

INSPECTION REPORT

Parkside Junior School
Smethwick

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique Reference Number: 103940

Headteacher: Mr. M. Davies

Reporting inspector: Mr. David Carrington
T12451

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th November 1998

Under OFSTED contract number: 703301

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. D. Cooper
Date of previous inspection:	June 1995

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Mr. D. Carrington, Rgl	Information technology	Attainment and progress
	Music	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
	Physical education	Teaching
Mrs. C. Field, Lay Inspector	Equality of opportunity	Attendance
		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Leadership and management
		Partnership with parents and the community
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
Mrs. V. Birkett	English	
	Special educational needs	
Mrs. S. Brown	Geography	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	History	
	Religious education	
Mr. A. Parker	Art	Curriculum and assessment
	Mathematics	
Mr. G. Wells	Design and technology	The efficiency of the school
	Science	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Standards and rates of progress in information technology and music
- There is good quality teaching and it provides a good curriculum which is improving rapidly
- The school is well managed with a very strong drive for better standards
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good, relationships are very good and the school builds the confidence and self-esteem of pupils successfully
- It takes care to use its money wisely and to check spending thoroughly
- Promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well and ensures that everyone works hard in a pleasant and friendly atmosphere which encourages good learning.
- Provides a good curriculum which is improving rapidly
- Keeps parents well informed about what it does and is trying hard to get them more involved in the life of the school
- Gives everyone, regardless of background, equal opportunities to succeed
- It gives good value for money

Where the school has weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are below the national average
- High absence rates and poor punctuality mean that many pupils miss much of their school work and then find it hard to catch up
- There is some loss of time at the start of the day, around break and at other points in the timetable such as personal, health and social education lessons and some members of staff do not always have sufficiently purposeful timetables.
- Assessment procedures are not yet fully in place and the use of the information which is produced by assessment is unsatisfactory
- Procedures to monitor the school's strengths and weaknesses are not fully developed and not all staff are involved actively enough in this process

It is clear that Parkside Junior School is improving swiftly and that all staff are working as a strong team to bring about change. The number of strengths very much outweighs the weaknesses. The governors will produce an action plan to answer the weaknesses listed above and this will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils in school.

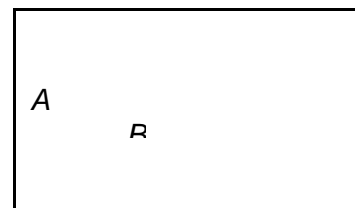
How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school made a slow start to improvements after the last inspection but the rate of improvement has increased a lot in the last year. The curriculum, quality of teaching and rates of progress have all improved, and whilst standards in English, mathematics and science are lower now than in 1995, firm action has been taken to boost levels of attainment in these subjects. Because everyone agrees on what needs doing, the school is in a good position to show speedy improvement in the future.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	E	D
Mathematics	E	D
Science	E*	E



Standards could be higher in English, mathematics, science and design and technology, but they are good in information technology and music and are average in the other subjects. Because of a number of factors, including the relatively high proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals and the percentage with English as an additional language, pupils have a low starting level of attainment and they have difficulty in maintaining an even rate of progress. The school works hard to overcome these difficulties and, overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress in their work. Progress is good in geography, history, information technology, music and religious education. The school has already produced improved standards in some subjects and is working hard to improve them in subjects where they are low at present.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	7 - 11 years
English	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good
Science	Good
Information technology	Good
Religious education	Good
Other subjects	Good

Teaching has improved since the last inspection with much less unsatisfactory teaching now. Teachers have good subject knowledge, good levels of expectation and they set interesting and motivating tasks for pupils.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	There are good procedures for encouraging good behaviour and conduct is good. Pupils have good attitudes, they form very good relationships with other people and their personal development is also good.
Attendance	Attendance rates are below average. The number of pupils who miss several weeks of schooling each year is high and this seriously affects the progress which they make and the standards they achieve.
Ethos*	There is a pleasant working atmosphere in school and every one tries their best. The ethos is good.
Leadership and management	The headteacher gives very good leadership to the school and has built a strong team who work hard to make sure that all pupils have good quality education. All staff are keen to make sure that standards are the best they can be. Some staff could be given more demanding timetables.
Curriculum	The curriculum has improved and now provides good opportunities for all pupils to learn about all subjects in a well planned way. Assessment is a weakness which the school acknowledges. It has started to change its assessment procedures and the way in which the information is used.
Pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are soundly supported, but there are management issues relating to this work, and to the enhanced learning project, which require improvement.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	This is a strength of the school. Pupils are well prepared to work in harmony with all others, become reliable and trustworthy and to look after others. They know what is special in life and have a good knowledge and understanding of the religions and beliefs of people in their locality.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	There are plenty of teachers and support staff, no shortages of materials and equipment and the school building is large and attractive. The libraries are not used enough as places for research. Outdoor space is big enough for play and the school has some imaginative plans to extend the grounds to provide better opportunities for learning outside.
Value for money	The school gives good value for money.

* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Standards of work •The quality of information provided about their children's progress •The friendly welcome they receive in school and the action it takes to deal with questions and complaints •Their involvement in the life and work of the school •The joy with which their children come to school 	

Nearly every parent praised the school for what it is doing and many said that they noticed an improvement in the last year. Those who had criticisms of the school also said that it was doing a good job on the whole. Overall, the inspection team agrees with parents' views of the school.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise the standards of attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science the school should:

- I. Introduce a rigorous system of monitoring of the curriculum, teaching and standards so that everyone knows the schools' strengths and areas for development. Involve all staff in this process
- II. Complete the set of assessment procedures, including those for pupils with special educational needs, and make sure that the information that this provides is used by everyone in planning the next stage of the work
- III. Revamp the school timetable to make sure that time is always best spent to help pupils make good progress in their learning, especially at the start of the school day, at all breaks and in personal, health and social education lessons
- IV. Work with parents and the community to encourage better patterns of attendance and punctuality so that progress for all pupils is uninterrupted
- V. Evaluate, and then adjust, the timetables and deployment of staff so that all pupils, particularly the average attainers, reach appropriate targets for learning.

These are the Key Issues for which the governors will prepare an action plan. Judgements and evidence which relate to these Key Issues will be found in the following numbered paragraphs

Key Issue I, paragraphs 36, 51, 59, 66, 91, 141, 148 and 155.

Key Issue II, paragraphs 26, 28, 39, 40, 41, 51, 63, 91, 107, 108, 140, 155 and 160.

Key Issue III, paragraphs 28, 53, 63, 77, 102 and 107.

Key Issue IV, paragraphs 12, 21, 22, 23, 32, 52, 53, 63, 83 and 92.

Key Issue V, paragraphs 13, 34, 35, 64, 65, 66, 72 and 79.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1.Parkside Junior School is situated to the south east of Smethwick town centre in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough. There are 384 pupils on roll and there is a considerable turn-over of pupils each year. The attainment of pupils when they enter school is below average. Amongst the pupils are a much larger than usual number with English as an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is very much above average. The pupils are organised into fourteen classes with an average size of 27.4. The school is of above average size for a junior school.

2.The school has 124 pupils identified as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average. Three pupils have a statement of special need. The number of pupils with statements is less than 1%, and well below what is often found in a school with such a high percentage of pupils on the special needs register.

3.Nearly half the staff have joined the school in the last two years. The headteacher has been in at the school since January 1998. Recent targets adopted by management include the stabilisation of, and improvement of the quality of staffing, improved standards of attainment, especially in statutory assessments, improved assessment and the way it is used to track progress, provision of different work for separate attainment groups and to set targets for individual pupils, year groups and the school as a whole. To ensure that these things happen, the school is introducing a system of monitoring rigorously the progress made and in the general quality of education.

4.The school aims to form effective partnership with parents in the education of the children, to pursue high standards, particularly in the development of English language skills and numeracy, to provide good quality education, ensure responsible behaviour, value the diversity of cultures present in school and to ensure that teaching is of good quality.

5.Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2

¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	37	47	84

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	13	12	15
	Girls	16	13	13
	Total	29	25	28
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	35 (44)	30 (32)	33 (40)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (68)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	12	16	17
	Girls	19	17	17
	Total	31	33	34
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	37 (46)	39 (33)	40 (43)
	National	-- (63)	-- (64)	-- (69)

¹

Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	8.5
	National comparative data	5.6
Unauthorised Absence	School	1.1
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	10
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	19
Satisfactory or better	96
Less than satisfactory	4

5. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

5. Attainment and progress

6. Standards in the 1998 National Curriculum statutory assessments were much below those found in most other schools. They were also much below the level found in similar schools. The 1998 results represent a decline in standards since the position in 1997. There is considerable evidence from statutory assessments in recent years to show that girls do better than boys and that members of some ethnic groups produce better results than others. The school has analysed completely and thoroughly the pattern of attainment in these tests and has begun a programme to boost standards all round.

