

# INSPECTION REPORT

**BLUE COAT C of E (VA) INFANT SCHOOL**

Walsall

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 104231

Headteacher: Mrs Joan B Nock

Reporting inspector: B Matusiak-Varley  
19938

Dates of inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> March 2000

Inspection number: 189099

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:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hanch Place Walsall West Midlands
Postcode:	WS1 3AF
Telephone number:	(01922) 720740
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Miss Dorothy Buchanan
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
B Matusiak-Varley	Registered Inspector	English Art Under-fives English as an additional language	How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? Features specified for inspection
M Morrissey	Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
A Giles	Team Inspector	Science Physical education Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
J Haslam	Team Inspector	Mathematics Information technology Design and technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
M Roussel	Team Inspector	Geography History Music	How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Blue Coat Infant School is an average sized C of E Voluntary Aided school, situated in the old part of Walsall. The school's ethos is firmly based on the doctrines of the Church of England which foster the values of the Blue Coat Foundation. The school caters for pupils aged three to seven years. There is a 27 full-time-equivalent (FTE) place nursery attached to the school which is fully subscribed. Sixty one pupils who are under six years of age attend the Reception classes. There are 233 FTE pupils in total on roll. Eight full-time teachers teach pupils in eight single-aged classes. Two nursery nurses teach children in the nursery. There are 101 boys and 105 girls in the main school. The school has a high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) (currently 40 per cent) and, at present, there is a small minority of pupils who are Kosovan refugees. Pupils with EAL are supported by 1.5 FTE teachers funded by EMTAG. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is about the national average. Ten per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs (SEN), this is below the national average; one child has a Statement of SEN. Pupils who have SEN have difficulties in emotional and behavioural development and in accessing the curriculum in reading and writing. Pupils come from a very mixed background, many attend from outside the catchment area. Attainment on entry is varied, but is below average, overall. Many children on entry to the nursery and Reception classes have underdeveloped skills in language and mathematics, and their physical co-ordination is below that expected for their age. Children's skills of personal and social development are also underdeveloped, although there are children whose attainment on entry is broadly average and who have attended pre-school playgroups.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Pupils' pastoral care is good. The school promotes its Christian aims and values well and strives for high standards in a happy, friendly and joyful environment, where each child is valued for his or her uniqueness. The school promotes high standards in literacy and support for pupils with EAL is very good. Standards in mathematics, science and ICT are average. Pupils' achievements are high in art, geography and music. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behaviour is very good. The quality of teaching is good, overall, and the leadership and management of the school are sound, overall. The school provides sound value for money.

Religious education was inspected separately under Section 23 of the School Inspections Act 1996.

#### **What the school does well**

- By the end of Year 2, pupils achieve high standards in speaking and listening, reading and the use of number; they also achieve high standards in geography, art and music.
- The majority of average attaining pupils make good progress. Due to the good provision for pupils with SEN and very good provision for pupils with EAL, progress is good and very good respectively.
- The teaching in the Early Years department is a strength of the school and is a contributory factor to the good gains pupils make in relation to their prior achievements.
- Pupils' attitudes are good, as is their personal development. Behaviour and relationships are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good with examples of very good and excellent practice. Teachers and support staff work and plan well together. This has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes, learning and subsequent achievement.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good.
- The school has good partnerships with parents.
- Pastoral care of pupils is good.

### What could be improved

- The use of assessment to inform teachers' planning is underdeveloped. This results in pupils' prior attainment not being fully taken into consideration.
- Pupils' spelling and presentation of work are variable, but are unsatisfactory, overall.
- The role of co-ordinators in monitoring standards and teachers' planning across the curriculum is underdeveloped.
- Teachers do not systematically challenge higher attaining pupils and this results in their rates of progress being inconsistent and judged to be only satisfactory when they could be good.
- The leadership and management of the school, whilst satisfactory overall, need to be more rigorous in identifying what needs to be done in order of priority for further raising standards of achievement.
- Schemes of work are not fully developed in all subjects.
- Provision for pupils' cultural development could be better.

*The overall strengths outweigh the weaknesses of the school and 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 inspected previously in June 1996. Since then it has made satisfactory improvement, overall. This is due to staff and governors being more effectively trained. Standards have been raised in ICT and are now in line with national averages. The governors are now linking priorities with expenditure and are fully involved in the life of the school. The support staff for pupils who have EAL are now effectively deployed and make a strong contribution to pupils' progress. Health and safety matters have been addressed in the nursery and complaints procedures have been clarified for parents. Assessment procedures are now in place to monitor pupils' progress, but, as yet, data gained are not sufficiently used to inform planning. Whilst the school has made some progress in ensuring that the cultural diversity of its pupils is reflected in all aspects of school life, this aspect still needs further improvement. Standards have risen in literacy, geography and ICT. The quality of teaching has improved and there is only 4 per cent unsatisfactory teaching as opposed to 19 per cent in the previous report. The progress of pupils with SEN is now good, and pupils who have EAL make very good progress. Pupils' behaviour is now very good.

### STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	D	C	A	A*	very high A*
Writing	D	E	B	A	well above average A above average B
Mathematics	C	C	A	A*	average C below average D well below average E

The test results of 1999 show that, in comparison with similar schools, standards were very high in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. In comparison with all schools, standards were well above national averages in reading and mathematics and above national averages in writing. Trends over time show that, with the exception of a dip in 1998 in writing and mathematics, standards have steadily risen. However, it should be borne in mind that the cohort of pupils who took the tests in 1999 had a very high proportion of higher attaining pupils and this resulted in the high grades achieved. Inspection findings show that this year's cohort of Year 2 pupils has a high percentage of pupils with EAL and SEN, but is nevertheless, overall, an average attaining group. Inspection findings show that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in speaking, listening and reading are above national averages; standards in writing are average, overall, but there are weaknesses in

pupils' presentation of work because handwriting, letter formation and spelling could be better. Standards in mathematics and science are in line with national averages. Pupils' achievements are high by the end of Year 2 in art, geography and music. Pupils who have SEN make good progress in their learning and those who have EAL make very good progress due to good teaching and joint planning within year groups. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, but there are occasions when tasks set are not suitably challenging. The school has started target setting for pupils, but, as yet, this is at an early stage of implementation.

Attainment on entry to the nursery is below national averages in all areas of learning. By the time that children are five years of age, they achieve the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning. The majority of children make good progress due to the good quality of teaching.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to do well and show interest in learning. They have sensible, mature attitudes to learning and take pride in their finished work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons and at play times.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils relate very well to adults and to one another within a caring Christian environment.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are keen to attend school and arrive punctually.

Pupils' good attitudes, good personal development and very good relationships and behaviour contribute positively to the good gains that pupils make in their learning.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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.*

The quality of teaching is good with examples of excellent practice. The best teaching was seen in the early years classes and in Year 1. During the week of inspection 96 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better, 5 per cent of lessons seen were excellent, 11 per cent were very good, 64 per cent were good and 16 per cent were satisfactory. Only 4 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is generally good because basic skills are well taught. This enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. The support staff contribute positively to the quality of teaching and this is a major factor in the very good progress that pupils with EAL make. The quality of teaching for pupils with SEN is good. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in the Reception class in music. There are occasions when higher attaining pupils are under-challenged and this results in them making satisfactory gains in learning, when they could be making good gains.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Broad and balanced. However, it is not monitored for consistency of the development of pupils' skills and pupils' prior attainment is not sufficiently used to inform curriculum planning. Provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory, but is currently being addressed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are identified early and are given specific targets relating to their needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral and social development. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school could make better use of the cultural diversity of its pupils in curriculum planning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. These pupils are very well supported both in withdrawal groups and in class. Expectations of these pupils are high and support staff contribute very positively to the very good progress that these pupils make.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a warm, welcoming and friendly environment in which the pastoral care of pupils is good. However, the use of assessment to inform planning is unsatisfactory, overall, and could be better.

The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents are informed of their children's progress through detailed reports and newsletters are informative. Class assemblies are well attended by parents and the school's open-door policy ensures that parents can come in at any time to discuss matters concerning their children.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sound leadership to her colleagues. She is ably supported by her staff and has ensured that all staff work together as a team. Her pastoral and spiritual vision of the school is better developed than her academic vision and the school development plan needs to be rigorously prioritised to raise academic standards. The role of the co-ordinators is underdeveloped.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The newly formed governing body is committed to the school and is very supportive of all school activities. It knows the school's strengths and areas for improvement and has a strategic vision in place for expectations of the new headteacher who will take up her post after Easter.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory, overall. The school evaluates its work and has identified appropriate areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The teaching and support staff are deployed effectively and the school makes good use of its resources.

The school is staffed by a good team of dedicated teachers and support staff who are conscientious and work well and collaboratively together for the benefit of pupils. The headteacher and governing body enable the school to apply the principles of best value.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They feel well informed of their children's progress.</li><li>• They are pleased with behaviour and the standards that their children achieve.</li><li>• Staff are always prepared to listen to their concerns.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There is a lack of extra-curricular activities.</li><li>• Reading books that pupils bring home are not very inspiring.</li><li>• Higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently stretched.</li><li>• Insufficient homework is set.</li><li>• Parents would welcome more involvement in the school.</li></ul>

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. Inspectors find that homework is sufficiently demanding for these pupils and endorse the open door policy that the school operates which means that parents can see teachers about their children's progress. Inspectors agree with parents' concerns about provision for extra-curricular activities, the limited range of reading books and occasions when higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently stretched. These matters are currently being addressed by the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement in the standards achieved by pupils since the previous inspection.
2. Pupils, overall, currently achieve above-average standards in English in speaking and listening and reading and average standards in writing, although their attainment in spelling and presentation of their work could be better. Taking into account the high percentage of pupils who have EAL, the school has worked very hard at raising standards and the implementation of the literacy hour has been effective. The reason for the present varying levels of pupils' achievement is that the literacy hour has been implemented longer than the numeracy hour and has had more time to have an impact on pupils' learning. Furthermore, there is regular and systematic support for pupils with EAL from the EMAG teachers who regularly test pupils; they also have high expectations when setting tasks matched to the needs of these pupils. In mathematics and science, pupils achieve standards which are in line with national averages. In ICT pupils achieve standards which are similar to those expected for their age. In English, science and mathematics, pupils who are of average ability and those with SEN make good gains in their learning. Pupils who are above-average attainers make satisfactory gains in their learning and those pupils with EAL make very good gains in relation to their prior attainment.
3. Pupils achieve high standards in art, music and geography and they make good gains in their learning. Pupils' attainment in history, design and technology and physical education is average and gains in learning are sound.
4. Children enter the nursery when they are three years of age and attend on a part-time basis. They move into the Reception class at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Their attainment on entry is below that expected of children of this age in all areas of learning: language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development, physical development and creative development. The majority of children make good progress due to the good quality of teaching, both in the nursery and the Reception classes and the good provision in relation to a vibrant and exciting curriculum which is relevant to their needs and interest levels. This results in children who are under five achieving the levels expected for their age in all areas of learning. The support of EMAG teachers enables children who have EAL, to make very good progress in being able to access the curriculum. However, there are instances when in the Reception classes, children who have not previously attended nursery, are set tasks which are too formal and rates of learning are slowed down because children occasionally struggle with keeping their concentration,
5. At the time of the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999, there was an exceptionally high-attaining cohort of pupils in Key Stage 1. They were identified as being above-average attainers when they entered the Reception classes. This fact should, therefore, be borne in mind, when considering that inspection findings do not reflect the same attainment levels, due to the present cohort of pupils being of lower attainment on entry to full-time education.
6. The test results of 1999 show that, in comparison with similar schools, standards were very high in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. In comparison with all schools, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing.
7. Inspection findings show that there is a difference between the previous high National Curriculum test results and inspection findings which is due to the fact that this year's cohort of Year 2 pupils has a high percentage with EAL and with SEN, but is, nevertheless, a broadly average attaining cohort. Inspection findings show that, by the end of Key Stage 1, standards in English are above national averages. This is because the support staff are effectively deployed to meet these pupils' needs in developing their emerging linguistic competencies.
8. In 1999, the National Curriculum test results for reading showed that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 or above was well above the national average. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher levels was close to the national average. The school has recognised that higher attaining pupils need to be consistently challenged. Over the last four years, in reading, the performance of pupils was

close to the national average and performance in writing was below the national average. Both boys and girls under-performed in writing, but girls were better than boys at reading. Inspection findings show that there is no difference in attainment by gender.

