

INSPECTION REPORT

COLMERS FARM INFANT SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103187

Headteacher: Ms J. Whitehouse

Reporting inspector: G. W. Cooper

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 24th January 2001

Inspection number: 188643

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rob Ffello
Date of previous inspection:	10 th – 14 th June 1996

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23647	Mr G. W. Cooper	Registered inspector	Science Music Physical education Religious education	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well is the school led and managed What should the school do to improve further?
8982	Mrs. K. Berry	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19709	Mrs. J. Fisher	Team inspector	English Geography History Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Equality of opportunity Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
11611	Mr J. Hall	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Colmers Farm Infant school is about average in size for infant schools. Fifty-two boys and girls attend the reception classes full time, with 119 boys and girls in Years 1 and 2. Most pupils are of a white British background. A very small number of pupils come from other ethnic backgrounds but are British by birth. This is low compared with schools nationally. Two children learn English as an additional language. The acquisition of English is not a barrier to their learning. There are 42 pupils on the special educational needs register, two of whom have a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils on the register is about average for schools in England. Most of the pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties, although a significant number have emotional and behavioural difficulties. When they enter school, almost all children have had nursery school experience. Attainment on entry varies from year to year but it is generally below the level expected of children of this age. A high proportion of pupils (about 42 per cent) is entitled to a free school meal. About 14 per cent of pupils entered or left the school at times other than the normal starting and finishing dates. This has a significant bearing on the standards attained. The school has recently entered the 'Excellence in Cities' initiative. A 'nurture' group (The Rainbow Class) has been established to cater for the needs of pupils identified as having specific emotional and behavioural difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Current standards of attainment are broadly in line with national standards but better when compared with schools of similar background. The quality of teaching, leadership and management are consistently good and frequently very good. The school provides good value for money.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

What the school does well

- Standards are in line with the national standard when pupils are seven except in writing. Good standards are attained in art and design.
- The leadership and management of the head and senior staff are very good and well complemented by the significant role played by the governing body.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good and teaching is good overall throughout the school.
- The school makes very good provision for the personal development of pupils and this results in positive attitudes to school, including very good behaviour and relationships.
- A determination to promote equality of opportunity and access is strength of the school.
- The school ensures good care of its pupils and this includes very good procedures for assessing attainment and progress.

What could be improved

- Attainment in writing is below the standard expected by the time pupils are seven.
- The school has an effective new scheme of work for religious education, which has not yet been implemented.
- Some aspects of the accommodation are dangerous: in particular the safety of the outside window copings and the provision for meal times.
- Attendance is consistently below the national average and this affects the standards of attainment of a minority of pupils
- The school makes little provision for curriculum enrichment through activities out of school hours.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in June, 1996. Good improvement has been secured since then. On the basis of levels of attainment expected nationally, standards have risen significantly. Over the past four years, the trend in attainment has been upward, despite year by year peaks and troughs. The school has maintained its provision through teaching and learning, the curriculum and leadership and management since the previous inspection. The key issues of the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. National Curriculum programmes of study are efficiently implemented and the allocation of time for subjects is appropriate. The procedures for assessment are very thorough although there is still room for the school to improve the use of the comprehensive data it has. The procedures, provision and support for pupils with special educational needs are effective, meeting the expectations of the code of practice. Good use is made of other agencies when providing for special needs pupils. Although the school is continuing to improve resources for religious education, provision is much better than at the previous inspection. There is capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
reading	D	E	D	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
writing	C	E	D	B	
mathematics	A	E*	D	B	

Standards of attainment vary greatly from year to year. The E* for mathematics in 1999 indicates attainment which is in the lowest five per cent nationally. The school has data to show that in that particular year, a significant number of higher attaining pupils left the school while those joining were largely lower attainers. Since then standards have risen and are continuing to rise. There is a significant rise in standards since the previous inspection. Results for 2000 indicate attainment below the national level but above and well above the average for similar schools. Of the areas of the curriculum tested, attainment in reading was the strongest. In the work seen during inspection, standards have continued to rise and they are broadly in line with the national standard in reading, mathematics and science. Attainment in writing remains below that expected. Attainment in art and design is good. Attainment in all the other subjects of the curriculum is in line with the standard expected. Children in the Foundation Stage (reception classes) attain standards that are similar to those expected of children of their age. As they enter school with a lower than average level of acquired skills and knowledge, children make good progress and achieve well. The school sets internal targets based on what it aspires to when judged against attainment on entry. These targets are becoming more challenging and pupils are on course to achieve the targets set. The school places a particular emphasis on speaking and listening and pupils achieve well in terms of their prior attainment. Given attainment on entry, rising standards and good comparisons with similar schools, pupils achieve well, although there is room for improvement, especially in writing. Pupils make good progress, both over time and in lessons.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are very positive about their school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. This is a strength of the school. It is rare than pupil is badly behaved and this includes pupils identified as having specific behaviour difficulties. There have been no recent exclusions
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils enjoy a healthy attitude towards each other, co-operate well and enjoy their relationships with adults and other pupils.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Good attendance is not a high priority for a number of families. The school does everything it can to encourage and promote good attendance. The poor attendance of a minority affects their standards of attainment.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

All lessons were satisfactory or better. Thirty three per cent of lessons were very good or better. Eighty three per cent of lessons were good or better. The strongest teaching in the school was found in the two reception classes. Very good teaching in the reception classes gets these children off to a flying start in their education. Consistently good teaching then reinforces learning for pupils in the rest of the school. English and mathematics are well taught and this has helped raise the quality of learning of pupils. Significant strengths in teaching include:

- good strategies for the management of pupils,
- highly effective questioning of pupils which encourages them to think as they learn,
- good use of strong beginnings and endings to lessons,
- consistent teacher planning for parallel classes of pupils of the same age
- and teacher discussions with pupils about what needs to be learned that keeps them well focused on what they need to learn throughout the lesson.

There are no major weaknesses in teaching and the consistent quality of teaching means that pupils learn consistently well. There is room to improve the quality of learning by placing more emphasis on the development and use of writing skills and greater use of assessment data. Despite this, teachers are effective in teaching literacy and numeracy. The school does everything it can to promote the learning of all pupils: boys and girls, higher and lower attainers, those who come from different backgrounds. A particular measure of this is in the planning of special needs staff and staff in the 'nurture' group to ensure the pupils they teach get equal curricular opportunities. This is a strength of the school's provision. Learning is enhanced by the very good behaviour of pupils, which makes them ready for their lessons and by the school's emphasis on good quality speaking and listening.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a rich and stimulating learning environment.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Careful attention is given to ensuring full implementation of the spirit and intention of the code of practice for special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Very few pupils are identified as learning English as a new language. No special provision is made for these pupils. The acquisition of English is not a barrier to their learning. The progress they make is similar to that of other pupils of the same age.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. This is a strong feature of the provision made by the school. It ensures that learning is a rewarding and satisfying experience for pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. The school is caring community. Very good procedures to assess and monitor learning have been established.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good. Parents are very positive in what they feel about the school. However, the school finds it difficult to involve some parents in its work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. This is a strength of the school. There is a perceptive and effective style of leadership. Efficient management ensures that tasks get done in a healthy and open atmosphere. Delegation of responsibilities is good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Statutory responsibilities are fully delivered. The governing body is committed, well informed and involved in the school's development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. This is a school that knows its strengths and areas for development through effective monitoring. Action is taken to secure improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school is well staffed. Accommodation is spacious but there are some deficiencies. Resources are good. The school is well aware of the need to get best value for available finance through standards and provision.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That their child likes school and makes good progress.• That behaviour is good in the school.• That teaching and leadership and management are good.• That the school has high expectations and is approachable. It works closely with parents.• That children are encouraged to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More provision of opportunities for activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school. Parents expressed a concern about the exterior condition of the building, particularly about the condition of the window copings. The inspection team agrees that action should be taken to make repairs. The governing body is also concerned about this. Most extra-curricular activities in primary schools are provided for pupils in the age range eight to eleven. Therefore the school is not unusual in the lack of provision identified. However, the inspection team agrees that the school could give more thought to the provision of activities outside lessons while still taking into account the age related needs of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter full time school, most have had previous experience in nursery school. Assessment of their knowledge, skills and understanding indicates that in most years, attainment is below that expected of children of the same age. This year's assessment of attainment on entry is rather higher than in most years.

2. Assessment records show that the majority of children enter school with skills that are below those expected in all the 6 areas of learning. Attainment is slightly better this year than it has been in the past. Children achieve well in all areas of learning. Most children are on target to achieve the early learning goals on communication, language and literacy development, mathematical and physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and creative development. They are on course to exceed the goals in personal, social and emotional development. Children are confident in talking, enjoy their role-play and listening to stories. In reading many are familiar with letters and sounds, and all children attempt to 'write'. In mathematics, they are beginning to count, recognise and understand numerals to 10 and beyond and identify and compare flat shapes such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles. Children are developing very good attitudes to learning, sustain concentration, persevere with their work and show some independence. Their behaviour is very good. They share equipment well and are beginning to work collaboratively.