7. Inspectors judged that the pupils achieve overall low levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are also below average in design and technology because the work is too heavily weighted to the *make* element, rather than to the *plan, design* and *evaluate* aspects. On the other hand, standards are good in information technology, largely because of the high quality computer facilities and well practised teaching. There are also good standards in music because of the well balanced and planned curriculum. Standards in all other subjects are at the expected level for pupils at the end of junior school. Trends identified during the present inspection suggest that the corner has been turned, and that standards are on the increase.

8. Standards in English are below average by the end of school. Pupils read with fluency, though they are not all good at reading with expression and they have below average skills and knowledge in the use of books for personal research. Pupils listen well, though they do not understand what is explained without much repetition, some simplification and the use of several examples to help clarify meaning. They speak simply, their vocabulary is narrow on the whole, though it is developing well in information technology and music and many pupils speak hesitantly. Writing standards are much below average because most pupils have difficulty in making the link between what they hear, what they think and what they want to write. Written sentences are simple, short and not always very original.

9. In mathematics, pupils also achieve below average standards. Those pupils in the top sets achieve at average levels when compared to pupils in other schools and they make the best progress because they have a sound base of mathematical knowledge on which to build. Other pupils are slower to solve problems, they make more mistakes and take longer to master even simple additional steps in the work. Many are dependent on cubes and other equipment to make calculations and do not have the necessary mental arithmetic skills even though appropriate practice is given.

10. Pupils achieve below average standards in science. Most pupils have a good level of basic scientific knowledge but have difficulty in relating the range of separate experiences and are too dependent on the teacher in scientific investigation and experiment. They find communicating their knowledge and ideas hard, though the quality of recording is often good.

11. Progress rates are satisfactory throughout the school, though they are often slower than would be found in schools where English is the predominant language. Progress is good in geography, history, information technology, music and physical education and is satisfactory in the other subjects. Progress is good in reading, though it is not as strong in speaking, listening and, particularly, writing. Pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate support and they make satisfactory progress. There is some evidence already that management's decision to set pupils in order to meet the demands of the National Literacy Strategy, is enhancing the existing progress of pupils with special needs. The provision of extra teaching staff to allow smaller teaching groups has been beneficial for all, including the higher attaining pupils. The provision of

separate work for different attainment groups enables all pupils to make at least satisfactory progress in the non-core subjects.

12.Despite their greater difficulties, those pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, though it is often slow and steady. Many pupils take longer to learn basic facts and skills in English, mathematics and science because they do not always understand the language at first hearing and require constant questioning, prompting and encouraging to help them make sense of what they are learning. An above average proportion of these pupils also have special educational needs and this often compounds the difficulties they have. Another factor which influences attainment and progress is the high turn-over of pupils. About a quarter of all pupils in any one class will be different at the end of the year when compared to the beginning. Some pupils are also hampered in their learning by regular and prolonged absences, usually to join an extended holiday.

13.The school is part of the Local Education Authority's *Enhanced Learning Project* to target specific groups for additional support and, in some cases, different teaching styles in a bid to lift achievement. This project requires further monitoring, to ensure that staff are used to best effect to raise standards of pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils with extremes of attainment, those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils plus those with English as an additional language are soundly supported and make appropriate progress. However, some middle-attaining pupils do not receive enough support in class lessons because the teacher has to work with large class numbers.

14.The school's literacy and numeracy strategies are having a satisfactory impact on standards at this early stage and teachers are keen to extend the observed benefits of the Literacy Hour to provision in other subjects. The strong cross-curricular dimension to the curriculum is having a good impact on standards, particularly where the use of information technology is concerned. There is a good drive for improved standards in school.

15.The school has now gathered a good body of information to help it identify where standards require improvement and is in the process of setting achievable targets for whole-school achievement over the next few years. The school is refining this process so that it can set individual targets for all pupils which will ensure they reach appropriate standards. It is making good progress with this work.

15. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

16.Parents comment positively about the happy way in which their children come to school. Throughout the school the very good relationships are a major factor in fostering the positive attitudes and the good behaviour of pupils. The school operates as an orderly community with everyone getting on well together and this contributes greatly to pupils' enjoyment, security, achievements and sound progress in learning.

17.In all classes most pupils demonstrate good attitudes to work. They settle quickly to work and boys and girls show equal enthusiasm for learning and acquiring new skills. They show determination and perseverance such as in Year 6 maths lesson when pupils had to use their ten times table knowledge to work out place values. They show confidence to talk about their work as demonstrated in a maths lesson in Year 4 when using a function machine to reason and calculate various sums. In most lessons pupils are well behaved, interested in what they are doing and work well for their teachers. They show a willingness to undertake roles of responsibility and are able to work independently, for example when using the information technology equipment in the suite.

18. Playground behaviour is free from tension and usually sensible, occasionally a small minority step over the agreed boundary and become silly. The school's system of credits which accrue to give class treats, are great motivators and pressure is soon put to bare from others if these are jeopardised by those who behave badly. There tends to be some restlessness in classes after lunch but pupils soon settle due to the consistent approach to behaviour management and teachers' effective class control. Sometimes, in physical education lessons, a few pupils become over-excited but are fundamentally well behaved.

19. Pupils with special educational needs adopt a positive attitude to learning. Most of their work is planned to meet their specific needs which enables them to feel a sense of satisfaction and achievement. This helps to promote good behaviour, and any deterioration of conduct, particularly by those pupils whose special needs are of an emotional nature, usually occurs outside the classroom. The use of the assertive discipline programme sets firm boundaries in the school and behaviour is managed well. The school's attitude to pupils with special needs is positive and the system of rewards encourages the development of self-esteem.

20. Pupils are quick to help one another and share ideas for example when working together in a Year 5 history lesson brainstorming what is the same and different about theatre today and in Elizabethan times. Every day a group of pupils runs the tuck shop, organising stock control and sales themselves. Pupils show awareness of the needs of those less fortunate than themselves through their charitable fund-raising. Throughout the school pupils' demonstrate caring attitudes to each other. In the past the number of exclusions was high but the rate is now falling.

20. **Attendance**

21. Levels of attendance are well below national levels. Nearly ten percent of pupils have lengthy periods away from school and this severely interrupts their education and limits the progress they make in learning. Poor punctuality was an issue raised in the last inspection and continues to be a serious concern. Every morning many pupils are late and arrive without a sense of urgency to start a day of work. The way in which the school organises the start of the day compounds the problem by not making clear the expectations for a smart start. Some parents are unhappy with the current arrangements.

22. The school is aware of the impact absence has on the standards being achieved and is aiming to raise awareness within the school community and seek increased support from parents in trying to make improvements. Attention has been given to raising the profile of attendance and a cup is awarded weekly for the best attending class, close monitoring systems are enabling the school to know exactly who is missing time but links have not been drawn to how this impacts on individual progress and achievements. An educational welfare officer has been recently attached to support the school in its development work.

23. The next step is for the school to set agreed targets.

23. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

23. **Teaching**

24. The quality of teaching is good at Parkside Junior School and is a strength. During the inspection 98 lessons or part lessons were observed, of these, well over a half showed good teaching and it was very good or excellent in nearly one in five. This is a higher proportion than is usually found. A very small proportion of lessons showed teaching which was less than satisfactory.

25. Teaching is good in geography, history, information technology, mathematics, music, physical education, religious education and science. It is satisfactory in the remaining subjects of English, art and design and technology. Teaching is satisfactory overall for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, both in their own classes and when they are withdrawn for additional support.

26. Teachers are aware of the needs of pupils on the special needs register and generally provide appropriately matched work for them. Records are kept of pupils' progress, but these do not provide an adequate profile of the pupils' areas of difficulty and do not provide the class teacher, who does not teach all pupils in the class for literacy, with sufficient information to assist with planning well matched work in other subjects. In addition, assessment procedures are insufficiently diagnostic, and so lesson planning does not always meet the individual needs of some of the pupils.

27. Teaching has improved substantially since the last inspection. In 1995 teaching was satisfactory overall, with about one in six lessons being judged of unsatisfactory teaching quality. The school has invested heavily in staff development and this has had good effect, so that it is now rare for teaching to fall below an acceptable standard.

28. The list of strengths in teaching more than outweighs the areas for development, though teaching could stand enhancement in two aspects and out-and-out improvement in one dimension. Day-to-day assessment is competent, but there could be better and more frequent use made of written comments to show how pupils can improve their work and not every teacher takes enough pains to assess overall what skills and knowledge have been learned in the lesson. Homework is used as a means of practising satisfactorily what has been learned, though this is not consistent, and homework does not have a high profile in school. The aspect requiring complete overhaul concerns the use of time. Most teachers work briskly, but there are dead moments in lessons and not all the available time is used for teaching. The first ten minutes of the day are counted as teaching time, but they are not well used and do not promote a purposeful start to work; there is some wasting of time at break time, several lessons were observed to take a long time to start after morning play; and personal, health and social education lessons are planned unsatisfactorily.