9. The school has improved pupils' attainment in English since the previous report, but pupils' spelling and presentation of work could be better. In speaking and listening, standards are above average and all pupils make good progress, especially in understanding and using subject-specific vocabulary. Standards in writing are broadly average and pupils can form coherent sentences, using descriptive words and tenses appropriately. Standards in reading are high. This is because pupils receive much help from support staff and they are heard to read on a regular basis; teachers also ask relevant questions to ensure that pupils have understood what they have read.
10. The 1999 test results in mathematics show that the percentage of pupils attaining both average and higher levels was well above the national average. Trends over time show that pupils' performance was above the national average and that boys did not achieve as well as girls. However, inspection findings show that this is not the case and that boys achieve as well as girls in all subjects. Generally pupils who are average attainers and those whose attainment is above average, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with SEN make good gains in their learning and those with EAL make very good gains in their learning in relation to their prior attainment.
11. Inspection findings show that the above-average attainment in English is largely due to the positive impact of the literacy hour which has a very structured approach. This results in teachers being clear about what they intend to teach and communicating this to their pupils. The good teaching of basic skills in both literacy and numeracy is a further contributory factor to good gains that pupils make in their learning, but, as yet, standards in mathematics are not as high as those in English, even though pupils' competencies in number are good.
12. The numeracy strategy has not had as much time as the literacy strategy to impact on pupils' learning, but the school has made an effective start in its implementation. However, the lack of monitoring of the curriculum for skills' progression and the unsatisfactory use of assessment data to identify pupils' prior attainment, result in teachers at the end of Key Stage 1 not being fully aware of the work that pupils have previously covered.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

13. The school is a happy and orderly community supported through a caring and spiritual ethos that is firmly based within a Christian environment where pupils feel valued. Pupils develop good attitudes to learning from nursery onwards. They are keen to learn and, when given the opportunity, they are willing to take responsibility and care for others. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and this has a positive effect on pupils' attainment, progress and personal development.
14. Pupils are happy to come to school and settle well into nursery. All feel safe and valued by staff and their peers. They show positive attitudes to learning and clearly enjoy their time in school. At the pre-inspection meeting, parents were very pleased with the standards and behaviour and say pupils are confident coming to school.
15. Pupils are keen and willing when given the opportunity to take responsibility and help others. One good example of this was seen in a Year 1 literacy lesson when one pupil organised her group for reading, making sure all had a turn and an opportunity to make their own comments on the story.
16. In all lessons, pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and are able to sustain concentration for good periods of time. In several literacy lessons, pupils demonstrated very positive attitudes to learning. In Year 2, they listened very well to teachers' explanations of text studied during the week. When the teaching is good they are motivated and become thoroughly absorbed in their work. This was evident in most lessons seen and particularly Year 2 art, Reception literacy and in the nursery. Pupils with SEN, and those with EAL, have very positive attitudes to learning and are keen and motivated to learn.
17. Children under five make good progress in the development of their personal skills. They enjoy coming to school. They are very secure in their environment and are confident to talk to visitors and show their work. They work and play together well, taking turns and sharing equipment. They respect their

environment and are very good when tidying away work before moving to another activity. They have very good relationships with their teachers and flourish in the calm, efficient and productive working environment provided for them.

18. Behaviour is very good across the school. It is very good in lessons and generally throughout the school day. Pupils co-operate with their teachers in establishing conditions in which they and others can work productively without fear of distraction or interruption; this compares favourably with the last inspection. They follow the code of conduct for classrooms and absorb the values and positive role models transmitted by all staff. No issues of bullying were reported and pupils, overall, feel that bullying is not a problem. Pupils are personally very well aware of the impact of their actions on others: this is transmitted through assembly and generally in lessons. It was noticeable that all pupils stood aside to let adults pass both in corridors and on the stairs, and were very polite to visitors and staff and to each other. There have been no exclusions during the school year.
19. Relationships within the school are very good. Teachers and pupils relate well to one another and the friendly, relaxed manner is built on a foundation of mutual respect. Parents say the staff have caring attitudes which give pupils and parents a feeling of security and all pupils are valued for their uniqueness. Attendance is satisfactory, overall, although authorised absence is high. This is due to the extended holidays pupils have in term times when visiting families abroad. The school has appropriate systems in place for providing work for pupils to take on extended holidays.
20. Since the previous inspection, the pupils have maintained the good attitudes identified, but behaviour has improved and is now judged as very good.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

21. The quality of teaching is good, overall. It has improved since the previous inspection. During the week of inspection, 96 per cent of teaching was satisfactory or better, with 4 per cent of teaching being unsatisfactory. Five per cent of teaching was excellent, 11 per cent was very good, 64 per cent was good and 16 per cent was satisfactory. The good quality of teaching is a contributory factor to the good gains that pupils make in their learning. During the week of inspection, all teachers gave examples of good teaching, but the best teaching is in the early years in the nursery and Reception classes.
22. Excellent team teaching was seen in the Reception class in music. In this lesson, the three teachers took equal responsibility in teaching the pupils a Japanese song about springtime. They used resources very well, such as a Japanese doll donated to the school by a local Member of Parliament and encouraged the children to tap the beat alongside a tambourine. They used flashcards to support pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and had high expectations of these pupils which were exhibited by the use of the correct musical terminology associated with tempo and dynamics. This resulted in pupils being able to identify pianissimo, fortissimo and repeating patterns. The natural enthusiasm of the teachers and their flair for this subject, contributed to the development of pupils' excellent attitudes and behaviour.
23. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is notably good because skills of literacy and numeracy are particularly well taught. This enables the majority of pupils to make good gains in their learning. There are occasions when higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged in literacy and numeracy, especially in Year 2, because the use of assessments to inform planning is underdeveloped and pupils' prior attainment is not built upon successfully. For example, in numeracy by the end of the Reception years, pupils have good working knowledge of numbers one to ten. In Years 1 and 2 this is repeated and this results in pupils consolidating knowledge, rather than extending it. Insufficient opportunities are provided for co-ordinators to monitor standards in each year group so that staff are unaware of the fact that knowledge and skills are repeated.
24. All teachers plan in detail and identify clearly what they expect pupils to learn. However, they are, at times, unsure of how best to match tasks to pupils' needs and there are occasions when tasks are not totally broken down in relation to skills content, which results in higher attaining pupils not being fully challenged. This was seen in Year 2 numeracy lessons, when pupils were gathering information for a pictogram and were completing low level tasks, such as drawing pets. Insufficient opportunities were provided for higher-attainers to extend their skills of numeracy and record their findings in a variety of ways. This lack of challenge for these pupils restricts their rates of progress.

25. Teaching staff who support pupils with EAL plan with the teachers in the year group that they are assigned to. The joint planning is thorough and results in pupils having equality of opportunity in accessing the curriculum. The thorough planning generally includes realistic strategies to help pupils. For example, when working with real life multiplication problems in mathematics, the teachers give pupils a series of useful questions to help organise their thinking. The joint planning in year groups ensures that staff share their expertise, but the data gained from assessments are not used systematically to inform teachers' planning. In the very good lessons seen, for example in literacy and numeracy in Reception, numeracy in Year 2 and knowledge and understanding of the world in the nursery, teachers use the opportunities that arise extremely well to teach and emphasise new ideas. Teachers have high expectations and challenge these pupils to think and extend their knowledge. Very good use is made of questioning to check that pupils both understand what they have been taught and to make them use their knowledge to solve problems.
26. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, although there are times when the higher levels of the curriculum are not used to challenge higher attaining pupils; this is evident in science and results in these pupils making only satisfactory gains in their learning.
27. Teachers generally know how to teach subjects well, using a variety of methods, including whole-class, group and individual teaching. A strong feature of all teachers' delivery is the subject-specific vocabulary that is evident in planning and in classroom practice. This contributes positively to pupils' skills of literacy. Throughout the school, lessons are generally structured well. They start with an interesting introduction or by recapping of what pupils know, and then check regularly on their understanding and progress. Time is not, however, always used effectively. This was seen in science and literacy in Year 2, where explanations given were too long and pupils became restless.
28. Teachers are good at directly teaching new information facts and ideas. In a science lesson in one of the Reception classes, the teacher used a Velcro board to illustrate what conditions are necessary for a plant to grow. Flashcards with words such as 'stem', 'flower', and 'bud' were used to promote pupils' reading skills. Some teachers talk or read to their pupils in a quiet voice. They do this very well to ensure that pupils listen to them closely. Where examples of good teaching were seen, for example in design and technology in Year 2; in English in Reception and Years 1 and 2; in geography in Years 1 and 2; and in mathematics in Reception and Years 1 and 2, lessons move at a brisk pace and pupils' work is used well to demonstrate and clarify points for others.
29. Generally, teachers have good classroom control techniques and manage their pupils well. In all lessons observed, relationships are very good. Many teachers use humour effectively to engage and interest their pupils. Support staff are well briefed and deployed carefully to make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. Support staff for pupils with EAL know their pupils very well and keep very good records of their progress. Homework, in the form of spellings, reading and an occasional piece of topic work, is set for pupils to enable them to extend their learning.
30. The accommodation is used well, classrooms are tidy, very well organised environments with resources clearly accessible. Issues that were identified during the week of inspection concerned the more efficient use of time, extension activities for the above-average attainers, the use of assessment data to inform future planning and insufficient opportunities being provided for pupils to learn from their mistakes which have been corrected by the teachers.
31. The good quality teaching contributes to the good gains that pupils make in their learning. Pupils acquire new knowledge and skills and develop and increase their understanding because they are well supported by staff. The rate, quantity and quality of learning are better in Reception and Year 1 than at Year 2, because time is used more effectively and a sense of urgency is established. There are occasions in Year 2 when explanations given by teachers are too long and this hinders rates of progress, because pupils do not have time to apply what they have learnt. Pupils have a sound knowledge of what they need to do in order to improve due to recent target setting that the school has undertaken.
32. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, in the under-fives teaching of physical education and in a Year 2 science lesson, time was not used effectively, there was a lack of challenge due to teachers not knowing the higher level of the National Curriculum orders, tasks were not matched to pupils' needs and lessons did not have clear learning objectives.