3. Results of standards tests and teacher assessments vary greatly from year to year. By the age of seven, attainment in mathematics was well above average in 1998 but within the lowest five per cent of results nationally in 1999. The results of National Curriculum tests in 2000 show that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was below the national average. However, when results are compared with schools in similar social and economic circumstances, attainment in reading is well above average and above average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments for 2000 in science indicate attainment well below that of schools nationally. Although trends in attainment have been erratic, they have improved since 1999 and the evidence of work seen during inspection indicates continued improvement. Assessment data available to the school shows that over a four year period there is little difference in the attainment of boys and girls, except in writing where girls do better than boys.

4. In the work seen during the week of inspection, by the age of seven, attainment is in line with the standard expected nationally in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics, science, information technology, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education. Attainment in writing is below that standard. Attainment in art and design is above the standard expected. Given prior attainment on entering full time school, pupils attain well. The standards seen are better than those suggested by National Curriculum tests. In English and in mathematics, good teaching is having a positive effect and pupils are benefiting from the impact of national strategies in literacy and numeracy. In science, several factors contribute towards a significant rise in standards. Science is now taught as a subject in its own right with a greater emphasis on investigative and practical science. What is expected of teachers and pupils is clearer because the scheme of work has been redeveloped and implemented. An additional factor is that the subject co-ordinator now teaches at the end of the key stage. On the whole, standards in other subjects of the curriculum have been maintained since the previous inspection. An apparent fall in information and communication technology (ICT) standards is the result of rapid changes in the resources available. The school is just now catching up with this through the imminent

opening of its computer suite. The school can point to improvement through the numbers of pupils now achieving the national standard compared to the number achieving this standard at the time of the previous inspection.

5. Based on its comprehensive knowledge of what pupils already know, the school sets internal targets for attainment by the time pupils are seven. Analysis of the data shows where the school has added value over time. School data suggests that more pupils make better progress than expected. Target setting is becoming more rigorous as the school develops its systems and has undoubtedly had an impact on recent improvement in standards. A significant number of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. Although these pupils rarely make learning gains that enable them to achieve the standard expected for their age, they make satisfactory progress through the teaching and provision made for them. A particular feature of the school is the progress made in personal development by pupils attending the 'Rainbow Class' that gives specific personal and curriculum support to pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This provision is instrumental in ensuring that these pupils make significant personal gains but also that they maintain contact with the mainstream curriculum and make progress in their learning. No additional provision is made for the very small number of pupils learning English as an additional language. However, these pupils make gains in learning similar to those of other pupils. Language acquisition is not a barrier to their learning. All pupils make appropriate gains in literacy and mathematical skills. However, the skills learned as exercises in literacy lessons - such as spelling, punctuation and other aspects of English grammar - are not successfully transferred into pupils' extended writing in other curriculum subjects and attainment in writing remains below the standard expected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils' attitudes to school and to their work are good. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils respond to the praise and reinforcement they receive and enjoy coming to school. They gain in confidence. They are eager to take part and express their own views as well as listening to others. Spontaneous applause is frequently given to other children for their effort or achievement. The good teaching inspires them, keeping their interest high so they remain engrossed in their activities. They love to be involved in learning and are encouraged to speak freely and without fear of being wrong. Consequently they use their initiative more and enjoy carrying out the responsibilities given to them in mature way. Some pupils have great difficulty socialising within the classroom and 'doing the right thing'. Given this, behaviour is very good and a strength of the school.

7. The Rainbow Class plays a major part in developing and nurturing pupils' relationships. It is successful in reintegrating pupils with difficulties into main stream classes. This has had a positive effect on the number of exclusions the school has had to make. There were no exclusions last year. Pupils work in a more positive atmosphere where respect and consideration of feelings is very much to the forefront of classroom activity. Relationships are also a strength and underpin the success the school has achieved in discouraging oppressive behaviour, promoting caring attitudes among pupils. Behaviour and relationships are now at a level where they have a significant impact on the way in which pupils learn. This accelerates their rate of progress over time.

8. Attendance for a significant number of pupils is disappointing and overall well below the national average. This is unsatisfactory. Pupils and parents say that children like coming to school. It is therefore extremely disappointing to the school that despite its best endeavours, attendance remains a problem. In some cases, pupils do not have the chance to develop their social skills or consolidate their learning because of poor attendance. Lateness is also a concern, causing disruption to lessons as well as developing bad habits for the future. The school has effective strategies to manage lateness.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

9. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In the lessons observed, eighty three percent of teaching was good or better. Thirty three per cent of lessons were very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The school has maintained a quality of teaching similar to that reported at the previous inspection. The effect of the good teaching is that pupils learn consistently well, achieving better standards than the average for similar schools. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage. This gets new entrants to the school off to a good start in their learning.

10. Teaching of English is good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and they use this structure to plan well for lessons. Planning includes clear objectives and details of work for groups of pupils, which is carefully matched to their ability, and reflected in the strategies used during lessons. Teachers expect the most of their pupils which is reflected in the language that they use when discussing books. Many pupils are confident using words such as "fiction" "non-fiction" "author" and "character" in response to the teachers' questions, and they understand the context in which the teacher uses such words. However, the teaching of the basic writing skills in all subjects receives less attention. Pupils' ability to form letters and numbers needs more rigour.

11. The teaching of mathematics is good. As a result, pupils make good progress in lessons. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and they have implemented it well in the classroom. A particular strength is the way in which teachers focus clearly on the objective of the lesson, reinforcing this throughout which enables pupils to understand clearly what they are doing and how they may improve. Teachers know their pupils well and the tasks and activities are well matched to their abilities both in the classroom and when pupils with special educational needs are working in the "Rainbow Class".

12. Teaching in science is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subject and use a range of appropriate vocabulary and strategies which increases pupils' confidence in their approach to science. For example, pupils in Year 1 are given opportunities to identify for themselves various types of materials around the school such as metals and plastics in a lesson about recognising and naming common materials. Teachers plan well for their lessons and have clear aims of what pupils should learn. They link what pupils have learnt in earlier lessons to their current work, which effectively reinforces their knowledge and helps them understand what they are doing.

13. Teachers provide pupils with many opportunities to use their ICT skills in a range of subjects. In geography, pupils use a CD-ROM to find out information about various parts of the world. Pupils in Year 2 compare the way a computer can be used to gather and present information on the frequency of birthday months to writing and drawing by hand. Teachers have a good grasp of the subject and give pupils the opportunity to discover how a computer can be of benefit in areas such as music, art and design and written presentation.

14. Good relationships with pupils are a strength of the school, which is evident in the way pupils confidently join in class discussions and answer teachers' questions. Teachers are determined that all pupils are involved in lessons. Boys and girls of all abilities are challenged by the style and content of teachers' questions. This helps them to increase their language and vocabulary, and become involved in their own learning. In most lessons teachers are very clear in their aims. They plan carefully and give pupils a very clear understanding of what they are learning by focusing on the main objective at every stage of the lesson. Teachers generally ensure that the pace of learning is maintained well by the very effective way they use the resources available and by briefing the support assistants clearly. In an art and design lesson in Year 1, the teacher led a good discussion on the different methods of printing and pupils maintained their obvious enthusiasm by beginning their work quickly with very skilful support and carefully arranged materials. On the infrequent occasions that the pace of learning is slower, the pupils cannot get through the quantity of work expected of them.

15. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and of those pupils with English as an additional language is good. Teachers ensure that work is matched carefully to the needs of pupils in classroom tasks. The "Rainbow Group" provides effective, relevant support when pupils are withdrawn. Teachers work closely together in English and mathematics to ensure that the work of pupils in this group is matched to the requirements of the National Curriculum. In other subject areas, such as design and technology in Year 1, pupils confidently join in a class discussion at the end of a lesson having returned from the "Rainbow Group" where they have worked on the same project.

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

16. The curriculum provided by the school is good. The Foundation Stage for the under sixes provides for all areas of children's learning and meets their needs well. The planning meets the requirements for the Foundation Stage. It provides children with a good education that promotes their intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them well for the next stage of their education.

17. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum of good quality and follows the guidelines for religious education in the locally agreed syllabus. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the school are good. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have been addressed and improvements in the school since the previous inspection are good overall. There has been insufficient progress in pupils' writing skills. Curriculum time devoted to the teaching of English, mathematics and science is balanced and is in line with national averages. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are securely in place and have a beneficial impact on pupils' learning.