29. It is, however, clear that teachers generally teach to their strengths. Their knowledge and understanding of all subjects is good and, coupled with high expectations of work and behaviour, this leads to improved attainment and progress. Lesson planning is good, it usually includes precise identification of what skills and knowledge are to be taught and learned, and shows clearly what activities will be presented. Teachers use good teaching methods and show good understanding of the particular requirements of their pupils. Pupils are well managed, discipline is good and lessons are well organised. Teachers make good use of the accommodation, particularly the computer suite and music room, and they put available resources to good use.

30. Inspectors saw several lessons of very good teaching quality where the above strengths were evident. As an example, a Year 6 English lesson was based on effective planning which allowed for the careful match of tasks to the needs of the pupils who had to use *-sion* words in a piece of writing to put forward a personal viewpoint. All pupils were keen to take part, they worked productively in response to the teacher's high level of expectation and made good progress. They had good practice in the use of words with the set ending and developed a sound understanding of how to structure an argument in their writing. The lesson was a purposeful and pleasant session.

30. **The curriculum and assessment**

31. There is a good curriculum that is broad and balanced. It is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. The subjects of the curriculum successfully contribute to the very good provision made for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

32. The statutory requirements for the subjects of the National Curriculum are met and religious education is taught in line with the locally agreed syllabus. There is a policy for personal, social and health education but it is not co-ordinated sufficiently to ensure common practice throughout the school. This leads to provision being fragmented. The pupils receive lessons in sex education and drugs awareness. The school development plan includes a detailed action plan for literacy and the headteacher has developed a numeracy strategy ready for implementation in line with statutory requirements. The whole curriculum is being improved rapidly and it provides pupils with a worthwhile experience during their time at the school. There is appropriate emphasis on the core subjects.

33. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The staff are very aware of the need for equal opportunities and their sensitive approach ensures full access to the curriculum for all pupils.

34. Curricular provision for pupils who have special educational needs is satisfactory. The organisation of pupils into sets for English and mathematics helps teachers to provide them with work that is well matched to their attainment levels. This is effective in meeting their particular needs and has answered successfully the key issue related to matching work to attainment level in the last inspection report. The main provision for pupils on the register of special educational needs is in the Literacy Hour, and targets set on their group education plans have this as their focus. Some pupils would benefit from additional input, either individually or in small groups, to address their more individual needs.

35. Pupils with English as an additional language are given a satisfactory curriculum overall. The school is part of the local education authority's *Enhanced Learning Project* and this has been responsible for the restructuring of some elements of the curriculum for these pupils. At present, the school is monitoring this provision to identify the benefits it brings. Whilst it is too early to evaluate the project fully, it is evident, that in some respects, particularly concerning the effective deployment of staff, it requires improvement to ensure that it is better focused on the needs of these pupils.

36. Planning of the curriculum is good. It is done conscientiously in year groups so that teachers of different classes are involved in the overall plan. To ensure that the pupils' learning builds on what has gone before the subject co-ordinators monitor the plans for their subjects and year group leaders are responsible for co-ordinating planning. All subjects of the curriculum are covered adequately and policies and schemes of work are used to unify the whole school approach to teaching the curriculum. Year group leaders and subject co-ordinators monitor the work of their colleagues by checking on completed work. This enables them to assess the effectiveness of curriculum planning, though they have little involvement in direct monitoring of teaching, the curriculum and standards in other classrooms.

37. The school's literacy strategy has been put into practice effectively. It is beginning to have a positive effect on standards, particularly in reading. The headteacher and the newly appointed mathematics co-ordinator, who will soon take up his post, are developing the strategy for numeracy. The recently completed curriculum policy for mathematics has already made an impact on the way teachers approach aspects of numeracy skills in lessons.

38. In addition to the main curriculum, several extra-curricular activities enrich the experiences of the pupils. Visits to museums such as Galton Valley, Birmingham Science Museum and Ironbridge help the pupils with their appreciation of historical and scientific resources. Their cultural experiences are enhanced by visits to the Birmingham Art Gallery and Birmingham Old Rep. Visits to Smethwick Library offer them opportunities to enlarge on their reading experience. These opportunities enhance the main curriculum and enlarge upon the pupils' learning through the National Curriculum. An art and craft club held after school enables those who attend to extend the skills that they have learned in lessons. Sporting activities are available after school in the form of clubs for netball, movement and soccer. Extra-curricular clubs are currently organised by five teachers. Each of the six clubs available offers places to approximately thirty pupils. Further clubs are planned and one teacher has been given the responsibility of developing this aspect of the school's provision.

39. The procedures for assessing pupils' work are satisfactory. Day-to-day assessment is sound and it is used effectively by teachers in lessons. The quality of marking is improving but the policy is not consistently applied. Some marking leads to improvement in the pupils' work because the teacher sets targets for further development. Much of the marking is not effective in doing this, however, because comments are not aimed at target setting but simply give praise or instructions.

40. The school's arrangements for assessment of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory overall but little assessment beyond the initial identification is carried out to help provide for the individual needs of the 56 pupils placed at Stage 2 on the register. Special needs in mathematics are not identified, or included on education plans. There is a comprehensive special needs policy, which offers clear information about the procedure for identifying pupils with special educational needs, but some pupils were observed who had particular needs and were not on the register.

41. The use of long-term assessment information in subsequent curriculum planning is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers do not use these assessments consistently in order to raise the attainment levels of all pupils. However, recent attempts to analyse assessment information have been successful in raising teachers' awareness of the needs of the pupils. For example, analysis of the national test results in science has been used to improve the teaching of the two attainment targets *Physical Processes* and *Materials and their properties*. Assessments are used in order to place pupils in appropriate sets for English and mathematics so that they can benefit from a curriculum which is targeted at their particular needs. Careful analysis of national test results has resulted in an awareness of forecasting the probable attainment levels of the pupils and setting targets to improve standards in future years. Records of pupil assessments are being collated to produce profiles of individual pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy in order to raise standards. These initiatives are becoming significant features of the school's assessment procedures. Their continued development and use in planning the curriculum will have a positive effect on the drive to raise standards.

41. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

42. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. This is because the values of the school are made explicit through the daily life and work of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all aspects of school life and participate fully in the spiritual and social aspects of the school.

43. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good, reflecting the school's aims and ethos well. Assemblies provide valuable opportunities for teachers' values and expectations to be conveyed to pupils. They are also used to celebrate achievement and personal experiences which promote pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Acts of collective worship are enhanced through a sensitive choice of music upon which pupils are often encouraged to reflect. Well chosen hymns and the focus on candle in prayer or thought also contribute to the spiritual

dimension of collective worship. Pupils respond positively to such opportunities and the lives and beliefs of others. The quality of teaching in religious education lessons also contributes positively to spiritual development.

44. Provisions for pupils' moral development is also very good. Pupils are taught to know and understand the difference between right and wrong and are expected to behave accordingly. Teachers and other adults in school provide good role models. The school's behaviour policy is applied consistently in all classes, where rewards and consequences of pupils' behaviour are clearly displayed and regularly referred to. Positive approaches are used and the emphasis is on raising pupils' self-esteem and confidence, while developing self-discipline and promoting a harmonious community. Pupils' responses and ideas are valued. They are encouraged to respect each other, the environment and those working with them in school. Praise is used effectively, although on occasions merit awards are given too liberally, diminishing their value.

45. Provision for pupils' social development is good, with emphasis placed on developing confidence and self-esteem. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work together and develop good relationships. Most pupils are keen to take responsibility and use their initiative with confidence.

46. The house system and merit awards system celebrate achievements in work and behaviour both in classes and also within assemblies. Most pupils are caring and thoughtful in their personal relationships. Pupils are given good opportunities to hold responsibility through daily routines. Class monitors carry out a range of duties within the classroom and pupils are able to select resources and take responsibility for their own workplace. There is a reasonable range of out-of-school activities including sporting and musical opportunities, art club and gardening club, in which a number of pupils participate. They contribute to charitable causes such as 'Children in Need' and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. Good links have been established with a local home for the elderly where pupils deliver harvest baskets and entertain with carols at Christmas. Close links have also been established with a local special school and a number of their children work with Parkside pupils. These activities provide pupils with a positive sense of belonging to the school community and promote a good sense of citizenship.

47. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils learn to appreciate their own cultural traditions through work in many subjects which is a marked improvement on the situation at the last inspection. They are introduced to a range of literature, they learn about their own locality in geography and make comparisons with town and country. In history pupils study changes over time, for example, finding out about aspects of life in the Victorian times or studying Tudor life and making comparisons with present times.

48. Very good opportunities exist for pupils to learn about the work of famous artists and musicians. The very good comparison work by Year 6 on African music and dance was an example of the way in which pupils develop knowledge, understanding and appreciation of the diverse culture and social customs of other people. There is very good evidence of work in history, geography, dance, art and craft, religious education and music from other cultures.

49. Visits are made to places of interest such as Ironbridge and the Galton Valley and a local Tudor house, which all serve to enhance the curriculum provided. Visitors to the school, such as the leader from the local Mosque, also contribute to the pupils' rich cultural awareness, and help to deepen their understanding.

49. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

50. The school makes sound provision for the health and safety and welfare of pupils. Staff know pupils well and are responsive to needs. Parents are supportive of the approach taken and feel confident that their children are looked after well at school.

