

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **SPRINGDALE INFANT SCHOOL**

Penn

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104307

Headteacher: Mrs Denise Shotton

Reporting inspector: John Messer  
15477

Dates of inspection: 8-12 May

Inspection number: 189100

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Warstones Drive Penn Wolverhampton
Postcode:	WV4 4NJ
Telephone number:	01902 558805
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jean Porter
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Messer	Registered inspector	Art	What sort of school is it?
		English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
			The work of the language resource base.
			What should the school do to improve further?
Kenneth Parsons	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupil' attitudes, values and personal achievement.
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jackie Johnson	Team inspector	English	
		Special educational needs	
		Geography	
		Music	
Ian Knight	Team inspector	Under Fives	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
		Mathematics	
		Design and technology	

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Tony Green	Team inspector	Science	
		Information technology	
		History	
		Physical education	
		Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>27</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

There are 222 full time pupils on roll and a further 60 children attend the nursery on a part time basis, either in the morning or afternoon sessions. The school is larger than most primary schools and larger than it was at the time of the last inspection. The school has a special unit, known as the language resource base, for pupils in the Borough who have language and communications difficulties. Currently ten of the twelve places in the unit are filled. Pupils are aged between three and seven years old and are taught in nine classes in the main school as well as in the nursery. Children start school in the nursery either in September or January, according to age. Children are admitted to the reception classes in the main school in the year in which their fifth birthday falls, either in September or January according to age. The pupils are predominantly from white English speaking families.

Around eleven per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is lower than the national average but very few children are from particularly advantaged home backgrounds. Children's achievements on entry to the reception classes are slightly below average. Eleven pupils have statements of special educational need and a further seventy are entered on the school's register of special needs because they require some extra learning support. Five pupils speak English as an additional language and all are fluent in English.

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

This is a good school which successfully promotes effective learning. Most of the teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Pupils have very positive attitudes to work and relationships between teachers and pupils are good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, most of the key staff and the governing body are newly appointed. The headteacher and her deputy share a clear vision for improving the school but as yet have had insufficient time to make a major impact. Pupils attain standards which exceed national expectations in most areas of the curriculum. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Pupils attain standards in many areas of the curriculum which are above national expectations.
- The quality of teaching is good and all teachers are conscientious, hard working and caring.
- The pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and their relationships with both adults and with other children are good.
- The contribution of support staff has a very positive impact on the quality of education provided.
- The school generates a sense of unity and teamwork and this positive ethos makes a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.
- The unit for pupils with language and communication difficulties is excellent.
- The nursery provides children with a good foundation for future learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- Pupils' knowledge of children's literature is under-developed and boys do not read and write as well as girls. There is an inadequate range of reading material.
- The roles of senior managers and subject co-ordinators are under-developed in terms of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning.
- There is insufficient time and resources allocated to enable all pupils to develop skills in information technology and teachers lack confidence and knowledge in developing such skills.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in a small but significant minority of lessons.
- There is not enough variety in the activities provided and some teaching sessions are over long.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since the school was last inspected, in June 1996, significant improvements have been made. Standards as measured by the proportion of pupils who attain the national target for seven year olds in the National Curriculum tests and assessments have improved substantially in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The proportion of high quality teaching has improved. The key issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been tackled but, due to staff changes, have not all been fully resolved. Work is continuing on developing the use of assessment data and the role of curriculum leaders is still under-developed. Good schemes of work for all subjects have now been implemented.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	C	B	D	D	well above average    A above average        B average                    C below average          D well below average    E
Writing	E	A	B	B	
Mathematics	D	A	B	C	

By the time they are five, children achieve standards in all the nationally recommended areas of learning which meet national expectations for their age. By the time they are seven, nearly all pupils attain the national target of Level 2 in reading, writing mathematics and science. The overall trend in the proportion of pupils who attain Level 2 has been steadily upward. In 1999 a lower proportion of pupils than nationally attained the higher Level 3 standard in reading and this resulted in the school's overall performance in reading being below average. Work seen during the inspection was of a high quality in mathematics, science, art, music, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. Standards are generally higher than might be expected for these pupils though too few pupils attain standards in reading which exceed expectations for seven year olds.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are keen to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is good in class and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form good relationships with one another and with adults. They are willing to take initiative when given the opportunity.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Despite the school's endeavours to encourage regular attendance, attendance is below the national average.

The pupils' positive attitudes and good behaviour contribute significantly to effective learning. There are opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility and show initiative but these are not as well developed as they might be.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING



<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>
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.*

Teaching in English, mathematics and science is good. Teaching is particularly effective where teachers maintain high expectations of pupils' performance and where good relationships generate in pupils a keen desire to do well and confidence in their ability to succeed. Teaching is very good and occasionally excellent in 23 per cent of lessons; it is good in 39 per cent and sound in 31 per cent. Teaching is unsatisfactory in 7 per cent of lessons. Teaching is unsatisfactory where teachers do not have a sufficiently precise idea of what skills they will teach in a particular session and occasionally where behaviour is not managed well. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy are taught well according to national guidance. Pupils with special educational needs receive mostly sound support in class and where a nursery nurse is available to give assistance they receive particularly effective help. The team of two teachers and two nursery nurses who run the language resource base provide exemplary teaching. The needs of all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, benefit from mostly good teaching which promotes effective learning.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and is suitably balanced over the long term though activities on a daily and weekly basis are sometimes over-extended. Skills in information technology are not developed consistently.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is sound in the main school. The work of the language resource base is excellent.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils who speak English as an additional language are all provided with good support which has enabled them to make good progress
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Provision for pupils' social and moral development is good and it is satisfactory for their spiritual and cultural development. Strategies for developing pupils' understanding of the multi-cultural nature of society are inadequate.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a secure learning environment with high levels of care and support.

The school endeavours to work closely in partnership with parents. The school provides good information for parents about their children's learning. Parents are welcomed into the school and feel that they have good access to teachers. The curriculum gives good attention to the creative arts and art and music are a strong feature of the school's work. The curriculum meets statutory requirements but little attention is paid to developing pupils' understanding of the rich cultural diversity of our society. Information technology is taught throughout the school but there are lengthy periods of time when computers remain unused and pupils in some classes have more opportunity than others to use computers, partly as a result of the unreliability of several of the machines. The school provides high levels of care and all adults who work in the school pay close attention to pupils' welfare and happiness.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and other key staff provide sound leadership and management and the headteacher has been a driving force behind getting a grant to restructure the early years classrooms. The senior managers and most subject co-ordinators are newly appointed and have had little opportunity to make a major impact as yet.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The new governing body is developing good systems to fulfil its monitoring role. It is successful in fulfilling its responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has not yet developed effective systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of educational provision though it has a good school development plan which identifies appropriate areas for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are mostly used well though computers remain under used for lengthy periods of time and there is a need to invest substantial amounts in new reading material.

There are an appropriate number of teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. Resources are mostly adequate but there is no well equipped outdoor play area to promote the physical development of the under-fives and the provision of high quality reading material is unsatisfactory. The previous governing body exercised prudence and a large contingency budget has been developed to supplement the grant to restructure the early years classrooms. The school provides good value for money.

#### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Parents feel confident about approaching the school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The school helps children to be mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school could work more closely with parents.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree with parents' positive views. The school does try hard to work closely with parents and is largely successful in its efforts. The pupils receive an adequate amount of homework. There is a satisfactory range of activities outside lessons though opportunities are sometimes missed to make appropriate educational visits in the area.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The results of the latest National Curriculum tests and assessments in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils who attained at least the national target of Level 2 was above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Inspection findings largely confirm these results and, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve at levels which are higher than would normally be expected of these pupils. Standards are significantly higher than at the time of the last inspection.
2. Children enter the nursery with levels of achievement which are below expectations of four year olds but, due to the rapid progress they make, by the time they enter the reception classes their attainment is only slightly below average. They make sound progress in Reception and most are on course to attain, by the age of five, the desirable learning outcomes specified in national guidance in all areas of learning. There is evidence, however, that a significant minority of pupils have poorly developed speaking skills, limited vocabulary and lack confidence in explaining themselves. This leads to many of the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 attaining levels in language and literacy below those expected for their age. By the time they are seven most have developed greater confidence and most speak clearly but a significant minority still find difficulty when searching for appropriate words to express themselves. One class showed remarkable confidence when leading an assembly on the development of wheels and one pupil from the language resource base led the whole school in a prayer which he made up as he went along. Such examples of articulate speaking skills are, however, infrequent. Most read fluently but the depth of their understanding is limited by a lack of breadth in their vocabulary. They write well and reach the expected level for seven year olds but few attain the higher standards in reading or writing. This adversely affects the school's overall performance and indicates that pupils who might be able to attain the higher standards are not always targeted with enough precision in order to boost their attainment. Pupils' performance in writing in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds was, however, above average when compared with schools which have pupils from similar backgrounds though in reading results were below the average for similar schools. This is partly because the school does not offer a sufficiently wide range of reading material to pupils and the pupils' reading lacks breadth.
3. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are all fluent readers and are making good progress across the curriculum. Most pupils apply the skills they learn in literacy sessions well across the curriculum, as in reading for information in history and in writing accounts of events in religious education or about the lives of famous artists. The standards attained by pupils with special educational needs in the main school are in line with expectations, taking into account their prior levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress overall in relation to their prior attainment. The good progress reported at the last inspection has not been maintained. When withdrawn for one-to-one or small group work pupils make good and sometimes very good progress. However progress and the effectiveness of learning in lessons is more variable. In literacy lessons for example, pupils make good progress when receiving direct support from the class teacher or a support assistant. In the majority of literacy lessons, however, most teachers are supporting the whole range of abilities on their own and in these lessons progress is only satisfactory. In these lessons tasks are not always closely matched to pupils' varying stages of development and without extra support pupils struggle to succeed. Girls tend to perform better than boys in English and in mathematics and, though the school is aware that this is the case, they have not taken effective measures to redress the imbalance.
4. By the end of Key Stage 1, the standards which pupils attain in mathematics and science exceed expectations. In the National Curriculum tests in 1999 the school's performance in mathematics was above average when compared with all schools and average when compared with similar schools. Pupils count in fives and tens accurately and are developing the ability to recall number facts quickly. Pupils use their skills in numeracy well in other areas of the curriculum, such as measuring results of a plant's growth in science and recording weather data in geography. They enjoy mathematics and show increasing confidence. In science the teacher

assessments showed that when compared with similar schools the proportion of pupils who attained at least Level 2 was average but the proportion who attained the higher Level 3 standard was well above average.