18. The school has a full range of policies to support the step-by-step development of what pupils should know, be able to do and understand. Since the previous inspection the school has adopted national guidelines for some subjects. For others it has modified the local authority guidelines. There is a very good overall plan that shows when each aspect of the different subjects of the curriculum will be taught to the pupils. The framework for planning is well thought out and is implemented effectively and consistently throughout the school. Planning builds steadily from term to term and year to year and planning is well matched to the age range in each class.

19. The Literacy and Numeracy projects are well established. Very good strategies support the teaching of these skills. These have raised standards of teaching and learning

and also have been successful in endorsing the setting of pupils' personal targets. There is a strong emphasis on classroom work supporting literacy and numeracy. Very good organisation of guided reading and writing and work in the 'Rainbow Class' enhance this work. In these classes, sensitive and skilled support to all pupils, including the 'Rainbow Class', has a positive effect on pupils' learning.

20. There is provision for educational visits, mostly in the locality. At present, there is no extra-curricular provision. Pupils visit Umberslade farm, Kenilworth Castle and Avoncroft Museum to enhance their history and geography learning and experience ballet workshops from the Royal Birmingham Ballet Company. During the inspection, pupils visited the local church in connection with the topic 'Belonging'. Although there are some seasonal clubs, there is no regular pattern of activities out of lessons.

21. The provision for special education needs is good and enhanced by the provision made through the 'Rainbow Class'. The school has effective procedures for identifying which pupils need additional learning support. Plans for the learning of these pupils have sensible and practical targets. It is very clear to see from the reviews of targets where pupils have made progress and can move on to the next target. The pupils in 'Rainbow Class' receive particularly intensive support. This helps them to not only stay securely in contact with the curriculum they need but also to learn how to overcome their emotional and behavioural difficulties. Since the previous inspection the school has been successful in addressing the key issues surrounding the identification of and support for pupils with special needs.

22. The school continues to be fully committed to equality of access and opportunity for all pupils and has regard to all statutory requirements.

23. Acquisition of language is not a barrier to the progress of pupils for whom English is a second language. They have access to the full curriculum and make satisfactory progress. Planning and records indicate that the school meets the needs of these pupils well, both within the classroom and when withdrawn in small groups for support teaching. They receive good support both within the classroom and in small groups and are well integrated into the life and work of the school.

24. The programme for personal, social and health education offered to pupils is very good and is a strength of the school. Assemblies and 'Circle Time' are used very well to give pupils opportunities to explore a variety of issues of how to develop themselves and deal with difficult situations and issues that arise in their lives. For example, in the one assembly seen, pupils empathised with the feeling of the real mother in the story of King Solomon and the baby. Teachers present very good role models through their sensitive approach and use of very good strategies. The school has a sex education policy, which is implemented consistently throughout the school. External health providers support the delivery of health education, for example a school nurse visits to talk about personal hygiene and discusses issues regarding growing up with older pupils. The police come into school to talk to pupils about drug awareness and 'Stranger Danger', as a self-protection issue.

25. The school has satisfactory links with the community. A number of learning opportunities are provided through the curriculum using the community as a resource. The local church plays an important part in the religious education curriculum and the Minister is a regular visitor to the school. The Police and the Fire Service have also had a useful input into aspects of the school's provision. There are close links with local nurseries and the junior school with a good exchange of records and information. The school makes good use of college students and work experience pupils to support their provision and to provide them with invaluable experience.

26. Provision for the spiritual, social, moral and cultural education of all pupils is very good overall. The provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. The aims of the school in the school prospectus state clear principles that relate to the preparation of the pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that they will face in their lives. Since the previous inspection, the school has made a positive effort, focussing in an appropriate, successful way to strengthen the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

27. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good, with time and opportunity allowed for them to reflect on aspects of their lives. Pupils have a range of activities that give opportunities for quiet reflection. This is particularly well developed through whole-school, uplifting assemblies and church services, in which clear messages and appropriately related songs are used to reinforce the ethos of the school. Science lessons promote curiosity and amazement. The 'Rainbow Class' gives pupils opportunities to reflect upon their actions in a professional climate of support. Planning indicates that 'Circle Time' gives pupils opportunities to reflect upon the consequences of their actions on others. The school provides assemblies with a daily act of collective worship, which is broadly Christian in nature. Collective worship meets statutory requirements in full.

28. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils have a very good understanding of right and wrong. The school's code of conduct is appropriately simple and is displayed in classrooms for pupils to read. Adults are both professional and caring towards the pupils in their classes and the consistent application of the school rules by them ensures a good framework for the pupils' moral development. Rules are positive, encouraging appropriate attitudes and behaviour within the school community. Pupils are encouraged to understand the consequences of their own actions, to be honest, show self-restraint and contribute to the welfare of others in the school. Pupils are cheerful and confident. They relate positively to each other, adults and visitors with respect and courtesy. Parents recognise that these values have a positive effect on their children and believe that pupils generally show high standards of behaviour.

29. The provision for social development is also very good. Adults are very good role models and pupils are encouraged through praise to adopt appropriate social skills in relation to themselves and to each other. This very good practice is evident in the very good provision of the 'Rainbow' class. Pupils' self esteem is sensitively developed and pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility. For example, in literacy, pupils demonstrate confidently examples of their work on the whiteboards. There is a strong sense of purpose in the school, which encourages pupils to value themselves and each other. As a result they are polite, and treat each other, adults and visitors with respect and courtesy. The standard of art and design work and wide range of displays throughout the school celebrates success and promotes a good community spirit.

30. The cultural development of pupils is good. The curriculum offers a wide range of activities to develop pupils' local knowledge and cultural awareness. Knowledge of local culture is developed through subjects such as history and geography, for example, through pupils' work on 'Homes of Long Ago' and visits to Avoncroft museum, Kenilworth Castle and Umberslade Farm. Geography work extends to raising awareness and understanding of cultural diversity for example between Birmingham and the Sudan. A wider cultural awareness is developed through other curriculum areas such as in literacy where pupils read stories from China and Greece. A range of music provision reflects a variety of cultures and places, such as the music 'Peter and the Wolf' from Russia and 'Fanfare for the Common Man' by the American composer, Aaron Copeland. Pupils study the customs of Islam and Judaism in religious education lessons, but no members of other major world faiths visit the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school has maintained its good provision for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety since the last inspection. Parents are aware of this and support the good work of the school. Great care is taken to help pupils understand about healthy eating and how to keep safe. All medical and accident procedures are well established and maintained during lunch and break times. However, there is growing concern about the condition of the canteen area. The floor becomes hazardous in wet weather and is a danger to pupils. The school's arrangements for child protection are good. The quality of support for monitoring and supporting behaviour and incidences of bullying or inappropriate behaviour is very good and a strength of the provision. Good use is made of external agencies in deciding how to provide for pupils with special educational needs.

32. The development of the 'Rainbow Class' has had a beneficial effect not only for the pupils themselves, but also for staff and general classroom management. All adults share the school philosophy on behaviour so pupils are aware of their boundaries and respond accordingly. The staff work hard to develop relationships and social harmony and this is now beginning to have the desired effect. A lot of hard work has been put in to raise attendance and improve lateness. This has shown in the steady rise in attendance statistics over the last three years but unfortunately they are still unsatisfactory. The school does all it can to promote good attendance and punctuality. Outside agencies are involved in supporting families where possible.

33. The school has very good procedures for assessing, monitoring and supporting pupils' attainment and progress. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection report. The results that the pupils achieve in national tests are carefully analysed and compared with what pupils were achieving when they entered the school, giving teachers a clear picture of how well pupils have progressed. Teachers maintain thorough records of pupils' attainment and targets are set every term, with parental support. A "progress book" is maintained for every pupil, where examples of work over a period of time are gathered showing relative achievement. The use that teachers make of assessment information to guide their planning is satisfactory. Detailed targets are set for pupils in reading, writing and mathematics and expectations are set for each subject over a year. However, teachers are at an earlier stage in developing some areas consistently across the school. For example, making more extensive use of the "progress book" across a wider range of subjects and programmes of study, and using parts of the National Curriculum to assess this work for future planning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