51. The quality of relationships at all levels is very good and underpins much of the effective learning taking place. Pupils' personal development is monitored informally and is largely based on class teachers' knowledge of each individual. There is no profile, maintained as an on-going record, for pupils' educational development. Assessment practice needs tightening up to ensure that educational guidance has better impact.

52. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are unsatisfactory. The arrangements for the start of the day are too lax and cause pupils to drift in rather than get a smart start to learning. Systems for monitoring attendance are in place, but need to identify what impact lost time has on attainment and progress if they are to be fully effective in raising standards.

53. There are appropriate arrangements made for child protection matters and good involvement of specialist support services. The nurse and educational welfare officer provide effective help in pastoral matters. Behaviour is managed successfully and those with emotional and behavioural needs are attended to well. A member of staff has recently been given responsibility to co-ordinate the provision for personal, social and health education which is currently fragmented and lacks impact as a result. The time allocation for personal, social and health education lessons is insufficient in the current timetable. Too little attention is paid to health-related fitness aspects and nutrition. Sex and drugs education are given adequate attention in Year 6.

54. The provision made for pupils with special needs and those who learn English as an additional language is satisfactory. Pupils are given appropriate support to work towards the targets set for them. In lessons teachers are aware of the additional support required and plan accordingly. Setting arrangements in English and mathematics help match the curriculum to pupils' needs.

54. Partnership with parents and the community

55. The school communicates well with parents who say they feel welcomed and able to approach the school freely if they have concerns. Newsletters are informative contain diary dates, news and views and celebrate well the school's successes. The written pupils' report usefully tells parents how well their child is doing at school. Some parents do not like the open nature of consultation evenings and feel that too little time is devoted to sharing information about progress and targets for improvement. A number of parents are not clear about the policy on homework. In some classes, but not all, home-school diaries are used to support reading.

56. Parents are informed in the school prospectus about the school's special needs policy and are made aware of their child's placement on the special needs register. Existing arrangements to hold reviews for the many pupils placed at Stage 2 on the register are inadequate and, although notified in advance, few parents attend the meeting. Home-school reading diaries provide encouragement for parents to hear their children read at home, but there is inconsistency in this provision throughout the school.

57. Parents like being invited into assembly and encouraged to help in school if they can. Very few do get involved however, and the level of support given by parents is below that usually found. The school is aware of the need to improve parental and community links and has allocated special responsibilities to two members of staff to have time to develop this aspect quickly. Governors are keen to make the school more available as a resource to the community and to strengthen ties with the nearby family centre.

58.A visits programme is well conceived to provide pupils with additional experiences. These include visits to Galton Valley to support geography, Black Country Museum for history work, Birmingham Science Museum and theatres. Visitors have included dance, drama and music performers, local clergy and charity workers, health specialists and schools liaison staff. The credit system in use to promote good effort, work and behaviour results in class rewards and these have included visits to the *Whacky Warehouse*. All of these make an important contribution to the quality of education being provided.

58. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

58. Leadership and management

59.At the time of the previous inspection, some three and a half years ago, key weaknesses were identified in aspects of monitoring of standards and budgetary decisions, teaching and education quality, subject schemes and policies, poor punctuality and in the maintenance of the provision for special needs. School monitoring records, including the action plan, reveal a positive response to tackling necessary improvements during 1996, but due to significant key staff changes, progress slowed down considerably thereafter. Since the appointment of a new headteacher two terms ago, there has been fresh impetus to review the school's strengths and weaknesses and to establish a shared responsibility to drive standards forward.

60.There is very clear educational direction to the work of the school. The headteacher is providing very effective, strong leadership. He is currently supported well by an acting deputy, in the school for one term until the new appointment takes up his place in January. In partnership, the headteacher and deputy have introduced a number of new initiatives and set out clearly their expectations for corporate working. An extended senior management team has been established to include year co-ordinators, who in normal circumstances would be at the middle management level of the school. This team has a clear role and remit to lead on curricular development and through targeted monitoring and evaluation to improve the quality of what is being taught and learned.

61.Already, in a very short space of time, key policies and schemes have been reviewed and revised where necessary. Many new staff have been welcomed and given good support to enable them to become effective very quickly. Job descriptions have been revised and roles of special responsibility have been allocated and responded to well by staff. Class teachers are now keen to exchange and share good practice. A team ethos prevails and there is a united determination to make improvements at a brisk pace.

62.A set of aims is in place but are due to be revised to reflect more closely the school's mission for the next four years. The focus for much of the comprehensive development planning is to raise standards in literacy and numeracy within a caring and happy environment that promotes the opportunity for all pupils to develop their talents to the full. A good start has been made in analysing the profile of pupils' achievements so that attention may be given to meeting needs and setting work at an appropriate level of challenge to ensure all make progress at a good pace.

63.The school is aware that assessment practices require development to better aid planning. Of key concern remains the high level of absence of many pupils, some 10% of the whole school. Although attention has been given to encouraging better attendance and punctuality through a reward system, too many pupils take holidays in term-time and there is more to be done to raise this with parents and the community. The arrangements at the start of the school day and use of time throughout the day requires better definition to aid efficiency and better promote the purposeful work-ethic required.

64.The literacy strategy has been introduced with confidence and is already having a positive impact on pupils' acquisition of skills, some staff training is still awaited, as are more big book resources. Numeracy is being given satisfactory attention through the policy and practice of the

teaching of mathematics throughout the school. Targets for literacy and numeracy between now and 2002 have yet to be formally set.

65. The management of special needs is sound overall and the arrangements meet the code of practice. The headteacher and governing body have adopted appropriate policy and have a supportive approach to special needs. The school has a named governor for special needs who is kept informed of the special needs provision in the school and feeds back regularly to the governing body. The governor's annual report to parents includes the statutory requirement regarding information about the implementation of special needs within the school. Setting arrangements in English and mathematics work well. Targets set out in pupils' individual education plans are rather vague and need to be better focused on the next steps required to aid progress in learning.

66. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also satisfactory. Senior managers have recognised that management of the *Enhanced Learning Project* requires closer monitoring and more targeted evaluation so that staff are used effectively to bring maximum benefit for the pupils. It has started this process and has some positive ideas for changes to provision.

67. Governors are supportive and well informed. They have established appropriate committees to help organise their work and make decision-making more effective. Their annual report to parents is of high quality and includes all the required information. Legal requirements are being met in full.

68. The level of confidence in the school is very high. The ethos promoted ensures that everyone works hard in a pleasant and friendly atmosphere. Parents are supportive and most hold positive views about how the school provides for their children. When taking into account all of the above, it is apparent that the school is well placed to continue to raise standards at the pace required and has the capacity to sustain continuous improvements through self-critical review.

68. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

69. There is a good number of teaching and support staff. Teachers are well qualified for the work and have well balanced experience. Some teachers do not have a class of their own, but give additional support for pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs. They are well experienced and qualified for this work. The support staff, most of whom work with pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language, are well qualified and experienced and work in good partnership with the teachers.

70. There has been a big change-over in teaching staff in the last year or so, with almost half the teachers having joined the school since September 1996. These teachers are well inducted into school and there are particularly effective procedures for assisting newly qualified teachers to settle. Staff development is well organised and has focused on English and numeracy to meet the demands of rapidly changing curricula in these subjects, and on information technology to help teachers make the best use of the new computer suite. The quality of teaching has improved much since the last inspection and the staff development programme has made a significant contribution to this trend.

71. Some parents are not happy that their children have several teachers in a short space of time. This is due largely to prolonged staff absence and it clearly has an unsettling effect on the classes most affected. Inspectors observed several lessons taken by short-term temporary teachers which were not of the same high teaching quality as those taught by the regular staff. Management is working hard to stabilise teacher supply and some settling-down in the situation is apparent.

72. There is generous provision of staffing to support pupils with special educational needs,

though there is little support for pupils in the average attaining sets for English. This makes it harder to meet the specific requirements of such pupils and to ensure that the targets set for future years are met.

73.The school has plenty of space inside for both the numbers of pupils and all the subjects and activities undertaken. There is a new computer suite and specialist music room, both of which play a large role in gaining high standards in these subjects. The hall serves for assemblies and physical education lessons and is big enough for the demands placed upon it. The school is kept in spotless condition, it is free of litter, graffiti, vandalism and hazard. The caretaker and cleaning staff do a sterling job of maintaining the school in good order.

74.The school has very good resources to support the work of special needs pupils in the Literacy Hour, including computer software. Resources to support other areas of special need are limited, for example, pupils who have problems with pen control are provided with the same programme of work to improve their handwriting as the rest of the class.

75.The grounds are large enough for the numbers of pupils who play there but there are some shortcomings of design which the school knows only-too-well. Management has ambitious plans to turn the outside environment into an area which can be used for more than just playtimes.

76.There are enough resources for every subject to ensure pupils have the necessary opportunities to investigate, experiment, make objects and study. Resources are excellent in both quantity and quality for information technology and very good for music. The school has two libraries, but these are not yet used sufficiently to encourage good standards of personal research.

