

# INSPECTION REPORT

**St Vincent's Roman Catholic Primary School**  
Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique Reference Number: 103417

Headteacher: Mrs P Bengier

Reporting inspector: Susan Diver  
23150

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706677

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Nursery, Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Vauxhall Grove
	Birmingham
	B7 4HP
Telephone number:	0121 3592359
Fax number:	0121 3336912
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Father John Carlyle
Date of previous inspection:	October 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Susan Diver, Rgl	Children under five Art Music	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Len Shipman, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
Julie Moore, Team Inspector	Special educational needs English Geography	Curriculum and assessment
Angela Fraser, Team Inspector	Equal opportunities Science Design and technology Information technology	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Fiona Robinson, Team Inspector	Mathematics History Physical education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Efficiency

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd  
5 Lakeside  
Werrington  
Peterborough  
PE4 6QZ  
Telephone: 01733 570753

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33 Kingsway  
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## Main findings

### What the school does well

- Standards are high in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2 and the pupils make very good progress.
- Children make an excellent start to their education in the nursery and reception classes.
- The ethos of the school is outstanding. Relationships and personal development are excellent and enable every pupil to achieve success.
- The quality of teaching is a strength of the school.
- The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent, as is the support and guidance it provides for the well-being of its pupils.
- The school is very successful in involving the community in its daily life.
- The school benefits from excellent leadership.

### Where the school has weaknesses

Minor point for improvement:

- Pupils have limited skills in handling data when they use the computer.

**The school has many strengths and a minor point for improvement. The governors' action plan will set out how this point is to be tackled and will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

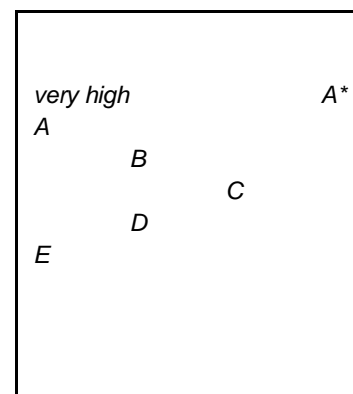
### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has overcome all of the weaknesses pointed out in its previous inspection in 1995 and it is now better than it was. Expectations and standards have risen in information technology, art and design and technology. The quality of teaching has improved significantly. The school has successfully reviewed its procedures for assessment and recording of pupils' achievements. It has provided greater opportunities for pupils to extend their cultural development. The school has not only maintained its strengths but has improved standards of behaviour and the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their welfare. The school has set high but realistic targets to help pupils do better in National Curriculum tests. It is very well placed to make further improvements and to meet its targets.

## 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	A	A*
Mathematics	B	A
Science	C	A



Standards were well above the national average in English, above in mathematics and close to the national average in science. Test results show that the pupils' attainment when compared with the results of pupils from similar backgrounds was very high in English and well above in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is well above national expectations in mathematics and above expectations in English and science. In information technology attainment is close to national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is similar to the level expected in English, science and information technology. In mathematics attainment is above expectations but in speaking and listening it is below. The majority of children enter the nursery with very low skills in all areas of learning. The results of assessments made when children start in reception show that levels of attainment have improved but they are still well below average in all areas of learning. By the age of five most children are likely to achieve expected levels in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. In language and literacy and mathematics a minority of children are on course to meet the targets set for their age group by the time they are five.

## Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Very good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Very good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education			
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The school has significantly raised the quality of teaching since the previous inspection when approximately one third of lessons were found to be unsatisfactory. Now teaching is always at least sound. During the inspection the quality of teaching was sound in two lessons out of ten,

good in almost four out of ten lessons, very good in just under four lessons out of ten, and occasionally excellent. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school and it makes a very positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.

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

### **Other aspects of the school**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Very good. This is a strength of the school and makes a very positive impact on the pupils' learning.
Attendance	Sound. This term it is similar to the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average.
Ethos*	Excellent. The pupils are very keen and interested in their work. Relationships are excellent. This makes a very positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.
Leadership and management	Excellent; a strength of the school. The headteacher and staff work very well together as an effective team with the support of the governing body.
Curriculum	Very good for all age groups. High quality planning promotes progress and the school use information gained from assessment very well to plan future work. The school provides very well for extra-curricular activities.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good. This is a strength of the school. These pupils and those for whom English is an additional language receive very good support and make very good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Excellent; a strength of the school. Provision for spiritual, moral and social development are excellent and for cultural development it is very good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good overall. There are a good number of well qualified and suitably experienced teaching and support staff. The accommodation is good for the effective delivery of the curriculum. Resources are generally good to support learning in all subjects.
Value for money	The school provides very 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"><li>•They are encouraged to play an active part in school life.</li><li>•The school is very approachable.</li><li>•They are kept well informed about the progress made by their children and have a clear picture of what is taught.</li><li>•Their children achieve a good standard of work.</li><li>•They are satisfied with the amount of homework that their children are set.</li><li>•They like the positive values and attitudes that the school promotes.</li><li>•Their children like school.</li></ul>	

Inspector's judgements support all parents' views. The school is very welcoming and provides an excellent quality of support and guidance. It has very good links with parents and the community and keeps them well informed about what is happening at school. Views of parents are based on the 27 per cent of parental questionnaires that were returned and on the views of the 10 parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting together with those who met inspectors during the week.

### " **Key issues for action**

There are no key issues for the school to address but in the context of its many strengths the following minor point for improvement should be considered as the basis for action.

The school should:

ensure subject plans identify opportunities for handling data on the computer.  
(Paragraphs 27, 28, 143 and 165)

## Introduction

### " Characteristics of the school

1. St Vincent's Roman Catholic Primary School was built in 1931 and is situated in Nechells, a heavily built-up area approximately two kilometres north east of Birmingham city centre. The school is in the Nechells and Aston education action zone. There are 246 pupils on roll, 120 boys and 126 girls and they are taught in nine classes. This is similar in size to many other primary schools. Forty seven children attend the nursery full-time. The children enter the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they have their fifth birthday. Seventeen children will not reach statutory school age until next academic year. They are taught in two classes, one for the children who will be statutory school age in January and who learn alongside some Year 1 pupils. The other children are taught in a reception class. At the time of the inspection there were 39 children in reception and they were all under statutory school age. The vast majority of children have attended the school nursery or a playgroup and they start school with much lower than expected skills in all areas of learning.
2. The vast majority of pupils live close to the school and come from a range of backgrounds. Housing is mixed with mainly rented properties and some that are privately owned. Some pupils come from homes where the rate of overcrowding is higher than the national average. Fifty four per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is very high in comparison with the national average. There are 37 pupils who speak English as an additional language and this is high. The languages spoken are Punjabi, Bengali, Urdu, Creole and Patois. The school has placed 26 per cent of its pupils on its register of special educational needs and this is high in comparison to the national average. There are four pupils with statements of special educational need and this is similar to the national average. The school has not excluded any pupils for a number of years.
3. The school aims to teach the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church; to encourage respect for religious beliefs and moral values, a tolerance of other races, religions and ways of life; to help pupils develop lively, enquiring minds and use language and number effectively.
4. Current priorities for the school include improving the quality of teaching and learning in religious education; continuing to raise standards in English, mathematics and information technology; and reviewing the curriculum for the children under five in light of the early learning goals.
5. Key issues from the previous inspection report were to raise expectations in information technology and art; improve some aspects of teaching; review the implementation of assessment procedures and recording of pupils' achievements; and review opportunities presented through the curriculum to extend the cultural dimension of pupils' personal development.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	22	14	36

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	17	18	19
	Girls	11	13	13
	Total	28	31	32
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	78 (89)	86 (91)	89 (86)
	National	79 (80)	83 (81)	86 (84)

<b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	12	13	13
	Total	30	30	30
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	83 (86)	83 (84)	83 (89)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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<sup>1</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	9	14	23

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	7	8	8
	Girls	12	8	11
	Total	19	16	19
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	83 (86)	70 (68)	83 (75)
	National	70 (65)	69 (65)	78 (72)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	5	5	5
	Girls	12	7	11
	Total	17	12	16
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	74 (64)	52 (68)	70 (82)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

## 5. Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	7.1
	National comparative data	5.7

<sup>2</sup> Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Unauthorised Absence	School	0.0
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	41
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

## 5. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 5. Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

#### Attainment and progress

#### Children under five

6. The majority of children enter the nursery with very low skills in all areas of learning. They make a very good start to their school life and their progress is good in all areas of learning. It is very good in personal and social development. The results of assessments made when children start in reception show that levels of attainment have improved but they are still well below average in all areas of learning. The children in reception make good progress in all areas of learning and very good progress in personal and social development. By the age of five most children are likely to achieve expected levels in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. In language and literacy a minority of children are on course to meet the targets set for their age group by the time they are five.

7. The children quickly settle into the routines and systems of the school and are keen to please. They relate exceptionally well to one another and to the adults. The children take turns, share equipment and behave well. They quickly develop an understanding of the difference between right and wrong and often show awe and wonder at the world around them. The children listen attentively, talk with growing confidence and join in with stories, songs and rhymes. They enjoy books and handle them carefully and most read their names. Average and higher attaining children read familiar words in simple books from the school's reading scheme. The children record their ideas, experiences and feelings through drawing and writing. In mathematics most children count aloud to 10 and recognise and write numbers to five. Higher attaining children add together numbers such as four and seven and record their work as a sum. The majority of children recognise and name simple two-dimensional shapes. Many children confidently use simple programs on the computer to support their learning. In knowledge and understanding of the world the children know which appliances in their homes use electricity and investigate whether shiny things can be seen in the dark.

#### 7. Key Stage 1

8. Over the last three years the school has steadily raised standards in reading and mathematics and has maintained standards in writing. The school's results in reading, writing and science in the 1999 tests and assessments are slightly lower than those achieved in the previous year but still close to the national average. This was because of a larger than usual number of pupils with special educational needs in the cohort. Their results in mathematics show an increase on the previous years.