34. The schools' partnership with parents is well established and progressing despite the loss of the home school liaison officer since the last inspection. Parents' views of the school remain positive and many appear well informed of new initiatives, as well as improvements. They are very supportive of the school's provision and care for their children, and have no major concerns. There is regular communication through letters and newsletters presented in a friendly format with good information on curriculum matters. The school provides three opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress and teachers make themselves available at other times on request. Annual reports present an honest and well-informed view of pupils' progress with areas for future development in some cases. Only a small number of parents take up the school's invitation to work alongside pupils in the classroom and despite a number of initiatives there is still little improvement in this area. Although parents are very generous when supporting fund raising activities and charity events, in many cases their support of their children's learning at home is disappointing. This makes it all the harder for

the school to maintain their side of the home school agreement to promote individual progress and raise standards.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. Leadership and management are very good. This has been a strength in raising standards of attainment and improving the quality of teaching and learning. The quality established at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. Among the indicators of strong leadership and management is the positive and successful way in which the key issues of the previous inspection have been met in the further development of the school. The headteacher is instrumental in creating an atmosphere of trust and confidence in which all adults relate positively while doing their work to a high level of competency. There are good strategies for sharing responsibilities. The deputy headteacher is effective in complementing the headteacher's skills. Staff have clear job descriptions and go about their duties enthusiastically. A particular feature of the school is the high quality of relationships that exist across all adults working in the school, teachers, classroom assistants, administrative staff, mealtime staff and cleaning and caretaking staff. Good leadership leads to good teaching and there are high expectations of pupils - both in the way they behave and relate to each other but also in the way they think and act in their schoolwork. Although subject co-ordinators have no financial responsibility, nor do they have the chance to see how other teachers work in the classroom, they take a good degree of responsibility for setting out how subjects should be taught and what should be taught. There is a good system for checking up on what has been taught. Where there have been classroom observations, in priority subjects, there has been good evaluation and development of teaching and the curriculum as a result. This has helped raise standards. The school is welcoming and friendly and well supported through its administrative staff and through the attitude of those who help at lunch times and those who care for the building.

36. Governors play a significant part in the work of the school. They meet their statutory responsibilities in monitoring the standards and provision of the school. They are aware of the fact that they do not visit the school sufficiently frequently. While they are well informed - through the headteacher reporting to them, through information about the budget and by being involved in developmental planning - little of the information they have is first hand. Direct observation of school provision and need is the best way of informing important decisions. The budget is well planned and monitored. Budget provision is clearly linked to the development plan that successfully identifies the school's most important priorities. At present the school has a larger than usual budget surplus. However, both the headteacher and the governors are very clear about how this money has been accumulated and how it is to be used. Although saving a significant part of its income does not reflect well on the principles of best value, the school is very critical of its own performance. It does reflect those principles in the way it challenges itself about its standards and in the way it consults widely with outside agencies and parents. One of the results of the application of best value principles is that resources are good for the size of the school. However, while the accommodation is spacious, it has some shortcomings. The first is in the dining room. The school does all it can to provide a welcoming environment in which pupils can learn. The dining room does much to undo this provision. It is a dismal space. The floor is slippery. When the weather is wet, the floor is dangerous. The second inadequacy is in the condition of the window copings on the outside of the building. These are reinforced concrete. The concrete is crumbling. In some cases, the steel reinforcing rods can be seen through the concrete. Safety barriers have been erected to keep pupils at a safe distance but the condition of the windows is dangerous. The school is well staffed. The pupil teacher ratio is low, partly because the school has a special needs co-ordinator teaching small groups of pupils and a teacher with a small class in the nurture group. There is also good provision of learning support assistants. Together support assistants and teachers work very efficiently in

the best interests of the pupils. Overall, given the standards of the school, the quality of provision and the funding available to it, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

37. The head teacher, governing body and staff of the school should:

- (1) Raise standards of attainment in writing by:
 - Improving handwriting and presentation;
(Paragraphs: 3, 4, 52, 57)
 - Ensuring that pupils make more accurate use of the skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar learned in literacy lessons;
(Paragraphs: 4, 5, 57)
 - Providing more opportunities for boys to be better writers;
(Paragraphs: 3, 57)
 - Extend the use of writing skills across the curriculum.
(Paragraphs: 5, 100)
- (2) Raise standards of attainment in religious education through the implementation of the new scheme of work available to the school.
(Paragraph: 100)
- (3) Take steps to have improvements and repairs made to those aspects of the accommodation identified as dangerous.
(Paragraph: 36)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	30
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	33	50	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	167
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	68

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	35	23	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	25	27
	Girls	22	23	23
	Total	48	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (59)	83 (51)	86 (65)
	National	84 (79)	85 (83)	90 (86)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	28	22
	Girls	21	22	21
	Total	44	50	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (67)	86 (63)	74 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	109
Any other minority ethnic group	8

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	430 933
Total expenditure	405 113
Expenditure per pupil	2 315
Balance brought forward from previous year	28 822
Balance carried forward to next year	54 642

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	167
Number of questionnaires returned	62

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	31	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	39	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	41	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	53	41	5	0	2
The teaching is good.	71	27	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	61	31	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	14	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	29	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	61	37	2	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	24	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	27	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	25	8	0	34

Other issues raised by parents

One parent made a written comment about an individual issue that has been discussed with the school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. When children enter the school, their acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding is below that of children of similar age. This is despite the fact that many have had good pre-school experience in nursery school. The school admits up to sixty children into two reception classes. After a suitable induction period, children attend school full time. Each class has a full time qualified teacher and the support of appropriately qualified practitioners. Classrooms are large and have suitable resources. There is a spacious, stimulating and well-resourced school library, which the children visit on a regular basis. Children use word processing to enhance their reading and mathematics skills. They talk about where they live, their school and the local church. Imaginative role-play helps them develop social and negotiating skills. The approved curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is taught, although there is no specific provision for outdoor play at this age. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most pupils are on course to achieve the standards expected of their age through the Early Learning Goals. They listen attentively to familiar adults, concentrate well on tasks such as reading. This is the result of very good teaching consistently found across both reception classes. Teachers use talk to good effect and use communication skills effectively. There are well-established ordered routines that offer security. Appropriate resources are suitably placed and easily available to develop children's independence. As a result pupils make good progress and achieve well given the point at which they started. Assessment procedures are very good and are used well to record children's work.

Personal, social and emotional development

39. Priority is given to the personal, social and emotional needs of young children and they achieve very well. This reflects the skilful teaching and provision. Children are encouraged at all times to feel confident about what they can achieve. They form good relationships, look after themselves responsibly and behave very well. They have positive attitudes towards their learning and enjoy coming to school. Children take responsibility for personal hygiene, work independently and learn the importance of taking turns in games such as 'What time is it Mr. Wolf?' and sharing construction toys such as large sized building cubes, fairly. They are on target to achieve the learning targets for this area.

40. The quality of teaching is very good. The adults provide very good role models and treat each other and the children with courtesy and respect. The children respond well. There are well-established, ordered routines which offer security to them, such as the choice of library books to take home, tidying up the home corner and returning toys after play. Dinnertime provides a good group experience when children sit and chat to one another, outside on the large-sized, wooden 'Train'.

Communication, language and literacy

41. Children get off to an early but appropriate start in communication, language and literacy skills and as a result they achieve well in lessons and make good gains in their learning. Most children are on course to attain the expected level by the time they start in Year 1. This is because of the very good teaching of reading, writing and handwriting skills and the National Literacy Strategy support that underpins all classroom activities. Children interact well with each other, speak confidently, and take turns in conversations. Children enjoy listening to stories and rhymes. They listen attentively to stories, including taped stories for an appropriate length of time and enjoy hearing stories such as 'The Biggest Cake in the World'. They discuss the key events in stories and enjoy the humour in them.

42. Children enjoy looking and selecting books from the reading corner. A commercial reading scheme is used well to introduce children to reading activities, such as 'shared reading' and recognition of letter sounds. Most know that print carries meaning and they talk in general terms about the stories. Progress is good and teachers build successfully on the previous skills acquired. Many children name sounds in words that they use frequently, and most children confidently 'have a go' at a range of writing styles such as notes, invitations to parties and recreate 'The Christmas Story'. Handwriting skills are less well developed and range from mark making to recognisable print. Resources are good and are used well by staff. Effective support by the classroom assistants is given to children and teachers. Classroom books are attractive and are well displayed. Very good teaching helps children to appreciate the main characters and events in books such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'.

43. The quality of teaching is very good and impacts positively on standards in communication, language, literacy, reading, writing and hand writing skills. Elements of the Literacy Framework are used well by the staff. A good understanding of phonics is developed through effective word, sentence and text level work, using well-known stories and rhymes. Good opportunities are given for early writing, as seen in the menu writing in the 'Café' but the formal practice of handwriting skills on the white board or on paper was not seen. Progression in lessons is accomplished by revisiting past work, careful sequencing of tasks and consolidating the work at the end of the lesson. Resources are good and support staff are used well.

Mathematical development

44. Most children are on course to reach the standards expected for mathematical development by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children get off to an early, but appropriate start and as a result they achieve well in lessons and make good gains in their learning. They do well because of the very good teaching and the support of the National Numeracy Strategy. Children develop mathematical skills through effective use of practical activities, number rhymes, games and songs. Most children can count to 10, and some to 20 and beyond. They are able to recognise and place numbers one to six, and five to ten in order. Carpet tiles are used to continue experience of numbers beyond ten. Children identify, match and draw basic shapes. They use circles, squares, rectangles and triangles and sort and match objects into large, medium and small sizes. Mathematical vocabulary of number, time, shape, pattern and measures is used confidently.