5. The school has set itself challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics and is anxious to improve standards further. It is striving hard to reach its targets and is likely to achieve a large measure of success in achieving them. Good work is produced in nearly all other areas of the curriculum and standards exceed expectations of seven year olds in most subjects as well as in religious education. The school is particularly successful in developing high standards in the creative arts. Pupils sing well and many are developing good skills in performing and composing music. Good work was seen in art where pupils drew wonderful portraits of van Gogh, for example, which included detailed facial expressions which accurately mirrored the artist's troubled mind. Not only do the pupils know of the works of great artists but they also know a great deal about their lives and this knowledge contributes greatly to their understanding of history and of developments in society at large.
6. The high standards which pupils attain indicates that, given the below average level of attainment on entry, that the school achieves significant added value in relation to pupils' earlier achievements.

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

7. The pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and their relationships with both adults and with other children are good. They are happy coming to school, arriving in a cheerful manner and going quickly to their lessons at the start of the day. Even the children under the age of five are confident when leaving their parents and come into school without fuss, a reflection of the supportive and caring attitude of staff in the school.
8. The pupils respond well to what the school provides for them. In the lessons which are well-taught, they display positive and enthusiastic involvement. Even in less interesting lessons teachers are able to maintain pupils' attention. Overall, pupils' attitudes and involvement are good, reflected in their interest in their work during whole class discussions, group work and when working individually across the range of subjects. For the majority of pupils their positive attitudes provide a solid foundation to enable them to learn. Pupils of all abilities put forward ideas and points of view with appropriate confidence in lessons and approach written and practical work positively. Completed work is often discussed and shared with the teacher and other pupils. Pupils take responsibility for their own learning when, for example, the teacher is engaged with another group in the classroom. Pupils with learning difficulties have positive attitudes to learning and respond well when praised by class teachers and support staff. The few pupils with English as an additional language respond well to their work and are motivated to learn.
9. Pupils behave well most of the time. During lessons most are polite and treat each other, and adults, with respect. Movement around the school is orderly. There is a happy atmosphere during break and lunch times. Behaviour in the playground is good, helped by the good area available for games. No incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour were seen during the inspection and it is not a common occurrence in the school. There have been no recent exclusions. Virtually all parents agree that behaviour in the school is good. Pupils use the school facilities with care and there is no evidence of litter or vandalism. They are trustworthy. They show an awareness of those around them and are polite to each other and to adults. There is no racial harassment and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, including those very few who speak English as an additional language, work and play happily together.
10. The personal development of pupils is good. Children under five enjoy each others' company and share toys and equipment. They are developing their sense of independence and are prepared to try new things. They are able to tidy away their own work and treat equipment with respect. Pupils help with the day-to-day management of the school in a number of ways, for example, taking registers to the office. Pupils mostly demonstrate good social skills, with an appropriate awareness of the achievements of others, for example, clapping each other's work in plenary sessions. Their understanding of the impact of their words and actions on others is

good for their age, although a small minority do occasionally forget what is expected of them. Pupils in a class containing a child with behavioural difficulties ignored his non-participation in the lesson, but welcomed him unquestioningly when he did come to join them. Pupils with communication and language difficulties are especially well integrated into classes. They slip into lessons with their teacher or nursery nurse and are quietly withdrawn, sometimes alongside other pupils from the main class, for extra support when necessary.

11. Pupils' relationships with their peers and with adults are good and reflect the considerable effort staff devote to this area of children's development. All staff provide positive role models and pupils generally reflect the respect they are shown. They work well together in groups even when these are of mixed ability and all contributions are welcomed and valued at whatever level. Pupils share resources amicably, for example, taking turns with the mouse when working on a computer.
12. Pupils with special educational needs in the main school generally respond well in class and when withdrawn for specific focussed help. They respond satisfactorily to appropriate questions in whole class sessions and work hard at individual tasks. They are successfully integrated into classes and work well in the foundation subjects. Their response in music is enthusiastic and they know a wide range of songs. Most pupils with behaviour problems generally respond positively to the strategies employed by class teachers.
13. The attendance by pupils at the school is unsatisfactory, with the number of reported absences above the national average for a school of this type. The level of recorded unauthorised absences is zero, a reflection of the efficient way the school approaches parents to supply reasons and also the way the figures are compiled. There are no specific groups of pupils with poor records of attendance. Most pupils arrive at school on time allowing an efficient start to the school day.
14. The school has maintained standards of its pupils' behaviour, and has improved their attitudes to learning and the relationships within the school, since the last inspection. Attendance levels were below national averages at the time of the last inspection and remain so now.

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

15. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Over 90 per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better. Across the school well over a third of teaching is good and nearly a third is very good and occasionally excellent. This proportion of high quality teaching is a clear indication that the general quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when only 5 per cent of the teaching was of this quality. There is a small but significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching in the reception classes and in Year 2. Teaching for the under fives in the nursery is almost always good, it is sometimes very good and is never less than satisfactory. Teaching for the under fives in Reception is mainly satisfactory though there is a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching for these children. Teaching in the language resource base is mostly very good and is never less than satisfactory.
16. There is a very close link between the quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning. In lessons where the teaching is good and very good pupils learn effectively and make good, and often very good progress. They are engaged in the tasks presented, concentrate well and produce work of good quality. In several of these lessons pupils became so engrossed that they worked in near silence. Where teachers' explanations contain an exciting element, pupils listen with rapt attention as they take in and consider every word. Such appropriate intellectual challenge was plainly evident in many lessons including several on classifying three-dimensional shapes, classifying insects, contemplating stories in religious education and studying the work of famous artists. Where such challenge is missing, learning lacks purpose and progress slows.
17. The quality of the teaching in the nursery is enhanced by the deployment of two nursery nurses who make a very positive contribution to the work of the nursery. Teaching is carefully planned in line with the national recommendations for the under fives. Daily classroom routines are well established which helps to promote a sense of security. The teacher and nursery nurses expect pupils to be well behaved and to engage fully in the activities provided; most children try hard

and work together as expected. Good strategies are used to create a well ordered environment and promote social skills, such as, for example, encouraging children understand that it is their turn to speak when they are holding the 'Talking Teddy'. There is a wide range of activities on offer, including a 'mini school', which encourages imaginative role play, and visits to the local library after which the children's route is carefully plotted on a detailed map created by the children themselves. The nursery nurses occasionally take the younger children in groups while the teacher takes the older children, who will be transferring to the main school next term, for special lessons to prepare them for the transfer. Relationships are good and the teacher has a warm, supportive manner with the children. The good teaching in the nursery creates a productive, purposeful learning environment where children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. Progress for the under fives in Reception is mostly satisfactory but there are occasions when the management of children's behaviour is unsuccessful and expectations of their performance are too low. The pace of learning is often too slow. The unsatisfactory teaching occurs when the teacher does not have the support of the nursery nurse who is deployed elsewhere for part of each week. Overall teaching for the under fives is generally at least satisfactory and mostly it is good in all areas of learning but is less successful in the physical development of children due to a lack of appropriate resources, such as wheeled vehicles, and a stimulating outdoor environment.

18. Teaching in the base for pupils with language and communication difficulties is very good. There is an excellent adult to pupil ratio as two teachers and two nursery nurses work closely together as a team. Planning is meticulous and pupils' progress is carefully assessed each week in order to inform plans for the following week. A stimulating range of interesting activities are provided and the team maintains high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance. Teaching aids, such as a number stick to develop a deeper understanding of number, are used well. Relationships are excellent and pupils' often challenging behaviour is very well managed. The pace of learning is brisk and time is used to good effect. The team work in close association with the teachers in the main school and the balance of integration of pupils into classes for lessons and withdrawal into the base for support is finely tuned. The highly effective teaching results in good progress and pupils attain high standards in relation to their prior attainment. Overall provision is excellent.
19. Teaching for pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language, in the two reception classes for the over fives, the three Year 1 classes and the three Year 2 classes is mostly good and in a quarter of lessons it is very good and occasionally excellent. Within this overall picture there are, however, significant variations. In the reception classes teaching is not as strong as in Years 1 and 2 and an unacceptable proportion of teaching, over a quarter, is unsatisfactory. Teaching is unsatisfactory where there are no precise learning intentions specified in lesson plans and where, as a direct consequence, there is no purposeful teaching of skills and hence time is not used effectively. In such sessions pupils are unsure of what is expected of them and wander aimlessly from one part of the room to another and learn little. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good when they are supported by a nursery nurse and mostly satisfactory when they are not. There are occasions, however, when these pupils do not receive sufficient support and tasks are not sufficiently well structured to enable them to succeed. In these instances they struggle and do not make sufficient progress. Throughout the key stage relationships are good and on occasion excellent. The quality of relationships has a very positive impact upon learning. In one lesson, for example, the teacher stated that she was astounded by the quality of work which the pupils produced and this generated great confidence and self esteem. Such fulsome praise was tempered by a detailed explanation, with examples, of precisely which elements of the work were so astounding. In another lesson the teacher's very firm approach was leavened by the good use of gentle humour. In one excellent art lesson, described as a 'Master Class', the pupils were taught skills sequentially, though the teacher often asked for the pupils' advice, having first skilfully led them to reach the most sensible conclusions for themselves. Not only did this lead to very effective learning but also to a heightened sense of self worth. An exceptionally good lesson in religious education dealt with Adam and Eve. The story was told so well that the pupils listened with rapt attention and when an apple was produced and the teacher was about to bite into it as Eve had done in a moment of weakness the pupils gasped with horror. They then each held the apple as they confessed a time when they had done wrong. This highly charged experienced created a