In 1998 the results of teacher assessments and national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that levels of attainment in reading and mathematics were close to the national average and in writing they were above. In reading, writing and mathematics attainment was well above the results of pupils with similar backgrounds. In reading and writing the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 was above the national average and was close to the national average in mathematics and science. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was close to the national average in reading, mathematics and science but below in writing.

9. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together test results show that there was no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys in reading and writing but in mathematics the performance of boys was lower than that of girls.

Inspection evidence reflects the teacher assessment and test results and indicates that at the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is similar to the level expected in English, science and information technology. In mathematics attainment is above expectations but in speaking and listening, it is below.

10. Boys and girls, including those who are higher attaining and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound progress over time and in lessons in information technology. Progress in English and science is good and it is very good in mathematics.

11. The pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. This is because assessments are accurate, work is pitched at the right level for them and they receive specific support which helps them to achieve their targets.

12. By the age of seven most pupils listen attentively to one another and to adults, share ideas and answer questions fully. They read a range of books accurately and with understanding and successfully use a range of strategies to read words they do not know. Lower attaining pupils sound out letters to help them. The majority of pupils are beginning to sequence their ideas and plan the structure of their writing well. They mostly use the correct punctuation and check their spellings using dictionaries or word banks. Standards of handwriting are good.

13. In mathematics the pupils are highly competent at simple addition and subtraction and are gaining a firm understanding of multiplication. They construct simple graphs accurately, compare and measure lengths and weights and identify two and three-dimensional shapes.

14. In science pupils describe simple properties of materials. They confidently talk about the differences between plants and animals. The pupils make good observations of plant structures and draw and label them well on a diagram. In investigative work most pupils make good predictions and are beginning to understand the need for a fair test.

15. In information technology the pupils successfully open a word processing program and their file of work. They confidently change the style of writing and the size of the font. The pupils have sound word processing skills and competently correct any mistakes. Higher attaining boys exit from programs and close down the computer.

16. Standards are high in geography and physical education and they are close to those expected nationally for seven year olds in art, history and performing and composing in music. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the pupils' attainment in design and technology.

17. Boys and girls, including higher attaining pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound progress over time and in lessons in art and in performing and composing in music. Their progress is good in design and technology, geography, history and physical education.

## 19. **Key Stage 2**

18. Over the last three years the school has significantly raised standards in English, mathematics and science. The school's results in the 1999 tests show a continuing improvement in mathematics and science. The school has maintained standards in English.
19. In 1998 the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that levels of attainment in English were well above the national average. In mathematics they were above the national average and in science they were close to the national average. In English results were very high in comparison with those achieved by pupils with similar backgrounds and in mathematics and science they were well above. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 4 in English was well above the national average and in mathematics and science it was above. The number of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above the national average in English, close to the national average in mathematics but below in science.
20. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together test results show that the performance of boys was significantly lower than that of girls in all three subjects.
21. Inspection evidence broadly reflects the test results and indicates that at the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is well above national expectations in mathematics and above expectations in English and science. In information technology attainment is close to national expectations.
22. Boys and girls, including those who are higher attaining and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound progress over time and in lessons in information technology. Progress in science is good and in English and mathematics it is very good.
23. The pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. This is because assessments are accurate, work is pitched at the right level for them and they receive specific support which helps them to achieve their targets.
24. By the age of eleven the majority of pupils confidently debate and discuss methods of working using technical language effectively. They listen attentively to adults and one another. Most pupils have a real enjoyment of reading. They express opinions about authors and they enthusiastically discuss their reasons for choosing books. The pupils confidently select books from the school and class libraries to read for information and pleasure. Their writing is wide and varied. The pupils frequently use dictionaries and refer to a thesaurus in order to enrich and enliven their vocabulary. Planning and drafting skills are very well developed and work is carefully sequenced using paragraphs. Higher attaining pupils are reaching very good standards using the correct tenses in their writing. Standards of handwriting and presentation are good.
25. In mathematics pupils are competent in the four rules of number and with long multiplication. They skilfully practise counting methods involving multiplication and negative numbers and make predictions from the observed patterns. The pupils calculate area, perimeter and volume and measure length and capacity accurately. They use their knowledge confidently to solve problems in mathematical investigations. In data handling the pupils collect information and present their results in graphs. Some use is made of information technology to represent information but this is currently under-developed.



26. In science pupils have a good understanding of how shadows are formed and distinguish between the formation of long and short ones. They develop very good observation and recording skills and continually improve practical techniques. The pupils set up their own investigations, select equipment and begin to identify patterns. However, there is little evidence of the pupils using data handling skills in information technology to support learning in science.
27. In information technology each pupil has an individual disk to store work. The pupils design attractive book covers and competently copy and paste illustrations into their written work. They talk readily about what they have to do using the correct terminology and are confident in overcoming problems. They find information for their topic work using the CD ROM and learn to manipulate sound using an electronic keyboard, a tape recorder and the CD ROM.
28. Standards are high in art, geography, history and physical education. They are close to those expected nationally for eleven year olds in performing and composing in music. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about standards in design and technology.
29. Boys and girls, including higher attaining pupils and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound progress in lessons and over time in performing and composing in music and good progress in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education.
30. The school has very successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy. These measures together with more focused direct teaching have raised standards in English and mathematics at both key stages.
31. At both key stages the pupils develop their speaking and listening skills appropriately in all subjects. They use their numeracy skills to support learning in other subjects, for example in science, history and music. Skills in information technology are not yet fully developed to support learning across the curriculum, particularly in data handling.
32. The school analyses in great detail information gained from national and other tests and assessments to set appropriately high but realistic targets to raise pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science.

34.

#### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

35. Since the previous inspection standards of behaviour have improved. In addition the school has addressed fully the issue of a whole school approach to behaviour management. By appointing a co-ordinator for behaviour and discipline the school successfully implements the reviewed policy.
- 35.
36. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good throughout the school. Children under five in the nursery and reception classes come with a very positive approach and are eager to learn. In both lessons and play their attention is focussed on activities. They quickly gain confidence and many share, take turns and join in activities in small groups and as a whole class. Most pupils work independently and make choices as they select activities they wish to take part in when not being taught by the staff. The children relate very well to all adults and their behaviour is very good. All children make very good progress in their personal development.
- 36.
37. In both Key Stages 1 and 2 the same very positive attitudes continue. Prior to registration almost all the pupils settle quietly either to read or are involved in constructive activities. This preparation has a positive impact on their learning. During lessons pupils are eager to answer questions either individually or as a class. In group work they work diligently with the minimum of supervision such as when researching and writing about a topic. Where a pupil has achieved a particularly good piece of work or answered a difficult question that is cause for celebration. A good example of this was seen in a literacy lesson when a pupil remembered and pronounced correctly an unusual and difficult word. The class applauded and house points were awarded. Such rewards encourage the pupils to apply themselves to their work.
- 37.
38. Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Parents have expressed satisfaction with the standards of behaviour and the values promoted by the school. In the nursery the children sit or play without squabbling. Good manners and behaviour are fostered by the nursery staff. The children learn in small groups and this allows for easy supervision. In both Key Stages 1 and 2 the standards of behaviour remain very high. Movement in and between lessons is very orderly and common courtesies are exchanged such as opening of doors and saying 'please' and 'thank you'. The staff have high expectations of their pupils and the pupils respond very well. In lessons they collaborate well, exchanging ideas or resources. This high standard of behaviour supports the quality of teaching and has a positive impact on learning.
33. At playtime boys and girls of all backgrounds play together and readily share the equipment. There is no evidence of persistent aggression and the supervisors are confident that recent behaviour policy strategies reduce the opportunity for bullying. Since the new policy has been adopted there have not been any referrals to the city's behaviour referral unit. There are no exclusions.
34. The pupils with special educational needs are integrated very well and their behaviour is very good. Most of them are confident and they are eager and enthusiastic during lessons. Concentration is very good and this is because they have interesting work which they enjoy.
35. Relationships among the pupils and between the pupils and the staff are excellent. In most classes there is a lovely rapport between the class teacher and pupils. This has a positive impact on the pupils' co-operation and willingness to strive for higher standards. Parents of pupils from a different religious background have commented on the fact that there is not any discrimination.

36. On two separate occasions pupils were seen to comfort and care for another who was crying loudly. Pupils hand in lost property and incidents of theft are almost unheard of. The school is free of graffiti and litter.
37. The school fosters positive and caring relationships throughout the curriculum and during assemblies. For example, in a house meeting 'circle time', building on good relationships was promoted. The staff, their parish priest and visitors invited into the school to support the curriculum provide excellent role models. The school's encouragement of family values is very much appreciated by the parents.
38. Personal development is excellent. From the time the pupils start school they are taught about good citizenship. All pupils have their turn in helping and this is often used to strengthen character building. Throughout the inspection numerous pupils were observed performing all sorts of tasks with a keen sense of duty. Some examples are taking registers to the office, helping to clear up at lunch, tidying book shelves and helping in the library. In the corridors and classrooms there are numerous displays of pupils' art or design technology work which stimulate their personal development.
39. The pupils are members of 'houses'. Each house has a captain. In addition the school has a head girl and a head boy. These pupils take their responsibilities very seriously and provide good role models for younger pupils.

#### 45. **Attendance**

40. Levels of attendance are sound. The statistics for the last few years show that the school had a rate of authorised absence that was slightly above the national average for primary schools but not significantly so.
41. The average attendance in Birmingham's inner-city primary schools is 87 per cent. This school, therefore, with 92 per cent for last year has much better levels of attendance than most of the others within the area. This sound level of attendance is having a very positive impact on the pupils' learning.
42. Teachers call the registers promptly and with the minimum of delay. Punctuality is very good.

#### 48. **Quality of education provided**

##### **Teaching**

43. The school has significantly improved the quality of teaching since the previous inspection when approximately one third of lessons were unsatisfactory. Teachers now use assessment very effectively to plan future work for pupils of all abilities. They match work well to pupils' needs. Teachers' knowledge has improved in science, information technology, design and technology and music. Now teaching is always at least sound. During the inspection the quality of teaching was sound in two lessons out of ten, good in almost four out of ten lessons, very good in just under four lessons out of ten and occasionally excellent. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school and it makes a very positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.