76. The efficiency of the school

77.The overall quality of financial planning is good. Financial controls are very good and the minor recommendations from the recent Local Education Authority's audit have been implemented. Good standing orders for financial controls are established. The school administration staff are very efficient. The school runs smoothly and administration is very good overall but arrangements for the start of the school day are not managed consistently by all teachers. This is a weakness that some parents commented upon at the parents' meeting and their comments are justified by the inspection findings. The time between the official opening of the school and the start of lessons is not used efficiently by all teachers.

78.The school systematically plans its expenditure following established review and consultation procedures. The headteacher and governors link spending decisions closely to budget planning in an effort to ensure efficient deployment of staff, in-service training to support curriculum targets, availability of resources and the development and maintenance of the accommodation. One of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report related to the monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of budgetary decisions. This has been addressed by establishing clear action plans in the school development plan and regular reviews of progress towards targets. Additionally, more information is provided about standards of attainment and progress through detailed analysis of test results. Regular reports are made to the main governing body by the headteacher and senior managers. Link governors have been appointed for special educational needs and literacy but not so far for other subjects.

79.Funding for pupils with special educational needs is generally used appropriately, as are those for pupils with English as an additional language. Teaching staff for pupils with special needs or English as an additional language are not always as well deployed as they might be. The Enhanced Learning Project staff are a case in point. They provide effective support but this could be better focused to bring even greater progress in learning. The classroom assistants are well trained and deployed effectively to support pupils with special educational needs or with first languages other than English.

80.All staff in the school are committed to the well-being of pupils and work hard to support their academic and personal development. The school accommodation is spacious and used effectively. Teachers work hard to provide attractive and interesting displays in classrooms, corridors and other open spaces and secure an attractive learning environment.

81.The school has many strengths and has taken positive steps to improve both attainment and progress. The quality of education is good. Teaching is mainly good with a significant proportion of very good teaching. Pupils attitudes to their work is positive and their behaviour in school is good. Expenditure per pupil is relatively high compared to national levels but in the light of its context and the foregoing other factors the school is judged to give good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

81. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

81. English

82. In the 1998 National Curriculum assessments the standards achieved in English were well below the national average for all schools, and were also well below those in similar schools. Inspectors also judge that standards in English are below average at the end of the key stage. Analysis of the 1997 test results showed that girls were performing significantly better than boys and the trend appears to be continuing this year. There is little evidence to support this in the lessons observed and in talking with the pupils.

83. Since the last inspection, standards in English have fallen. Changes in staffing, particularly at senior management level, fluctuations in the school role, prolonged absences of some of the pupils and the low levels of attainment of many pupils on entry to school have all contributed to lower attainment. Observations during the inspection suggest, as a result of measures to resolve some of these problems, rapid improvement is now taking place. Firm action has been taken, in a determined effort to raise standards.

84. In speaking and listening, standards of attainment are satisfactory. Younger pupils are able to discuss matters of interest to them, and will listen to others for short periods of time. By Year 6, pupils express themselves clearly and confidently, including the many pupils who have English as an additional language. They make thoughtful contributions in class and express their own opinions, and are capable of sustained concentration. They enjoy stories and listen with interest to the contributions made by other class members, as well as teachers. Pupils are provided with many opportunities in school to develop their speech and language, and those who experience difficulty are provided with additional support by a teacher from the Language Enrichment Team.

85. Many pupils enter school with low levels of attainment in reading. They are unable to read simple texts with understanding and have developed few reading strategies. In Year 6, most pupils are able to read a range of texts with fluency and accuracy. They are able to read independently and with understanding and some read with expression.

86. In general, pupils have difficulties with English because of the high proportion who speak another language at home. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs is also a significant factor in the level of attainment. Whilst pupils are developing their mechanical skills with speaking, listening, reading and writing, the additional difficulties they have in understanding the work and teachers' instructions limits the rate of progress made. Nonetheless, pupils do make slow and steady progress and the school promotes pupils' learning successfully in English.

87. Early indications following the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy into school, and the present provision for reading, suggest that there is an improvement in standards in English. The school has established a daily Literacy Hour and pupils are provided with many opportunities to develop technical skills, fluency and understanding. In order to raise standards further, the school provides daily opportunities for independent, silent reading. All pupils are heard to read regularly, and books are changed frequently. Pupils are encouraged to take books home, but there is some inconsistency in the provision of a home school reading diary, and the level of support provided by parents is not encouraged or recorded. There is a wide range of reading books, and reading records are well kept. The school has two libraries with a very good selection of fiction and non-fiction books, which represent the cultural diversity within the school. There is a wide selection of books to interest boys in an effort to enhance their levels of reading attainment. The implementation of the new library policy should go some way to extending the limited research skills of some pupils, and encourage greater use of the library.

88. The low standards in writing are also showing gradual improvement following the start of the

Literacy Hour. The school also provides pupils with additional time for the development of writing skills. Some pupils in Year 6 have reached a high standard, which is reflected in their work in other subjects. They produce well-sequenced and organised work, reflecting careful thought and ideas with accurate spelling and punctuation. Handwriting and presentation of work is variable. Pupils learn to join handwriting at an early stage, though some pupils with difficulties need further input in order to improve.

89. Pupils' responses in lessons are good. They respond to discussions with enthusiasm, and are very keen to answer questions and make verbal contributions. Their response to reading is just as enthusiastic. They have access to a very good selection of fiction and non-fiction books, and are eager to read, either independently, in groups or to the teacher. All pupils spoken to said they take books home regularly and read to parents. Some are members of their local library. Attitudes to writing vary. Limited skills in this area mean ability to express themselves in the written form is difficult, and some pupils who are left to work independently make limited progress.

90. In the lessons observed, teaching varied from unsatisfactory to very good, but is satisfactory overall. Despite limited training opportunities, teachers are making every effort to bring about the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. In the best lessons, teachers are interpreting the framework imaginatively, and reflecting this in their planning. Other teachers are less confident and are using existing resources within the structure of the hour until they receive further training to increase expertise and confidence. The decision to offer extra teaching support to the Literacy Hour has enabled school to set pupils into attainment groups and reduce class sizes considerably. This has been of particular benefit to pupils with special needs, and allows teachers to be more effective. Teachers generally have high expectations and they make good use of time and resources, though at present there is too much dependence on existing resources. Many new resources will soon be available as the next, very well planned phase of the school's Literacy Action Plan, is implemented.

91. The school is also examining its existing assessment procedures and how these may be extended and refined to provide more detailed information to ensure subsequent planning is well detailed. This is particularly important for those pupils with special educational needs. The continued direct monitoring of the National Literacy Strategy is also essential to ensure maximum impact in school for all pupils.

91. **Mathematics**

92. The results of national tests over the past two years, and inspection evidence indicate that the pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is well below the national average. It is also well below the average found in similar schools. Pupils make sound progress during the key stage. However, when pupils are absent for frequent or lengthy periods of time their progress is interrupted because they miss vital stages in the work being covered. Although the teachers try to ensure that pupils who have been absent are given adequate help on their return, it is inevitable that these pupils find it difficult to make the same progress as those who have attended regularly.

93. The pupils' standards in numeracy are below average. When doing simple calculations, pupils rely heavily on counting aids such as cubes, counters, fingers and written calculations to help them arrive at answers that they could calculate mentally. The school is taking steps to improve numeracy skills in the following ways.

94. The organisation of pupils into sets according to their levels of attainment is helping to ensure that they receive work at a level that is appropriate for them. Lessons are planned to begin with speed tests of mental calculation and the pupils are expected to learn number facts such as multiplication tables and number bonds. In the most effective examples of this planning the teacher ensures that the pupils are given appropriate time limits for their calculations and there is no wastage of time. Classrooms are displayed with attractive charts and pictures giving the pupils reference to mathematical facts that are important in the development of numeracy skills. These include multiplication tables, units of measure, graphs and number lines. The use of numeracy skills in other areas of the curriculum is also given importance so that the pupils can see a positive use for their skills as well as finding pleasure in numbers for their own sake. For example, in a science experiment about evaporation pupils are required to record measurements using mathematical symbols, to calculate their findings and display them in the form of graphs. In many lessons, the pupils are taught calculation methods that help them to work quickly and accurately.

95. Year 3 pupils can count in twos and fives up to a hundred. They are able to explain their calculations and can use mathematical language to describe their reasoning. They can use mathematical vocabulary such as add, subtract, increase and more than when discussing their calculations. They are able to multiply together two single-digit numbers with the help of counting aids such as cubes or discs. They understand the symbols for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and can use them when recording their work.

96. In Year 4 the pupils can use terms relating to time such as months, weeks, duration and they are able to ask questions which relate to the calendar. They can make rough estimates when they are calculating but these are not usually very accurate. When using a number line, the pupils can add or subtract single-digit numbers to or from two-digit numbers.

97. During Year 5 the pupils increase their skills in calculation. They use appropriate written methods to multiply three-digit numbers by single-digit numbers and can recognise and read numbers up to thousands. They can recall some multiplication facts quickly but their overall knowledge of these facts is not secure. When they are solving problems, the pupils are beginning to use mental strategies of calculation to help them.