bond between the teacher and members of the class which helped to make understanding more effective.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported when withdrawn for individual help and when receiving individual or small group support in class. Here pupils' activities are generally well matched for their needs. However when no extra support is available, provision in class is variable. Pupils cannot always access tasks without extra help and do not always understand the purpose of a particular task. Occasionally these are mundane and do not motivate the pupils. Targets identified in individual education plans are generally specific enough to inform teaching strategies but are not always evident in teachers' planning. A small number of targets, although specific, are repeated in subsequent action plans and are not therefore well matched to pupils' needs.
21. Teachers assess pupils' work by good questioning strategies which explore the depth of pupils' understanding and consolidate learning. Most teachers keep careful notes of pupils' performance which they review at the end of each week and use the information gathered to plan the following week's lessons. In the classes where these practices are methodically and consistently employed, the quality of teaching is enhanced because teaching is more closely focussed on the needs of pupils, who are often at widely differing stages of development. Where teachers do not assess pupils' performance systematically, plans do not cater so well for pupils' learning needs.
22. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have provided a clear structure for the teaching of literacy and numeracy both of which are taught well and according to national guidance. Teaching is good in almost all subjects. In history and geography there was insufficient evidence upon which to make judgements about the quality of teaching. There are shortcomings in the teaching of information technology because computers are under-used and some teachers lack confidence in teaching the subject. In English the teaching of reading is impeded by an inadequate stock of high quality children's literature and the main reading scheme used by the school is outdated. The teaching of basic skills such as handwriting does not always take place in short regular daily practice sessions but is often confined to a longer session once a week. Other sessions, such as religious education and physical education are over long and are not divided into several shorter periods each week. In some classes pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet rather than being actively involved in their learning. There are considerable inconsistencies in the overall quality of teaching. The school has not adopted a clear standard or model which defines those features of a teacher's performance which result in excellent teaching and no clear criteria against which to measure the quality of teaching in order to identify areas for development. Overall, however, the quality of teaching is significantly better than at the time of the last inspection. Where nursery nurses are available to support teachers the quality of teaching is enhanced.

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

23. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements. There is an appropriate emphasis on the core subjects of English and mathematics with each having a daily timetabled lesson in Key Stage 1. In addition, the school values artistic and musical endeavours and these are also emphasised effectively. There is a good range of learning opportunities for children under five, but the timetabling in Key Stage 1 means that the range of opportunity here is only sound. In particular, some sessions are only held once each week in a lengthy block when several shorter sessions would benefit the pupils more. For example, most classes have a single lesson timetabled for handwriting once a week. This is insufficient to reinforce good habits and consequently pupils continue to reverse some letters and numbers after the time this would normally have stopped. At the last inspection the provision for physical education was criticised on similar grounds, that is that a single long session weekly makes coverage of more than one area problematic. Although the school experimented with shorter lessons, it remains the case that physical education is still taught in one hour-long lesson weekly.
24. Pupils with special educational needs, both in the language resource base and in the main school, have access to all areas of the curriculum. The curriculum is generally appropriately

matched to their needs although this is not always reflected in teachers' planning, particularly in the foundation subjects. Pupils with special educational needs have access to all extra curricular activities and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

25. The school has adopted the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The National Literacy Strategy has been in place for a few years and is now being reviewed by the school. As a result minor changes have been made to make it more relevant to the school. It is now well implemented. This process has not taken place with the newer strategy for numeracy as yet, although it is fully implemented in the school.
26. The school makes sound provision for extra-curricular activities. All activities, mainly musical – choir and recorders – or sporting – football coaching in partnership with the local football club - are open to all pupils of the target age. However, most of the musical activities take place before the end of formal school in the afternoon. At that time, pupils who do not take part in musical activity have story time with a teacher. In addition, not all classes in a year group have equal access to the curriculum. In Year 1, two of the three classes have an hour of physical education per week timetabled in the hall; the third has only half an hour and receives more numeracy in its place. The school has taken steps to broaden its stock of books to help to interest boys more in response to their under-performance in English. However, this process is not complete so that boys are at a small, but real, disadvantage compared to girls. In addition, although statutory requirements for the teaching of information technology are met, the unreliability of some of the machinery coupled with a lack of confidence from some staff means that pupils in different classes get radically different experiences. Together, these factors indicate that the school is not offering equal access to the whole curriculum for all pupils.
27. The governors' policy is that the school does not teach sex education as a discrete subject. Provision for this, personal, social and health education, and drug awareness come under the umbrella of science and the provision is sound. The recent trial of circle time clearly has the potential to enhance the provision for personal and social development considerably.
28. The school makes sound use of the community to enhance the curriculum on offer. Football coaching is offered in conjunction with the local football club and the school has had two artists in residence in recent years. The striking mural in the entrance area, created by every Key Stage 1 pupil with one of the visiting artists, is evidence of the effectiveness of this venture. In addition, visits are made to places of local historical interest like Shugborough Hall and the Ironbridge museums. However, little use is made of the cultural diversity of the area. Few visits to places of worship have been made recently despite a wealth of possibilities. The approved syllabus for religious education suggests that religious leaders from a variety of faiths might visit the school, but this has not happened. The school does, however, have close links with the junior school on the same site. Curricular co-ordinators meet regularly to ensure continuity when pupils transfer. Links with local playgroups are less close, but still effective. There are also close links with local higher education institutions which use the school for teaching practice and for work placement for trainee nursery nurses. These close working relationships have a good effect on the overall curriculum on offer.
29. The school makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual development. This is mainly fostered through religious education and the daily assemblies, which meet statutory requirements for an act of collective worship. In religious education, pupils have the opportunity to reflect on the wider questions in life. For example, pupils in Year 1 were asked to consider and write about what makes them feel peaceful, and 'What I Pray For'. In assemblies, moral tales reinforce the school's behaviour code. However, there is little planned provision in other subjects although opportunities for pupils to feel awe do arise in lessons and when these occur the teachers use them effectively. For example, in a Year 2 religious education lesson discussing the events in the Garden of Eden, pupils gasped audibly as the teacher made as if to bite the apple she used as a prop. However, such opportunities arise spontaneously and are not rigorously planned for.
30. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. They are sensitive to the needs of others, know right from wrong and are able to moderate their behaviour to suit particular circumstances. Good behaviour is reinforced in assemblies and in each lesson. The school rules are understood by pupils and further reinforced by the negotiation of class rules at



the beginning of each school year. Teachers present good role models and enforce the class rules with good humour. A system of rewards and sanctions is consistently applied in each classroom. Pupils with behavioural problems are well-integrated into lessons, especially when they have additional adult support.

31. Social development is well developed by the school. In lessons pupils are expected to work in a variety of different groupings depending on the task. Pupils are very capable of taking responsibility and for using their initiative but opportunities for them to do so are often not fully developed. Teachers and support staff treat pupils with respect and expect the same courtesy in return. Pupils are expected to take a measure of responsibility for themselves and their own learning. They also take turns to take responsibility for aspects of the class. This starts in the nursery where children take the register to the office and hand out milk. Simple monitoring tasks continue to develop a sense of community and shared responsibility higher up the school. The outcome is a school with good relationships at all levels which contribute positively to the learning in lessons.
32. Cultural development is soundly developed. Pupils gain a good understanding of European culture through the study of, for example, European artists. The artists in residence promoted this particularly well. Visits, linked with history, to local places of interest further reinforce this understanding. Other cultures are studied in religious education and pupils are introduced, for example, to the five Ks of Sikhism. However, the school has few multicultural books and displays and few visits are made to non-Christian places of worship. Similarly, few visitors representing the cultural diversity of the area or the country come to school with the effect that pupils are not well prepared for life in a multi-cultural society.
33. The school does not fully provide equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. On the positive side, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound and for those pupils with English as an additional language it is good. Adult support is well planned and effective. The special needs co-ordinator organises the provision well to ensure that these pupils make satisfactory progress. However there are a number of specific areas where there is not full equality of access for all pupils. Variations in timetables between parallel classes mean that, some pupils get a greater provision in some subjects than do others. The choir and recorder clubs, held within the school day, lead to differences in provision for different pupils, albeit based on their own preferences. Some pupils do not get as much access to computers as other pupils in the same year. At a wider level, National Curriculum test results have indicated for some while that boys have been under-performing compared with girls, particularly in reading and mathematics. Over the four years to 1999 this difference has averaged out to about half a term's progress, a significant gap for this age group. Although the school has identified the problem, measures to close this gap have not been sufficiently effective to ensure equality between boys and girls.

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

34. The school provides satisfactory procedures for ensuring the care and welfare of pupils. Staff genuinely care about their wellbeing and they provide both personal and academic help when pupils need it. The school has a strong sense of community and within this the staff have created an emotionally secure environment within which pupils can feel respected and valued.
35. In most cases appropriate steps have been taken to ensure that the school provides a safe environment. Most required safety tests are carried out and safe practice was seen in all lessons observed during the inspection. However, there are some concerns about fire safety. External fire exit doors are bolted during the school day, which compromises their use as emergency exits, internal fire doors are often propped open, fire exit signage is not always sufficiently visible, and the routine testing of the fire extinguishers is overdue. The school would benefit from a comprehensive review of fire safety.
36. The staff are aware of their responsibilities under local child protection guidelines. There are in place appropriate procedures and links with social services and the school has necessary monitoring and recording procedures in place. The promotion of regular attendance has been good, with procedures in place to ensure that parents are aware of the importance of children

coming to school on a regular basis. The computerised registers of attendance are completed properly. Routine monitoring of non-attendance and lateness is good, with further steps taken as needed to contact parents.

37. Individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs are monitored regularly, reviewed and generally updated appropriately and the identification and assessment of pupils is carried out satisfactorily. Other assessment of pupils' progress follows the practices employed for mainstream pupils.
38. The school's measures to encourage discipline and behaviour are good and help to make the school an orderly community. Pupils help to decide on their own class rules, which they know well. They are encouraged to behave in line with them by a good range of rewards and sanctions. The school does contain a number of pupils who find it hard to consistently behave well, and teachers deploy appropriate strategies to modify such behaviour, supported where necessary by the headteacher. Procedures for dealing with any bullying or other oppressive behaviour are effective. The lunchtime supervisors contribute well to the school's behaviour management.
39. The school has a sound range of strategies for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. The assessment of pupils when they first enter the school provides a useful starting point for evaluation of how it adds to their attainment. Target setting has involved the school in a careful review of individual progress prior to the identification of what should improve. Detailed analysis of national test results is undertaken, although the school has not been fully effective in the use of this data to identify and resolve the differences in the relative performance of boys and girls. Assessment data is used to guide short and medium term curricular planning, for example, to adapt a following week's lesson planning to re-address problems experienced by pupils. The school monitors individual pupils' progress, particularly in core subjects. The systems used are currently being changed and because of this the results are not at the moment always used effectively to support pupils' further development. Some teachers are keeping good records on individual pupils, and all teachers know their pupils well as individuals. Record keeping in the Nursery is particularly comprehensive, covering both academic and personal development in detail. The school has effective procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs and carefully monitors their progress through regular reviews.
40. The school has maintained the standard of its provision for pupils' welfare since the last inspection.

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

41. Based on the limited sample of parents who attended the meeting with the registered inspector or who returned the questionnaire, they hold a very positive view of the school. They think it is well led and that teaching is good. Children are seen to like school, and to behave well. Parents think the school helps their children to become mature and responsible, and they themselves feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem. A minority of parents would like to see the school working more closely with parents and a wider range of activities outside lessons. Some are dissatisfied with the amount of homework provided, although opinions tend to be divided as to whether more or less is needed. Inspection findings indicate that the amount of homework set is adequate.
42. Parents are provided with good quality information about the school. There are three opportunities each year for parents to meet teachers to discuss their children's work and the school provides good information to parents on the curriculum. The written reports on pupils' progress are sound. The school makes satisfactory arrangements to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in the assessment and review of progress related to pupils' individual education plans. Normal day-to-day concerns are dealt with through the usual channels.
43. The links parents have with the school are good. Many parents assist their children's learning through their support for homework, although this is not universal. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved well in the reviews of progress. The vast majority of parents

have signed the home school agreement, although there are no discernible effects from this initiative. A limited number of parents help in school on a voluntary basis. The Friends of Springdale organise successful fundraising events which help to supplement the level of resources available to support pupils' learning.

44. The quality of the school's partnership with parents has been maintained at a good level since the last inspection.

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

45. The school has emerged from a lengthy period of uncertainty caused by the absence of a permanently appointed headteacher and deputy headteacher. A new headteacher was appointed several months prior to the inspection and a new deputy headteacher took up her appointment several days before the inspection. In the two years prior to these appointments the school's ability to forge ahead and make major policy decisions was constrained. This absence of a permanently appointed senior management team was further compounded by the recent reconstitution of the governing body. The school's new governing body was appointed four months ago. Notwithstanding this unsatisfactory situation, the school has successfully managed to introduce significant new initiatives. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have been introduced successfully. The school has succeeded in maintaining a steady improvement in standards as measured by National Curriculum test and assessment results in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The good elements of the school reported at the time of the last inspection have been largely maintained. The absence of a permanently appointed leadership team has, however, resulted in the development of few initiatives beyond those impelled by national guidance. The new headteacher was a driving force behind the very recent success of a bid for a grant to restructure the early years classrooms and the acting headteacher, the acting deputy headteacher and key staff have succeeded in maintaining high standards in most subjects and in promoting effective teaching and learning. Standards of staff morale and motivation have been maintained successfully during this period of uncertainty.
46. The new governing body has been trained successfully and has developed a considerable understanding of how to fulfil its responsibilities effectively. It is currently engaged in reviewing procedures so that governors are able to provide telling support, develop their monitoring role and gain a clear insight into the workings of the school. The governing body is actively involved in preparing its first annual report to parents which the chair envisages as a joint venture in which the school and all governors are fully involved. The school has been largely successful in meeting statutory requirements. One minor exception is the omission of comparative data in the publication of National Curriculum test results in the school prospectus. The school has been successful in addressing the main key issues which were identified at the time of the last inspection. Good schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and more able pupils are generally provided with work which is appropriately challenging. Staff changes have impeded the strengthening of the role of curriculum co-ordinators and work on developing the use of assessment data has been improved significantly but using assessment data to assist curricular planning for progression continues to be an area for further development.
47. Key appointments to the senior management team have been the result of the promotion of existing staff. This has implications for the professional development of senior managers in terms of ensuring that the wider perspectives of educational development are secure and that the school looks beyond its own confines to develop a broader understanding of good practice. The nursery, for example, is good but the school has no clear picture of what constitutes excellent provision. There is still one senior management position which remains unfilled.
48. The school development plan is a comprehensive document which includes statements that indicate a clear commitment to improving standards in literacy and numeracy. It includes details of staff involved in managing specific time bound initiatives, in service training implications, costs of developments and success criteria. It is clearly produced and gives a good picture of how the school intends to manage a wide range of appropriate developments. The success criteria do not always focus on how the success of initiatives will be measured. The success

criteria linked to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, for example, refer to the successful implementation of the strategy but not how its success in terms of raising standards will be assessed. The school has, however, set challenging targets for the proportion of pupils who will attain the national target of Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. It is aiming to ensure that 93 per cent of pupils attain Level 2 in the tests in reading, 95 per cent in writing and 96 per cent in mathematics. It may not achieve these results in 2000 but the setting of targets, quite voluntarily as there is no requirement to do so in Key Stage 1, indicates a clear commitment to improving standards.

49. The school and governing body have set up appropriate structures to ensure that the needs of the pupils with special educational needs are met. The governing body is well informed about any changes in the provision. However the governors' report to parents only contains very brief details about special educational needs and does not give a clear picture of how successful the provision has proved to be. The special needs co-ordinator is new to her position but already has a sound understanding of her role. Class teachers are appropriately involved in the writing of education plans and their review. Good links are maintained with outside agencies. The deployment of support staff does not provide maximum support for pupils in the core areas of the curriculum. Resource material is adequate but the use of information technology in pupil support is underdeveloped.
50. Most of the curriculum co-ordinators have been appointed to their posts very recently and have not as yet had sufficient opportunity to have a major impact on the development of their areas of responsibility. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, in order to identify areas for development, has not been pursued in most subjects. Lessons have been observed as the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies were being implemented and the school has benefited from lessons being monitored and evaluated by the school's local authority adviser. It has plans to establish a systematic regime of monitoring according to a programme which has yet to be developed and agreed by all staff.
51. The school has over a period of years accumulated a substantial financial reserve fund from its delegated budget. This prudent husbandry of finances has been part of a deliberate policy to provide funds for foreseeable future major expenditure such as the resurfacing of the flat roof and the making good of ceilings damaged by leaks through the roof, the repair of the playground surface and supplementing the grant for restructuring of the early years classrooms so that the job can be completed to a high standard. The conservation of funds has, however, led to a lack of adequate resources in certain areas, such as the provision of enough high quality reading material, the provision of a secure, well equipped outdoor play area for the under fives and the provision of enough computers. The school has not had an external audit by auditors appointed by the local authority for many years but is looking forward to an audit next month. The cost per pupil appears at first sight to be considerably above average but this unit cost includes the extra allocation for the resource base. In fact the unit cost is close to the national average. All school fund accounts are properly kept and audited annually. The governors are provided with regular, clear information which helps them to monitor the budget effectively. All office procedures run smoothly and teachers are not unnecessarily involved in administrative duties which interfere with their work in the classroom. The school successfully applies the principles of best value to its use of resources. It compares the standards it achieves with those of other schools, it debates and justifies its use of resources and uses all grants for specific purposes appropriately and ensures proper competitive tendering arrangements are made for major works and services. The school consults widely when considering major changes and it is currently, for example, arranging for a range of consultants to advise on the development of an improved reading scheme.
52. Taking into consideration the broadly average income which the school receives, the high standards which pupils attain, the good quality of teaching and the positive ethos which is rooted in a commitment to improve standards further, the school provides good value for money.

#### **THE WORK OF THE LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS RESOURCE BASE**

53. The school provides excellent support for pupils drawn from across the Borough who have

language and communication difficulties. The unit is well staffed with specialist teachers and skilled nursery nurses. This team works well with a number of external specialist visitors, such as the speech therapist and occupational therapist. Together they provide an exceptionally high quality education such that the pupils make good progress and generally attain results which compare very favourably with those of pupils in the main school. There is an excellent balance of support via withdrawal into the base and integration into the main school classes. The quality of teaching is very good and a stimulating, exciting learning environment is created. There are exceptionally high levels of care and excellent relationships between adults and pupils are forged. Pupils flourish in the rich learning facilities provided.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. In order to improve standards further the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) extend pupils' reading opportunities by:

- increasing the range of reading books available with especial attention to material which particularly interests boys,
- reviewing reading strategies in order to develop pupils' knowledge of a wide range of children's literature. (paragraphs 22,73)

(2) improve the consistency of teaching by:

- developing a teaching and learning policy which defines the criteria against which the quality of teaching can be evaluated;
- deploying support staff more effectively so that their support is more closely related to pupils' needs; (paragraphs 22,26,49)

(3) develop the roles of the senior management team and curriculum co-ordinators, especially in terms of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning; (paragraphs 46,47)

(4) review timetables so that pupils have a greater variety of learning experiences each day, comparable learning experiences and similar time allocations for subjects; (paragraphs 23,33)

(5) ensure that pupils in each year group receive sufficient time to develop skills in information technology and that staff receive further training in the development of such skills; (paragraphs 22,105)

Less significant areas for development:

- Speaking and listening skills are not developed consistently throughout the school.
- There is no secure and stimulating outdoor play area for the under fives.
- There is insufficient attention to developing an understanding of the multi-cultural nature of our society.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.
- There are health and safety issues which need to be addressed.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

**Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection**

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	21	39	31	7	0	0

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

**Information about the school's pupils**

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	222
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	81

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

**Attendance**

**Authorised absence**

	%
School data	7.5
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	39	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	35	36
	Girls	21	21	23
	Total	56	56	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 [ 78]	90 [ 87]	95 [ 94]
	National	82 [80]	83 [81]	87 [84]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	36	37
	Girls	20	21	21
	Total	55	57	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (84)	92 (86)	94 (95)
	National	82 [ 81 ]	86 [85]	87 [86]

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

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



**Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	8
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	210
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.1
Average class size	27.8

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162.5

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	63

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

**Financial information**

Financial year	1998-1999
	£
Total income	507 854
Total expenditure	467 564
Expenditure per pupil	2078
Balance brought forward from previous year	45 399
Balance carried forward to next year	85 689

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	250
Number of questionnaires returned	46

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	25	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	25	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	48	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	37	21	3	0
The teaching is good.	64	27	7	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	45	7	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	18	7	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	36	5	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	41	41	16	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	27	5	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	34	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	56	17	0	12

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents are strongly supportive of the school. A small minority of parents believe that the school could work more closely with parents. A minority are not satisfied with the amount of homework provided. Some parents would like to see a greater range of activities outside lessons.