45. The quality of teaching is very good and impacts positively on children's achievement in counting, calculating, shape, space and measurement. Children get off to an early but appropriate start and as a result they achieve well in lessons and make improved, good gains in their learning. Systematic planning and provision allow children to progress in their knowledge, skills and understanding of mathematics. The classroom assistants are well deployed and contribute well to the good progress made in lessons, by ensuring that children move speedily from one activity to another. Very effective use is made of resources such as number puzzles to reinforce learning and to order numbers. Children are very interested in the mathematical activities and remain interested throughout the lessons because of the very good provision.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

46. Only one lesson with direct teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world was seen. Photographs, plans and talking to adults and children indicate that provision is satisfactory and children make good gains in exploring, investigating, designing and making,

and in information, communication and technology skills. They are on course to attain the early learning goals expected for this area of learning. Children learn more about themselves, other people and the environment through topics such as 'Ourselves'. All children gain a sense of the passing of time through the regular use of significant times of the day, days of the week and daily routines. They learn about significant events in the calendar year and the church year. They use a range of constructional equipment to design and build models such as houses and are able to cut, stick and join materials, and make 'cameras' from junk material. Children are taught how to use the computer. They show increasing confidence in controlling the mouse and the cursor when working independently. Very good use is made of the traffic light system in 'Road Safety' to raise awareness of communication systems in the environment. Children talk about where they live, their school and the local church, but they have little knowledge of localities further afield. Children begin to understand their own culture and beliefs and those of other people through the study of other countries. They learn about religious celebrations such as Divali, which enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world and different cultures.

Physical development

47. The majority of children are on course to achieve standards expected for this area of learning by the time they are six years of age and make good gains. The provision available for physical development is used well, but there is neither outdoor provision for climbing, sliding and balancing nor large equipment for imaginative, energetic, outdoor play to promote gross motor skills. Children are acquiring skills in movement, have a developing sense of space and bodily awareness and use tools and equipment with increasing dexterity. All children make good use of a variety of tools for drawing, colouring and cutting. They develop satisfactory skill and control when handling scissors, for example, when cutting out teddy bears, and some show increasing dexterity as they work with pencils, crayons, and paintbrushes. Manipulative skills are good. Children roll, squeeze, push and kneed malleable materials.

48. The quality of teaching is good and impacts positively on standards in physical development. Children are taught to move in a controlled way and learn to link movement together. Standards in writing, colouring, cutting out, painting and sticking are improved by the attention given to physical development. Most use pencil and scissors correctly. Due regard is given to safety when children handle tools. Very good support by adults contributes effectively to the acquisition and development of skills when manipulating tools. Effective intervention by staff helps to support and extend children's ideas and understanding in this area.

Creative development

49. The majority of children are on course to achieve standards expected for this area of learning by the time they are six years of age. Most children make good gains in their learning. Children are encouraged to express their feelings through exploring media and materials, music, dance, story making and imaginative play. They have opportunities to experience colour, texture, shape, form and space in two-dimensional art and regular opportunities to explore colour through painting, printing, collage and crayoning. Children create interesting collages such as 'autumn', and use a wide range of well-chosen resources, including paintbrushes of different thickness. Painting in shades of one specific colour such as brown enhances their awareness of colour. Children recognise familiar songs, nursery rhymes and jingles and sing them in unison with enjoyment, natural exuberance and zest.

50. Children use a range of constructional equipment to design and build models and are

able to cut, stick and join models. There are few opportunities to explore and investigate on a regular and frequent basis through sand and water play. Most children are able to use the listening tapes independently and respond to the stories appreciatively. The computer is used with enjoyment and increasing confidence.

51. Teaching is very good. Teachers plan very effectively and provide good opportunities for children to explore art and design. Very good imaginative play such as in the 'Police Station' triggers the imagination, extends language and develops decision-making skills. Effective intervention by staff helps to support and extend children's ideas and understanding. For example, the signing of the 'Police Report Form' is used to good effect to reinforce children's abilities to write their own names correctly, and the discussion and negotiating skills heard in the 'Café' enhance their social and moral development.

ENGLISH

52. Overall, attainment in English is broadly in line with the national average by the age of seven. Standard test results indicate that by this age, pupils attain standards below those expected nationally. However, when standards are compared with similar schools, achievement is above average in writing and well above average in reading. At present the majority of pupils is on course to meet the standard expected of seven-year-olds and a few are on target to exceed this level. A minority is not on track to achieve this level. Factors affecting attaining are the high proportion of transient pupils and the significant number of pupils with special educational needs. Results in the National Curriculum tests in English have fluctuated over the last four years, dipping in reading and reducing sharply in writing in 1999, but rising in both areas in 2000. A greater number of pupils attain higher levels in reading. Writing is below the national average, but has improved because of the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the improved quality of teaching. Inspection findings are rather better than the 2000 test results. In the work seen, speaking and listening skills are well established and strongly in line with national standards. Reading is not quite so strong but still in line with national standards. Writing is below the standard expected because of poor handwriting skills and pupils' lack of understanding of the correctness of the English language. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Test data indicates some difference in the writing standards of boys and girls: girls tend to be better writers than boys. More pupils now achieve the expected standard than at the time of the previous inspection. When attainment on entry to school is taken into account, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and the small number learning English as an additional language make good progress. They are well supported in their learning needs. Well-constructed tasks and challenging discussions ensure that higher attaining pupils maintain their progress.

53. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this has helped to ensure a consistent approach to planning and teaching which is having a positive effect on pupils' learning. Teachers are now more confident and more effective in teaching literacy and provide good opportunities for pupils to apply and improve their skills in other subjects, for example in science, where pupils research the properties of different materials. This has made a significant contribution to raising achievement in other areas of the curriculum. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills across a range of subjects. Pupils acquire a satisfactory range of experience in the use of computers. The school's agreed priorities and procedures for raising standards include setting challenging, measurable targets for improvement. The school is on course to meet them.

54. Throughout the school, standards in speaking and listening are in line with those

expected nationally. Because levels are below average on entry to school, appropriate attention is given to the systematic development of pupils' skills. The majority of pupils speak and listen well to their teachers, to visitors and to one another, and do so with humour, sensitivity and increasing confidence. Pupils listen with increased attention, sustain longer conversations and make mature contributions to class discussions. Teachers expect pupils to use appropriate specialist vocabulary and this enables pupils to express themselves accurately. Year 1 pupils discuss the structure of sentences and when to use full stops and capital letters and Year 2 pupils talk enthusiastically about their Halloween 'Spell' books and winter poems. Pupils have opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills by using headphones to listen and record stories such as 'The Enormous Crocodile' by Roald Dahl. All pupils have opportunities to take part in drama and role-play in a range of activities. Pupils perform publicly in school assemblies, which offer valuable opportunities for pupils to listen and use spoken language.

55. By the age of seven, standards of attainment in reading are marginally close to the national average. Standards throughout the school have risen because of the successful implementation of the Literacy Strategy, good teaching and pupils' enjoyment of reading. The school continues to place emphasis on individual reading as well as the opportunities presented in the literacy hour. Pupils have their own personal reading diaries. Most pupils have favourite books and talk of their enjoyment of books at home and at school, such as 'Winnie the Witch', 'Peter Pan' and 'The Three Little Pigs'. By the age of seven, higher attaining pupils read with fluency, accuracy, expression and growing understanding. They have a range of strategies for reading new words and as they become more confident they self-correct and re-read passages to work out their meaning. They read books for pleasure and for information. Average attaining pupils are able to segment words and use the structure of the sentence to determine the type of word needed to make sense. They read books less accurately, more hesitantly and with less expression. Lower attaining pupils read very simple text such as 'My Old Teddy' with some degree of accuracy and try hard, but they are more hesitant when sounding out words and rely on picture clues.

56. Pupils' independent research skills are satisfactory overall. Only the higher and average attaining pupils are fully aware of the library system, but the weekly visit with an adult to look at, and exchange books is proving beneficial to the pupils' developing retrieval skills. Younger pupils are familiar with technical terminology such as author, illustrator, content page and index.