98. Towards the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils can recognise odd and even numbers. They understand that patterns emerge in a range of numbers for example, numbers that end in zero or five can be divided exactly by five. Some pupils are beginning to use instant recall of multiplication facts to help them in their calculations. The highest attaining pupils in Year 6 are very adept at mental calculation and have good recall of many number facts and units of measurement. These highest attaining pupils can also multiply whole numbers and decimal fractions by ten and they can use this skill to help them to successfully multiply three-digit numbers by two-digit numbers. They can explain how their mental calculations are performed and give reasons why they choose particular routes.

99. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is sound. These pupils make satisfactory progress overall. The organisation of pupils into sets based on their mathematical attainment helps to ensure that those pupils who have special educational needs are taught at a level that is appropriate for their needs.

100. The pupils usually behave well in lessons and they are improving their confidence in relation to mathematical activities. They are often excited by the work. They can sustain concentration and are able to work well on their own or in partnership with other pupils. During discussions about their work the pupils are proud of what they have done and enjoy explaining their results. When teachers are giving instructions for a lesson, giving advice or holding discussions about a piece of work the pupils listen attentively. The pupils' attitudes are generally positive.

101. The quality of teaching is good overall. In one of the lessons observed, teaching was very good and in another it was excellent. The teacher ensured that there was a brisk pace throughout

the lesson, she challenged the pupils so that they all made good progress and she used the pupils' recent learning to help them to make further gains in knowledge and skills.

102. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Their planning is good and they organise and manage pupils efficiently in relation to their abilities and needs. The procedure for placing pupils in sets helps the teachers to cater for the different attainment levels of the pupils. However, some wastage of time is evident when pupils move to their sets.

103. A new co-ordinator has been appointed to lead developments in the subject. The headteacher has taken temporary responsibility and is currently ensuring that there is good leadership and that strategies for the introduction of the National Numeracy Project are in place. He has analysed the results of the national tests and set priorities for the development of the subject aimed at improvements in the pupils' levels of attainment.

103. **Science**

104. The 1997 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds show that the proportion of pupils attaining at expected levels was well below the national average and below average in comparison with schools with similar backgrounds. Results for 1998 indicate similar levels of attainment. The inspection finds that most pupils in Year 6 are on target to attain below average standards by the time they leave the school. There is good reason to believe that standards will improve further because of the improved quality of teaching since the last inspection. The previous inspection judged standards to be sound.

105. By the time pupils leave the school they have made satisfactory progress in most aspects of the subject. The majority have accumulated a good body of knowledge and understand many basic concepts relating to life and living processes, materials and some of the changes that take place during mixing and/or heating and cooling. They know about electricity, and other physical processes such as sound, light, magnetism and gravity. During the inspection pupils in Year 6 were acquiring good understanding of the Earth and its place in relation to the sun, moon and planets of the Solar System. Attainment in Year 5 is also improving and scrutiny of pupils' completed work showed good progress in a range of work. Pupils are also using information technology in their work, for example, a design program "Splash" to enhance their understanding of light. In other years, data bases are used and variations in sound and light are monitored with computer operated sensors.

106. Pupils in all years are making satisfactory progress in carrying out their own scientific investigations. In certain respects pupils in Years 5 and 6 make good progress in developing control over experiments with good understanding of variables, knowing what to alter and what to keep the same. For example, in the Year 5 lessons on transmission of sound, pupils kept the same plastic cups but altered the material of the conductor, choosing string, wire or binding twine. A relative weakness in the experiments was caused by over-direction by teachers, who did not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to make their own suggestions about materials or how to plan the experiment. Teachers of Years 3 and 4 also tend to give too much support to pupils in carrying out investigations, thereby undermining their progress in investigative science. For example, many worksheets, provided by the teacher for the recording results on, were presented in the form of tables ready to be filled, which, although appropriate for a small number of pupils, did not challenge the majority to think about various ways of communicating findings. In contrast the recording and communication of results improves in the older classes. Whilst a significant number of pupils in Years 5 and 6 continue to have difficulty in accurately communicating the results of their enquiries, the quality of presentation by many pupils is very good. Their science books contain a variety of records, including graphs, tables and written reports.

107. The quality of teaching is good. In the lessons seen, over a third of the teaching was very good. No teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers are generally confident in teaching science and their knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum programme of study is good. Much

of the successful teaching is because teachers effectively relate their good knowledge to the needs and interests of pupils. Planning is good. Year group teachers plan the half-term's programme carefully but do not identify sufficiently focused assessment opportunities in their plans. Daily planning lists appropriate learning objectives, based on what pupils have learnt so far. Background materials and resources are thoroughly prepared. Appropriate methods characterise the good and very good lessons and teachers use a variety of well thought out activities to promote the most effective learning, including explanation, demonstration and group experiments. The quality of teachers' questioning is generally good and helps to put right misconceptions and relate the learning to pupils' experiences of everyday science. When investigating or experimenting pupils are challenged to observe closely. However, in Years 3 and 4 teachers do not sufficiently foster the important skills of predicting, planning and organising tasks to test predictions and to draw their own conclusions. In most lessons teachers work hard to interact with pupils, supporting them and helping them to make progress. In the very good lessons teachers supported attainment and progress with very effective ongoing assessment and challenge. In the less than good lessons pupils were not challenged so well. The majority of teachers use time well once lessons started but on a number of occasions the start was delayed because of disruption by latecomers to the room.

108. The subject is managed effectively by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who works hard to promote developments throughout the school. The policy and guidelines provide a useful framework for teachers to draw up termly plans for learning and teaching. The quality of half-term plans is good and this helps to ensure that pupils develop knowledge, understanding and skills progressively as they move through the school. This shows an improvement on the previous inspection finding that more detailed guidelines were required to assist teachers in their planning. The procedures that have been designed to assess and record pupils' progress are good. However, there is a significant weakness stemming from the fact that records are not completed by some teachers and so cannot be used effectively to plan the next stage of the programme. Pupils' work in science is valued by teachers and there are attractive and interesting displays in all class rooms. Teachers and pupils demonstrate enthusiasm for virtually all that takes place in the science curriculum. The majority of pupils throughout the school enjoy science, sustain interest and concentrate well. Behaviour is good and pupils are courteous to their teachers and respect each other's efforts. The quality of work achieved by groups working in collaboration is good and reflects good relationships. Although attainment is below average, the general ethos for the subject is otherwise good.

108. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

108. **Art**

109. The pupils make satisfactory progress through the key stage and they develop an understanding of the creative aspects of art as well as improving their skills and techniques.

110. Through their studies of famous artists such as Van Gogh, Rousseau and Cezanne the pupils develop a good understanding of different styles and artistic intentions. Their work is used to introduce the pupils to a wide range of painting techniques and as an inspiration for their own work. The pupils are encouraged to plan in sketchbooks and to consider their ideas thoroughly before commencing on a final effort. This is very effective in helping the pupils to develop an artistic view of their own work throughout its development.

111. Observational drawings are developed to encourage pupils to appreciate shape and form. They are able to use these skills to record from experience and from their imaginations. For example, pupils observe and draw sketches of buildings and then express their own ideas in different forms. To do this they experiment with various media such as charcoal, chalk and pastels in order to produce a desired effect.

112. The pupils are taught about colours and how they can be mixed to create patterns and

pictures that evoke feelings. Pupils produce paintings of seasonal scenes using colour-mixing techniques involving light and dark in order to transmit a mood.

113. All pupils show interest in their work and demonstrate good, positive attitudes in lessons. They are proud of their own efforts and those of their fellow pupils. When their work is displayed around the school, the pupils talk about it with great enthusiasm and they applaud the results and successes of other pupils with equal pride. They work hard during lessons and show a great deal of enthusiasm for painting, drawing and decorating and manipulating materials such as clay. Behaviour in lessons is good and the pupils persevere in order to produce their best work.

114. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are sound. They have high expectations of the pupils and give them encouragement to produce good work. Lessons are well planned and the pupils' work is assessed accurately during lessons to ensure that they make satisfactory progress.

115. The subject co-ordinator shows strong leadership. She monitors the work of the school and advises on good practice. Her enthusiasm for the subject is a positive influence in ensuring that high standards are maintained and that the pupils experience a worthwhile curriculum.

116. The pupils' work is used very effectively to create an artistic atmosphere in classrooms, corridors and other circulation areas. The work generates a bright, cheerful ambience and attracts the attention of pupils, staff and visitors in a very positive way.

116. **Design and technology**

117. Four lessons were observed during the inspection and evidence from these, together with examination of pupils' completed work, show that progress overall is satisfactory. There is weakness in some aspects of the provision in Years 3 and 4 which makes for slow progress. However, this is compensated for by good quality provision in Years 5 and 6, good progress and high standards, so that over time pupils in the school receive a broad, well balanced curriculum that fulfils National Curriculum requirements.

