had brought in honey for pupils to taste to help them understand why Sikhs see it as a positive reminder of prayer. Teachers often make good use of discussion and use questions well to extend pupils' understanding. They use resources effectively. However, sometimes they do not make clear links in their planning with the attainment targets of the Agreed Syllabus or use these to measure pupils' progress. Teachers plan well together in year groups and this is successful in providing pupils with equality of access to the curriculum. Teachers make good use of visits to places of worship of a range of faiths, including Christianity. Most pupils have good attitudes to their work, behave well and are attentive in lessons. In the infants, they settle well to their tasks. In the juniors, they listen well to each other's views and opinions. They work well in groups, and listen to and consider the views and ideas of others. They increase their knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths and, in this way, the subject contributes well to their cultural and spiritual development.

117. The recently appointed co-ordinator has made a good start to management of the subject. He assists in planning where appropriate, but no formal monitoring of planning across the school is presently undertaken. He uses informal discussions with colleagues and visits to classrooms to monitor standards. There is a portfolio of work to support teachers, but this is not levelled to show different stages in attainment. There is no agreed whole-school system of assessment of work in religious education in place to inform planning. Consequently, suitable curricular targets are difficult to ascertain. Thus, progress year on year is sometimes less rapid than expected for pupils of higher attainment. The range of resources is good. Resources are well managed and maintained and are readily accessible to staff and pupils.