## 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

55. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis according to their age. There are currently 60 children attending for either the morning or afternoon session. They attend the nursery for between three and five terms before moving into one of the reception classes in either September or January of the school year in which they become five. At the time of the inspection 21 children in the reception classes were aged four. An analysis of teachers' records and work completed by nursery pupils confirms the view that, whilst there is a range of attainment on entry to the nursery, overall attainment on entry is below average. Many pupils have particularly limited speaking skills on entry. Following good progress in the nursery and further sound progress in Reception, pupils enter full time education with attainment levels which are nearly, but still slightly below, average. This is confirmed by an analysis of the school's baseline assessments carried out shortly after children start in Reception. Planning in the nursery and reception classes is based firmly in the recommended areas of learning and reception children are introduced to the early parts of the National Curriculum at the appropriate time, ready for the more formal teaching in Key Stage 1. The detailed daily and weekly assessments are used effectively in the planning of subsequent sessions. However, planning for physical development in terms of climbing, clambering and the use of wheeled toys is less effective because there is no dedicated, secure outdoor play area for these children. Consequently, nursery children receive two short sessions outdoors per week to use bats and balls or wheeled toys, supplemented by a lengthy hall session for the other aspects rather than the daily access seen in the best provision. Children in the reception classes only have an hour session in the hall weekly and no regular access to an outdoor area.
56. Teaching is consistently good in the nursery in all areas of learning and overall it is sound in Reception. The two full-time nursery nurses in the nursery provide good support for the nursery teacher and are well deployed. For example, they lead activities for small groups and assist in making ongoing assessments during whole class sessions. However, the reception classes do not have the same consistency of support with the result that some lessons are less effective than they should be. For example, in a reception lesson aimed at creative development, the lack of any other adult to assist the teacher meant that she could not adequately supervise all of the different activities. The effect of this was that children did not follow instructions closely enough, were not on task long enough and did not learn enough in that lesson. When teaching is good, the good rapport between the children and the nursery staff is evident. The teacher changes the focus of the activity regularly so that the children do not become restless. These features combine to ensure that children are well behaved, highly motivated and learn well. The quality of teamwork in the nursery was a strength in the last report and remains so. Activities are planned effectively to provide an appropriate balance between purposeful play and directed activities.
57. The nursery teacher is also the early years co-ordinator. However, she was only appointed to this role last September. She attends the planning meetings for the reception classes but has not had the opportunity to directly monitor the quality of teaching in there. Due to increasing numbers of pupils on the school's roll space is limited. At the time of the inspection, half of the nursery area was in use for the youngest reception class with the result that the nursery was more cramped than usual. However, careful use of the available space minimised the effects of this. Resources are adequate although some of the wheeled toys used in outdoor physical activities are broken or shabby. Outdoor play can only take place on the main playground and this area is not a stimulating one for young minds. There are no markings to use in role-play, for example.
58. The findings of this inspection broadly echo those of the previous inspection team.

#### Personal and social development

59. By the age of five, most children attain the desirable learning outcomes in this area. They sit sensibly on the carpet and listen attentively to teachers and other adults. They understand about taking turns, for example, when handing out the milk and saying a prayer. When they

receive their milk from the day's monitor, they remember to say 'Thank you'. Children actively seek out different tasks and join groups without friction. When discussing what things are made of, they expressed sadness that animals had been killed just to provide ivory or snakeskin. In reception, however, children do not always behave appropriately which means that lessons sometimes move more slowly, affecting progress in all areas. The staff provide good role models for the children and their high expectations of behaviour lead to the good behaviour and learning seen, especially in the nursery. This area was reported as a strength at the time of the last inspection, and remains so now.

#### Language and literacy

60. By the age of five, most children embarking on the National Curriculum achieve the desirable learning outcome. Children in the nursery understand that books contain information and that they should be read from left to right and top to bottom. They handle books carefully, and are happy to share them. They 'read' books confidently interpreting the pictures. They are gaining a sound knowledge of the sounds associated with letters. Most children can trace or copy their own name; higher attaining children write their name independently. The routine for registration, during which children remove their name from a board, is effective in teaching children to recognise their own name. In reception, children commence the school's reading scheme and most can recognise some words in simple picture books. Many children are confident speakers and during the inspection week, nursery children were confident in the 'Mini School' role-play area. A significant minority of pupils, however, has poorly developed language skills and struggle to express themselves clearly.

#### Mathematics

61. Nursery children count confidently with the teacher up to 100, although they recognise the numerals only for smaller numbers. Nevertheless, most pupils know number names up to about ten and can count out the right number of toy dinosaurs to match numbers to five. They have an understanding of sequences and can place pictures in order to illustrate a simple story. As children move through reception, their knowledge is extended. They use the words 'bigger than', 'smaller than' and 'between' to, for example, place random numbers up to twenty in the appropriate place on a washing line. This already had four and thirteen hung up; the nominated child was able to deduce that seven should be placed between them. Completed work shows that children have learned about larger numbers and shapes, too. The majority of children are on line to achieve the desirable learning outcome.

#### Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Most of the children are on line to achieve the desirable learning outcome. Children in the nursery understand that different objects are made of different materials. During the inspection week, the theme was the jungle and many children could name several of the animals. When discussing lions, for example, they can recognise a 'man-lion' because of the 'hair round his neck'. Regular sessions using the computer are available to children and they are beginning to control it through the mouse. Children in reception had an understanding of the stages by which a caterpillar becomes a butterfly, and the cyclical nature of this as the butterfly lays further eggs. Their understanding of this as a cycle of events was promoted by their circular collages showing the stages.

#### Physical development

63. Children make good progress in the skills of drawing and writing. The 'self-portraits' completed termly and kept by the school show clear development in pencil control and in hand-eye co-ordination. They handle glue and spreaders confidently and cut, paste and stick accurately. They can pedal tricycles and toy cars confidently in the playground with an awareness of the space around them and avoid collisions. They throw and catch a variety of balls, bean bags and quoits. However, progress in clambering, riding and balancing is compromised by the lack of a regular outdoor session in a suitable enclosed outdoor area. Nevertheless, most children should attain the desirable learning outcome by the age of five.

## Creative development

64. By the age of five, most children are on course to meet the desirable learning outcome. Nursery children know the names of colours and choose which ones to use in a painting. They are encouraged to explore texture, for example, when using papier-mâché, they were encouraged to think, and talk, about how the glue and newspaper strips felt. Reception children completed multi-coloured squares in a variety of ways to make a collage of Elmer, the multi-coloured elephant. Some used paint, others chose chalk, felt-tip pens or to glue coloured tissue.

## ENGLISH

65. The results of the latest National Curriculum tests in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils who attained at least the national target of Level 2 was above average in reading and writing. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 standard was above average in writing, but well below average in reading. The school's overall performance was above average in writing but below average in reading both when compared with all schools nationally and when compared with schools who have pupils from similar social backgrounds. There is clear evidence that girls perform better than boys in reading and writing. Inspection findings concur with the test results and show that currently pupils achieve levels which are broadly in line with national expectations in both reading and writing and that a significant minority of pupils exceed national expectations. Since the previous inspection, standards, as measured by the proportion of pupils who attain Level 2 in reading and writing by the age of seven, have improved steadily and results are now much better than they were in 1995. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher Level 3 standard in reading and writing fell significantly between 1998 and the latest tests in 1999 due to the increased number of pupils in the cohort who had difficulties of various natures. The well-implemented National Literacy Strategy and improved teaching are having a positive impact on standards.
66. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations for most pupils; however, a significant minority of pupils has poorly developed language skills. Pupils listen well as is shown by their response to questions and the contributions that they made to discussions in most of the lessons observed. Most pupils speak clearly but need much prompting to expand their answers from one word or a phrase. There is a very small proportion of highly articulate pupils who are confident in discussing their work at length. Many need help with finding the words they need to express views and opinions clearly. There are opportunities within the curriculum for pupils to report back to the rest of the class, as for example in the Year 1 science lesson where pupils investigate the basic conditions required for plant life and in the 'good work' assembly where pupils describe the work they have been doing. Opportunities are missed however, to make use of role-play and group discussions within some literacy lessons. Overall pupils achieve at levels which are as high as might be expected given that their achievement is below average on entry but there is insufficient emphasis on developing speaking skills systematically.
67. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading meet expectations for seven year olds and nearly all pupils, including those with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language, succeed in learning to read fluently, accurately and with good understanding. Most use their knowledge of phonics as well as clues in the text and illustrations to work out unfamiliar words. They know how to use non-fiction books to find specific information by using the contents and index sections and able pupils show an understanding of the function of the bibliography in a book. They use dictionaries to check spellings and find the meanings of words. Whilst pupils make good progress and learn to read effectively, their breadth of knowledge of children's literature is often slight. Few can name favourite authors and they find difficulty in referring to a range of books by different children's authors. Inspection findings indicate that higher attaining pupils are not always appropriately challenged with a wide range of children's literature and this may well have contributed to the decline in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard in the National Tests. By the end of the key stage, pupils' achievements are as high as would normally be expected, especially as a significant minority enter school with achievements in language which are below expectations of five year olds.
68. Standards in writing are in line with national expectations. By the end of the key stage pupils

convey their ideas in a wide variety of forms of writing which includes poems, factual reports, letter writing, instructions and fiction writing. Sound opportunities are provided in subjects like geography, history and religious education for pupils to practise and develop their writing skills. Handwriting is legible but a significant number of pupils do not hold their pencils correctly or form their letters properly. Most pupils spell common words accurately. They show consistent use of capital letters at the start of sentences and full stops at the end of these. They use other punctuation marks, for example, question marks with less consistency. The work of able pupils shows good use of speech marks and inverted commas. Pupils use an appropriate range of adjectives in their written work, as in the topic based on 'Dark is Beautiful' with descriptions of an owl. Pupils show a clear understanding of the three basic parts of a story and the handwriting of most pupils is legible. Achievement is generally higher than might normally be expected of these pupils.