57. By the age of seven, standards of attainment in writing are below the average in other schools, despite the good gains made since entering school. There is a slight improvement since the previous inspection when writing was well below the national average and unsatisfactory. The school has acted appropriately upon the issues found, through a systematic literacy plan to improve reading, writing, and handwriting. Though spelling has improved and pupils use their growing knowledge of different letter combinations to write their own words it is still inconsistent in quality and simple words are often spelt wrongly. Handwriting is now based upon a commercial scheme, which offers consistency of approach, but is still in the early stage of implementation. Presentation in some books is good but in most others letters are not always evenly formed and many less able pupils have yet to learn to write with consistency and fluency. There has been some improvement in the standard of spelling with the systematic approach adopted through the National Literacy Strategy. Spelling conventions are taught and opportunities are provided for pupils to practise spellings. However, the school is not complacent and further development of grammar and spelling is planned. Most pupils' books show effort, but the lack of handwriting skills and the correctness of appropriate English are reflected in the quality of standards and presentation. There are no extra-curricular activities for English, but there are good opportunities for all pupils to enhance their literacy skills in school. They attend drama workshops to hear

productions such as 'Wilfred' and 'Frog and Toad', and listen to visiting authors and poets such as Nicholas Allen's retelling of 'The Demon Teddy' and Simon Pitt's poems. They attend a pantomime every two years.

58. Teaching is very good. In the lessons seen over sixty per cent were very good, about seventeen per cent good and a further seventeen per cent satisfactory. Teachers have taken account of the National Literacy Strategy in planning and apply the principles well. They have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn and what they should do to improve. Large print texts are used effectively to demonstrate teaching points. All pupils are expected to work hard and most do. Teachers use skilled questioning to assess pupils' knowledge and to help them make connections across subjects. Group work is matched well to pupils' differing levels of ability. This ensures that higher attaining pupils are challenged in the work they do and that lower attaining pupils are given the support they need in their learning. Spelling conventions are clearly taught and are reinforced by the use of appropriate, regular spelling tests. A period of time is used at the end of each lesson to review, consolidate and extend pupils' learning. These consistent features of high quality teaching are significant factors in enabling pupils to extend their learning. Learning is good. Given their attainment when they start school, pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well. They acquire a good range of new skills, knowledge and understanding to bring them to a standard about in line with the national standard. They try hard and work productively at their tasks. Teachers' strategies for sharing learning objectives ensure that pupils understand what they are learning. This helps them to maintain their interest and concentration. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as a new language make good progress in their learning.

59. Attitudes to work are good and standards of behaviour are very good. This is because of the improved standards of teaching, work that is well matched to pupils' needs, the very successful behavioural strategies introduced in all classes and the appropriate work in the 'Rainbow Class'. The majority of pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and work hard for an appropriate amount of time when actively engaged in reading, writing or discussions. Most pupils work purposefully on their own when the teacher is engaged in group work with other pupils. They attempt new work with growing confidence. Their weak handwriting skills do not reflect the effort they put into the presentation of their work. The very few pupils that begin to become disinterested and restless when the lesson is too long for their concentration span are dealt with skilfully and purposefully so that all pupils remain fully engaged in the lesson. Pupils support each other well, co-operate when completing tasks together, and spontaneously applaud one another's successes. They enjoy using computer programmes such as 'The First Amazing Dictionary'. Listening skills well used during reflection on world issues during 'Circle Time' and assemblies give good support to pupils' personal development.

60. Appropriate work is planned for English and the literacy hour for pupils with special educational needs, and they receive good assistance from the support staff. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum that the school provides. They are given either support in class or are withdrawn for individual help and this contributes effectively to the good progress they make towards their individual learning targets. Pupils get opportunities to use their literacy skills in other lessons, for example, when recording what they know and have observed in history and science.

61. Co-ordination of English and literacy across the school is very good. The co-ordinator manages and leads the subject well. Having analysed test results and samples of pupils' work, the co-ordinator is clear about the strengths and areas for development in the English curriculum and has initiated an action plan to improve standards. The inspection finds that writing, spelling and punctuation need to be further improved and this reflects the school's findings and plans. The co-ordinator has already introduced a comprehensive programme to raise the standard of writing and handwriting, which is beginning to have an effect. She has collated a useful portfolio of work, which is a valuable reference document for staff in assessing pupils' attainment and progress. She monitors planning in English. Monitoring of the teaching of the subject to provide useful feedback to colleagues and so support staff in raising standards is not done by the co-ordinator. Resources are very good. There are sufficient literacy books in the classroom libraries. There is an appropriate range of good quality books in the attractive school library, colour coded for ease of referral. The school is aware of the need to increase the range and amount of dictionaries in the classrooms. Pupils use their word processing skills in writing stories and poems and the new computer suite should offer increased opportunities.

MATHEMATICS

62. The results of National Curriculum tests for 7 year olds in 2000 show that standards were below the average of all schools nationally. When these results are compared with schools where pupils have similar backgrounds, these results are above the average. Results over the five years up to 2000 indicate that standards have risen substantially and that the trend is significantly better than the national average.

63. The standard of work seen during inspection week by pupils who are seven years old is in line with the standard expected nationally. Most pupils in Year 1 add one digit numbers together to make totals up to 10, whilst higher attaining pupils add and subtract figures with two digits, for example 16 minus 13, in sums up to 20. Most pupils in this year group understand that coins can be added together to make values up to 10 pence, and that coins have values which are not all the numbers up to 10. Higher attaining pupils readily understand the addition of coins to 10 pence and do this using the minimum number of coins.

64. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. In Year 2, most pupils write the missing numbers in a sequence up to 100 and they accurately add tens to numbers up to 100, for example 43 plus 10 is 53. Lower attaining pupils, however, do not always form numbers accurately and need support when recognising odd and even numbers. Most pupils in Year 2 identify two-dimensional shapes including hexagons and pentagons and higher attaining pupils readily identify these shapes within a pattern containing other shapes.

65. The quality of teaching is good overall and no unsatisfactory lessons were seen during inspection week, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. Teachers are focused clearly on the objectives during lessons. Their planning, strategies and organisation all support the aims of the lessons well. This enables pupils to see clearly what they are doing and means that they more readily understand how well they have done. The effective deployment of relevant resources and well-briefed support staff, re-inforces the focus of lessons and helps pupils to work at a good pace. Teachers have a good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils and the tasks and activities are well matched to the abilities of pupils. This ensures that pupils of different abilities make appropriate progress. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in their mathematical development both in the classroom and through withdrawal in smaller groups. Teachers expect the most of their pupils in both attainment and behaviour. For example, they use mathematical language such as "partitioning" whilst ensuring that pupils understand, and they encourage pupils to develop and talk about their own strategies for solving problems. Classroom routines are well established and high standards of behaviour are maintained. Pupils are secure in their environment, which helps them to sustain their concentration well.

66. Teachers have a good knowledge of the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy, which they use effectively to develop their strategies in the classroom. They plan lessons well, ensuring that each activity and task supports what pupils are learning. Mathematical concepts are supported by the use of ICT. For example, in an ICT lesson, pupils in Year 2 become familiar with how data on the frequency of their birthday months can be collected and represented in a bar chart. They compare and contrast the benefits of doing this by drawing the chart by hand and entering the data into a computer. The teacher's expertise enables pupils to readily appreciate the speed at which a computer program can do the task. Teachers make sufficient use of numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, when recording observations in science. Some good use is made of counting skills in registration.

67. The management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has been effective in supporting the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. There is very good documentation for assessment procedures and the work of pupils is monitored carefully, with appropriate targets set for pupils by individual teachers. However, whilst the use of these procedures to inform teachers' planning is satisfactory, teachers are at an earlier stage in developing some areas consistently across the school, such as making fuller use of the pertinent pupils' "Progress Book", and the moderation of pupils' work against National Curriculum levels of attainment. There is a programme for monitoring the teaching of mathematics. The co-ordinator, headteacher and school advisor carry out classroom observations.

SCIENCE

68. The standard achieved by pupils in lessons and in their written work is in line with the standard expected of pupils aged seven nationally. This is a considerable improvement when compared with the standard achieved in National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2000. These indicated that attainment was well below the national average. The improvement is the result of a number of significant changes in the school. The curriculum plan has been modified and re-structured. This ensures much more consistent coverage of curriculum content than previously. The subject is now taught separately. Previously it was taught as part of a topic. Science for science's sake is paying dividends. Part of the emphasis of the revised scheme of work has been on practical, experimental and investigative work. This is having a significant impact on the way pupils think about science. Finally, a contributing factor is the influence of the subject co-ordinator teaching the subject to the older pupils in the school. All pupils make gains that build on their prior learning. Pupils

with special educational needs and pupils learning English as a new language are well integrated into lessons and make satisfactory progress. They benefit from teachers' well-targeted questions and from specific support from classroom assistants.