33. The teaching of pupils with EAL is very good. Expectations are high and pupils are given skilful support to help them to learn. Support staff have a very good level of knowledge and understanding about how pupils learn and what help they need to achieve success. Teachers make very clear distinctions between pupils who require SEN support and those who are experiencing difficulties due to their limited knowledge of the English language. There is a good mixture of individual and small group teaching and support within the class. Staff know their pupils well, but insufficient reference is made in planning to pupils' individual education plans. Good attention is paid to assessing the work of pupils with EAL in order to measure progress made towards individual targets. Recording of this information by the local authority advisory staff for this area of pupils' education is undertaken diligently.
34. The teaching of pupils with SEN is generally good. It is strongly underpinned through the effective deployment, commitment and expertise provided by support teachers. Teachers are aware of the procedures for identifying pupils with SEN. Good progress has recently been made in the testing and assessment procedures to identify specific learning difficulties, especially at stage 1 on the register. Pupils identified by class teachers are brought to the attention of the SEN co-ordinator by using a 'nature of concern form.' There are also good procedures in place to enhance curricular access for pupils with SEN. In-class support is further improved by effective planning and communication with the class teacher and the use of specific resources to meet their needs. However, teachers' planning is too centrally focused on tasks for pupils with lower ability as opposed to the specific needs and targets that address the SEN of some pupils.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

35. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its overall sound provision. The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are sound, overall, but there are weaknesses in the content of knowledge to be taught and skills' progression, because the curriculum is not consistently monitored by senior staff for appropriate skills' development. This results in certain inconsistencies. For example, in art, pupils do not study great artists in sufficient depth; in science, skills of enquiry, hypothesis and prediction are not successfully built upon and this results in pupils in Year 2 not building on what has previously been covered. The school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidelines as medium-term plans. These are in the early stages of development and the school has not undertaken a full audit of how these guidelines might fit in with existing schemes of work, such as the science scheme. The QCA guidelines have not been fully matched to the needs of the school and pupils' prior attainment. At present, pupils make sound or better progress due to the expertise of teachers generally getting it right when matching activities to pupils' needs, but this provision could be better because there are occasions in numeracy and literacy, when pupils consolidate their learning rather than extending it. The medium-term plans do not fully identify expectations that pupils of all abilities will reach at the end of each year.
36. The curriculum for the under-fives is planned well to the recommended early learning goals and covers the six areas of learning for language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social development. The curriculum is vibrant, exciting and relevant, but there are times in the Reception year when children, who have not attended nursery, are set tasks which are too formal, because insufficient attention has been paid to their prior attainment.
37. Overall, the curriculum at Key Stage 1 meets the statutory requirements. The school pays due regard to the national strategies for both literacy and numeracy and this has had a positive impact upon standards that pupils achieve at the end of the key stage, especially in literacy and in number work. The quality of specialist provision for pupils with SEN is good and for pupils with EAL, it is very good. When pupils are withdrawn from their mainstream class lessons, they cover the same learning objectives and this contributes to their good or better rates of progress. Great care is taken to ensure that these pupils maintain access to the full curriculum and are not excluded. Throughout the school, the curricular opportunities in ICT are sound. Pupils generally benefit from curriculum opportunities which are both interesting and challenging, such as the planting of cress seeds in Reception which challenged pupils' skills of independence. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory. This is an area which has caused concern for parents. The governing body and headteacher have already made plans for providing extra-curricular activities and have recognised this weakness. The school makes good use of the wider locality surrounding the school. Regular visits to places of interest, such as the Walsall

Art Gallery, local shops, nature studies and visits from local church leaders, add a valuable dimension to pupils' academic and social experiences.

38. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Pupils have good knowledge of health issues and are aware of how exercise and healthy eating affect their bodies. The school has developed statements and policies for sex education and drugs awareness, both of which are taught sensitively during personal and social education and science lessons. In addition, opportunities are provided in lessons to discuss a wide range of issues which prepare pupils well for taking personal responsibility for their actions and for developing an understanding of how these may affect others.
39. The school has developed good relationships with the junior and secondary schools in the Blue Coat foundation. Parents and the local community are welcomed into the school and enjoy being entertained by the pupils at harvest and Christmas times. Senior citizens are very welcome in school and they regularly help in craft and other activities, talking with pupils about their own experiences of school life. The school has good links with an art gallery and a local national retail business.
40. The school meets the statutory curriculum requirements, including provision for religious education. Daily acts of collective worship are incorporated into whole-school and class assemblies. These contribute to the good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Whilst religious education and collective worship were inspected under a Section 23 inspection, it is nevertheless evident that Christian principles are at the heart of the work of the school. Pupils are given opportunities to marvel at the wonders of God's creation and the limitless powers of man's creative potential. Pupils listen to a range of music, which enables them to reflect upon the meaning of their actions on others. Clergy and other visitors provide pupils with effective role models. Pupils respond well during times of prayer and reflection.
41. Provision for moral and social development is good. The school provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to raise their awareness on social and moral issues. Pupils learn about a range of environmental issues. Pupils are constantly reminded by their teachers of what is fair and not fair and, in Year 2, pupils are taught about the value of clearing our minds from negative thoughts. Pupils work together on batik prints and marvel at the canal system of Walsall and compare it with the canals in Gloucester; this contributes positively to their moral and social development as pupils are actively encouraged to talk about the use of land and how transport has changed over the centuries and affected people's lives.
42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, overall, but there is insufficient emphasis placed on using the richness of cultural diversity within the school to enhance curricular provision. Pupils know about the cultural environment in which they live through visits to museums and art galleries. They celebrate Greek traditions, Chinese new year, Diwali, St David's day and the main Christian events such as Easter and Christmas. They listen to Celtic music and know about the importance of St George's day. They have learnt about the island of St Lucia, have had visitors from Northern Ireland, but insufficient emphasis has been placed on learning about cultural differences through art and music.
43. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained a broad and mostly balanced curriculum and good provision has been maintained in spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development has improved, but it could still be better in reflecting the many cultures of the school's own population.
44. The curricular provision for pupils with SEN is good and the recommendations of the Code of Practice are mostly met. Pupils with SEN have full access to the curriculum and their learning needs are properly considered with appropriate professional agencies. Individual education plans are prepared for pupils, identifying targets for improvement and they make good progress. Progress is further enhanced by the very compassionate ethos in classrooms and teachers readily use encouragement and praise to ease pupils into main classroom activities. Teachers make a very good contribution to these pupils' developing sense of worth and self-esteem. The individual education plans meet local education authority guidelines and are of good quality. However, they are not always used in conjunction with general lesson planning. During the inspection week, there was an absence of discrete teaching plans to complement specific mainstream Programmes of Study.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

45. The pastoral care the school provides for pupils is good. It is a strength of the school and ensures that during their time in school pupils feel happy and confident and are able to concentrate on their learning. The Christian ethos promotes very good relationships throughout the school and is a key priority in the care provided for pupils. The quality of this care has been maintained well since the last inspection. However, although the procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are sound, the data gathered are not always targeted effectively to promote consistent progress across the school. This limits the school's ability to provide all pupils with appropriate support and advice in their learning.
46. Pupils in the Nursery and Reception classes are very well cared for in a calm and pleasant atmosphere. The induction procedures for both children and parents are good and children settle well into the routines of the classroom. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to school on time and to collect them promptly. Pupils quickly learn what is expected of them and staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise. For example, there is a good work assembly on Fridays when individual pupils are praised for their personal achievements. Satisfactory records are kept of pupils' progress and any learning or social difficulties are identified at an early stage and systems put into place to support each child.
47. Pupils with SEN have good support in all areas of the school. There are appropriate and satisfactory assessment procedures, including individual education plans, standardised testing and observational records of support assistants. However, although individual education plans are in place, there is an inconsistency in their use in classrooms. Although learning support assistants give an oral feedback to class teachers after each lesson, there is no structured system for written observational records to be kept. Pupils where English is a second language make very good progress and have very good support from the teachers, funded centrally by a special grant.
48. There is a good policy for the education of pupils with SEN, which gives clear guidance and direction to this aspect of the school's work. Appropriate communication is established between the co-ordinator for SEN and the nominated school governor and relevant information is conveyed to parents about aspects of provision for their child. The co-ordinator has also established strong links with the necessary external agencies and review documentation shows these procedures to be contributing positively to the provision for SEN.
49. The welfare of all the pupils is a high priority of the school. Class teachers welcome the pupils into school in the morning and pupils are comfortable in talking to their teacher about any worries they may have, either personal or academic. Other adults in the school also know the pupils well and this ensures a continuity of care throughout the school day. This can be seen especially in the quality of supervision during the mid-day break. For example, a majority of the classroom assistants also supervise at mid-day and know the pupils well. This enhances the quality of care and supports the effective systems of communication between the mid-day staff, class teachers and the headteacher.
50. The procedures the school has to govern health and safety and child protection are good. The school follows the advice of the local education authority and has developed its own policy for child protection. The headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection and the deputy headteacher has received the appropriate training. All staff are made aware of the procedures and know what to do when there is cause for concern. Confidential records are kept and liaison with outside agencies is very good. For example, the educational welfare officer visits weekly and has a very good working relationship with the school. School medicals are held regularly and other agencies, such as the speech therapist and audiometrician are available to visit the school when required. There are two members of the ancillary staff who have been trained in basic first aid procedures. An accident book for staff and pupils is kept in the school office and parents are notified by telephone if their child has an accident. Medication is kept in a cabinet in the school secretary's office for easy access by staff. Pupils are taught about healthy eating and about exercise through science and physical education lessons, thus contributing to the development of pupils' self-confidence and self-awareness.
51. Parents are aware of the importance of bringing their children to school on time and to advise the school at an early stage of reasons for absence. Punctuality has improved and the school monitors lateness and any concerns are reported to the educational welfare officer. If a child has to leave the school early during school time they are given a slip as the local education authority truancy officers patrol the area. The situation from the last inspection where pupils have taken extended holidays during term time has diminished somewhat, but it still happens on occasions. The school is doing all it can to rectify this issue.