69. Pupils generally respond positively in lessons and make sound and often good progress. Most maintain concentration well during individual tasks, although the concentration of some pupils lapses during longer whole class discussion sessions. Pupils' behaviour is generally good and relationships in the classroom are positive and enhance learning.
70. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The good teaching results in effective learning. Teachers plan together in year groups. Planning is generally good and includes clear learning objectives for the range of pupils' abilities. In the most effective lessons, teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of these objectives and an analysis of their response to them is an integral part of the review session at the end of each lesson. In a Year 2 lesson for example, the objective, to be able to find out specific facts from a non-fiction text on insects, was made clear at the start of the lesson and was also on display as the class target for the lesson. Individual and whole class tasks generally present suitable challenges for the range of abilities of the pupils. In some lessons however, where pupils are working on a number of different activities and teachers are working with group readers and have no classroom support, the task set for the less able pupils contains little challenge and is based on a copying exercise. Pupils of all abilities are supported sensitively during whole class question and answer sessions. All teachers are very successful in providing a secure working atmosphere where pupils feel valued and able to contribute. Pupils are given time to think and are encouraged to appreciate the effort of others. Teachers' perceptive questioning and consistent assessment enables individual pupil's strengths and weaknesses to be well known. Most lessons are well organised and proceed at an appropriate pace. In a small number of lessons where the pace slows down to the detriment of the success of the lesson, this is due to the teacher allowing too many interruptions by pupils or because of less effective strategies to manage pupils' behaviour. The teaching of handwriting does not always take place in short regular daily practice sessions, which would be appropriate to pupils' learning needs, but is often confined to a longer session once a week. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and pupils are praised appropriately. Sometimes the work is annotated for the reader and includes constructive comments for the pupils. Support staff, when available are used well by teachers and provide very effective support for the pupils. Teachers make limited use of information technology to support literacy.
71. The quality of teaching in the base for pupils with communication and language difficulties is very good. Teachers and nursery nurses maintain high expectations of pupils' performance and pupils succeed in achieving at levels which exceed what would normally be expected of these pupils. Pupils are integrated sensitively into the literacy hour sessions in the main classes and are withdrawn for extra support as necessary and according to carefully laid plans. During such sessions the teachers and nursery nurses often assist pupils with special needs other than those in the base. This provision of extra support for pupils in the main classes is effective but does not happen consistently for all such pupils. There are occasions when pupils with special educational needs do not receive sufficient support to enable them to succeed.
72. Management of the subject is sound. The subject co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and examines pupils work. However a rigorous analysis of pupils' progress and the setting of individual pupil's targets is not an established part of the school's structure. The role of the co-ordinator with respect to monitoring and supporting colleagues in-class is underdeveloped. This development, noted in the last inspection report, has yet to be completed.

73. The school library and the collection of big books have been improved in recent years. Pupils from Reception onwards show enjoyment of reading 'big books' together as a class. However the range of children's literature is still limited in quality and quantity and a richness of good literature suitable for exciting boys and girls is still lacking. The main reading scheme used by the school is outdated.

## **MATHEMATICS**

74. The school's results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests show that pupils' attainment was above the national average and broadly in line with the average in schools with a similar intake. When the levels actually achieved are examined, it is clear that higher than average numbers of pupils gain at least the expected Level 2 in tests and high numbers gain the higher Level 3 standard. Since 1996 the trend is securely upward with a year of consolidation in 1999. Over this period, girls have consistently outperformed boys.
75. Inspection evidence show that standards are still higher than average although not as much very high attainment was seen, which echoes teachers' predictions for this summer's tests. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 can, for example, count on in threes, fives and tens up to 100. Higher attaining pupils can deduce, for example, that to count on from five to 100 you must count in fives rather than tens or you will miss 100 and count to either 95 or 105 instead. As at the last inspection, the school's main emphasis is on number work, in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Nevertheless, standards in the other areas of mathematics are now equally as strong as number. The analysis of pupils' completed work showed good levels of understanding of tessellation, for example, along with a knowledge of simple properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. The report of the previous inspection stated that standards at that time were about average. These findings represent a considerable improvement since then.
76. When the pupils' attainment on entry is taken into account, pupils achieve well. Baseline assessments show that significant numbers of pupils are below average on arrival at the school so they do well to gain above average standards by the time they leave to go to the juniors. Their rate of progress is high throughout the key stage and they learn well in lessons. For example, in a Year 1 lesson pupils were rapt as they identified and sorted shapes. They knew the names of common two dimensional shapes and were able distinguish, for example, a square and a rectangle. In addition, having completed tables of shapes sorted according to the number of sides, they made relevant observations like, 'There are no two-sided shapes', which had not been explicitly mentioned by the teacher. In this lesson, pupils consolidated their earlier learning of shapes and took their understanding further as a result of the task that was set. At the last inspection there were concerns that higher attaining pupils were not challenged enough. This was certainly not the case in this lesson as they were extended by skilful questioning about the two-way table they had completed.
77. In many lessons, pupils with special educational needs learn well. This is mainly when the class teacher is supported by a nursery nurse or teacher from the special unit attached to the school. In these lessons, all pupils make good gains in learning because the extra adult can take immediate and discreet steps to ensure pupils are attentive and the class teacher can then concentrate on the matter in hand. However, if there is no support for the teacher in those classes with a relatively high proportion of pupils with behavioural difficulties then the pace can become slow and the flow somewhat staccato as the teacher uses up time to maintain discipline. This happened in a Year 2 lesson. The behaviour of one pupil disrupted the whole class part of the lesson and caused the others not to listen and become restless. The consequence was that too long was spent in this part and pupils did not have enough time to practise individually.
78. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons and work hard in most of them. They are able to work very diligently in groups or pairs and concentrate well. Although they may talk, it is usually about the task. When the teaching is particularly inspiring, pupils hang on the teacher's every word in the whole class sections of lessons. This happened in a Year 1 lesson in which the teacher had a first-rate rapport with her class. She used praise very effectively, which raised the pupils' self esteem and gave them the confidence to answer questions without worrying if they were right or not. The high quality of the relationships here led to pupils really wanting to do well to please

the teacher. However, as noted above, behaviour can deteriorate if the whole class section is allowed to drag on for too long so that pupils become bored, inattentive and restless.

79. Evidence based on the lessons observed, together with evidence derived from an analysis of completed work, shows that, overall, teaching in mathematics is good. At the time of the last inspection, mathematics teaching was judged to be sound, so this judgement represents an improvement since then. In the best lessons, work is closely matched to pupils' needs. This is especially true of the lessons in the language resource base. Here, energetic, focused teaching with a sense of humour enables all pupils to achieve success. In other lessons, pupils from the base are successfully integrated into mainstream lessons and supported by their teachers and nursery nurses. In the main school, very good teaching is characterised by a rapid pace and regular changes of focus. In the Year 1 lesson cited above, the teacher's evident excitement inspired the pupils so that her discipline was invisible and any admonishments that were required were delivered and accepted in good humour. A positive feature of this lesson was that literacy was also promoted through the use of flashcards with the names of shapes on them. Another feature of very good teaching is that the teacher listens to, and uses, pupils' responses effectively. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, when one pupil was hesitant about where to place the number 65 on to a number line marked in tens, the teacher invited him to have a closer look, then suggested he look in the tens column of his number. At this point he realised his number fitted between 60 and 70 and triumphantly placed it on the line. A feature of the unsatisfactory teaching which also affected some satisfactory lessons was a slow pace caused by an overlong introductory session. Pupils were sometimes kept sitting for over thirty minutes before getting to the individual tasks.
80. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy exactly according to the guidelines. However, the co-ordinator is new to this post and there has been little monitoring of teaching, although planning has been scrutinised. As a result, the length of the whole class sessions has not yet been reviewed, although plans are in hand to review the strategy's implementation this summer. Assessment is not yet coherent. The school is changing its assessment scheme because the previous system did not link closely enough to the National Curriculum. Nevertheless, teachers use their informal assessments in lessons effectively to form groups of pupils and to judge when to intervene. Numeracy is effectively promoted across the curriculum in other subjects.

## SCIENCE

81. Standards in science are above the national average at the end of the key stage. Teachers' National Curriculum assessments for 1999 show results at Level 2 or above to be above the national average. Assessment results in the aspects of the subject which deal with experimental and investigative science and life and living processes were above national averages. Assessment results in the aspects which deal with materials and their properties and physical processes were in line with national averages. The proportion of pupils who were assessed as attaining Level 3 or above was well above the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards continue to be above national expectations by the end of the key stage. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, which judged standards to be in line with the national average.
82. Pupils are developing good scientific knowledge, understanding and skills. By the end of the key stage they can communicate their understanding and discuss their experiments with confidence and enthusiasm. They achieve well and often better than would normally be expected for their age. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. They use equipment well and predict the outcomes of their investigations. For example, pupils in Year 1 planned an experiment to decide the best place to grow watercress seeds and the best media in which to grow the cress. They predicted the results and noted any changes in the seeds over regular periods. Good use was made of pupils' diaries to record the growth of the watercress over a set period of time.
83. In their study of life processes and living things, pupils can identify the major organs of the body, the main parts of a plant and the major parts of insects. For example, pupils in Reception study the life cycle of the butterfly and pupils in Year 2 study and classify insects and 'non-insects'.



They confidently give reasons for their classifications. They can also accurately classify animals as nocturnal and diurnal.