118. The weakness identified in Years 3 and 4 is in developing designing skills. In Year 3 for example, designs for a shadow puppet, relating to a science topic, were very roughly drawn and although some parts were labelled, the work did not constitute a design plan. No suggestions were given about how the making might proceed or what materials would be used. Skills are also weak in Year 4. Pupils in one lesson were designing food packages and, when drawing their designs, they did not apply mathematical skills of measuring accurately nor did they apply their knowledge of mathematical 3D shapes to make suggestions about the packages they were to make. On the other hand completed work on display in Years 5 and 6 indicate good progress in both designing and making. Very well constructed Tudor houses made from a variety of card and paper indicate that pupils have made good progress in measuring accurately, marking, cutting and combining materials. A display of puppets made by Year 6 pupils confirms that progress in designing and making skills towards the end of the key stage continues at a better than expected rate. The design plans in pupils' work books and discussions with pupils about the strengths and weaknesses in their finished products revealed good standards in modelling, selecting materials, tools, techniques and evaluation.

119. Teaching of design and technology is good and there were examples of very good teaching. Medium term planning for design technology is good. Design and making tasks meet the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The lessons seen reflected good knowledge and understanding of the subject and chosen activities were well organised and matched well the interests and prior attainment of pupils. As indicated above, in the less than good teaching, opportunities to apply knowledge and skills from mathematics were missed. Links to other subjects, such as science, geography and history, are well established. The work on electrical circuits seen in Year 3 developed good understanding of series and parallel circuits and

the practical use of electrical systems. The recently appointed co-ordinator for design and technology is enthusiastic and has good knowledge and understanding of design and technology requirements. A new policy has been drafted and now awaits ratification by governors. Comprehensive guidelines have been provided which removes the only weakness identified in the previous inspection. A wide range of appropriate equipment and materials are provided, and used efficiently.

120. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to design and technology. They listen carefully to instructions and to each other's suggestions. They sustain interest and, particularly in Years 5 and 6, persevere to create well finished products. In group activities they collaborate well, share resources sensibly and work safely.

120. **Geography**

121. Geography is taught in all classes and is delivered through a thematic approach with a high focus on developing geographical skills and knowledge and comparative studies of places. The previous inspection was critical of the limited use of resources, including maps and photographs. Since then, steps have been taken to address this although large scale world maps and globes are still not a feature in every classroom.

122. The standard of pupils' work is appropriate for their age. Pupils are making good progress in developing geographical skills and acquiring knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress given their previous attainment levels.

123. Throughout the school pupils extend their geographical vocabulary and build systematically upon their mapping skills so that by the end of their time in school pupils can locate specific countries and areas on large and small scale maps. Good use is made of the study of contrasting locations. In Year 3 pupils study their own locality in Smethwick and compare and contrast this with the coastal area of Coverack, being able to locate both on local maps and maps of Great Britain. In Year 5 pupils visit Galton Valley as part of their topic work, and in Year 6 they make a comparison of Lye in the Swot Valley compared with Lye in Smethwick. In Year 4 pupils study weather forecasts in Great Britain. They maintain weather diaries and are familiar with weather symbols, writing their own weather forecasts and demonstrating good links with literacy. They learn about the best methods of transporting food around the world and know that different produce requires different types of transport. They know the meaning of import and export and make good use of atlases and maps to locate different countries. The theme of weather is revisited in Year 6 when pupils extend their knowledge to world climates and weather patterns. Most can describe different world climates such as polar, desert, tropical and equatorial, using world maps and studying the key to climates. They can record their observations of different weather conditions and know that site conditions influence weather. In a study of a micro-climate pupils record temperature, rainfall and wind conditions over time. They compare and contrast the climate and seasonal changes in this country with Pakistan.

124. Pupils enjoy geography and respond well in lessons. They share resources and work well together, persevering with challenging tasks. They are eager to answer questions and demonstrate their level of learning.

125.The quality of teaching is good. The very good teaching in a Year 6 class on world climate resulted in very good progress. The teacher's own knowledge of the subject was good. Challenging tasks and effective use of questioning motivated pupils well and led to further investigations. High expectations together with the brisk lesson pace meant pupils covered a good amount of work in the time set. Displays of work were of a good standard and extended pupils' understanding.

125. **History**

126.Due to timetabling arrangements it was only possible to observe a small number of lessons in history. However, scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and displays together with discussions with teachers and pupils allow judgements to be made.

127.Standards in history are appropriate for the pupils' age. The programme for history is broad and interesting. Pupils are making good progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.

128.Since the last inspection artefacts have been developed and resources improved. Good progress has been maintained.

129.Pupils are learning about major historical civilisations and periods including Ancient Greece, Roman Britain, Viking life and Tudor times. They knew about some of the important people of these periods and throughout the school pupils are developing a good understanding of chronology. Pupils can discuss famous historical characters of the time, such as Bouddicca in the Roman study, and Henry VIII in Tudor times, and can refer to secondary sources for information. Many can give simple explanations for the causes of some of the main events.

130.Pupils enjoy history and most concentrate well in lessons. They enjoy discussions and demonstrate the ability to use information books independently as part of their research. They work well in groups when required to do so.

131.Teaching is satisfactory. On occasions it is good. In a good Year 5 lesson on Tudor theatre, pupils made comparisons between Tudor and present day theatre. Good subject knowledge and well prepared resources enabled the teacher to provide a good insight into both, as pupils have not experienced live theatre for themselves. A lively teaching style, brisk lesson pace and positive support helped pupils to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding and to extend their range of language linked to theatre. Pupils developed research skills in order to locate and extract relevant information. Skilful questioning, high expectations and good management were all evident in this successful lesson.

132.Information technology is used well to help develop a range of historical skills. The wartime posters prepared in Year 6 in a study of Britain since the 1930s' were good examples of how information technology is used to enhance historical studies and present information in different ways.

133.The school makes good use of historical visits to enhance pupils' progress and enrich learning. These visits include a visit to Oak house, a Tudor period House, and to Galton Valley, looking for evidence of the past changes over time.

133. **Information technology**

134.Standards in information technology are good and pupils make good progress. The school has invested much money in its new computer suite and it is evident that this is well used to give all pupils a broad education in the use of computers and associated technology. Because of the depth of the work, the very good level of resourcing and the good quality of teaching, pupils are able to achieve at levels above those found in most schools. This marks an improvement on the

judgement of the last inspection which recorded that standards were average.

135. Pupils have good computer skills in Year 3 and know how to use graphics packages to draw lines, shade rectangles and produce pictures. They write simple music scores using unusual symbols for the notes and collect and sort data using a data base program. Year 4 pupils write music using more usual symbols, play it back and then edit the score on screen. In one lesson the pupils were developing their melodies to include complicated percussion parts, changing the tempo and trying the effect of different instruments such as a church organ, violin or flute. In this work they were achieving at least one level higher than is expected for pupils of this age.

136. The good progress continues as pupils grow older. In Year 5 the pupils were seen manipulating a complex data base. They understood the terms field and record and were able to search the information for specific facts about Tudor people and events and to relate one field to another when doing this to produce a simple logical search. Year 6 pupils print the data they have sorted in different graph forms and they can suggest complex questions as the basis for their data base searches. The oldest pupils can also use the computer to control simple machines and simulations and have designed air planes by programming the computer with its dimensions and angles.

137. Information technology is used very well to support the work in other subjects. Much work is available to show how computers are used to improve pupils' attainment in art, English, geography, history, mathematics, music and science. Computer use is already having positive impact on the work in literacy and numeracy.

138. The pupils are keen users of technology and are well behaved in lessons. They work well in pairs, sharing the tasks between them and give good support to their partners. Information technology lessons are productive working sessions and there is a pleasant atmosphere in the computer suite as they work. The pupils are proud of their work and they enjoy showing it to visitors and explaining what they have done or want to alter.

139. Teaching of information technology is good. The teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. They have worked hard to keep up with the rapid changes in hardware and software and teach the subject with confidence and enjoyment. Lessons are well planned to consolidate and extend knowledge and skills and to provide a good degree of challenge to the work. Class management and organisation are both good and time is well used. There is a sense of determination in computer based lessons which teachers harness well. Teaching of information technology is a strength of the school.

140. The curriculum is very good because it includes every strand of information technology listed in the National Curriculum in well-judged balance. All pupils have every opportunity to use the computer suite, as well as computers in other parts of the school, and there is regular and continuous development of pupils' skills and knowledge. Assessment of the subject is in course of development. There is not yet, however, a consistently used set of assessment tools which chart the growth of knowledge and skill as pupils pass through the school. Because of this, there is only a limited amount of information available about standards which can be used to set targets for attainment and to plan the next step of the work.

141. Management of information technology is very good. The co-ordinator has ensured that the new computer suite is quickly up-and-running, she has arranged attractive displays of good quality pupils' work to set standards and show the power of the subject, and is available to give good assistance to other members of staff as they need it. The monitoring of the subject is imperfect because the co-ordinator has little opportunity to take part in the direct monitoring of standards, teaching and the curriculum.