52. The procedures for monitoring attendance are good, with the school having the highest attendance rate in the area. Attendance data are collated and each week are sent to the local education authority. The school rewards good attendance with certificates. Behaviour is good, with appropriate systems in place to monitor the behaviour of pupils throughout the school. Class teachers are consistent in the way in which they manage the behaviour of pupils and pupils are quite clear about what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.
53. The school meets statutory requirements for the testing of pupils at the end of the key stage. Good use is made of the analysis of National Curriculum test results and to pinpoint any differences in attainment of pupils of different gender. Teachers have comprehensive assessment files for each year with specific areas for assessment. However, the systems are not universal in each teaching year, although pockets of good practice are seen. There is a pilot scheme to set targets for improvement and pupils have their own targets displayed in classrooms. However, assessment procedures and the use of assessment to inform planning are still at an early stage of development and have insufficient impact on the attainment and learning of the pupils. Assessment on entry is undertaken both in the nursery, through the Nursery Entry Profile and through Baseline Assessment in the Reception classes.
54. Overall, the day-to-day outcomes of pupils' work are not recorded sufficiently or built systematically into subsequent lesson planning. The school provides effective support and advice for pupils in terms of their pastoral care and personal and social development. Problems that arise are recognised quickly and support is provided as appropriate. There is a good system of awards, which encourages pupils to work hard over a long period of time and pupils confirm that they value this recognition. However, because of the inconsistencies in using assessment data, pupils do not always receive a satisfactory level of support and advice to enable them to achieve higher standards of academic attainment. This is particularly so with higher achieving pupils. Because of the variable quality of marking, pupils do not always learn from their mistakes.
55. Attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now broadly in line with the national average for a similar school. Pupils arrive at school on time and are well prepared for their day. There is no unexplained absence. The school has maintained its good levels of care for pupils as identified in the previous report.
56. School documentation is thorough. The number of pupils on the register for SEN is below the national average and teachers are fully aware of the nature and details of their individual education plans and the level of support needed. There is an absence of guidance to teachers and curriculum co-ordinators on how the details of the individual education plans can inform planning across the range of National Curriculum subjects.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

57. The school has good links with parents. There is good parental involvement in pupils' home-school learning and this has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress,
58. Parents are satisfied with the quality of education provided by the school and the standards pupils achieve. They consider that the teaching is good and this enables their children to make progress and develop well. The evidence during the inspection supports this view.
59. Whilst parents feel they are well informed on school matters as a whole, a number would like more information on pupils' progress in-between the parents' evenings and the annual reports. The school is addressing this and has an afternoon literacy and numeracy information session planned. There are regular letters sent to parents and carers informing them about the school events and providing some information on topics that will be covered in each year group. The governors' annual report to parents and the school prospectus meet statutory requirements and inform parents well. There is regular contact between parents and teachers at the beginning and end of every day; those wishing for a more formal meeting are able to arrange it. This helps strengthen the parent-teacher relationships.
60. Relationships with parents are good and have continued to develop since the last inspection. Parents, grandparents and at least one great grandparent are very supportive of the school. Staff appreciate the help they provide: this helps all pupils to make appropriate progress and supports their personal development. One grandmother and great grandmother regularly spend time in school: during the

inspection, pupils were working with them on a craft session. The children were very keen and interested and were benefiting both from the work and the opportunity for conversation. One parent was helping Year 2 with their Lent Appeal, selling cakes at break times which was also giving pupils an opportunity to extend their numeracy skills. The impact of parental involvement on the work of the school has a positive effect on pupils' progress.

61. Parents have agreed the Home School Agreement and the majority have signed the final document. Through the agreement the school has asked parents to set aside time each day to enjoy the sharing of reading, counting, painting and finding out. The results of this are positive and are having an impact on pupils' numeracy and literacy skills. Parents of pupils with SEN are sensitively supported and well informed.
62. Overall the partnership between parents and the school and parents' commitment to supporting pupils' learning at home have a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Since the previous inspection, there has been an improvement in this aspect and all parents are aware of the complaints procedures.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

63. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, overall, but there are areas for improvement in developing a rigorous approach to further raising pupils' standards of achievement through the monitoring of teaching and curriculum development. The headteacher is an effective leader in the pastoral and spiritual direction of the school and has managed the recent government initiatives in literacy and numeracy appropriately. However, the role of the co-ordinators is underdeveloped and this results in staff not being fully aware of pupils' prior attainment. The headteacher's vision and direction for the school clearly take account of its Christian aims and values, which are to promote a caring environment in which good attitudes are developed and very good relationships are fostered. High standards in learning are achieved in literacy and, considering the low baseline from which pupils enter the school, the headteacher has ensured that the school is moving in the right direction to further raise standards. However, the school development plan, whilst it contains appropriate areas identified which need to be addressed, is not fully prioritised into manageable targets which will be most effective in raising standards.
64. The planned introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been effectively led. At present, the school has 'managed' without a literacy co-ordinator due to a member of staff leaving and the headteacher has taken this role over effectively. The role and responsibilities of the co-ordinator for SEN are clear and understood by all staff within the school. The headteacher has ensured that support staff for pupils with EAL are suitably deployed and this has resulted in these pupils making very good progress in literacy and numeracy. This was a key issue in the previous report and has now improved.
65. The school is well staffed by a team of qualified and experienced teachers who are supported very well by a team of hard-working, talented and dedicated support staff. All adults in the school are committed to the education of the children in their care. The very good teamwork, evident in their daily activities, helps teachers to provide good role models for pupils and enables the school to function as an effective learning community. The administrative, caretaking, cleaning and catering staff make a good contribution to the school and take their responsibilities seriously. They provide prompt and cheerful help, whenever the need arises, and help the school to run smoothly. Accommodation is satisfactory, although the outdoor area for the under-fives is not fully developed in relation to large play apparatus. This issue is identified as an area for improvement in the school development plan. All of the school's accommodation is kept clean and tidy and there are very good displays of pupils' work. This has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes, because they are aware of the need to care for their surroundings and they help to tidy up willingly. Learning resources are satisfactory, overall, but there are shortages in non-fiction books for English, globes for geography, artefacts for history, mechanisms and structures for design and technology and outdoor play apparatus for the under-fives. Resources are well managed and used effectively.
66. The governing body has only recently been formed and governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and their role in moving the school forward. There is appropriate expertise among the governors in relation to curriculum development, financial and personnel issues and management. Reports given by the headteacher keep governors well informed about standards and curriculum

development. The Chair of Governors is a regular visitor to the school; she is very supportive of the headteacher and staff and guides the school towards continuous improvement. Governors are fully involved in the compilation of the school development plan and are aware of the need to both prioritise and monitor the cost-effectiveness of spending. Due to the appointment of a new headteacher, who has not yet taken up her post, they have not made major decisions about future spending and curriculum development. The governors are keen to develop their roles even further and act as critical friends of the school. They are currently undertaking training to increase their understanding of how to develop their satisfactory practice of the principles of best value when spending school finances.

67. At present the evaluation and development of teaching is underdeveloped. Monitoring has taken place and performance has been discussed by teachers. However, not all staff are aware of the methods used throughout the school which have the most effect on improving pupils' rates of progress. Subject leaders give support to teachers through the help and advice they are able to offer, especially in religious education, numeracy and science.
68. The school development plan is satisfactory, overall. It outlines areas for development, is carefully costed, and sets timescales for the completion of targets, but, as yet, it is not fully monitored and evaluated and priorities for raising standards are not sufficiently well defined. The plan has incorporated all the areas for development in a realistic timescale.
69. The school does not, at present, have an effective, formal policy on monitoring appraisal and performance management. These two areas of teaching are currently being monitored on an informal basis and it should be stressed that, although the present headteacher is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of her staff and these have been fully discussed with the staff concerned, the headteacher is leaving at the end of the Easter 2000 term.
70. Grants are used efficiently, such as those received for the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours and money relating to the support of pupils with EAL and SEN is utilised well. Systems for financial administration are efficient. A recent audit made some minor recommendations and these have been acted upon.
71. Taking into account pupils' below average attainment on entry, the good quality of teaching that pupils receive, their overall good rates of progress and subsequent high achievement by the end of Key Stage 1 in literacy, coupled with average attainment in mathematics and science, the school provides sound value for money. This judgement confirms that the school has maintained its provision since the previous inspection. Since the previous inspection, the effectiveness of leadership and management has also been maintained.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

### **The use of assessment to inform teachers' planning is underdeveloped and should be rectified by:**

- ensuring that all teachers take full account of their pupils' prior attainment.

(Paragraphs 12, 23, 30, 35, 45, 52, 53, 88, 97, 109, 112, 115)

### **Pupils' spelling and presentation of work are unsatisfactory, overall, and should be improved by:**

- ensuring that, alongside learning spelling lists, pupils are given opportunities to learn spellings that have been misspelt in their own writing;
- introducing a handwriting policy that is consistently applied throughout the school.

(Paragraphs 2, 9, 88, 93)

### **The role of the co-ordinators needs to be developed by:**

- ensuring that all co-ordinators are aware of the attainment levels of pupils in their subjects;
- allocating sufficient time for monitoring continuity and progression in all subjects across the curriculum
- sharing examples of good practice in all subjects with teachers, so that all are aware of what constitutes good practice.

(Paragraphs 23, 35, 63, 67)

### **Teachers do not systematically challenge higher attaining pupils and this should be addressed by:**

- teachers having higher expectations of their pupils by using the higher levels of the National Curriculum in their planning;
- ensuring that challenging tasks are set for these pupils to extend rather than consolidate learning.

(Paragraphs 23, 24, 26, 30, 95, 108, 112, 114)

### **The leadership and management of the school needs to be more rigorous in prioritising targets in the school development plan by:**

- ensuring that raising of standards in the core subjects is the key priority and that all other priorities are evaluated in relation to their impact on raising pupils' levels of attainment.

(Paragraphs 63, 66, 68)

### **Schemes of work need to be developed for all subjects in order to:**

- clearly define what higher, average and below-average attainers are expected to achieve by the end of the year, both in subject knowledge and development of skills.

(Paragraphs 35, 115, 127, 133, 140, 155)

### **Provision for pupils' cultural development could be enhanced by:**

- further emphasis being placed in art and music to reflect on the variety of cultures within the school;
- ensuring that all pupils have the opportunity to study great artists and musicians.