44. The quality of teaching is good in all subjects at both key stages and it is very good in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in art, design and technology and music.

The overall quality of teaching for the children under five is good. It is always at least sound, good in just under half of lessons and very good in almost three out of ten lessons. This makes a positive impact on the progress made by the children. The quality of teaching is good in all areas of learning and it is very good in personal and social development. The teachers, nursery nurse and support assistants have a very good knowledge of the needs of the children, very high expectations and manage their classes extremely well. They make good use of time, prepare the classrooms carefully and provide a stimulating learning environment. They use day-to-day assessment very well to plan future work. There is a close working relationship between all staff who provide good role models.

45. The overall quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is good. In the lessons seen it was always at least sound, good in a little under four lessons out of ten, very good in three out of ten lessons and occasionally excellent. At Key Stage 2 the overall quality of teaching is very good. It was always at least sound, good in just under four out of ten lessons, very good in almost half of lessons and occasionally excellent. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 5 and 6.

46. Pupils with special educational needs have work well matched to their needs. Careful planning helps them achieve their targets. The school deploys its special needs support staff well in support of groups and individuals. They make a valuable contribution, helping pupils' progress to accelerate and their standards to improve. Teachers and learning support staff assess pupils' needs regularly. The information from these assessments helps staff plan the next stages in learning. Teachers carefully match the work they prepare to the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language.

47. At Key Stage 1 the teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and very high expectations of the pupils. Their planning, organisation of classes and use of time and resources are good. The teachers make very good use of the information gained from day-to-day assessments to plan future work. They manage their pupils well and make good use of homework to extend and reinforce the pupils' learning in school.

48. At Key Stage 2 the teachers have very good knowledge of their subjects and very high expectations of the pupils. They use an excellent range of methods and organisation and most manage their classes very well. The teachers make very good use of information gained from day-to-day assessment to plan the next steps of learning. They make good use of time and resources and very good use of homework.

49. Teachers mark work regularly and to a high standard. In all subjects praise and comments are used to encourage the pupils to improve their work. All pupils receive good-quality information during lessons about how they may improve.

50. The amount of homework set increases as the pupils move through the school. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are expected to read five to ten minutes each day and spend five minutes each on mental mathematics and spelling. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils are expected to spend 15 minutes each day reading, five minutes each on mental mathematics and spelling and 30 minutes each week on both a literacy and a numeracy task. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils are expected to spend 20 minutes each day reading, 15 minutes a week on both mental

arithmetic and spelling and 30 minutes weekly on each of literacy, numeracy and other curriculum tasks.

51. In the best lessons teachers give very good, clear demonstrations. For example, a teacher in a language and literacy lesson in reception showed the way we read from left to right. Teachers use questions very effectively to develop the pupils' thinking and to check their understanding. A good example of this was in a mathematics lesson in Year 4 when the teacher asked the pupils what was the perimeter of particular shapes. Excellent use is made of the plenary session to reinforce earlier teaching points and to share the pupils' learning. This was the case in many literacy lessons at both key stages. There is a cracking pace to the lesson, pupils waste no time and they move forward rapidly in their learning as the lesson progresses. Teachers use praise very effectively to boost the pupils' self esteem.

52. In all lessons teachers share clear learning objectives for each lesson with the pupils and make good use of support staff. They reinforce the vocabulary necessary for each subject at every opportunity. The high quality relationships amongst the pupils and between the pupils and the teachers ensure a very purposeful environment for learning.

## **The curriculum and assessment**

53. At the time of the last inspection there were a number of weaknesses in the school's curriculum and assessment arrangements. It has made excellent progress. It has tackled all the weaknesses successfully and is in a strong position to maintain its current rate of progress.
54. A broad and balanced curriculum is in place for all pupils and this meets with the requirements of the National Curriculum. The curriculum for the under fives is very good in both the nursery and reception classes and this is an improvement from the previous inspection. Planning follows the national guidance so that a suitable curriculum for the under-fives is planned and delivered. Teachers achieve some very good work, particularly to further the personal and social development of the children. They lay good foundations for the development of literacy and numeracy. Early assessments give valuable information about each child's interests and capabilities and teachers use this as a starting point to plan a range of activities.
55. There is an appropriate emphasis on English, mathematics, science and information technology. The school does not neglect the other subjects and has maintained a wide and stimulating curriculum for its pupils. In English and mathematics the curriculum and teaching methods follow a consistent pattern across the whole school and this is one of the main reasons why standards are improving.
56. The school supports the intellectual and physical development of its pupils very well indeed. Girls and boys and the pupils who speak English as an additional language have equal access to the curriculum. Very good planning between class teachers and support staff ensures all pupils take a full part in lessons. Very good procedures in the early years unit identify pupils' linguistic and other needs. Careful monitoring and evaluation of pupils' performance support the very good assessment throughout the school. This results in an exemplary record of improvement in achievements as pupils move through the school. There are effective procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and they have good levels of support which enable them to meet their targets. This area is a strength of the school. Higher attaining pupils enjoy a curriculum which is sufficiently challenging and teachers always plan their work at the right level for them.
57. The school promotes pupils' personal development effectively through the personal and social education programme and prepares them very well for secondary education. Health, drugs and sex education meet the requirements. A range of planned opportunities encourages pupils to have additional responsibilities such as being monitors, taking part in the school council, being prefects and helping in the library. Homework increases as pupils move through the school preparing them well for secondary education.
58. Policy documents and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Curriculum planning is generally very good and teachers plan work so that learning is progressive and challenging. This was a weakness at the last inspection. The school has made excellent progress and the staff plan cohesively within the whole school curriculum framework. The extra-curricular activities are excellent. They offer good teaching in a wide range of music, sport and activities of interest. The clubs are extremely popular. They provide a great deal of enjoyment and pleasure and enrich the basic curriculum.
59. Teachers know their pupils well and they very effectively assess on a daily basis what pupils have learnt in class. They use this information to plan the next stages in learning so that

they always plan work at the right levels. A range of regular assessments in the main subjects keeps teachers well informed about their pupils' progress and attainment as well as providing information which they use to set future targets for the pupils. The arrangements for assessing the work of pupils with special educational needs are thorough and accurate and this helps them to meet their targets speedily. The previous report identified assessment as a significant weakness. The school has overcome the weaknesses successfully and all teachers now use assessment as a crucial tool in their drive to raise standards even further.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

60.The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and now provides more opportunities for pupils' cultural and multi-cultural development throughout the curriculum.

61.Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Opportunities for cultural development are very good. The school's aims and mission statement provide an excellent foundation for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. Starting in the nursery children under five experience awe and wonder at the world about them. They are taught the difference between right and wrong through stories and day-to-day happenings in their class. Relationships are excellent and visitors to school extend these young children's growing awareness of their cultural heritage.

62.The school makes excellent provision for the pupils' spiritual development and fosters and develops it through English, dance, art, music and religious education. It creates a calm, reflective atmosphere during assemblies and provides valuable opportunities for singing, story, prayer and reflection. Pupils consider Christian and other religious festivals thinking about themselves and others and their response to faith. In religious education and personal and social education teachers challenge pupils to consider issues such as friendship, attitudes and loyalty for others. There are excellent links with the local church and each class has its own mass either in church or class every half term. The school effectively helps pupils build qualities of mind, body, spirit, feeling and imagination in order to develop true Christian awareness. They become aware of the beauty and significance of their own artwork as well as that of famous artists such as Monet and Van Gogh. The school environment is attractive and well cared for and the shrine is a place of peace and tranquillity.

63.Provision for moral development is excellent and the school fosters this very well through its consistently high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. As stated in the mission statement the school makes all pupils feel special, treats them equally and encourages them to succeed. It helps them to distinguish between right and wrong and encourages them to build on the values promoted. The school engenders a sense of justice and fair play in all activities. It encourages pupils to be honest and to show concern for others and parents are very happy with the values and attitudes promoted by the school. The school trusts pupils to carry out a wide range of responsibilities and older pupils show special concern for younger pupils. Teachers miss no opportunity to explore moral issues which arise in literature. They appropriately praise and reward pupils for their excellent behaviour and attitudes. In all areas of the school the rules devised by pupils themselves and their behaviour targets are clearly on display.

64.The provision for social development is excellent. The school actively and successfully

encourages the development of social skills which are evident in the positive and happy way in which pupils work and play together. The school's ethos promotes excellent social interaction and equality of opportunity. The adults provide excellent role models of positive relationships. The school makes older pupils aware that they must provide positive examples for those who are younger and they have many opportunities to respond to the needs of their peers thoughtfully and sympathetically. School council representatives discuss issues such as bullying and friendship and search for ways to ensure that all pupils receive fair and respectful treatment. All pupils have suitable opportunities to appreciate and contribute to the community in which they live and learn. There is a wide range of after school clubs such as choir, recorder, netball, football, computer, guitar and homework clubs. These together with outdoor and adventurous activities and sporting events further enhance pupils' social development. Pupils have many opportunities to contribute to the wider community such as collecting for a chosen charity and singing to the elderly at Christmas. A residential visit further enhances the social development of the older pupils.

65. Cultural development is very good. Pupils' knowledge of their own local culture and history and other cultural tradition develops very well through work in art, music, history, dance and religious education. They encounter books written by a wide range of authors and music from different countries. Pupils visit galleries and theatres which enrich their experiences significantly. Visitors to the school include a poet, readers for World Book Day, the Royal Ballet and music and drama workshops add further valuable dimensions to pupils' cultural development. The school gives its pupils a developing understanding of the diversity and richness of other cultures. Its commitment to pupils' cultural development is evident from displays around the school.

## **72. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

66. Provision for the welfare, support and guidance of all the pupils is excellent. The school has successfully addressed the issues from the previous inspection. A very positive school ethos coupled with high expectations provides a spiritual peace where every pupil feels valued. The parents are very appreciative of the school's provision for their children.