84. When studying materials, pupils can sort by colour, texture and hardness. They know that some materials change when heated or cooled and that the process is not always reversible. For example, as part of their topic on farming, pupils in Year 2 visited a 19<sup>th</sup> century farm museum and observed the change in the ingredients when they baked bread in the farmhouse. They remembered this with enjoyment.
85. In their work on physical processes, pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of how to construct a circuit to light one or two bulbs. They can confidently name the planets, in the correct order from the sun, describe physical features about each planet and explain how day and night occurs.
86. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. In almost half of the lessons observed, pupils' behaviour and attitudes were very good. They are enthusiastic about science, particularly when there is a practical and investigative component to the lesson. They are eager to share their knowledge and understanding with each other and with visitors to the class. They co-operate well in group-work and want to learn more. For example, a number of pupils in Year 2 used home computers to find more information about the planets from CD-ROMs and the Internet. Pupils show a pride in their work. Boys and girls work well together and make similarly good progress. Pupils develop a good understanding of predicting, fair testing and making conclusions.
87. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of what they teach. Classroom assistants are given good guidance and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning, especially to those pupils from the language resource base. Not all teachers provide pupils with a list of key words or phrases to encourage the correct spelling of important scientific words. However, a good example was seen in a Year 1 class where the teacher provided the more able pupils with initial phrases to start their writing about their experiment and encouraged all pupils to use a simple dictionary.
88. The co-ordinator is new to the role. She has good subject knowledge and good awareness of the strengths and areas for development in the science but has limited opportunities to work alongside colleagues or monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms. She is not yet involved with the predicting of levels of pupils prior to their taking the annual national assessments but she has analysed assessment results to identify weaker areas in the curriculum. Monitoring of the subject was identified as an area for development in the previous inspection report and has still to be fully developed. Since the previous inspection a policy and scheme of work has been put in to place and new assessment procedures are presently being developed. A portfolio of examples of work is being put together, which, when completed, will be a useful aid to support assessment. The subject is soundly resourced. The small pond and large field contribute well to the subject. Cross-curricular links through topic based work is good. For example, the life cycle of insects and the development of babies make a good contribution to religious education. The life and works of Isaac Newton and George Stevenson also contributes to History. The contribution to literacy is good. In many classes pupils are encouraged to feedback to the whole class the results of their work. A good example was observed in a Year 1 class, where pupils from each group were asked to feed back to the whole class about their experiment for growing watercress seeds. However, such opportunities are not sufficiently planned for. The use of information technology to support the subject is satisfactory. Year 1 pupils draw and write about their seed growing experiment using an art and word-processing program. Year 2 pupils use a CD-ROM to research information on insects and to produce a class dictionary of insects and non-insects. Good use is made of educational visits. For example, to the Birmingham Botanical Gardens and the 19<sup>th</sup> century working farm museum

## **ART**

89. The good progress and high standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. By the end of the key stage, most pupils produce work which exceeds national expectations. Pupils paint bold self portraits and illustrate their work with careful drawings.

Pupils gain inspiration from the work of famous artists both modern and from earlier eras. They have, for example, a good knowledge of the life and work of Kandinsky, Andy Warhol, David Hockney and Vincent Van Gogh. When studying Kandinsky's 'Concentric Circles' pupils made a book of their own concentric circles which not only resulted in a fine piece of work in its own right but also enhanced their vocabulary and understanding of geometry. Their understanding of reflective symmetry is heightened as they make symmetrical prints of a butterfly's wings by folding a blank side of a piece of paper onto a boldly painted side. Pupils work in a variety of media including different types of paint, charcoal pencils, pastels, pencil crayons and coloured inks. They make collages with a wide range of materials and use clay and create three-dimensional models. Pupils in the resource base made detailed models of garden gnomes as part of a project on gardens and understood how to mould the figures out of one piece of clay to give greater strength rather than stick pieces on to a central torso.

90. Information technology is used well to reinforce and extend learning opportunities. A digital artist worked with pupils to produce moving images and computer generated pictures. The Internet is used effectively to produce coloured prints of artists being studied during lessons. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their work and take a great pride in their finished products. They persevere and use their initiative as, for example, when pupils created simple yet effective contact prints from excess coloured inks which had accumulated on a table top.
91. The quality of teaching is mainly good but varies between unsatisfactory and excellent. Teaching is unsatisfactory where expectations of pupils' performance are too low and where pupils are not all fully engaged in purposeful tasks. This occurred where the learning intentions of a lesson were ill-defined and hence the teacher's expectations of what pupils were expected to produce were hazy and skills were not taught systematically to all pupils. On this occasion pupils were unsure of what was expected of them and many wandered aimlessly as a result. Time was not used effectively and the quality of learning was diminished. One excellent lesson was seen where the teacher had prepared pupils well to receive a 'Master Class'. Anticipation of the lesson ahead was developed carefully such that pupils' interest was captured. The teacher exuded enthusiasm which was transmitted to the pupils. The teacher had high expectations of pupils as was evidenced by her very clear explanation of the term 'impressionism' and her explanation of the aim of the impressionist school of painters. A very serious approach to the work in hand was engendered so that the pupils believed that their creations were of great importance. They were encouraged to reflect and offer sensible suggestions about the best way to compose their paintings. As the lesson progressed individuals would leave the room one by one with a nursery nurse and would return with prints of the artist's work which they had chosen to download from the Internet. The quality of the paintings produced were of high quality, the pupils' knowledge of the artist and the history of art was increased, they experienced success and a heightened sense of self-worth and they developed a good range of skills. Generally achievement exceeds that which would normally be expected of pupils in similar schools.
92. The subject is adequately resourced. The co-ordinator offers good guidance and support and is planning to further improve the progressive development of skills and the range of work covered. Pupils study Islamic art as part of their work in religious education and some good Rangoli patterns have been produced but currently there is little material which reflects work from cultures other than those which are rooted predominantly in Western influences.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

93. The last inspection report spoke highly of the standards and provision for design and technology. The findings of this inspection are that the high standards of teaching and learning have been maintained
94. It was possible to observe only one lesson directly aimed at design technology, but evidence from this and from the standards of work produced and on display show that standards are higher than would normally be expected for pupils of this age and that teaching is good. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were seen designing a garden. They had previously produced labelled diagrams with suggestions as to the materials – plants, trees, ponds – they might use. In the lesson observed, they began the task of converting these to a model using plasticine. The

teacher skilfully allowed the pupils to discover that their original designs, drawn as three-dimensional views, were not easily transferred to a model and that a bird's-eye-view would be better. The carefully understated teaching enabled pupils to get on with the work and effectively kept pupils' enthusiasm. More importantly, the pupils learned very effectively as they refined their design and came to the conclusion themselves – or with a little discreet prompting - that a bird's eye-view would be easier. This was further reinforced in the closing section of the lesson when the teacher used her very good subject knowledge and the plans of her own garden to reinforce the points that emerged from the lesson.

95. Previously completed work on display shows clearly that all aspects of the design-and-make process are effectively taught throughout the key stage. Given pupils' levels of attainment as they enter Key Stage 1 this represents good achievement by all, including those with a special educational need. The co-ordinator has only taken on this responsibility since September and this year has been one of consolidation and audit. She enjoys good links with her counterpart in the junior school. However, monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject does not happen and assessment is informal. There are sufficient resources to allow for the effective teaching of the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

96. The pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage is above national expectations and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Before pupils enter the key stage they develop a good understanding of the representation of a journey on a plan, as for example in the Nursery where they build up a collage map of their journey to the library. Throughout the key stage pupils are given increasingly more complex areas to represent as plans. Pupils in Year 1 draw plans of the playground and gardens as well as considering the positions of places on a magic island. By the end of the key stage pupils have a good understanding of the use of symbols to represent places on a map. Year 2 pupils use this skill effectively in practice during their visit to Shugborough Farm. Pupils of all abilities are able to discuss the use of appropriate symbols as in the Year 2 lessons where the representation of a door on the plan of the classroom is considered and its position inside or outside the classroom examined when the door is opened. Good links are made with mathematics as pupils use their understanding of number to record weather statistics and find positions on maps by using co-ordinates. The school grounds and the garden area to the rear are used well as an early experience of a field trip, however a number of other visits enrich the curriculum. Kingswood Nursery and Infant Area, Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Bewdley Safari Park and Avoncroft Museum provide a wealth of experiences upon which geographical skills and knowledge is built. By the time they have reached the end of Year 2 pupils have built up a good range of appropriate vocabulary. When examining the journey of a river, for example pupils know and understand words like source, streams, waterfall, lake and meanders. Pupils have a good understanding of similarities and differences, as for example shown in their study of the production of sugar in Barbados compared with food grown in this country. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory and sometimes good progress particularly in those lessons where extra support is given, in the form, for example of a partly prepared plan to complete where more able pupils are drawing the complete plan.
97. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection but interviews with pupils during the lessons, scrutiny of work and photographic evidence indicate that pupils respond well to the work done.
98. No judgement can be made on the quality of teaching overall, however in the small number of lessons observed teaching ranged between satisfactory and good. Lessons are well planned and contain challenging activities. Teachers engage pupils in thought provoking discussions and lessons contain a good variety of activities. Tasks provided for less able pupils are satisfactory but in some lessons they are better matched to their needs.
99. The school places appropriate emphasis on geography and the curriculum content contains satisfactory breadth and balance. A portfolio of samples of pupils' work has been started and

pupils' progress in geography is reported satisfactorily to parents each term. Resources, as at the time of the last inspection, are adequate. The use of information technology to support learning is under-developed.