(Paragraphs 42, 43, 121)

### **Minor issues:**

- Resources, whilst satisfactory overall, need to be improved in English (non-fiction books), science (equipment for the delivery of AT4), design and technology (mechanisms and structures), ICT (hardware),

geography (globes and photographs), history (artefacts), outdoor large play apparatus for the under-fives. (Paragraphs 65, 91, 99, 114, 127, 140, 147)

- Provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory and should be addressed. (Paragraph 37)
- Ensure that under-fives who have not attended the school's nursery, receive appropriate access to activities which are self-chosen rather than teacher-directed. (Paragraphs 4, 36, 72)
- Prepare and implement a policy for the appraisal of the performance management of teachers. (Paragraph 69)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5.5	11	63.5	16	4	-	-

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	206
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	-	50

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	94

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### *Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999 (98)	49 (43)	40 (36)	89 (79)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	47 (32)	48 (30)	47 (32)
	Girls	39 (33)	39 (30)	39 (31)
	Total	86 (65)	87 (60)	86 (63)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (82)	98 (76)	97 (80)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	86 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	47 (31)	46 (33)	47 (28)
	Girls	39 (33)	37 (31)	38 (31)
	Total	86 (64)	83 (64)	85 (59)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (81)	93 (81)	96 (75)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	26
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	15
Indian	22
Pakistani	25
Bangladeshi	9
Chinese	1
White	63
Any other minority ethnic group (Kosovan)	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

*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)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13.5

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998/99
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	£
Total income	405,151
Total expenditure	402,153
Expenditure per pupil	1,585
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,907
Balance carried forward to next year	23,545

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	400
Number of questionnaires returned	89

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	21	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	37	8	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	40	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	33	16	6	4
The teaching is good.	52	39	2	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	31	17	7	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	29	4	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	30	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	43	33	16	7	1
The school is well led and managed.	53	35	4	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	36	7	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	19	20	16	16

## **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**

72. During the week of inspection, there were 27 FTE children in the nursery who were under five years of age, and 20 children across the Reception classes who were also under five. The school makes good provision for these children. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching has improved and the children are provided with a good start to their formal education. The entry assessments conducted within the first few weeks of the autumn term, indicate that children's competency and confidence in all the elements of foundation learning, are below levels expected for their age. Children develop their skills effectively in all areas of learning and make good progress, overall. Since the previous inspection, children make better progress in physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Planning has improved, but there are occasions in the Reception classes, where children who have not attended the nursery, are set tasks which are too formal and which they do not choose themselves.

#### **Personal and social development**

73. All children achieve good standards in their personal and social development. They are very well behaved, friendly and polite. They are confident and feel secure within the school, quickly making good relationships with each other and the staff. Children work extremely well as groups and in pairs and are able to work and play independently. Children in the 'home corner' are able to play for long periods of time, saying "please", "thank you" and "excuse me" to their peers. The children are eager to explore new learning. Children are beginning to initiate ideas as they play with construction sets. They show that they can solve practical problems on their own when they tackle unzipping their coats, undoing buttons and putting their own coats on hooks after play times.
74. Teaching is consistently good. All staff have a very good understanding of child development and work with children sensitively. They act as very good role models and are calm, offering gentle encouragement and positive praise, while setting clear expectations of behaviour. They encourage independent play, yet provide security by always being available for the children to talk to. The curriculum includes quiet times as part of the planning for social and personal development and all staff work together exceedingly well as a team. Children learn to share their achievements and their concerns. Children with EAL are very well supported. They are given plenty of opportunities to practise naming objects and repeating sentences and phrases.

#### **Language and literacy**

75. Standards in language and literacy meet the expected outcomes for children's ages. All children make good progress because the quality of teaching is good and teachers focus very well on promoting this area. Children achieve notably good standards in listening. They pay good attention to adults and listen carefully when being given instructions and guidance in their activities. Children develop a clear understanding of how to handle books by observing their teachers and soon begin to show basic early reading skills because of the carefully chosen texts provided. They enjoy listening to stories and are able to sit still and listen attentively. Many children like opening books from their class library and enjoy looking at the pictures. They particularly enjoy taking books home to share with their parents. Children in the nursery are beginning to experiment with making their own marks on paper and many make successful attempts to recognise their own names. They enjoy songs and stories and like recounting a story from the pictures in one of their 'big' class books. In the Reception class, children develop their knowledge of letters and can identify letters, which they have printed in their art work.
76. All the teachers work very hard to equip the children with the necessary language and listening skills. Teaching is good. The teachers are clear and precise, intervene carefully with perceptive questioning to make teaching points and use expressive story-telling skills. They encourage the children to reason and to predict. Books are well displayed and classroom resources are clearly labelled.

#### **Mathematical development**

77. Most children meet the expected outcomes by the age of five. Many can count to ten and some of the higher attainers can count to 30. In the Reception class, children under five can count to 60. Children recognise circles, squares and rectangles and use the correct vocabulary. They are able to sort objects according to size and some are beginning to recognise patterns when using the computers. Children make good progress during lessons, considering their below average attainment on entry. Mathematical language is developed by encouraging the children to count when lining up. The majority of the children show an awareness of number operations and understand and record numbers. They learn number rhymes and games and can tell a story, using numbers. Children behave very well during lessons. They are able to share equipment and work together. Concentration is sustained for long periods for such young children. They are very willing to pack away the equipment at the end of lessons and collaborate well in this task.
78. The quality of teaching is good, with examples of very good teaching by the numeracy co-ordinator in the Reception class. Activities are play-related and practical and sustain the interest of the children. The activities are chosen to fit in with the theme in the long-term plan, and appropriately match the children's abilities. Assessment procedures are good. Staff make regular observations and record the children's development for future planning and set appropriate targets for them. This is an effective model, which would benefit other staff to adopt.

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

79. Children meet the expected standards by the time they are given. They find out about their own babyhood and the lives of the adults in the school through looking at old photographs. They cut and make shapes out of play-dough and use scissors and other cutting tools safely when making 'gingerbread men'. Children can fit construction toys together and learn how mustard and cress grows. They are able to pour sand carefully into various sized containers in the sand tray and pour water into funnels. They paint, using large paintbrushes, and manipulate the keys on the computers confidently. Children make good progress. They quickly learn to dress themselves and turn on taps to wash their hands. They learn how to manipulate a wide variety of toys and learn very quickly how to pack them away. They learn about living things through practical experiences. Children are inquisitive about the world and constantly ask questions. They work well together in making things and playing in role-play situations and with toys. Children wait their turn, share resources well and they concentrate on the task in hand. They show obvious care and concern by the gentle and skilled way they hold and look after their 'babies' in the home corner.
80. Teaching is good. Planning is detailed for all areas of this subject and is appropriately matched to the time of the year and to the children's stages of development. Very good displays enhance children's experiences. Teachers spend time with children and pace themselves to give all children an equal share of attention. They use skilled questioning and use pictures and actual objects to extend children's vocabulary. The daily use of assessment is good. Adults constantly check the children's previous knowledge and understanding through questions and answers. Resources are good and matched well to the children's abilities.

### **Physical development**

81. Children make good progress and meet the standards expected for their age. They are able to handle beanbags and balls and show good co-ordination. Many children can manoeuvre well around objects and people. They enjoy the feel of the play dough as they push, pull, roll and cut it and they handle small toys gleefully. Children sustain concentration well during physical activities. They are courteous and well behaved to adults and each other and show very willing attitudes to learning. Many are able to walk, jump and move around to find a space and can climb up and down confidently. They use construction kits with increasing confidence and tools, such as scissors, paint brushes, crayons and glue brushes, are handled increasingly well. They spread sand on their pictures carefully and, when planting mustard and cress seeds, they have sound manipulative skills.
82. Teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons well to teach skills progressively with choice provided in activities. A positive learning environment is provided by calm but firm discipline. The accommodation is used very well. The school plans to develop its outdoor area for the under-fives in the near future.

### **Creative development**

83. Children make good progress and achieve the expected levels for their age. They build upon their artistic skills through practice and interaction with teachers and other adults. The 'blue gallery' is a delight to see and represents the many skills of printing, collage, finger painting, that these young children can do. The use of printed letters for the 'blue family' contributes positively to children's emerging literacy skills. Children achieve good standards in artistic and musical activities. They find enjoyment in expressing their feelings and ideas through a range of experiences in artistic, musical and imaginative play. For example, they enjoy painting at the easels and making prints, showing great excitement and wonder at the end product. Children know the primary colours well and also know a few secondary colours, like orange and green. They enjoy the discovery of play dough shapes when using the cutters, and work happily with a wide range of media. Children enjoy singing and making music and do so tunefully, using actions enthusiastically in their rhymes and songs. They use the resources well to aid their imaginative play in the 'hairdressing salon' and are beginning to show very confident social skills when playing with each other. Resources are good and the role-play areas are easily adaptable to a variety of themes during the year.
84. The quality of teaching is good. All adults support children in their learning and ensure that they gain from the activities through discussion as they work. There is a good sense of fun encouraged in practical tasks and activities are organised well. There is always a well-planned choice of materials available and the children make good progress in developing their imaginative skills. Very good displays of children's work help to create a vibrant and colourful environment in which all children are highly valued as individuals.

## ENGLISH

85. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 show that in reading, pupils' attainment was well above national averages and in writing it was above national averages. In comparison with similar schools, attainment in reading was very high and in writing it was well above averages. In reading, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was well above the national average, but in writing, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 3 was close to the national average.
86. Over the last four years, trends show that pupils' attainment in reading was close to the national average, but writing was below the national average. Girls performed better than boys in reading, but there was no difference in attainment by gender in writing.
87. There has been a gradual improvement in standards, with standards in reading being in line in 1998, but in 1999 standards rose sharply. This is due to a one-off high attaining cohort which the school recognised as being above average ability on entry to the Reception class.
88. Inspection findings show that there is no significant difference in pupils' attainment by gender and that by the end of the key stage, standards are above national averages in speaking and listening and reading, but that, in writing, standards are broadly in line. However, there is a weakness in spelling and in the presentation of pupils' work. Overall, inspection findings show that standards are above national averages and that average attaining pupils and those with SEN make good progress. Pupils with EAL make very good progress. Higher attaining pupils make only sound progress, because there are occasions when they are not sufficiently challenged. This is largely due to the fact that teachers do not fully use the data identified in assessments to move these pupils on in their learning. The school has recognised this as an area to be addressed on the school development plan. A further contributory factor to higher attaining pupils' rates of progress being only satisfactory is that teachers are not, as yet, familiar with using the teaching objectives of higher levels of the literacy strategy; this results in pupils consolidating their learning rather than extending it.
89. Pupils who have EAL make very good progress because EMAG staff have high expectations of these pupils and the joint planning with class teachers ensures that these pupils cover work which is best matched to their needs, based upon appropriate, age-related objectives of the literacy strategy. Very regular and detailed assessments are undertaken of these pupils, which result in early identification of problems which are quickly taken on board and individual language programmes are put into place. The school is in the process of setting internal targets which will be rectified by the newly appointed headteacher. These targets are sufficiently challenging and the school is on line to achieve them.

## **Speaking and listening**

90. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are above average and all pupils make good progress. They are eager to tell their news at length and make relevant contributions during plenary sessions. Pupils use subject specific vocabulary and this is a contributory factor to their above average attainment, because teachers identify key words in their planning. For example, in Year 2, pupils used clearly and understood the terms rhyme, phoneme and alliteration. They listen carefully to what teachers and others are saying and wait sensibly for their turn to speak. The introductory and plenary sessions of the literacy hour provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss learning objectives, shared text and independent tasks.

## **Reading**

91. Standards in reading are above average. The majority of pupils can read with fluency. Pupils learn to read through structured schemes, building on previous knowledge to increase word recognition and also through using the sounds of letters. However, their home reading diet is limited to fiction books as there is a lack of non-fiction books in the school which pupils are allowed to take home.
92. Pupils with EAL who have limited knowledge of letter sounds, make use of picture cues and the meaning of the text to assist them in tackling new words. More confident pupils can express opinions about stories that they have read and say what sorts of books they enjoy reading. Pupils can name their favourite authors and Roald Dahl is a firm favourite. All pupils have the opportunity to take books home each day to read to parents, and the school has rightly identified the need to replenish the existing home 'readers' with more non-fiction books. Good use is made of the library and, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know how to locate and use non-fiction books, referring to the contents page and index.