67. Procedures for monitoring the pupils' progress and personal development are excellent throughout the school. Assessment of achievement is consistently very good. At every opportunity the school praises pupils and encourages them to extend their knowledge and learning. For example, there are awards in assemblies where the school celebrates the achievement of each pupil. This has a positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.

68. All staff, including those who are non-teaching, know the children very well. This helps with observing their individual progress and development. Regular staff meetings allow time to monitor and develop strategies for each pupil. Everyone takes turns with routine tasks such as picking up litter so there is no resentment.

69. The parish priest promotes excellent pastoral provision through the celebration of Mass. In addition class teachers or support staff are always available to comfort or reassure an upset child.

70. The class teachers and the support staff provide good support for pupils with special educational needs in all aspects of their learning.

71. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. Many of the pupils are



from a socially deprived area. The school takes a full part in all the local initiatives to improve the overall standards of behaviour and self-discipline. The governing body has appointed a co-ordinator and ratified a new policy. Together with behaviour professionals within the city council the school has adopted a new tactic. The scheme identifies the causes of poor or anti-social behaviour and then offers support to meet the challenge. This includes bullying and all forms of harassment. The school informs parents at an appropriate early stage and gives pupils an individual plan. In some instances this plan could involve the co-ordinator of special educational needs. Already the behaviour and discipline co-ordinator is very confident that behaviour has shown a marked improvement. The support staff comment favourably on the improvement. The overall good standard of behaviour is having a very positive impact on the pupils' attainment and progress.

72.Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are excellent. Poor attendance is a common feature at other schools within this locality. Working with outside agencies the school has raised the profile for better attendance and presents a weekly cup to the class with the highest attendance. It presents a shield annually and issues other awards such as certificates.

73.The school has set itself a target of 95 per cent rate of attendance by year 2001. The school secretary and the headteacher monitor the registers and available data closely and attendance shows signs of improvement. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have reached that target this term. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are improving on previous years. Although unauthorised absence is not a problem the school monitors it closely. It tracks and discourages factors such as extended holidays. If appropriate the headteacher will conduct home visits.

74.Procedures for all aspects of child protection are very good. The headteacher is the named person. She, the deputy headteacher and another member of staff have received full training. They share this knowledge with every member of staff. The school follows the agreed Codes of Practice within the city. The staff have developed and adopted an extra tier of awareness to help safeguard the pupils in their care.

75.In appropriate instances there is close liaison with social services and other specialist agencies. First aid provision is of very high standard and the school properly records all accidents or injuries. To provide an added safeguard every class register has a list of any pupil with an ailment and the recommended treatment. Regular fire drills ensure that the evacuation procedures are safe and secure.

76.Health and safety provision is very good. All records of maintenance are in place. The headteacher conducts regular risk assessments with the governing body but there are no formal records. The site supervisor maintains the whole building to a high standard, keeping it in a clean and hygienic condition.

77.The tarmac surface in the playground is in a deteriorating state of repair. There are signs that some parts are crumbling with a number of holes evident in the play area. During the inspection some parents complained that cars parked across the school entrance signs were creating a hazard to other children. Although this cannot be attributable to the school there is evidence to support the parents' concerns.

#### **84. Partnership with parents and the community**

78.Links with parents and the community are very good with some outstanding features. Issues

from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. Letters are more informative and written in a friendlier way and more parents participate actively in working in the school.

79. The quality of routine information for parents is good. Parents of children entering the nursery receive a mini prospectus. In addition, the school encourages parents of prospective pupils to visit and see the nursery in operation. The parish priest interviews all parents and children prior to enrolment into the nursery or school. This ensures that there is no doubt that the children will receive a Catholic education. Many parents of children from other faiths willingly accept this and state that their children have integrated very well.
80. The school sends routine letters though in many cases information by word of mouth has proved more effective. Parents surveyed feel that they receive full information about all school activities. The well presented pupils' annual reports give clear individual targets for the forthcoming academic year. There is provision for the pupil's own personal and social development and there is an accompanying letter for parents to reply to.
81. The school prospectus has improved and is informative. The annual report to parents' by the governing body has also improved but does not contain all the required information. Three evenings a year provide ample opportunities for the parents to discuss and examine work of their children with the class teacher. There is an open door policy and most parents feel confident that the school is very approachable to discuss issues.
82. Parents participate fully in the regular reviews of the progress of children with special needs. They have input into setting future targets for their children. The school involves outside support agencies at an appropriate stage.
83. Overall the involvement of the parents in their children's education is very good. The school has worked extremely hard to involve all the parents in the education of their children. In this part of the city there are high levels of social and economic deprivation. The school has adopted various community projects such as the Nechells Area for Community Education and 'Share and inspire'. Outside agencies working closely with schools are setting out to raise the levels of self-esteem and literacy amongst some parents. This in turn helps the parents support their own children in raising attainment. The school's co-ordinator for the 'Share' project is confident that those children in the scheme have made very good progress, especially in literacy. The co-ordinator for Nechells Area for Community Education is also confident that noticeable improvements in literacy and numeracy by both parents and their children are becoming evident.
84. The school sets homework for all year groups making it relevant to the pupils' age and ability. It supplies reading and homework diaries so that parents can monitor progress. The headteacher gives suitable advice to those parents who fail to support the home-school policy on homework. Most parents express satisfaction with the levels of homework set for their children.
85. There is still no parent-teacher or school association. However, there is an informal meeting of parents every Friday morning. The number of parents attending is increasing. In addition, the school is setting up various workshops to help parents have a better understanding of subjects such as literacy and numeracy. The 'French Club' for both parents and their children is proving more popular.

86. One aspect that the school particularly welcomes is the development of parents helping in school. Although the numbers are fairly small the school has encouraged many of these parents to take professional training that leads to recognised qualifications. Nearly all the learning support assistants employed by the school have come by this route. Their input makes a significant impact in the quality of education the school provides.
87. Links with industry and the arts are excellent and have a very positive impact on the quality of education provided. The business links co-ordinator has established liaison with many organisations and these are mostly linked to the curriculum. Many year groups have worked with the Royal Ballet, which in turn supports music, art, design and technology, literacy and numeracy. A planned visit to 'Land Rover' will link with information and communication technology.
88. The parish and the parish priest participate fully in the school, supporting both spiritual and community awareness. In appropriate cases the priest will make home visits or act as a 'mentor' to the pupils. Regular celebration of Mass helps cement the pupils' personal and spiritual education.
89. All pupils enjoy the school visits, including a residential one. Most trips also have direct links with the curriculum such as a museum visit when studying a particular period in history.
90. Liaison between the school and the senior schools is well developed. Pupils embarking on their next phase in education are well prepared. Many leave to attend one of the Catholic schools in the city whilst others attend the local Heartlands High School.

97.

## 97. **The management and efficiency of the school**

### **Leadership and management**

91. The school benefits from excellent leadership by the headteacher who gives very clear educational direction to the work of the school. The senior management team and the staff work closely together with the support of the governing body. They all share the same vision for the school and are committed to high standards. Since the previous inspection very effective strategies have ensured that the school has moved forward and successfully made improvements in all of the areas of weakness identified in the report. One factor in these improvements is the very effective leadership of the headteacher who has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses. With the support of the senior management team, staff and governors the headteacher has set appropriately high but realistic and achievable targets for improvement. The school is in a very good position to sustain these improvements.
92. There is a well established, very effective management structure. The school delegates responsibility for curriculum matters to subject co-ordinators and all but the newly-qualified teachers lead well at least one subject or aspect of school life.

The headteacher monitors and evaluates the curriculum and the teaching and learning. The co-ordinators also monitor and evaluate the curriculum in their subjects. They receive release time from their classroom duties to see teaching and learning in other classes according to the priorities of the school improvement plan. Their role also includes demonstrating lessons for their colleagues. This has been very successful in raising the overall quality of teaching in the school

and is making a significant impact on the attainment and progress of the pupils.

93.The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises with outside agencies. She carefully maintains the paperwork, attends reviews and acts as a contact for the parents. The co-ordinator and the named governor for special educational needs carefully monitor the school's provision.

94.The headteacher and deputy head devised the school improvement plan in consultation with the staff and the governing body. It has clear priorities and links to the budget and includes very well-chosen developments in all aspects of the work of the school. It allows the headteacher and the staff to evaluate the effects of school developments on the pupils' attainment and progress.

95.Parents support the excellent ethos, aims and values which the school clearly reflects throughout all of its work. The governing body has an appropriate policy for equal opportunities. It uses the principle well in school policies and in ensuring that staff provide the pupils with full access to the range of school activities. The staff provide very good role models. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and fully meets the statutory requirements of the Code of Practice<sup>3</sup>. It employs additional support staff to meet pupils' needs and enables them to make very good progress.

96.The governors are very supportive and are developing a more active role in the management of the school. They are involved in strategic development planning but the governing body does not formally monitor and evaluate its success. The governors monitor and evaluate the curriculum through detailed information from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Some governors regularly visit classrooms but the governing body has yet to establish procedures for formally monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. It holds regular meetings and has established an appropriate committee structure. It fulfils all its statutory responsibilities with the exception of ensuring that its prospectus and annual report to parents contain all the required information.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

97.Staffing levels are good. The ratio of pupils to teachers is below average compared with schools nationally. Teachers are well qualified, with a very good balance of age and experience, for meeting the demands of the curriculum. Two teachers appointed during the last two years have become well established in school. A difficult situation of long-term absence through ill health is very well managed, providing effective continuity for pupils. Teachers bring a very good range of interests and expertise to the school. They are conscientious and work very effectively as a team. The head teacher gives very careful consideration to the deployment of teachers throughout the school using experienced teachers to very good effect. This deployment achieves nursery provision of high quality and very effective teaching in upper Key Stage 2. It ensures very good preparation of pupils for the next stage of education. Additionally, the school manages the difficulty of teaching mixed-age classes very well. Older pupils in a mixed age class move into the class of their age group for some direct teaching. For example, all Year 2 pupils learnt science together during the inspection. Similarly, the deputy head teacher taught mathematics to all of Year 3 leaving the class teacher to support lower attaining pupils

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<sup>3</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

within the lesson. Such arrangements are very effective in helping pupils to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding.