69. In the work seen, all pupils show signs of learning to use a scientific methodology - to think like scientists. They talk about and write about what they think will happen. They use their emerging literacy skills to note down their careful observations. There is a little evidence of the use of numeracy skills to record their findings and some very limited use of the computer to record. However, more needs to be done in this area of learning. Pupils gather many facts about the human body. They know about the action of yeast when making bread. They sort materials into different categories. A farm visit confirms much of their learning about life and living things. The curriculum supports the school's strategies for personal, social and health education. Pupils learn a great deal about having a healthy diet, how to achieve a high standard in personal hygiene and the care necessary with medicine and other drugs. Pupils are enthusiastic about science. They observe carefully. Discussions among pupils and with the teacher are lively. Groups work well together, although some of the exchange of ideas is noisy.

70. Teaching and learning is good. Teachers are well prepared. They are confident about what they need to teach and have good strategies for getting the content of lessons over. Good behaviour and sensible listening contribute a great deal to the quality of learning. The attitudes pupils bring to their practical work make a significant impact, too. Occasionally the lesson introduction is rather long where the teacher has a lot of information to discuss with pupils before their practical tasks. Under these circumstances pupils get a little restless but need little reminding to return to the focus of the lesson. Good questioning by teachers makes pupils think. This stimulates what happens in group work. Teachers have the ability to leave space for pupils to use their initiative and to make their own unique contribution to discussions or to ask pertinent questions. Sometimes questions are so pertinent that teachers miss the opportunity to follow them up immediately. Pupils settle quickly to tasks having been challenged by the introduction to the lesson. A good and consistent feature of lessons is the way teachers discuss the learning objectives with pupils and then return to the objectives, to clarify what has been learned at the end of the lesson. This helps to keep pupils' minds on what they need to do and know throughout the lesson. The quality of discussions and well-designed tasks ensures that all pupils are challenged and supported in their learning. As a result higher attaining pupils and lower attaining pupils make progress, which is appropriate to their prior learning.

71. The subject co-ordinator is committed and well-informed. She has seen lessons in other parts of the school and this has helped shape the direction of the work. The scheme of work is well balanced and gives emphasis to how science should be taught. Pupils benefit from curriculum enrichment through visits and visitors. For example, a highlight of the curriculum is a museum visit and the visit of a theatre group performing a science day, such as 'electricity' or 'forces'. Resources are sufficient and well complemented by a good collection of reference books in the school library. Although it can only be used during the summer, part of the school field is being developed for use as a science resource. Sufficient use is made of ICT. Although standards have dropped in recent years, current initiatives are supporting rising standards. Compared with attainment at the time of the previous inspection, standards have been maintained. However, the school has made good improvements in the shape of the curriculum, in the introduction of strategies for teaching and learning and in the resources available. However, there is continued room for improvement, especially in the way pupils record their scientific findings and in their use of computers.

ART AND DESIGN

72. Attainment achieved by pupils at seven years of age is above the standard expected nationally. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection.

73. Pupils in Year 1 explore several designs, using string to decide on one idea for a printing block, and they explain the reasons for their final choice. They improve their design in various ways as they make the block with card string and glue. Pupils explain their changes saying, for example, " I like it to look sharper with more little pieces of string". They experiment with rubbings using a variety of surfaces such as bark and leaves. Good use is made of sketchbooks for the development of ideas in areas such as abstract pattern and portraits.

74. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress, as they move through Years 1 and 2, particularly in their observational drawings and development of ideas from a starting theme. Year 2 pupils make good observational colour drawings of sections of fruit that form the basis for string prints and collage. They develop their ideas well and carry through the theme from original designs to finished work successfully. Pupils in this year group carefully study the faces and eyes of their friends and explore ways of making abstract images using wax colour. African masks form the starting point for pupils to interpret and develop their own ideas for masks.

75. Only one lesson was seen during the week of the inspection, and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. In this lesson, the teacher engages pupils well in a discussion of their previous and current work with good questioning and prompting, stressing the ways in which their ideas can be extended and developed. Pupils are enabled to maintain their interest and enthusiasm very well by the skilful deployment of resources and briefing of support staff. Good relationships are evident in the way pupils co-operate in groups. They share ideas well and are prepared to accept the ideas of other pupils to improve their own work. Pupils participate well in discussions and show an enthusiasm for the subject.

76. The subject is managed well by the co-ordinator and a strength of the subject is the way in which teachers clearly work closely together. They give pupils a stimulating visual environment through thoughtful, thematic displays, and they are consistent in the way they show pupils how to develop their initial ideas in a variety of ways.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

77. Standards of attainment achieved by pupils at seven years of age in design and technology are in line with the standards expected nationally. Standards have been maintained.

78. Pupils in Year 1 discuss ways of making bread and decide which ingredients are required. They make shapes from dough and see the results after cooking. They work together as a group to make wind chimes using a variety of materials such as shells and fir cones and test the results outside. Larger scale construction work is carried out using plastic struts and joints when making a house in a project on 'The Three Little Pigs'. They assemble and join parts of a construction kit using plastic spanners and explain what they are making. Pupils, including those with educational needs, make satisfactory progress and by the time they are seven years old, they understand how to generate ideas, for example in a project on "Joseph and his Technicolor Dreamcoat". They use a variety of techniques, including weaving, to bring together their individual work into one large piece. Most pupils understand that a simple spring can be made with card and make a "jumping frog" to demonstrate the idea.

79. Only one lesson was seen during the week of the inspection, and therefore it is not possible to make an overall judgement on teaching. In this lesson, a thorough approach in the planning, leading of discussions and preparation of materials by the teacher, meant that pupils wasted no time and maintained good levels of concentration. The teacher skilfully prompted group discussions, helping pupils to make decisions and solve problems on their own. There is an overall atmosphere of industry, with pupils enthusiastically finding new ways of solving problems when building structures for strength from a construction kit. Good relationships are evident in the way pupils co-operate in groups. They share ideas well and are prepared to accept the ideas of other pupils to improve their own work. Pupils participate well in discussions and show an enthusiasm for the subject.

80. Elements of national guidelines have been successfully incorporated into teachers' planning, schemes of work and recording of pupils' attainment. Clear objectives are set and pupils' work is evaluated against consistent criteria. Resources are satisfactory and the subject is soundly managed.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

81. Standards of attainment are similar to those expected of pupils of this age. Inspectors were unable to see sufficient lessons to gather a wide range of evidence. This makes it impossible to give an overall assessment of the quality of teaching and learning. In the previous inspection it was judged that the provision for history and geography was satisfactory and that standards were at the expected level for pupils aged seven. Inspection evidence from scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' work, teachers' documentation, displays, and conversations with teachers shows that the level of provision found in the last inspection has been maintained. The majority of pupils attain an appropriate quality of work in relation to their age and there is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Most pupils acquire, use and extend history skills and vocabulary through investigations and in geography gain the required knowledge and skills of the subject.

82. The majority of pupils in the school have a satisfactory understanding of the historical and geographical concepts and knowledge that are taught through units of work. Through the geographical themes taught, pupils experience exploration of places, acquire, use and extend geographical skills and vocabulary and investigate a number of thematic studies. Geographical understanding builds on a variety of experiences moving pupils from local to wider and contrasting environments. By the age of seven, pupils skills in historical and geographical enquiry are appropriately developed by visits to their own locality, such as Bristol Road, when they make observations of the characteristics of the local buildings in the vicinity, such as the shops and the variety of housing. Pupils draw and label simple maps of their journey to school, and begin to use appropriate geographical vocabulary, such as roundabouts and turnings. Pupils gain an increasing awareness of the physical and human features of their locality and compare them with those of Sudan.

83. In history, pupils understand the passage of time by discussing the differences between the past and the present relevant to their own lives and relatives. They know about life in the past and have a satisfactory understanding of how domestic life and houses have changed over time. They know and write accounts about important events beyond living memory and famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Grace Darling, using appropriate vocabulary. The provision of ICT software resources in history and geography is good and this enhances pupils' progress in seeking extended information. Access to the Internet is to be further developed when the new computer suite is established.

84. Pupils' literacy skills are further developed through extended writing and reading for research and listening to fact and fictional stories. Year 1 and 2 pupils study China and the past Chinese way of life and listen to stories about their myths such as 'The Willow Pattern Plate'. Pupils use photographs and documentation to research various holiday destinations, and discuss the climatic differences of various holiday resorts. They read poems and stories from other countries such as Japanese Haiku poems and the Indian fable 'The Monkey and the Crocodile'.

85. Most pupils had positive attitudes to their learning in history and geography. They talked enthusiastically about their visit to Avoncroft Museum, when they compared modern housing with old historical buildings. They described, graphically, its architectural features such as the fireplace, kitchen, and toilets. They know that the prevalent building material was wood, and that a century is 100 years. Other pupils expressed interest in their geographical work about Africa and China and one child produced chop sticks and proudly volunteered to say 'Happy New Year' in Chinese.