## **Writing**

93. Standards in writing are broadly in line with national averages. Pupils can write in sentences, they use a varied vocabulary. Punctuation is variable but is satisfactory, overall. Pupils generally use capital letters and full stops accurately, but their use of speech marks is inconsistent. Standards in spelling are unsatisfactory, overall, and teachers do not always use pupils' spelling mistakes as teaching points in order for pupils to make better progress. Pupils often spell common words incorrectly and the presentation of their work is often untidy. Pupils write for a range of purposes, they write poems, explain how to do things, such as making a Chinese dragon, communicate information, write lists and create stories and character profiles. Examples of Year 2 stories show that pupils' writing is imaginative, clear and events follow a logical order. Pupils are taught to use dictionaries to check spelling and to look for the meaning of words.
94. Lower ability Year 2 pupils know the alphabet and can locate words in a dictionary when creating their own glossary. There are, however, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 who do not hold their pencils correctly and this results in their letters not being formed correctly. Teachers generally make good use of literacy across the curriculum. Lesson plans show that the introduction and plenary sessions involve pupils in questioning and discussion, and that subject-specific vocabulary is introduced. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in subjects, such as history and geography, where they write about canals and changes in transport over the years and life in Victorian times. The use of ICT is being developed successfully. Year 2 pupils can word process their work and alter font sizes.
95. The quality of teaching is good. All lessons are planned effectively and teachers have good subject knowledge. Pupils with SEN and EAL receive good and often very good support and tasks are appropriately matched to their needs. Pupils who are higher attainers could be further challenged as there are occasions when they consolidate their learning rather than being pushed into further challenges. This is partly due to the fact that assessment data are not used to inform planning. This has been recognised by the school as an area for future development.
96. All lessons have clear learning objectives and generally tasks are well matched to pupils' needs. Learning objectives are shared with pupils so that they are clear as to what needs to be done. Teachers mark pupils work regularly, but do not always use pupils' mistakes as further points for developing learning. In the introduction to lessons, teachers expect and encourage pupils to give well-thought-out responses to questions. Time is generally used well, but there are occasions when explanations are too long and this restricts the time devoted to word-level work.

97. Teachers have generally very good management skills and use support staff very well. Support staff work very hard in ensuring that pupils practise words that they struggle with on a regular basis and this contributes to the good rates of progress these pupils make. Teachers' expectations are higher in Reception and Year 1 than they are in Year 2. This is because, at present, assessment procedures are satisfactory, but their use in informing future planning is underdeveloped. The teaching in basic skills is good throughout the key stage. Teachers teach reading skills well and generally match activities to the text that pupils have read in class. This results in pupils making good gains in their learning. Writing skills are taught inconsistently and this results in the presentation of work being untidy. Teachers provide pupils with interesting worksheets which are appropriately linked to the text that pupils have been working on. Teachers give good explanations and model for pupils what is expected of them. For example, when teaching pupils about differences in writing letters and postcards, based upon a letter from Jack to his mother, teachers showed pupils how to write in short sentences which convey clear messages.
98. Relationships are very good. Teachers offer good support and independent tasks are clearly explained to groups who are expected to work at them, without interrupting teachers, allowing them to concentrate on a particular group.
99. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively in spite of the fact that the literacy co-ordinator has recently taken up employment elsewhere. The headteacher is at present responsible for co-ordinating the subject, but, as yet, a rigorous handwriting policy is not being used across the school which results in presentation of work being untidy. Resources are generally satisfactory, but there is a shortage of non-fiction books, especially for home readers.
100. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen and are now above national averages. Good standards in reading have been maintained. The rates of progress for pupils with SEN and EAL have improved and pupils with EAL are making better progress than they were during the last inspection and EMAG staff are more appropriately deployed.

## **MATHEMATICS**

101. At the end of Key Stage 1, the overall standards of pupils' attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum tests were well above the national average. Their standards of attainment were very high when compared with similar schools. The results for 1999 indicate an improvement and the school reached its target for pupils at or above the national average. The proportion of pupils who attained standards higher than those expected of seven-year-olds was well above the national figure.
102. The trends in attainment over time show that pupils' performance in mathematics was above the national average. The discrepancy between national test results and inspection findings is due to the academic profile of this year's cohort of pupils, who are not attaining standards as high as those achieved in 1999. There is a higher percentage of pupils with average and below-average ability. The inspection findings show that seven-year-olds attain standards that are in line with national averages. Trends over time match inspection findings with the exception of the 1999 results, where the pupils who took the test were mainly of average to above-average ability.
103. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of seven-year-olds are able to derive division facts from the two and ten times table and have developed rapid mental recall of number pairs that make 20. This is because they have had an effective start in the Reception classes and due to the dynamic teaching of the mathematics co-ordinator. Pupils are developing their mathematical vocabulary through the use of words such as multiply, divide and equal. They are familiar with sorting and classifying data into a block graph. Pupils understand the use of x and y axes on a block graph and can organise information into a pictogram. In Year 1, they can count forward and back in fives to 100 and they can count on and back from a number in fives. They can calculate time by the hour and half-hour. In Reception classes, pupils can count in twos and tens, they can add single-digit numbers up to ten and they can count two groups of objects and add them together. They can relate addition to combining two groups of objects and subtraction to taking away. This is due to the fact that teachers are always encouraging pupils to explain their thinking. The pupils do so correctly and to a high enough standard to reach the expected standards. In mental and oral sessions pupils carry out calculations with speed, accuracy and confidence.

104. In the Reception class, pupils can identify two-dimensional shapes and use a number line to 20. They draw objects to get an idea of size, bigger, smaller. In Year 1 they can carry out calculations using money, calculating change from 50p and can estimate length in centimetres. In Year 2, the seven-year-olds were engaged in adding tens and units and identifying odd and even numbers. They can calculate accurately in 2s, 5s and 10s, counting on and counting back. They can use addition, subtraction and multiplication with confidence. They can add and subtract three-digit numbers and can recognise and add simple fractions. Pupils in Year 1 can use a number line with confidence, working with numbers up to 60
105. The progress of the majority of pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, is good, overall. Pupils with EAL make good progress, because they are very well supported in lessons. Progress over a longer period is slower for the higher attaining pupils at the end of the key stage and, overall, they make satisfactory progress. Pupils with SEN make good progress. In Year 1, pupils add the missing numbers up to 60 on a number line and, by Year 2, they calculate accurately simple addition sums to 100.
106. The pupils show good attitudes to mathematics and respond well to the questioning skills of the teachers, who often ask pupils to explain their thinking. The pupils answer confidently, as they know their answers will be received well and, if they are incorrect, they will be asked to think again.
107. The teaching of numeracy is a strength, due to the very good guidance given by the subject co-ordinator. Lessons throughout the school start with mental work associated with number facts and simple calculations. This is having a positive effect on raising standards. Numeracy is used soundly across the curriculum in an incidental way, rather than as part of a planned programme. The quality of teaching in the majority of lessons is good or better and in one quarter of the lessons it is satisfactory. A particular strength is the teachers' subject knowledge and their planning, which is linked carefully to the framework for teaching. There are clear learning objectives for each lesson. Teachers use a brisk pace and question their pupils well. However, expectations are inconsistent and are sometimes higher in Reception and Year 1 than they are at Year 2. This results in pupils making more marked gains in their learning in the younger classes.
108. The pupils are taught mathematics in groups, according to their prior attainment. The lower attainers are in smaller groups and are often supported by classroom assistants. The effectiveness of this support is consistent between classes and year groups. The work planned for the higher attaining pupils, particularly in Year 2, does not always provide sufficient challenge and this, on occasions, results in them making satisfactory progress, rather than good progress.
109. At present there is regular testing of pupils' progress and attainment, but the information from the tests is not used effectively to inform teaching and planning. Workbooks are marked regularly and there is on-going teacher assessment. At present, teachers are not setting consistent targets for improvement. A significant amount of pupils' work across the whole school is marked, but there are few constructive comments. Homework is not set regularly to effectively support pupils' class work.
110. The leadership and management of the subject are good, overall. The co-ordinator is passionate about the development of her subject. She provides good advice and her teaching is exemplary. Every opportunity is taken to develop pupils' skills of literacy and numeracy and this contributes to the good gains that pupils make in their learning.
111. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behaviour is very good. Relationships between the pupils and teachers are very good. Pupils are interested and motivated in their work; they want to improve on their previous best performance. They try hard in mental mathematics to explain their thinking processes and they learn from one another's mistakes. Since the previous inspection, rates of pupils' learning have increased, attainment has remained in line with national averages and curriculum planning has improved due to the implementation of the literacy hour.

## **SCIENCE**

112. The results of the 1999 National Standard Assessment Tests for science were well above the national average. Standards during the inspection week are in line with national averages. This matches the trend over the last five years with the exception of the 1999 results, which had an above-average attaining group of pupils. There is inconsistency in the achievement of pupils across all years due to the lack of assessments to inform planning and insufficient monitoring of the curriculum for skills progression. In

the Reception classes, pupils have good levels of observational skills when identifying the different parts of plants. They are developing good questioning techniques as they determine the requirements for seed germination. Many Year 1 pupils also achieve well when identifying how we hear environmental sounds and how these can be compared, using pitch and volume. However, the most able pupils in these classes could be further challenged scientifically to describe cause and effect of various sound phenomena. This is the case with the oldest pupils in the school. Pupils' high prior attainment is not sufficiently well built upon in Year 2, especially in skills progression. Work on electrical circuits insufficiently challenges the most able pupils, who miss the opportunity to set up appropriate experiments to extend their thinking about the flow of electricity. They especially lack the skills to question why the circuit can be interrupted and to test these theories through experimentation. Pupils with special education needs make good progress, generally. Teachers and support staff use literacy strategies to develop their thinking and the pupils are particularly adept at using key scientific words to describe what is happening. Throughout Key Stage 1 there is insufficient challenge and expectation of pupils to use extended writing to record their findings.