98. The number of classroom assistants is good. The head teacher makes very good use of additional funds to support pupils in lessons. The nursery benefits from two fully qualified nursery nurses, one providing support for pupils who do not speak English as their first language at home. An additional learning assistant has been appointed for pupils in Key Stage 2 as a result of funds from the education action zone. Very good deployment of assistants makes a significant contribution to the school's central aim of raising standards. Very good briefing and appropriate training enables all assistants to carry out their roles. Additionally, one member of staff has received training as a specialist teaching assistant.

99. Teaching staff and learning support assistants are well experienced in meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The learning support assistants with responsibilities for pupils with special educational needs give very good support. The school's provision ensures that the pupils make very good progress.

100. Arrangements for staff development are very good. The school sees professional development as a high priority in meeting its objectives for raising standards. It reviews job descriptions for all staff annually. Appraisal has been in place but arrangements are currently on hold. However, the school maintains a very good system of professional review and development arrangements. Co-ordinators receive very good information about their subject responsibilities and have a cohesive drive to raise attainment. Teaching and non-teaching staff attend a wide range of courses relevant to the needs of the school. The school has implemented a very good induction policy document for newly qualified teachers and the current programme is progressing well. Administrative and site staff, along with mid day supervisors, feel well supported and discharge their responsibilities very well.

101. The accommodation is good, providing a very positive place for learning. The school has implemented a long-term programme for improvements and maintenance with good effect on the quality of education provided. It has replaced windows, improving classrooms in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection. The upgraded library is attractive and valued by pupils. The eight recently installed computers are immediately having a positive effect on the standards pupils can reach in information technology. The pupils with special educational needs are able to work effectively in classrooms but there is limited space for them to work individually or in a small group with a learning support assistant. The school is very clean and well maintained. Vandalism taking place out of school hours has been reduced by considerable investment in additional security. Good displays of pupils' work provide an attractive learning environment focusing on what pupils have achieved.

102. The external environment is largely unattractive and without any green areas for pupils to play. However, two attractive courtyards provide pupils with an area for quiet reflection and one for studying conservation with a small pond. Hard play areas enable pupils to engage in purposeful play at breaks and lunch times.

103. Learning resources, including those for pupils with special educational needs, are good overall. The school has rectified deficiencies in history, science and design technology since the previous inspection. Resources for design technology are now sound and for all other subjects are good, with very good resources in mathematics. Resources for the literacy and numeracy strategies have been a major priority and offer pupils learning materials of

very good quality. The school gradually improves resources in other subjects year by year. New computers have significantly improved resources for information and communication technology. The school will benefit further when it is phased into the Birmingham Grid for Learning Programme. The library is an attractive learning environment with a good range of fiction by suitable authors. The non-fiction section is very good, fully catalogued and clearly labelled, usefully identifying National Curriculum areas in subjects such as science. All books are of good quality and free of stereotyping. Good book displays in the classrooms and the nursery supplement materials for different class topics. The staff make very good use of displays to enrich literacy throughout the school.

## **The efficiency of the school**

104. The headteacher and governors work hard to ensure that good financial planning supports the educational developments. The school manages its budget effectively and has a long-term strategic plan which sets priorities for the school's objectives. When drawing up the annual budget the school considers carefully its educational priorities and available finance. Staff and governors work in close partnership to determine priorities and link their spending decisions suitably to the school improvement plan. They cost some priorities but there is not a clear audit trail between the school improvement plan and the budget plan.
105. The governing body, through its finance committee, participates fully in financial matters and receives good information. The governors on the finance committee have a very clear grasp of funding issues, budget setting and spending priorities. The school's large contingency fund amounts to 13 per cent of the annual budget. The school plans to use this money for refurbishment and staffing. It has a clear commitment to spending the available resources for the benefit of pupils at present in the school. The high expenditure per pupil is the effect of the numbers of pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and local initiatives such as the education action zone.
106. Overall the school makes very good use of the teaching and support staff, the accommodation and the resources for learning, all of which contribute to the very good progress made by the pupils. The professional development of staff is highly efficient and all staff have a clear understanding of their areas of responsibility. The school deploys its support staff very well in supporting pupils with special educational needs. It also deploys them efficiently support pupils in literacy, numeracy and language development. They form an integral part of the staff team. Learning support assistants work very effectively with teachers and pupils. They have their own planned programme for supporting pupils with special educational needs so that standards improve and progress accelerates. The school makes excellent use of resources and accommodation to support learning.
107. Standards of financial control and school administration are very good and have improved since the previous inspection. They make an effective contribution to the day-to-day running of the school. There are very good systems in place for financial management and budget monitoring. The office manager, the headteacher and the governor who leads the finance committee have a thorough understanding of the procedures and practices. Financial control is very good and the headteacher and governing body monitors spending closely. The school has implemented fully most recommendations of the local education authority's recent audit.
108. Pupils' standards of attainment have significantly improved since the last inspection and progress made is very good. Standards of behaviour in and around the school are very good and the quality of education is high, especially by the end of Key Stage 2. Although the cost per pupil is higher than the national average taking all factors into consideration the school gives very good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **116. Areas of learning for children under five**

109. The school has maintained the standards found at the previous inspection. The provision for the children under five in the nursery and reception classes is very good. This is a strength of the school and makes a very positive impact on the children's attainment and progress.

110. Children come into the nursery on a part-time basis after they reach three years of age. They attend full-time for the year before they move into the reception classes. The nursery has two teachers, a nursery nurse and a support assistant for children who speak English as an additional language. Children join the reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. They currently learn in two classes. One is for children who will be of statutory school age in January and who learn alongside some Year 1 pupils. The others are in a reception class. There are currently 17 children under five in the reception and Year 1 class who will reach statutory school age at the beginning of the spring term. The vast majority of children have had some pre-school experience either in the school nursery or playgroups. The early years unit which includes both the nursery and the reception classes gives high priority to the development of language skills, mathematical development and personal and social development.

111. The vast majority of children enter the nursery with very low skills in all areas of learning. They make a very good start to their school life and their progress is good in all areas of learning. It is very good in personal and social development. The results of assessments made when children start the reception class show that levels of attainment are well below average in all areas of learning when compared with those expected for children under five nationally. Children of all abilities make good progress in all areas of learning. By the age of five most children are likely to achieve expected levels in personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. In language and literacy and mathematics a minority of children are on course to meet the targets set for their age group by the time they are five.

### **119. Personal and social development**

112. The children enter the nursery with very limited personal and social skills. They make very good progress and quickly settle into the routines and systems of the nursery. For example, on arrival they come in quietly and leave their parents without any fuss. When the children move into the reception classes their skills have improved but they are still below average. They make choices about which activities to do and they work without constant supervision from adults. The children relate well to one another and there are many examples of them working together, for example in role play in the 'Post Office' in reception. Excellent relationships are established with adults and the children pay appropriate attention to all members of staff. They behave very well and in all activities they take turns and treat equipment with care. The children enjoy their work and readily take part in the activities provided for them. They work as part of a group and independently and some begin to concentrate for longer periods of time. The children show awe and wonder, for example when looking at 'stars' as part of their work in mathematics. They make very good progress and by the age of five it is likely that most children will reach the expected level.

### **120. Language and literacy**



113. When children start in the nursery they have very limited skills of speaking and listening. They make good progress and by the time they move into the reception classes their skills have improved but they are well below average. The children in the reception classes make good progress in developing their language and literacy skills but it is unlikely that by the age of five they will reach the expected level. All children develop their use of language. They listen attentively to stories told to the class such as 'Hairy Bear' and they talk with growing confidence about things they have seen. The children enjoy books, understand their purpose and handle them carefully. Some children know that in English the print reads from left to right and from top to bottom of the page and the majority can read their names. Higher attaining children read familiar words in simple texts. The children begin to learn the sounds and shapes of letters and practise forming them correctly. Some can write their names without help and they record their ideas, experiences and feelings through drawing and writing.

#### 121. **Mathematics**

114. Mathematical skills develop as the children learn to match, count, sort and handle objects. Their attainment is much lower than expected when they start in the nursery. Good progress is made but even so by the time they start the reception classes their attainment is still well below average. The children in reception work with enthusiasm on mathematical activities such as sorting by shape, matching objects one to one and making simple repeating patterns. Most children count aloud to 10 and recognise and write numbers to five. Higher attaining children add together numbers such as four and seven and record their work as a sum. All children know the names of two-dimensional shapes such as circle and triangle. The children are familiar with number rhymes and songs such as 'There were ten in the bed and the little one said roll over'. Many activities are linked to other areas of learning and there are considerable opportunities for children to work practically, developing mathematical understanding through sand and water play. Children of all abilities make good progress but it is unlikely that by the age of five they will reach the expected level.

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

115. The children in the nursery are curious and want to know more about their world. They make good progress but by the time they start the reception class their attainment is below average. In the reception classes all children make good progress and by the time they are five it is likely that they will reach the expected level. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the world by talking about their families and past events in their own lives such as their birthdays. The children learn about appliances in their homes which use electricity and things that need a battery to make them work. They investigate whether they can see shiny things in the dark. The children select materials and make model stars cutting, moulding and sticking with simple tools. They use construction sets with enjoyment. The children use simple computer programs with growing confidence and successfully operate cassette players to listen to stories and songs.

#### 123. **Creative development**

116. The children draw, paint, print and make collages with great pleasure. They enjoy singing from memory simple songs and rhymes such as 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star'. Through music the children show an increasing ability to use their imagination, for example when performing as snowflakes and the rain in a dance lesson. All children make good progress in the acquisition of creative skills and by the age of five they are likely to reach the

expected level.

## **Physical development**

117.Children of all abilities make good progress and by the age of five they are likely to reach the expected level. In physical activity the children develop their skills using appropriate apparatus: they handle scissors, paintbrushes and pencils well with developing control. They can run, balance, climb and jump with some confidence and begin to develop an awareness of space and others around them. The children demonstrate this in outdoor play when they ride wheeled toys and play on different sized equipment.