142. At the time of the last inspection standards in information technology were average, teaching was satisfactory and there were a number of improvements required in order to improve learning

outcomes. Today, there are good standards and quality teaching and most weaknesses have been eliminated, or are well on the way to completion. There are now many strengths in information technology and the school is in a good position to build on these as it develops and improves other subjects.

142. **Music**

143. Pupils achieve good standards in music and they make good progress with their work. Pupils in Year 3 can write straightforward accompaniments to stories in which they experiment with the sounds made by a good variety of percussion instruments. They write the notes as simple symbols and are beginning to represent images of running, walking and talking convincingly in musical form. In Year 4 the pupils go on to gain good knowledge of more conventional written scores, they make accurate distinctions between minims and crochets when playing the music and they are beginning to experiment with pitch, dynamics and tempo.

144. In Year 5 the pupils begin to analyse music scores for structure. They quickly spot the sequence of tunes in the theme from "ET" and some are able to identify this as binary form and say how this differs from pieces in ternary structure. These pupils sing in parts with some skill, they hold the line and are not deflected by the other groups as they sing. Year 6 pupils are gaining a good general knowledge of music. They talk confidently and accurately of the pentatonic scale and play examples with skill. They cannot always identify the highest note, say, in this five point scale though they do compose short passages in this form to reflect the theme they are considering.

145. The level of attainment in music is strongly influenced by the availability and use of computers to support and extend the work. Pupils have regular opportunities to compose, play and edit music using different music packages and are developing good skills of sight reading and their music vocabulary is deepening. This is a strength of the school.

146. Standards of singing are average overall and are best in Years 3 and 4. Older pupils do not show quite the same enthusiasm for singing as their younger colleagues and some singing lacks tune. There are many opportunities in hymn practices and assemblies to learn to sing and most pupils join in with pleasure. In other respects, pupils' response to music are good. They are well behaved, listen very carefully and concentrate well. Relationships are good and this enables them to work well as duets or trios, in quartets or larger ensembles

147. The teaching of music is good all round. Teachers are enthusiastic and confident, even if not every one claims special music knowledge or insight. Music lessons are well planned, motivating, well organised and go at a brisk tempo. The level of expectation is high and this has a strong impact on standards.

148. The curriculum for music is good, with appropriate emphasis on the four elements of composing, performing, appreciating and listening to music. There is a sound programme of extra curricular music activities and pupils give concerts for parents and other people. The co-ordinator has not yet been long in school, though she has good involvement in planning and teaching the subject and is building good knowledge of provision. There is little direct monitoring of the subject and this reduces the quality of information available to make informed decisions about subject development.

149. Music received a good report at the last inspection and continues to stand up well against other subjects.

149. **Physical education**

150. Pupils achieve average standards in the range of physical education activities open to them. This is an improvement on the standards found at the time of the last inspection when many

pupils missed their lessons and the lack of resources hampered progress. Whilst there are still shortages of large apparatus in the hall, teachers have worked hard to provide the necessary range of physical education activities and most pupils now join in at all times. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in physical education lessons.

151. Pupils learn to move around the gym with care, safety and assurance. They develop better control of movement as they grow older, use space more efficiently and hold balances with some poise. They spend much energy in developing the ball handling skills necessary for the different team games they play and they understand the idea of supporting their team mates. Sound standards are achieved in games and sports activities and some good work was seen in dance. A strength of physical education is found in the level of analysis which pupils bring to their discussion of work. They are used to searching for ways to improve what they do, and are developing the skill of putting their ideas into words satisfactorily.

152. The quality of extra curricular activities in physical education and sport is good and these sessions are well attended. School teams have been very successful in inter-school competitions, often remaining unbeaten for long spells. The programme of extra curricular sports has a positive impact on standards because of the take up rate and quality of instruction at these activities.

153. Behaviour is good, and often very good, in physical education lessons. The pupils enjoy good relationships with other pupils, they concentrate well and respond quickly and sensibly to the teacher. Overall, their energies are well channelled into productive work.

154. Teaching is good in physical education. All teachers teach the subject with confidence and good subject knowledge and they plan lessons of well balanced content and teach skills with success. Control and discipline are good and teachers use the available time to best effect, with brisk introductions and explanations. Expectation of pupils' attainment and conduct is good. Planning could have more focus on exactly what is to be taught and learned in the lesson.

155. The co-ordinator for physical education was absent during the inspection but it is evident that the subject is well managed and that teachers are given good support. There is little direct monitoring of the subject and assessment procedures require overhaul if they are to be consistent between teachers and provide the necessary information to help improve standards.

155. **Religious education**

156. At the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected in the local education authority's agreed syllabus and is what might be expected by the age of eleven. Pupils know that Christianity is the main religion of this country and continue to build their knowledge and understanding of other world faiths. They demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of beliefs, moral values and lifestyles to believers and can relate Bible stories and other stories to their own experiences and lives. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils recognise that man has a responsibility to look after the world and prevent it from being spoiled, for example by pollution, litter and radiation. They consider their roles and responsibilities in society as citizens. They know that the Bible is a holy book for Christians and consists of the Old and New Testaments. They develop their understanding of proverbs and relate them these to everyday life. Pupils learn about the importance of rules, such as the Ten Commandments and the five pillars of Islam and relate these to class and school rules, writing their own rules by which to live. They study sacred writings of Christianity and other faiths, such as the Book of Kells and consider which books are special to them and why. They discuss 'honesty' and 'being afraid' and learn about the work of the Gideons and the Salvation army in helping and comforting less fortunate or lonely people.

157. Pupils make good progress in developing knowledge and understanding of Christianity and of other faiths, and in their explanation of issues in the wider world. In a good lesson in Year 3 pupils explored moral issues such as 'finding a purse,' 'vandalism,' and 'being a friend' and

showed a good understanding of right and wrong. Through their role play they made decisions about problems which affect “our beautiful world”, demonstrating care and concern for their environment and for other people. Pupils with special educational needs are given sound support to help them make satisfactory progress towards their individual targets.

158. Pupils behave well in lessons and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. They participate well in discussions in spite of a limited vocabulary in many cases. They take time to speak and value and respect the contributions other people make. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong and are able to relate issues to their own daily lives.

159. The good quality teaching promotes spiritual development well through sensitive use of questioning and good provision for reflection on what is learned. Well planned, carefully matched tasks interest and motivate pupils strongly. Clear learning objectives provide a good focus to lessons. Progress is good because teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject and ensure lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and make a good progress and pupils strive to please them.

160. Since the last inspection the many staff changes have included a new co-ordinator who is also newly qualified. She is enthusiastic, but is still learning the role of subject co-ordinator. Teachers continue to work closely together to provide a common programme which follows closely the syllabus for religious education agreed by Sandwell. As yet there are no strategies in place for the formal assessment of pupils' work or for maintaining of standards and progress. There are good links with other subjects such as art, music and literature. The high standards of display enhances pupils' learning. Assemblies and acts of worship make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development, many providing good opportunities for quiet reflection through prayer, thoughts and music.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

160. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

161. Time spent observing classes, sampling pupils' work and talking to pupils:

161. Key Stage	Key Stage 2	Total
Hours	83' 05"	83' 05"

162. Hours spent:

-observing lessons: 65 hours 25 minutes
-sampling work: 13 hours 10 minutes
-listening to pupils read: 4 hours 30 minutes

- The team observed 98 lessons or part lessons, 9 assembly and 18 registration sessions.
- All classes, subjects and teachers were observed and the work of support staff was evaluated.
- Discussions were held with most members of staff and visiting specialists and representatives of the governing body.
- A comprehensive sample of pupils' work from all age and ability ranges was analysed.
- Time was spent reviewing photographic, cassette and video evidence and work on display.
- There was a complete and thorough analysis of pupil records and reports and the statements, individual education plans and reviews of pupils with special educational needs.
- Inspectors talked to pupils about their work and life in school. This took place in class, with groups and individuals and at lunch times and break, in the playground and around the school.
- The documentation supplied by the school before and during the inspection was carefully studied.
- Registers and registration periods were examined.
- 8 parents attended the pre inspection parents' meeting and the results of 39 parental questionnaires were analysed.

1. DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y3 – Y6	384	3	124	184

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y3- Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	20.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6

Education support staff (Y3- Y6)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	81
Average class size:	27.4

163. Financial data

Financial year:	1997/1998
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	£
Total Income	654 200
Total Expenditure	637 929
Expenditure per pupil	1 599
Balance brought forward from previous year	75 388
Balance carried forward to next year	91 659

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	384
Number of questionnaires returned:	39

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	31	54	8	5	3
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	33	54	8	3	3
The school handles complaints from parents well	18	62	10	10	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	23	59	10	8	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	31	64	5	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	39	58	3	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	41	41	15	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	31	38	15	15	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	29	45	16	8	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	32	46	16	5	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	53	34	5	5	3

Other issues raised by parents

Only three parents wrote comments on the reverse of the questionnaire. Two of these were generally complimentary about the school, whilst the third was critical. The consistency and amount of homework was queried by two of these parents. Several parents at the meeting expressed concern about the number of new teachers who had taught their children in just a short time.