113. Satisfactory standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Reception age pupils still receive a good grounding in scientific studies and this has a positive effect on the motivation of pupils to independently investigate issues. Older pupils maintain this enthusiasm, but teachers still inconsistently structure lessons to take advantage of this method of learning. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows some good gains in knowledge and understanding when pupils set up an experiment to chart the speed of cars moving down a slope. However, little progress has been made in specifically planning for the most able pupils, using relevant extended tasks.
114. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, but teaching to younger pupils generally shows a better understanding of National Curriculum requirements. It is these pupils who are consistently performing above the levels expected of them. Teachers' understanding of the physical processes Programme of Study is less competent than other areas. Science lessons are planned to give pupils valuable practical experiences, they respond very well and when given opportunities can pose questions and record answers. Year 1 work shows a good understanding of human health issues and scientific sources of light. Year 2 work, through a range of relevant experiments, provides pupils with good understanding of changes in materials due to cold and heat. Teachers' planning usually considers the range of abilities in the class, the less able pupils particularly receive good support. Planning for the most able does not sufficiently extend higher order knowledge, but, rather, consolidates previous learning. Year 1 work did not use pupils' knowledge of the human hearing mechanisms to extend the validity of their sound experiments. Able Year 2 pupils do not logically introduce switches to their circuits or extend the power supply to further apparatus. Unlike Reception pupils, they are not systematically hypothesising, testing and recording their findings. Teaching style in the Year 2 classes is not extending independent thinking and relies too much on teachers' explanations. Teachers use resources well to motivate pupils. The sound laboratory resource boxes in Year 1 provide a very good structure to learning. However, the school is desperately short of acceptable electrical circuits, greatly diminishing the opportunities for learning in this Programme of Study. Teachers manage pupils very well and relationships are very good. Generally time is used effectively.
115. Recent management initiatives have successfully standardised coverage of the science National Curriculum. However, it is proving difficult to cover all Programmes of Study on a one year cycle, especially with a lower than national average timetable allocation of science. Teachers plan well together in year groups and some very good links are made with other areas of the curriculum. Science lessons now make far greater use of information technology and literacy strategies to develop understanding. When studying light, pupils relate this to the Diwali festival; the study of the human body and diet covers some important health and environmental issues; and the work on sound focuses strongly on musical instruments. A lack of a whole-school scheme of work, with clearly defined expectations for the varying ability levels at the end of each year, reduces the opportunity for consistent planning of both skills and knowledge that need to be covered. Present monitoring is underdeveloped and is not sufficiently noting the unevenness in the acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils progress through the school. Opportunities are also missed to share best teaching practice and, although teachers do well to record achievement, they do not always use these records to inform the next stages in learning. This was clearly identified in the Year 2 studies. A visiting speaker prior to the inspection clearly identified the sound levels of understanding of electricity passing through a circuit. Subsequent planning did not take this on board and opportunities to extend levels of understanding were missed.

## **ART**

116. Pupils of all abilities make good progress throughout the school and their art work is of a high standard and contributes significantly to the very good quality of displays throughout the school. Art is used very well to support other subjects. For example, in science, pupils draw electric circuits, plants, materials of different substances; in English, art is used to illustrate pupils' interpretations of characters that they have studied and stories that they have written. In History, art supports the Homes and Houses topics and some excellent examples of silhouettes based upon back-wash effects were seen. Pupils' skills of fine-line drawings are well developed.
117. In the early years, 'The Blue Gallery', a project undertaken with the Walsall Art Gallery and a local national retail business, is a credit to the school. The blue painted stars and patterns, made using glue and paint, are meticulously executed and the 'blue family' prints, using numbers and letter shapes, contribute positively to pupils' emerging skills of literacy and numeracy. By the end of Key Stage 1, all pupils make good progress in acquiring a full range of skills from paper tearing, mixing paints, smudging chalk, drawing in pastels, using charcoal and in developing their skills of painting with precision, ensuring that attention is paid to minute detail.
118. Pupils' batik work is of a high standard. In supporting the science topic of materials and their properties, pupils produced some very intricate designs, using a variety of dyes and wax. Pupils' clay work is precise and well executed. In Year 2, pupils design, make and paint ceramic tiles and in the Reception Year 1 pupils make 'spider' baskets which they paint very neatly for Mothers' day. Pupils are making sound progress in using ICT programs in developing their skills of drawing and colour matching.
119. Pupils have very positive attitudes to art. They happily chat away as to what aspects of their art work they enjoy and what skills they have improved in. When designing their clay tiles, they are quick to point out that intricate patterns sometimes look better on paper than they do in clay.
120. No formal teaching of art lessons was seen during the week of inspection, but scrutiny of teachers' plans and interviews with the teachers and pupils clearly reveal that teachers have good subject knowledge and that their demonstrations and explanations produce work that is of high quality.
121. The art curriculum is broad, but slightly unbalanced in that the work of artists is underdeveloped. Whilst teachers cover aspects of van Gogh and Picasso paintings, this is not suitably well developed to ensure that pupils make gains in their knowledge and skills from year to year. The school has recognised this as an area for development. The art co-ordinator has only recently taken over from a member of staff who is on maternity leave. Assessment in art takes place on an informal basis, but is insufficiently developed to ensure that a detailed record is kept as to what skills pupils need to improve on. Resources in art are good and are well used. Since the previous inspection, high standards have been maintained, pupils continue to work in a variety of media and teachers' subject knowledge has improved. However, at present, the multi-cultural aspect of art is insufficiently well developed.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. All pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology and, by the time they are seven, their standards of work are typical of that of most pupils of their age. Pupils with SEN and those with EAL make good progress as much of the subject involves practical activities. Average and higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, overall.
123. When pupils are seven, they are accustomed to working from designs, which specify the tools and materials that will be needed for their models and work safely. Most pupils have a good knowledge of a variety of methods to fasten materials together, which includes staples, clips, glue and string. Pupils work confidently with tools. When making vehicles in Year 1 they design and make a frame for the chassis from strip wood and attach wheels and axles to the frame. They consider designs for musical instruments and use familiar materials to make wind and string instruments. In Year 2, they design and make wall tiles from clay, carving and forming patterns, which are painted in bright colours. Some pupils use the computer to design their tile patterns. They also use a simple electric circuit which makes bulbs light up and they use this circuit to make a clown's face light up or to make a torch. A good example of products finished to a high standard are the floral baskets made in clay by Reception class pupils, the decorative masks and wallpaper designs in Year 1 and the fabric printing in Year 2.

124. By the end of Key Stage 1, the seven-year-olds understand the properties of common materials and make choices when constructing models. For example, they make sensible decisions when selecting materials to make junk models or the material to make an axle for vehicles they have designed. Pupils understand the importance of planning, which includes deciding what tools and materials they are going to use. The pupils measure, cut and join a variety of materials accurately when constructing models. They assemble models carefully, introducing movement by using axles for wheels, or split pins for joints in card cut out figures. All appreciate the importance of evaluating the quality of their work when it is finished.
125. The quality of teaching is good, overall, but the rates of learning are inconsistent due to limited resources for teaching relating to mechanisms and structures. Teachers give good explanations and enable pupils to develop their skills of evaluation. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to link their knowledge of design and technology with other subjects, such as history, where Year 2 pupils make clay tiles resembling those made in Victorian times. The development of literacy encourages pupils to use appropriate vocabulary when naming tools and describing what they are doing. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills of numeracy and pupils mark and measure with confidence.
126. Pupils' attitudes are good. All take a pride in their work and enjoy taking part in design and technology lessons. Pupils with special needs are equally as successful in making things as other pupils and this raises their self-esteem. Pupils share tools sensibly and help one another willingly. Pupils' behaviour is very good and all pupils take turns and share resources collaboratively.
127. The overall curriculum for the subject is well planned and projects are usually part of a topic theme. At present there is no scheme of work to ensure good breadth and balance over time. Planning is based on the QCA guidance, but within a limited range of activities. There are no planned activities covering the use of mechanisms and structures. There are adequate resources to teach the planned projects in each year, but resources for teaching mechanisms and structures are unsatisfactory. There is limited assessment of progress and attainment. The school has made satisfactory progress in matching tasks to pupils' ability and the school has maintained its good cross-curricular links.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

128. All pupils make good progress in geography in the key stage. By the time they leave the school, the quality of their geographical work is above that expected for pupils of this age. This quality has improved since the last inspection.
129. Pupils learn to use plans, maps and the globe and interpret them appropriately. They learn map skills by comparing the difference between the aerial view of objects and the full view. For example, pupils in Year 2 were comparing photographs of familiar classroom objects taken by a classteacher. They successfully identified the picture of these objects from the aerial view. They were able to understand the principle of a "birds eye view" when looking at plans. Other well-prepared visual aids supported the learning. Pupils went on to draw plans of their bedrooms and compared the information that can be obtained from a picture and plan of a town. Early map skills were being introduced in a Reception class where the teacher used the story of Jack and the Beanstalk as a stimulus. Animals found under the leaves on the beanstalk were used for pupils to match the animal picture to an outline. As pupils move through the school they develop their skills of observation, discussion, recording and communicating ideas. However, the use of information technology is underdeveloped and the range of programs for studying geography are limited.
130. Pupils can describe their immediate and local environment and their routes to school. There is a specific geographical topic in Year 2 where pupils study the similarities and differences of their own urban locality and the contrasting country locality of Gloucester. Other locations around the world are studied through materials such as fabrics, especially wool and silk. Similar starting points are used to stimulate investigation. For example, investigating where cocoa grows and countries where we import food, such as fruit, from. This encourages the use of reference books, maps and atlases to find the answers. Opportunities to use literacy and numeracy skills are developed through the topics.
131. Pupils understand the reasons for the existence of features in specific locations, such as factories, offices, shops, residential areas and schools. They have a very good appreciation of environmental issues and pupils in Year 2 have designed posters to encourage reduction of litter and the positive use of recycling.

Pupils learn to identify and explain symbols and geographical features they represent. For example, they can identify roads, trees, hills, churches and other buildings and incorporate these on a map of their own. In some classes, pupils check the daily weather and display it in the classrooms.

132. Pupils have good attitudes to geography. They are attentive and interested in their lessons and respond to questions. Relationships are very good and pupils co-operate very well on collaborative activities. They work at a good pace, producing results of a good standard.
133. Geography is taught well and teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. There is a draft policy and the planning is linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for geography through topics. These topic themes are generally science based and cross-curricular links are made with other subjects. However, although the medium term plans in each year are generally well planned, there is no scheme of work to ensure consistency and progression and the systematic teaching of appropriate skills and knowledge is underdeveloped. However, teachers know the subject well and their secure subject knowledge ensures that they plan effectively. Lessons take account of the range of ability within the class and relevant tasks are set to meet the needs of all. Speaking and listening skills are used effectively, especially at the end of lesson, when pupils explain what they know and understand. The work the pupils produce is generally well presented and their learning is directed by the teachers' marking and comments. Teachers' expectations are high. However, there has been little monitoring of the teaching of geography and this results in teachers in Year 2 not being fully aware of precise geographical skills that have been covered previously.
134. Management of the subject is satisfactory and the monitoring of pupils' workbooks is carried out by the subject co-ordinator. Although the resources for geography in the classrooms are limited, there is a visual aids store with sufficient resources to increase the availability of geographical stimulus and interactive activities for pupils to use. However, the school makes good use of the local Educational Development Centre resource boxes. Since the previous inspection, pupils' attainment in geography has improved at a satisfactory rate, as have their rates of learning. The quality of teaching has also improved.