118.The quality of teaching for the children in the nursery and the reception classes is very good in personal and social development and good in all other areas of learning. This makes a very positive impact on the progress the children make. The teachers have very good knowledge of the ways young children learn and have very high expectations of them. Planning is detailed and is based on very good day-to-day assessment of what the children know, understand and can do. There is a good balance between activities directed by the teacher and opportunities for the children to choose for themselves. The children are well prepared to move on to the programmes of study of the National Curriculum as they reach statutory school age.

119.The teachers make good use of time and resources. The classrooms are well prepared and stimulating with inviting activities attractively set out. The adults make very good use of praise and encouragement and relationships are excellent. All staff consistently maintain a quiet, warm and caring approach, which successfully enhances the children's confidence, raises their self-esteem and helps their learning. The teachers use homework well to support the children's work in school.

120.The work of the nursery nurses and classroom assistants is of a high quality and has a positive impact on the children's learning and the progress they make. All staff provide very good role models and work well together as a team. This makes a significant contribution to the children's personal and social development.

128.

## **128. English, mathematics, science and information technology**

### **English**

121.Standards have risen since the previous inspection. In 1998 the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that attainment was close to the national average in reading and above this level in writing. Attainment in reading and writing was well above the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was above the national average and the percentage reaching Level 3 was close to the average. There was a similar pattern in writing with fewer pupils reaching the higher level. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together test results show that there was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school has substantially raised standards in reading over the last three years and writing standards have remained broadly the same.

122.In 1998 the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that attainment was well above the national average and very high in comparison to the results of pupils from

similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together test results show that boys' attainment was well below that of the girls. The school has significantly raised standards over the last three years. The 1999 results show that there is a small decline in the overall standards because fewer pupils reached the higher levels at both key stages.

123. Inspection findings broadly support test results. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment is close to national expectations for most pupils but their standards in speaking and listening are below those expected for the age group. The higher attaining pupils reach good standards in both reading and writing. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards are good and they are higher than expected for the age group with a significant number of pupils close to attaining even higher standards than this. The school has worked consistently and successfully to improve pupils' literacy skills across all year groups and this is the reason that standards are rising. Planning is good and it is closely based on the results of various assessments through which the school monitors pupils' progress. Pupils have many planned opportunities to develop their speaking skills, both in small groups, to the whole class or to the school during assembly times. Teachers make good use of fiction and non-fiction reading tasks as well as guided reading to provide regular support for developing reading skills. The school has made extra time available for writing and pupils produce extended pieces of work in a range of genres including stories, poetry and play scripts. The development of writing skills such as drafting and revising work, organising and structuring writing and using correct grammar and punctuation is raising standards across the school. Pupils develop literacy skills and apply them successfully across the whole curriculum.

124. When pupils start school they know few words and their ability to talk to one another or members of their class is very limited. Their progress soon begins to accelerate and standards improve. In Key Stage 1 they share ideas and answer questions fully, listening to one another and to their teachers. In Key Stage 2 they debate and discuss methods of working using technical language effectively, as in a Year 5 art lesson when they debated how to make a class model stand up successfully.

125. Reading is an important part of the school day and teachers take every opportunity to develop and use pupils' reading skills across the whole curriculum. Average and higher attaining pupils have a range of strategies which they use when they are trying to work out unknown words. Lower attaining pupils also use a range of strategies but these are limited to working out the first sound in the word and then the sounds in the middle of words. All of the pupils read appropriate fiction and non-fiction texts accurately and with understanding. Older pupils express opinions about authors and they enthusiastically discuss their reasons for choosing books. There is a real enjoyment of reading and an interest in how authors put stories together. Class texts are often chosen to link with other work, as in Year 1 when pupils were writing a list of party ingredients for the 'Gingerbread man's party'. They were reading the story of 'The Gingerbread Man' in their big class reading book and this deepens the pupils' knowledge and understanding. All pupils use the library well and they are confident when selecting books for information and for pleasure.

126. Pupils' writing is wide and varied. The range of their work includes letters, stories, poems and play scripts as well as imaginative writing and factual accounts of work in science and geography. Infant pupils are beginning to sequence their ideas and plan the structure of their writing well. They mostly use the correct punctuation and check their spellings using dictionaries or word banks. Key Stage 2 pupils use dictionaries frequently and refer to the

thesaurus in order to enrich and enliven vocabulary. They have very well developed planning and drafting skills' and sequence their work carefully using paragraphs. The recent focus on how to structure written work is having a positive impact on standards throughout the school. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils are reaching very good standards using the correct tenses in their writing, such as when writing a letter expressing opposition to a new by-pass or when reporting a debate about vivisection. The standards of handwriting and presentation are good and frequently very good with pupils presenting their work neatly and joining up their writing smoothly. The pupils practise spelling regularly and standards are good. They develop their writing skills to a consistently high standard in a wide range of subjects across the curriculum. At both key stages pupils are able to label diagrams, take notes and write reports using their literacy skills very well indeed. Most pupils are confident in using their word-processing skills on the computer to write, draft and revise their work successfully.

127. At both key stages progress is good, both in lessons and over longer periods of time. Progress accelerates rapidly in Years 5 and 6 and here the pupils frequently make very good progress. There is a direct link between the quality of teaching and the progress made across the entire school. From a very low starting point in the reception classes progress is consistently good in all aspects of English. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2 they develop their ideas thoughtfully, speak confidently and put forward their ideas in discussions. The higher attaining pupils develop their ideas well. A good example in a Year 6 lesson was when they talked about the purpose of a diary and related this to Anne Frank's diary explaining how feelings are conveyed in the text. The school consistently builds and develops reading skills so that the pupils in Years 5 and 6 are able to glean ideas to support their views as they did in the above example. Writing is varied and interesting using a range of vocabulary correctly in both formal and informal written work. Teachers and assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs. They work very well together in planning appropriate work for them and their progress is very good. The National Literacy Strategy has introduced a great deal of new material and different ways of working. The pupils have adapted very well to these changes and this has enabled them to extend and develop their skills even further.

128. The pupils really enjoy their English lessons and they are very well motivated and eager to learn. They join in discussions, working collaboratively together when they are writing shared accounts or investigations. They sort out books and equipment quickly and efficiently at the start of each lesson and throughout the lessons pupils' concentration is very good indeed.

129. Teaching is a strength. Good planning, leadership and training for the literacy sessions enable staff to be confident in delivering the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils' progress is accelerating and their standards are improving all round. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is good and at Key Stage 2 it is very good. At both key stages there are many planned opportunities to develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Teachers are consistent in the ways in which they manage the literacy strategy so that learning is built upon and developed. The structure of these lessons enables teachers to focus on particular skills and to build on them in subsequent lessons. In a lesson with Year 1 and Year 2 pupils they were writing instructions about how to make a sandwich. The specific vocabulary such as bread, butter, cheese and chocolate spread was identified and listed, as well as the clear instructions about how to make the sandwich. This enabled all the pupils to extend their vocabulary, their reading and their writing skills. Another strength is the use of questions, which allow pupils to extend their knowledge; for example, in a Year 4 lesson 'What is an opponent?' followed by 'Give me another word for an opponent' were

specifically targeted at an individual pupil to find out how much she understood. Regular homework supports the work done in class. Teachers check what pupils know and understand on a day-to-day basis and good use is made of formal assessments so that progress and attainment are monitored successfully. In the minority of lessons where teaching was less effective, mostly with the youngest pupils, the work was too hard for a minority of pupils and there were missed opportunities to reinforce how the work was to be set out.

## Mathematics

130. Standards have risen since the previous inspection. In 1998 the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that attainment was close to the national average and well above the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the both the expected Level 2 and the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together the boys' performance in mathematics was much higher than that of the girls. The school has steadily raised standards over the last four years. The school's 1999 test results show an increase on the previous years.
131. In 1998 the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that attainment was above the national average and well above the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was above the national average and the percentage achieving the higher Level 5 was close to the national average. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together test results show that the girls' performance in mathematics was higher than that of the boys. The school has steadily raised standards over the last four years. The school's results for 1999 show an increase on the previous years, particularly the percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5.
132. Inspection findings show attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is above national expectations. Higher attaining pupils reach a very good standard. Pupils are highly competent at simple addition and subtraction and are gaining a firm understanding of multiplication. They construct simple graphs, accurately compare and measure lengths and weights and can identify two and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils are acquiring an ability to count in tens and an understanding of place value. They double and halve numbers confidently and can find fractions of shapes.
133. By the end of Key Stage 2 attainment is well above national expectations. Pupils are competent in the four rules of number and with long multiplication. In data handling pupils collect information about favourite ice creams from which they create various forms of graphs. They calculate area, perimeter and volume and measure length and capacity accurately. They have a very good grasp of the equivalence of fractions and their decimal counterparts. They skilfully practise counting methods involving multiplication and negative numbers and make predictions from the observed patterns.
134. Progress in lessons and over time is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. The clear objectives shared at the beginning and end of lessons, the high expectations of teachers and the generally brisk pace of lessons enhance the speed of progress. The oldest pupils show a good grasp of tables and of the strategies necessary for accurate practice within lessons. The development of numeracy skills continues to be a focus. Work on problem solving and investigation is represented in the work of the school. Pupils have many opportunities to study mathematical patterns and relationships. Work matches pupils' ability well throughout the school. Pupils receive work which is appropriately challenging. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress at Key Stage

1 and Key Stage 2. They receive extra support, which enables them to maintain their very good progress. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress in using calculations by the end of Key Stage 2.

135. Standards of numeracy are excellent overall and pupils are most confident in their use of number and measurement. Numeracy across the curriculum is enhanced in science, design technology, geography, dance and music. Pupils develop databases and graphs to depict information. They make some use of information technology to present mathematical information but this is currently under-developed.

136. Pupils have very positive attitudes to mathematics. They develop a strong sense of self-esteem. They listen carefully and co-operate well in small groups. They sustain concentration well and have very good attitudes to learning. They work independently and take a pride in their presentation. They are polite, well managed and share resources sensibly. Pupils' very good behaviour has a positive effect on their learning.

137. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 with some very good teaching at the end of the key stage. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 2. Planning is thorough and all teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject. Expectations are realistic for higher and lower attaining pupils including those with special educational needs. Effective support ensures that these pupils make very good progress. Learning objectives are very clear. A very good example occurred in Year 2 where pupils were halving and quartering shapes before recording each part as a fraction. This helped them to recall the names of shapes and their properties as well as improving their numeracy skills. This occurred because the teacher knows her subject well and plans suitable tasks which challenge and extend. Pupils are well managed and the quality of day-to-day assessment is consistent and effective throughout the school. Regular homework usually supports work set in class.

#### 145. **Science**

138. Standards have risen significantly since the last inspection. In 1998 the results of the national teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 show that attainment was close to the national average and high when compared with the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was close to the national average but well above the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well below the national average but it was close to the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. The school's results for 1999 show that standards have been maintained.

139. The 1998 the results of the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that attainment was close to the national average and well above the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. The number of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was above the national average. The number achieving the higher Level 5 was below the national average. When compared with pupils from similar schools the number achieving expected and higher levels was well above average. The 1999 results show further improvement in that the locally published figures show the number of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 is above the national average and the number achieving the higher Level 5 is similar to the national average. Taking the three years 1996 to 1998 together the performance of boys is significantly lower than that of girls. The school has steadily raised standards over the last four years, achieving national averages in 1998 and 1999.

140. The difference between the results of teacher assessments and national tests and inspection evidence is due to the good standards the pupils reach in lessons, particularly in investigative science. Year 1 confidently use plastic droppers and distinguish between waterproof and non-waterproof materials. They describe simple features of materials. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils confidently talk about the differences between plants and animals. They make good observations of plant structures, drawing and labelling them well. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of how shadows are formed, distinguishing between the formation of long and short ones. They draw and annotate diagrams, explaining vocabulary very well. The pupils have a very good written record of work, sustaining good standards throughout the term. Lower attaining pupils are supported very well to reach expected standards in lessons.
141. Progress of boys and girls, including those who are higher attaining and those who speak English as an additional language, is good throughout the school. Pupils make very good progress in investigation skills. As a result of very well planned lessons in both key stages they develop very good observation and recording skills and continually improve practical techniques. Year 1 have made very good spectacles, understanding the need to use transparent paper for the lenses. They make good predictions about which materials will keep them warmest. Year 3 make good progress in understanding the principle of magnetism but the standard of written work is below average. Year 4 develop ideas well through good quality discussion with the teacher. They make good progress in analysing the ideas behind separation of solids and liquids as a result of very well prepared practical materials. Year 5 pupils make very good gains in knowledge and understanding about the loudness and pitch of a note as a result of high quality discussion of practical findings with the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of very good systems of support.
142. Behaviour in lessons is very good and pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They gain excellent personal development. The youngest listen carefully to the teacher, putting hands up to ask questions, excited by the work. They share resources amicably. Their enthusiasm makes a positive contribution to attainment and progress. Pupils in Year 2 are thrilled to be using very attractive resources, examining them with great interest. They are very keen to answer questions and work very hard during the practical task, talking with each other as they draw and label plants.
143. In Key Stage 2 Year 3 enjoy a science quiz which improves their knowledge of magnetism. Pupils work very well in teams, organising apparatus independently, supporting one other and developing a good sense of responsibility for their work. They take their learning seriously and are keen to summarise the main points of the lesson. Older pupils are all very positive, aiming to finish work. Year 6 pupils work very hard trying to answer challenging questions, recognising mistakes and correcting them. Each pupil wants to achieve well.
144. The overall quality of teaching is very good. A strength in the teaching is the extent to which good quality investigations underpin the teaching of new concepts. Pupils are encouraged to think and write as scientists and in the very best lessons are given time to express themselves clearly, developing good scientific language.
145. Planning is very good because teachers have seen the need to equip and develop skills over time. Good knowledge of the National Curriculum results in good sequential learning year by year. Teachers assess pupils as a regular part of teaching. They work closely with

individuals and small groups, monitoring progress. The teachers share and review lesson objectives helping pupils towards a clear view of what has been achieved

146. Teachers have a very good understanding of how pupils learn. In Year 1 the teacher draws on knowledge from an earlier lesson, helping pupils to recall which material was best for keeping toys warm and begin to consider which materials are best for keeping you dry. At their best teachers are very imaginative in presenting ideas to pupils, making very good use of visual resources that stimulate them.

147. Relationships are very good, encouraging pupils to answer questions. Teachers are very good role models in talking and writing scientifically and this results in good standards of scientific writing and speaking. They have high expectations of pupils in requiring them to make their own decisions about equipment. This results in very good personal development of pupils.

148. Teachers make very good use of learning resources. All lessons have some practical involvement by pupils. Teachers link new ideas to appropriate vocabulary which they display very well in classrooms. New computers are beginning to be used well in showing pupils how to display and analyse experimental results.

**156. Information technology**

149. The school has successfully addressed the key issue from the previous inspection and has raised expectations. Teachers now teach all elements of the subject.

150. Attainment is close to national expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards in word processing are good at the end of Key Stage 2 but skills in data handling are currently less well developed. Attainment in control and monitoring is similar to national expectations.

151. At the end of Key Stage 1 all pupils are successful in opening a word processing program and their file of work. They all locate the size of script and fonts on the tool bar, amend it and change the style of writing. The pupils enter brief sentences and successfully correct mistakes. A number of higher attaining boys are very quick at exiting from 'Word' and closing down the computer. Discussion with older pupils indicates appropriate use of a toy floor robot to control direction of a moving object.

152. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have developed good routines. Each pupil has an individual disc to store work and a notebook for recording operations. They design attractive book covers by transferring illustrations into text and are adept at copying and pasting. The pupils talk readily about the procedures using the correct terminology and discussing problems encountered and how to overcome them. Planning indicates Year 6 will have created and amended a data base and analysed information after a further term of work.

153. Progress made by boys and girls, including those who are higher attaining and who speak English as an additional language, is good in both key stages. The rate of progress is increasing as teachers make more use of the recently installed computer suite in the library. For example, Year 2 learn to edit text very quickly because each pupil has access to a computer. Teachers continue to make good use of computers sited in classrooms to further enhance learning. Pupils in the Reception and Year 1 class begin the lesson with very little knowledge of computer terms such as 'space bar'. By the end of the lesson the majority know and use the space bar, know the name of 'mouse' and higher attaining pupils use it to click and move the pointer. In Years 1 and 2 pupils collect data about how they travel to school and quickly learn how to enter the information on to the computer. Year 3



make good progress in using the computer to support spelling during literacy lessons and have sound word processing skills. They find information about Ancient Greece using a CD ROM. In the library pupils in Year 4 arrange a newspaper article in columns, amend text and insert an illustration from an art program. Higher attaining pupils complete the task and print their work in the time allowed. They use a screen turtle to control a change of direction. The pupils are learning to manipulate sound using the electronic keyboard, tape recorder and CD ROM. Lower attaining pupils in Year 5 make good gains in literacy, improving their spelling using the self-learning package with very good support from a learning assistant.

154. The quality of teaching is good. The whole school approach to planning is effective, particularly in improving standards of literacy. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in using language and number software for individual learning. A planned visit to a commercial motor company is very well designed to extend knowledge and understanding of 'control and monitoring' for three classes in Key Stage 2 to use traffic lights and sliding doors. This represents a positive business link to increase the experience of pupils in this area of the curriculum. Very good use of teacher modelling of data-handling in science has shown pupils in Years 3 and 4 the benefits of analysing experimental results by computerised graphs.

155. Teachers monitor successfully the progress pupils are making during lessons. A very good system of assessment is being developed, identifying clear and specific criteria for measuring pupils' progress. Teachers manage the behaviour of pupils in the computer area very well to introduce new ideas and evaluate earlier learning. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Teachers use resources well and the whole staff is increasing in confidence as they train in the use of new packages and equipment.

156. Pupils are very motivated to improve their skills. They are attentive to instructions and enjoy their work, appreciating their equipment. The pupils try hard to finish tasks in the given time and are proud of their work. The youngest are very keen to learn and listen to the teacher during a whole class demonstration. Pupils are rapidly gaining improved independence from the regular use of a good resource.

157. The school is updating its scheme of work to absorb new national guidance. The scheme will include very good links to raising standards across the curriculum with a current focus on literacy. As the scheme takes shape it is important to involve subject co-ordinators in meeting all subject requirements in Key Stage 2, particularly the importance of data handling to subjects such as science and geography.

165.

## 165. **Other subjects or courses**

### **Art**

158. The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and has provided more opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 to experiment with colour mixing and choose appropriate media. Pupils in both key stages now use sketch books.

159. Standards are close to those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1 and they are above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound

progress at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. In both key stages the pupils competently work in two and three dimensions using a range of media and simple tools with due regard to safety. They clearly enjoy their work, behave well and share resources amicably. Pupils in Year 1 make bright, colourful blow paintings and bubble prints. In Year 2 they make attractive winter pictures using chalk on black paper. They make careful observational drawings of exotic fruits and use pattern well to show texture, for example of a pineapple. The pupils study the work of artists such as Hockney, Rembrandt and Mary Cassatt and produce work in a similar style. In Key Stage 2 the pupils build on their skills and are able to represent what they see and imagine using pencils, paint, print, clay, papier-mâché and textiles. Their work shows increasing attention to detail and their drawings and paintings become more complex. They study the work of artists such as Matisse, Monet, Levina Teerline, Holbein and Da Vinci and produce good quality work in similar styles. The pupils develop their colour mixing skills to produce realistic skin tones. In Years 3 and 4 they make careful outline drawings of Greek vases in black pastel and add highlights in white to show the effect of light. In Year 5 the pupils competently use chicken wire and modroc to sculpt a three-dimensional model of 'The Iron Man'. Throughout the school the pupils begin to evaluate their own work and that of others in terms of what was intended. They make use of art computer programs to support their work.