86. No lessons were seen in history and only one lesson in geography therefore it is not possible to reach a judgement on the quality of teaching.

87. Geography makes a positive contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development. For example, Year 1 pupils discuss issues about their school environment, explaining their likes and dislikes of the playground and the school playing field, such as, the lovely big trees and the mud. They become aware of cultural differences through comparative studies of the lives of people in Birmingham and those in Sudan, and the religious Divali festival. Relevant visits linked to their historical and geographical studies enhance their work and also improve their social and cultural skills. They are used well to enhance the history and geography curriculum, such as visits to Avoncroft museum and to Kenilworth Castle to enhance the work on old buildings.

88. The management of history and geography has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have more confidence as expertise has widened. The co-ordinator of the subjects is clear-sighted and energetic and has shared her subject knowledge and expertise with class teachers. She has clear ideas as to how she wishes the school to proceed and prioritises according to need and finance available. There is now a more structured approach to the subjects through appropriate policies and detailed schemes of work. Structured guidance is offered by way of unit resources to ensure the step-to-step development of skills. Formal on-going assessments of pupils' skills are kept as topics are completed, but day-to-day assessment is an area the school is to develop. The school is to build up portfolios of pupils' historical and geographical work, but this is at an early stage of development. Plans are monitored, but there are no opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor classroom practice. The school is conscious of the need to develop further its assessment procedures in the light of the Curriculum 2000 requirements. Resources are

adequate, but the school is conscious of the need to build up its historical artefacts to support the units of work and atlases of different scales to support pupils' mapping skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

89. Standards of attainment achieved by pupils at seven years of age in ICT are in line with the standards expected nationally. This represents a relative decline in standards since the previous inspection report. The demands of the subject and the provision of computers and computer programs have moved on rapidly since the previous inspection. The school is just beginning to catch up with current developments.

90. With help, pupils in Year 1 access, retrieve and print out the illustrated meanings of words such as big, sheep and sad. They use the mouse to draw simple shapes in a pattern of colour and self-portraits with a paint program and print out the results. Pupils understand that computers can be used in a variety of situations. For example, in a geography lesson, pupils use a CD-ROM with help, to choose areas of the world to look at. They also become familiar with how data on their favourite seasons of the year can be collected and represented in a computer-generated bar chart.

91. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and develop their skills well in areas such as information handling and generating ideas in different forms as they move through Year 2. In a lesson they show through discussion and demonstration, that they clearly understand the differences between manually and electronically stored information. They collect information from each other on their birthday months and show the frequency on a paper chart. This is compared, with the teacher, to doing the same task with a computer much faster. Pupils develop their use of ICT in a number of other areas such as music, art and design and writing. Pupils in the "Rainbow Class" explore what happens in imaginary situations using a simulation program. Most pupils manipulate the size and style of fonts effectively in a word processing program when writing descriptive sentences.

92. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject in ICT lessons, and by the way in which they provide many opportunities in other subject areas for pupils to enhance their skills. In a lesson in Year 2, the teacher demonstrated how quickly information, which had been gathered previously, can be turned into a bar chart on the computer screen. Pupils instantly understood the advantages, illustrated by their reaction of surprise and awe. Teachers use resources well and employ strategies, such as groups, pairs and individuals working with computers, to maximise pupils' "hands on" experiences.

93. Standards of attainment are currently in line with national expectations. At the time of the previous inspection resources enabled good progress to be made by pupils. The current access to updated hardware and software by pupils curtails their opportunities to develop their learning further. However, with the imminent establishment of a computer suite the school has plans designed to greatly enhance pupils' learning opportunities. Management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has developed the subject throughout the school, in areas such as planning and assessment, and is aware of the strengths and weaknesses. She is conscious of what is needed to develop the subject in the future and is actively pursuing these aims. Although resources are currently satisfactory, although. Subject policy and planning is satisfactory with schemes of work being based on national guidelines.

MUSIC

94. At the age of seven, attainment in music is in line with the standard expected

nationally. At the previous inspection, attainment was judged to be above the expected level. In the one lesson seen, for a group of lower attaining pupils, good progress was made and satisfactory standards attained. As only one lesson was seen it is not possible to make an accurate comparison of standards now with those at the time of the previous inspection. However, discussion with pupils shows that they have a competent grasp of the curriculum for this age and that they have experience of all elements of the curriculum.

95. The oldest pupils in the school have a confident discussion about the benefits they gained from the visit of some musicians. They talk eagerly about trying out different instruments, making their own arrangements of a song and performing for their parents. They listen to music frequently. Some have music playing as they prepare for break or work at their tasks. There is always music to listen to at the beginning and end of assembly. Pupils knew that the music for inspection week was written by 'an American man' (Aaron Copeland) and was called 'Fanfare for the Common Man'. They name many instruments of the orchestra and recognise some when they play during a piece of music. Pupils sing tunefully and vigorously in assembly.

96. As only one lesson of music was seen, no judgements are possible about the quality of teaching. However, the implications from teachers' planning and from discussion with pupils are that teaching is of a satisfactory quality and that the curriculum for music in the school is secure. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and well informed. The subject is effectively managed. Resources are readily available and match the needs of pupils and the curriculum. Pupils have used a computer program to write and play their own music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

97. By the time pupils are seven, attainment is in line with the standard expected for pupils of this age. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Given their point of development on entry to school they make good progress and achieve well. Pupils are eager participants in lessons. They enjoy experimenting with speed, shape and position. They work hard at developing the skills of catching and throwing. A small minority has well developed and mature catching and throwing skills, managing difficult catches, catching and throwing accurately with either hand. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in relation to their prior learning. Some of these pupils find it difficult to listen well and to acquire the self discipline needed to gain most from physical education lessons and this slows their progress. Language acquisition does not prevent pupils learning English as a new language participating fully in these lessons.

98. In the small number of lessons seen, teaching was good. Teachers have good class control. They start lessons briskly with a warm up and good subject knowledge enables them to keep the lesson moving. As a result, pupils get a lot of time to practice skills. They learn well from this. The only impediment to well paced lessons is when a small number of pupils do not listen and respond as well as the majority. Teachers have to use their control strategies with these pupils and while the strategies are effective, the delivery of the lesson is slowed. A good feature of physical education lessons is the way in which teachers encourage pupils to think as well as do. Teachers also make good use of pupil demonstration to encourage quality performance. Pupils learn a great deal from watching each other. For almost all pupils, there are good levels of co-operation and enjoyment. This motivates pupils well in their learning.

99. The curriculum is well planned with suitable coverage over all the essential elements. Resources are good. The hall is a good resource for learning. There is suitable provision of large and small equipment. The school has developed a strategy to get the best out of available time where teachers set out the large equipment at the beginning of lessons and pupils learn essential safe handling of it by putting it away on a rota basis. The co-ordinator is efficient in the way she manages the subject. The curriculum is enhanced by a range of visitors to the school and visits out of school. The most recent of these was workshops provided by Birmingham Royal Ballet, an initiative to be followed up later in the school year. This enrichment of the curriculum is an added element to the cultural development of pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

100. Attainment in religious education meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Attainment was judged to be satisfactory at the previous inspection although coverage of the curriculum was scant. The situation is similar at the current inspection. However, the school has developed a good scheme of work designed to give wide coverage of the curriculum and to give greater support to lessons. This scheme has not yet been implemented, as other priorities have been more pressing. At the previous inspection, resources were judged to be inadequate. That situation has improved. There is a good collection of books in the school library covering a wide range of themes and different religions. The school has also acquired a range of artefacts to support learning about different religions. To support the new scheme of work, photo-packs have been acquired.

101. As no lessons of religious education were seen, judgements about standards are based on discussions with pupils and teachers and the evidence of teachers' planning. Much of the work is based on discussion and role-play so very little written work was available for analysis. Discussion with pupils reveals some enthusiastic response to the subject. Some pupils have a mature understanding about why this subject is important. One girl said that she listened to stories so that she could learn from the important people in them and become a better person. Pupils have a good knowledge of characters from the Bible. They recognise Old Testament personalities and discuss a number of themes from the life of Jesus. Strong teaching in assembly complements the lessons teachers give. Pupils recognise a number of religious artefacts as 'Jesus ornaments' (although the artefacts were from a number of different religions). However, there is no current evidence of the use of artefacts in lessons. Pupils are confident about finding information from the range of books in the library. There is no evidence that they do so regularly as part of lessons. There is no evidence of the use of computers to support learning.

102. It is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. However, the learning revealed by pupils through discussion suggests that teaching is at least satisfactory. Examination of planning also implies that this is so. The subject co-ordinator is well informed and perceptive. When implemented, the new scheme of work promises to be a considerable influence on standards achieved. A good link with a local church enhances pupils' background of knowledge. Regular visitors to the school add impact to learning.