## **HISTORY**

135. No lessons were observed during inspection. However, evidence gathered from the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays of a historical nature, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils, indicates that pupils achieve standards in line with those expected for their age.
136. History is studied through topic work that is often cross-curricular. At the end of the key stage, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of historical events, have developed a good sense of chronology and can sequence simple events from their lifetime. They gain a good understanding of change through studying how they have changed since their birth. Their developing knowledge of how people lived and what they did in times gone by is enhanced through the careful study of displays of artefacts from homes of the past. In addition, senior citizens who regularly help with art are able to give first-hand descriptions of these artefacts.
137. Overall, pupils of all attainment levels make satisfactory progress in their learning. They have an awareness of the past through comparing their own environment now with that of before. For example, pupils were able to compare the older listed building of the school as it would have been used in Victorian times with its use as a school today. This was achieved through an assembly, given by the history co-ordinator who was dressed as a Victorian lady, explaining how the building would have been used as a home 100 years ago. Another assembly looked at classrooms 100 years ago and how pupils were taught, with examples of extracts from the school log book. However, although there are topics that look at old and new houses, own times and old photographs, opportunities to study the immediate environment with its richness of first hand evidence is still underdeveloped.
138. Pupils are interested in what has happened in the past compared with today and enjoy the history topics. Attitudes to learning are good and pupils interviewed showed enthusiasm for the subject. Through other cross-curricular subjects, such as religious education, science, geography, art and music, pupils are gaining a good understanding of the lives and importance of people from the past. Pupils are well aware of historical events such as the Gunpowder Plot. Visitors enhance their learning by giving talks about their jobs, interests or skills passed down over time. For example, a visit by the postman supports the

topic on 'Simple Postal History'. Other visitors include the owner of a narrow boat and a demonstration of spinning on a spinning wheel.

139. The school took part, with other schools in the borough, in the Windows on our World project. The pupils established a 'Domesday record' of the local environment and heritage as part of the Millennium Exhibition at the Walsall Library and Museum. Each school had a week's slot to display their work in the EM Flint Gallery.
140. The quality of teaching cannot be judged as no lessons were observed. There is a draft policy and the school has obtained recent national guidelines for the planning and teaching of history. However, at the present time these guidelines are not being used. Without a scheme of work the school is unable to ensure consistency in developing the skills and knowledge of the pupils across the age range. Assessment in history is underdeveloped and the monitoring of teaching and learning has not been undertaken. There is a long-term plan that highlights the topics and the medium term plans are broken down into topic webs from which the weekly plans are developed. The subject co-ordinator is aware that the resources for history are limited and there is a need for an up to date audit on resources. The part of the school that is a listed building is an ideal environment in which learning for history takes place. Much has been made to create wall displays, time lines and interactive displays to stimulate the pupils and further their historical understanding.
141. The previous report stated that standards in history were in line with national expectations. There has been no change and that level has been maintained.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

142. Taking account of lessons, pupils' previous work and discussions with pupils and teachers, overall attainment by the end of the key stage is average. Pupils have access to the use of computers. Skills are developed mainly through word processing and handling data. When there are opportunities these are used effectively and pupils are confident in using computers to communicate their ideas in a variety of ways. For example, in Year 1, pupils use the mouse to select and move information and write sentences to describe pictures. In Year 2, they are able to use a word processor and are good at being able to enter, amend, save and retrieve information without help from the teacher. They can change the style, colour and size of text and print. They can program a floor turtle, using sets of simple commands so that it negotiates a pathway. They can build bar charts and graphs by inputting data and printing the results in colour and in different formats, pie charts and block graphs. In Year 2 they use their creativity and imagination to produce pictures, using symmetry and patterns.
143. They develop good skills in using the equipment and good skills in using the mouse to give instructions to the computer. In Year 2, they are able to use the space and return keys to set out text when composing a story or poem. They are confident when amending and correcting text. Pupils are familiar with the use of computers to develop and refine their stories. They are beginning to develop skills in controlling devices, they can recognise that devices can be controlled by a computer and write a sequence to produce a recognisable event. The school has published its own web site, which celebrates the achievements of the pupils. The web site has been created, using a digital camera and scanner to capture images of pupils' work.
144. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress and sound gains in their learning as they move through the school in their use of word processing skills. They make satisfactory progress in using computers to communicate ideas and information. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use computers with confidence.
145. Pupils have particularly good attitudes to their work in information technology. They are well motivated, able to concentrate for suitable lengths of time and respond with enthusiasm. A strong feature is the way pupils are able to access the computer without help from the teachers and work independently. Pupils are very responsible when using computers and can work together on the computer well. They show particularly good respect for the equipment and, indeed, for each other. Behaviour is always very good and this contributes very effectively to the standards pupils attain.

146. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. Strengths in teaching include teachers having a mostly secure knowledge and understanding of information technology and planning that identifies clearly what pupils are to learn. Teachers' expectations are usually appropriately high and they set tasks that are suitably demanding. The effective way that teachers manage their lessons has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and willingness to use information technology. Where there are weaknesses in teaching, lesson objectives are not clearly identified, the tasks set do not provide enough challenge or the organisation does not give pupils enough time using the computer. Teachers' skills and knowledge of the use of computers in the curriculum are good.
147. Planning is based on the QCA guidance but within a limited range of activities. There is some assessment of progress and attainment, but this is in the early stages of development. The limited number of computers available, just two in each class, restricts access to the full range of the Programmes of Study including the use of CD-ROM and the Internet. Since the previous inspection, standards in ICT have improved and are now in line with national expectations. Teachers' confidence and expertise have improved, but resources are still barely satisfactory. Teachers have become more competent in using ICT and have attended courses to improve their knowledge. The good team-work among them ensures that they learn from one another and advise each other as to what programs are best matched to the curriculum covered, such as using a program to design tiles.

## MUSIC

148. Pupils, including those with SEN and EAL, make good progress in music in the key stage. By the time they leave the school the quality of their knowledge and skills development is at a level above that expected for pupils of this age. This quality has been maintained since the last inspection.
149. The whole-school singing is excellent. It is well pitched and tuneful and sung with good diction. Music features strongly in assemblies and pupils get many opportunities for listening and appraising music throughout their school day. In the previous half term, Year 2 were able to have the services of a teacher from the Borough Music Support Service. This programme has had a significant effect on the standards of music in the school. The music programme covered both attainment targets for music and included the musical elements of pulse, rhythm, form, dynamics and pitch. Pupils were also able to develop their skills in composing, reading notation and singing and playing instruments individually or in a group.
150. Pupils make a very good start in music from the early years because the quality of teaching in the Reception classes is excellent. For example, the three Reception classes joined for a music and movement session in the school hall. The session was led by one of the teachers with the other two teachers giving strong support. This excellent teamwork by the teachers encouraged their pupils to do their best, gain confidence and succeed in their efforts. A well-chosen theme on springtime was performed to a recording of a Japanese song. At the start pupils clapped the first beat of the bar led by the beat of the teachers' tambourines. This achieved excellent time-keeping and pupils were able to join in the singing. Well-focused questions on whether the music was fast or slow, loud or soft brought in the concept of tempo and dynamics. Every opportunity was taken to include literacy and numeracy within lessons. For example, pupils responded successfully to the flash cards for Forte(loud) and Piano(soft) and took part in a simple composition using four rhythm instruments and counting four beats to the bar. The overall outcome of the lesson was of a very good standard for pupils so young and demonstrates the lengths teachers take to lead their pupils to creative heights. In another lesson, Year 1 pupils were extending their knowledge of music through the links with the science topic of sounds. Pupils were looking at different musical instruments from the brass, string, woodwind and percussion families. There were displays of actual instruments such as the flute, cornet, trombone and guitar as well as instruments made from scrap materials. They also sang and recorded their voices onto tape and then the teacher replayed the tape and they sang along with it as a round. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain high standards due to the effects of the excellent teaching seen lower down in the school. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and the management of pupils is very good. Teachers are enthusiastic and in hymn practice they set high expectations for their pupils.
151. Pupils' attitudes to learning and overall behaviour are very good. They are enthusiastic and enjoy their music. Each year, the older pupils take part in the Schools' Music Festival and entertain the elderly at their club. The school takes part in the Easter and Christmas services in the church. At the present time there are no recorder clubs and this lack of extra-curricular activities has troubled parents. The school has recognised this as an issue to be addressed.

152. The school has recently appointed a temporary music specialist who works in Year 1. Due to the short time in post the co-ordinator has only been able to conduct an informal audit of music resources. There is an intention to put into place an action plan.
153. In the small sample of lessons seen, the quality of teaching was judged to be good, overall, with examples of excellence. Music resources are good and are stored in the school hall.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

154. Standards in physical education are average at the end of Key Stage 1. In games lessons, Year 2 pupils can throw, catch, run with a ball, but when playing games their throwing and passing skills could be slightly better. Pupils can use space appropriately and do not bump into each other when playing games. There are occasions when further appropriate achievement is restricted by a lack of tasks that place pupils in a small game situation, allowing them to move in response to apparatus and other players. Unsatisfactory achievement was observed in one Reception class gymnastics lesson; this was due to weaknesses in the teacher's expectations of pupils. Although pupils have sound knowledge of mounting and dismounting equipment, poor lesson organisation allows little time to practise and refine these skills.
155. There is still no whole-school scheme of work to guide planning and monitoring of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Expectations are not sufficiently well defined for each year group. Identified weaknesses in the previous report to promote early years physical development and physical education have not been fully addressed due to a lack of a scheme of work, but this is not consistent throughout all the Reception and Year 1 classes. Training in the 'Top Sport' programme has enhanced teachers' knowledge and understanding and the level of school resources. However, the school still does not have a suitably prioritised development plan to remedy whole-school issues in the subject.
156. Teaching in Year 2 games is satisfactory. All three teachers have co-ordinated their planning, using commercial schemes, and there is consistency in lesson structure and the kind of tasks given. In the two lessons observed at this stage the pupils progressively developed and used appropriate game skills in challenging contexts. Teachers use good assessment procedures to note good practice and demonstrate accordingly. The use of appropriate words to aid techniques of catching and throwing skills is underdeveloped. A lack of a scheme of work, which charts what pupils should be doing at this stage, also reduces teachers' expectation of performance. Teachers plan to use all resources at their disposal and organise this efficiently within group work. There is a present shortage of appropriately sized balls, which makes some tasks too difficult for a number of pupils. A Reception class physical education lesson successfully used descriptive words to explore the theme of travelling. However, an under-estimation of what pupils can do on apparatus and a lesson structure that greatly minimises their times on task restrict progress significantly. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they behave well in lessons.

## **OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

### **Pupils with English as an additional language**

157. The school makes very good provision for pupils with EAL. Three teachers and two support staff are effectively deployed which has been an improvement since the previous inspection. Higher attaining pupils make very good progress and this results in the majority of them attaining standards which are above national averages in speaking and listening and reading, and in line with national averages in writing, although their spelling and presentation of work could be better. These pupils achieve good standards in numeracy and average standards in science. In all other subjects, with the exception of design and technology, pupils make very good gains in learning. In design and technology, these pupils make satisfactory gains, only due to the lack of resources. Overall, the very good provision for pupils with EAL is a contributory factor to the high standards achieved by them.