160. It is not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1, but in the one lesson observed it was good. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good. Clear planning for each year group identifies work in a good range of media and the development of skills. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development; for example, the pupils study the work of artists past and present from a range of cultures. Throughout the school the pupils use their skills well to support learning in other subjects, for example in science, religious education and history.

### **Design and technology**

161. The school has successfully addressed the key issue identified in the previous report and has raised expectations. The subject is now better developed within the school and staff have increased their knowledge through training.

162. Pupils make good progress at both key stages. Years 1 and 2 pupils develop good skills in paper technology and in using tools. They join different textures of paper, illustrating opaque and transparent materials. The pupils use construction kits, making effective models of different forms of transport. Year 5 pupils have made very effective fairground roundabouts using scientific knowledge of cogs and wheels. They have used an attractive range of materials for decoration, evaluating the effects of colour. The pupils make very good progress in completing staged plans for musical instruments, listing all the items they will need. They have very good organisational skills in developing the task. Work on display shows pupils in Year 6 have reached good standards in designing models and in producing structures that represent periods of history, culminating in the Millennium Dome. They talk about the research they did for the designs and how they have strengthened each structure. The pupils have used skills of measuring and joining and have improved such techniques as working with papier-mâché. Pupils enjoy design technology. They gain a good sense of purpose, working very well in pairs, enjoying good relationships with adults and sustaining concentration because of good support. The pupils are very motivated by tasks, take considerable care and are proud of their achievements. The oldest talk confidently about their designs, recognising that efforts made in developing skills improve the quality of their work. They take full responsibility for working safely with tools and

clearing away equipment.

163. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching but it was very good in the lesson seen. Very good discussion techniques help pupils evaluate ideas for design. High expectations for independence are successful with very effective grouping to ensure pupils make good progress. Effective planning is beginning to ensure pupils make good progress over time. Teachers have worked well to improve the design elements with a good range of scale drawings in Key Stage 2. Good links with science and history are encouraging pupils to apply their knowledge thereby improving their understanding of scientific principles.

## Geography

164. The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Pupils now have many planned opportunities to find things out for themselves and to analyse information and make judgements.
165. Standards are above national expectations at the end of both key stages and as pupils move through the school they make good progress. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Mapping skills are developing well and progress accelerates in Year 6. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 make plans of their classroom and they can talk about the differences between desert and polar climates. Many of them can identify the different types of clothes needed in each climate. Teachers build upon and develop this work in Key Stage 2. Pupils can use and interpret different maps, identifying features such as deserts, rivers, lakes and cities. By the time they reach Year 6 pupils' research skills have developed well. They can compare and contrast different areas, explaining how and why the climates differ. Pupils use literacy and numeracy skills successfully throughout the school, for example to monitor and record rainfall and temperature.
166. Pupils really enjoy geography and talk with great enthusiasm about their work. They handle atlases, globes and maps with confidence and they know how to use all their books and resources effectively. During discussions pupils refer to previously taught work, explaining clearly and concisely how they have tackled topics such as pollution and environmental issues.
167. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons well with an appropriate balance between direct teaching, discussion and practical work helping progress to be sustained. They make good use of questions such as 'Where is the best place for a settlement in a desert?' followed by 'What are the reasons for that?'. Teachers waste no time and lessons move forward at a brisk pace. They always give attention to how much time is available to complete research or written tasks and this keeps pupils' attention well focused on the task in hand. All staff use the correct geographical terms helping pupils to extend their vocabulary as well as their knowledge.

## History

168. Evidence from pupils' work and discussions with them show that good progress is made over time. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 and only three lessons were seen at Key Stage 2 but the standards reached at the previous inspection have improved. At the end of Key Stage 1 the pupils' attainment is close to national expectations and at the end of Key Stage 2 it is above expectations. In Key Stage 1 younger pupils are developing an understanding of chronology and they are aware that as time passes there are changes in people as they grow older. They know about the past and can talk about events such as birthdays, holidays and visits to relatives. In Years 1 and 2 they look at toys and homes from long ago. They look at Victorian people and Victorian schools and enjoy linking their school with the area around them.
169. In Key Stage 2 older pupils tackle their work with increasing confidence, using some materials to interpret events such as the Ancient Greek Black figure style of pottery and life at this time. They know at what point in time Henry VIII lived and about life in Britain since the Second World War. Their understanding of chronology is secure. Standards are good at

both key stages. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively to read, research and interpret a range of material as well as recording their findings appropriately and accurately. They make good use of information technology at Key Stage 2. All pupils enjoy history and they concentrate hard and apply themselves well because they are interested.

170. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject in history with some good teaching at Key Stage 2. They plan lessons well with an appropriate range of tasks well matched to pupils' ability. They make good use of a range of resources such as books, artefacts and suitable information technology programs.

#### 178. **Music**

171. The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. Lessons with the pianist now take place fortnightly and the pupils learn a wider range of songs connected with class topics and cultural festivals.

172. Standards in performing and composing are close to those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound progress in performing and composing at both key stages. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about progress in listening and appraising. The pupils know many songs and hymns from memory, such as 'If I were a butterfly', 'Big Foot', and 'I'm a dingle-dangle scarecrow' and perform them tunefully and with clear diction. Boys and girls sing confidently and rehearse for performances such as acts of collective worship, a Christmas musical and a termly music sharing hour. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a sequence of music to create the effect of rain, storm, wind, sun and snow and successfully follow a graphic score. Pupils in Year 3 confidently use percussion instruments and their voices to create a musical interpretation of a story inspired by the picture 'Eagle and the snake'. Pupils in Year 6 successfully create the musical effect of the desert, rainforest, polar climate and a monsoon. They record their work, refine it and read their graphic score during a performance. At Key Stage 2 the pupils have the opportunity to work with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. The school also enriches its provision by regularly taking pupils to concerts such as 'Blast from the Past' and 'Around the world in 80 minutes'. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have also attended a service of joy to celebrate the Millennium in central Birmingham. Pupils can extend their skills and interest by joining the recorder club. The school is awaiting the delivery of the instruments for its steel band and tuition is planned for pupils who wish to take part.

173. There is no evidence of pupils using computer programs to compose pieces of music or to research information about the subject. The pupils' listening skills are well developed in music, for example during the whole-school music sharing performances. Skills in music support learning well in other subjects such as religious education. All pupils clearly enjoy the subject, are attentive and concentrate well. They are well behaved and work hard to improve their performance.

174. There is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching but in the two lessons observed it was good. Clear planning for each year group shows how skills in listening and appraising, performing and composing will be built on as the pupils move through the school but does not clearly show listening to music from a variety of cultures. The subject is used well to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, and social development.

## 182. **Physical education**

175. Standards are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. Only a small number of gymnastics, games, swimming and dance lessons took place and in these lessons progress was good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 are able to control a ball well in terms of direction, correct positioning of body and determining how hard to hit a ball. Dance skills are developed well throughout the school and a high quality performance was given by a Year 4 class to the whole school during a music assembly. Swimming skills are progressing well and by Year 5 most pupils are able to swim 25 metres. Pupils perform gymnastics activities well in Year 2, linking floor and apparatus work and know that the heart is a muscle and needs to be warmed up before rigorous activity as they play the pirate game 'Ship Ahoy'. At Key Stage 1 pupils are able to work out ways of moving over and under large apparatus in the hall and can curl up, crawl, balance on a beam and climb the wall bars. They can throw and catch bean bags and quoits. Their dance skills develop well and they are encouraged to evaluate one another's performance. As pupils move through the school their judgements about performances are more sophisticated and they are increasingly used to refine and improve individual performances. In the lessons seen attainment is good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
176. Pupils' attitudes are very good with all pupils taking part enthusiastically and energetically. In swimming younger pupils learn to kick under water and are eager and responsive. All of them understand the health and safety aspects of using apparatus. The pupils enjoy gymnastics very much and this has a significant and beneficial impact on their physical development. Pupils work hard during gymnastics and dance to improve the quality of their movements. They concentrate and listen well and show respect for one another when appraising their movements.
177. The quality of teaching is good, with some very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 1. Planning is effective and teachers have high expectations about what pupils are capable of achieving as in a gymnastics lesson when pupils were stretching and learning to control all parts of their body. The main strengths are in the way teachers share their objectives, introduce new skills and involve pupils in planning, reviewing and demonstrating their performances. Teachers use a wide range of strategies to develop balancing skills, individual work and collaborative team work.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **185. Summary of inspection evidence**

178. The inspection team consisted of five inspectors, one of whom was a lay inspector. The team spent a combined total of 19 days altogether gathering evidence. During the inspection they saw 75 lessons or sessions. They spent over 57 hours observing lessons. Discussions with pupils also took place during lessons and at other times. Specific discussions with pupils representing different age and ability groups contributed to evidence of attainment, for instance, in reading. The team examined samples of pupils' work from each year group separately and during the daily activities in the classroom. They drew other evidence from displays of work, records and reports. They held discussions with members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching and governors. They also scrutinised a wide range of documentation provided by the school. They obtained the views of parents on aspects of school life in a specific meeting arranged for this purpose and by means of a questionnaire. Ten parents attended the meeting and 27 per cent returned completed questionnaires.

## 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
YR – Y6	246	4	59	134
Nursery School	47	0	0	31

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21

#### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked each week	273

#### Qualified teachers (Nursery school)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.5

#### Education support staff (Nursery school)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	65

Average class size:	27.3
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## Financial data

Financial year: 

1998/99
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	£
Total income	477,626
Total expenditure	458,649
Expenditure per pupil	1,951.70
Balance brought forward from previous year	44,176
Balance carried forward to next year	63,153

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

191

Number of questionnaires returned:

51

Twenty seven per cent of parents returned a completed questionnaire

### 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	51	45	4	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	59	37	2	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	31	41	20	8	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	51	37	10	2	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	51	39	8	2	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	57	37	6	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	65	24	11	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	61	31	6	2	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	55	37	8	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	53	31	12	4	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	76	18	6	0	0

### Other issues raised by parents

Parking outside the school