## **HISTORY**

100. No lessons were observed during the inspection. Therefore, judgements are based on discussion with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of the pupils' work and photographic evidence. By the end of the key stage, standards in history are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be sound. Knowledge of local history is particularly strong. Good use is made of local museums within topics to stimulate pupils' interest.
101. As no lessons were observed, it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching or learning in lessons. However, a comprehensive scheme of work is in place and long and medium term planning contributes to good learning in lessons. Discussions with pupils and the analysis of books and displays, confirms that pupils' learning is good. The majority of pupils make good progress and those spoken to clearly enjoy the subject. The written work of the pupils shows that they are developing a good foundation of knowledge about life in the past. For example, they can compare aspects of life today with life in the past, and understand the terms past, present and future. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about farm life in the 1800s and 1900s. They can compare what is in their home to that in a farmhouse one hundred or two hundred years ago. They can sequence stories and events such as the life and work of a farmer throughout the seasons and the daily routines of a Victorian servant. They are eager to share their knowledge and talk with confidence about events studied, for example the Gunpowder Plot, and about the lives of people studied, for example, Sir Isaac Newton, George Stevenson, Grace Darling and Neil Armstrong. One group of pupils had a very good understanding of the links between science and history in this topic. They were able to describe Stevenson's contribution to steam power and Isaac Newton's discovery of gravity and the spectrum of light. Pupils know that people in their community have valuable knowledge about life and events in the past.
102. Resources are satisfactory overall but there are a limited number of artefacts. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject and is aware of the strengths and areas for development. However, she has few opportunities to work alongside colleagues or to monitor work in the classroom.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

103. No direct teaching was observed during the inspection week. Therefore, judgements are based on observation of pupils using computers within lessons in other subjects, displays of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and inspection of teachers' planning documents. By the end of Year 2, pupils reach standards in information technology, which are in line with those expected nationally. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection report. The majority of pupils in Year 2 use the mouse and keyboard satisfactorily. They can delete and insert letters and words, change the style, size and colour of fonts, move the cursor with accuracy using the mouse or arrow keys, format the layout of a poem and print their work unaided. From an early age they are aware that information technology can be directly controlled in the home and at school. The majority of pupils show satisfactory standards in word-processing. Pupils in Year 2 write poems and stories, in different fonts, to accompany their science work on space and their art work on Van Gogh. They use a simple graph program to draw a graph of their favourite cereals and the CD-ROM to research information on insects. However, inconsistent assessment of pupils' skills by teachers means that pupils do not build systematically on previous work and able pupils, and those bringing skills from home, are not being sufficiently challenged.
104. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in their learning. This is a decline since the previous report when progress was judged to be good. Computers are not used regularly in all classes therefore restricting the opportunities to build on previous knowledge and experiences. The attitudes of pupils to the subject are good. They are eager to learn new skills and happy to share these with their classmates. Their behaviour is very good.

105. Many classroom computers are underused and during the inspection week some were not used at all. In many cases this is because of a lack of confidence, skills and knowledge by teachers and because many older computers are prone to breaking down. Later in the year, staff training will take place when a national training initiative is implemented. Two classes have to share a computer, which is an additional restriction on the time allocation for pupils in those classes. This area of the curriculum is not well resourced. The trolleys for some computers are too high and make it awkward for smaller and younger pupils to use them comfortably. Learning support assistants give good help to pupils, especially those with special educational needs, and make a positive contribution to the subject. The co-ordinator has very good knowledge about the subject but has had limited opportunities to work alongside colleagues and monitor learning in the classroom. At present she is seconded to another post in the authority and a "caretaker" co-ordinator has taken her place. She is also very knowledgeable and has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the subject but has had no opportunity to monitor in the classroom or work alongside colleagues. The curriculum is being developed and planning has improved since the previous inspection. The scheme of work is being updated in the light of national initiatives. Good use is has been made of the digital camera. Very good use has been made of a 'Digital Artist in Residence' to teach pupils how to take photos with a digital camera and how to produce photomontages and animated storyboards. Good use is made of a part-time technician who is employed to ensure that the computers are maintained and correctly programmed. He has also helped develop a very informative web-site, which the school is justifiably proud of. The use of the Internet by pupils has still to be developed.

## **MUSIC**

106. Pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage is above national expectations and matches standards at the time of the last inspection. By the end of the key stage, pupils of all abilities have a wide repertoire of songs and these are of a good variety, both musically and historically, and come from a range of cultures. Pupils perform well together, accompanying themselves by clapping or playing percussion instruments as in the Year 1 lesson on learning and playing "Gardens" and "Cowboy Spring". Pupils show in discussion of these tunes that they have a good understanding of the differences between them as well as the differences between the refrain and the chorus. Pupils' enjoyment of singing is evident both in class lessons and school assemblies where pupils sing or hum, sometimes spontaneously as they are leaving the hall. Even some of the younger pupils are confident enough to sing solos in front of the rest of the class. Pupils, by the end of Year 2 are adept at creating music for themselves. They know that music can be used to represent sounds and activities in everyday life and enjoy using instruments to do this, as in Year 1 where groups of pupils represent the growth of a seed through its various stages. They collaborate successfully in mixed ability groups when doing a shared task and are well used to recording their musical creations using symbols which they developed themselves. Pupils of all ages have a well-developed capacity for listening carefully to music performed by themselves or others and take this skill with them into other lessons. Knowledge and use of musical terms is effectively built up throughout the key stage and by the end of it pupils know the names of a variety of simple instruments. Progress is good for all pupils throughout the key stage and pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their individual abilities.

107. Pupils' attitudes to music throughout the school are good and sometimes very good. They listen carefully to their teachers and engage in activities eagerly. They co-operate well and exhibit pride in their final performances as when showing each other work done in small groups. Real enjoyment of singing is evident. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good and the majority of pupils are very well behaved in lessons. Pupils have a well-developed sense of responsibility and musical instruments are looked after carefully during lessons.

108. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory and in the majority of lessons it is good. In the most effective lessons, teachers' subject knowledge is secure or better and their confident approach and encouragement ensure that pupils respond in kind. An experienced pianist, who accompanies the singing and has a very good rapport with the pupils, supports teachers very well during music performance lessons. Planning is good and follows the national scheme appropriately. This provides good variety within lessons and breadth of experience for the pupils. Teachers' questioning of the pupils, particularly in the creative music lessons is

perceptive and encourages pupils to think clearly about choices and decisions. In a Year 2 lesson based on the poem "Midnight", for example the teacher made pupils justify their choice of insect or animal, which they linked with a particular percussion instrument. Teachers use time well and include a good variety of stimuli in creative music lessons. This not only enhances music lessons but also reinforces work done in other subject areas.

109. The subject co-ordinator manages the provision effectively, as well as teaching the school choir and recorder group, which are well attended by pupils. Teachers' planning is monitored satisfactorily, but the role of the co-ordinator has not been developed to include the monitoring of teaching and learning. There is no school system for pupil assessment but parents receive information from class teachers each term about their children's progress. As at the last inspection, resources are good. The use of information technology to support learning is in the process of being developed. Musicians from the Wolverhampton School of Music regularly hold workshops in the school and music is an integral part of school celebrations throughout the year. All these activities enhance the music provision and contribute well towards the pupils' musical development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

110. During the inspection week, it was not possible to observe all aspects of the curriculum for physical education. However, from the lessons observed, evidence indicates that by the end of the key stage standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils perform a range of basic tasks such as balancing and travelling in a variety of ways and directions with suppleness, control and with safety. They demonstrate good control when linking actions together and when using small apparatus. This is similar to the judgements of the previous inspection.

111. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and the majority set a good example to pupils by dressing appropriately and leading by example. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage the pupils well throughout lessons. Lessons are well planned and include the essential elements of warming up and cooling down. However, in many lessons, pupils are not given enough opportunities to observe, discuss and refine their work with each other, and with the class teacher, in order to develop their skills.

112. The progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. They are enthusiastic about their learning. They work purposefully to produce improvement, and make good use of practice and repetition in order to refine performance. They respond well to activities, and show enjoyment in lessons. They work well individually, in pairs and in groups. For example, in an indoor Year 1 games lesson, pupils concentrated hard on improving their skills of throwing and catching a small ball. In an outside games lesson, led by a coach from Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club, pupils in Year 1 worked very well together in small groups when practising skills and in the team games and team races when they put their skills to use. In an indoor Year 2 games lesson, pupils were using larger balls to dribble round markers and made good progress in their ball control. Concentration was good when working individually and when working with a partner and groups. Pupils from the learning resource base are integrated very well into the lessons. They are given very good assistance by the class teachers and support staff.

113. Since the previous inspection, a policy and scheme of work have been created to ensure continuity and progression. The co-ordinator has good knowledge of the strengths and areas for development in the subject but has had few opportunities to monitor in classes or to work alongside colleagues. The school uses its large well-equipped hall and a large field, which is shared with the junior school, well. There are inconsistencies in the time allocated for physical education, with two classes only receiving half-an-hour a week for the subject whilst all other classes receive one hour a week. For some aspects of physical education, and for many pupils, especially those in Reception and Year 1, one session of an hour a week is too long at a time. The previous inspection report also highlighted that one lesson a week restricted the curriculum provided.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

114. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 are above the expectations described in the locally agreed syllabus and match those described in the previous inspection report. Pupils make good progress in their understanding of religious beliefs. They are able to make comparisons between Christianity, Judaism, and Sikhism. Pupils have a good understanding and respect for the feelings and beliefs of others. Their attitude to learning is good. In a Year 2 lesson observed pupils' attitudes were very good. They displayed sensitivity for each other's beliefs. Year 1 pupils learn about people who help us and people who helped Jesus. Year 2 pupils know about religious festivals from different faiths. For example, they talk confidently about Easter, Christmas and Diwali. They learn the important stories of the main religions studied. They can talk about the major events in the life of Jesus, for example his birth and the Crucifixion.
115. Teaching is good overall. In two lessons observed, teaching was very good. Teachers are secure in their understanding of the subject. In the very good lessons observed, both in Year 2, the teachers used questions well to assess what the pupils had learned and to introduce new challenges. There was good pace to the learning and a spiritual dimension to the lessons. The teachers used examples from the Book of Genesis, which involved pupils fully in a class discussion about the creation of the world and Adam and Eve. In one class, the lesson skilfully led in to a "Circle Time" activity, where pupils sat together and gave examples of their understanding of God and also of how they felt when they had done something wrong. The teacher very sensitively handled the discussion from this and ensured that pupils celebrated each other's faiths and beliefs. Teaching sessions are often over long and last for over an hour when two shorter sessions would be more appropriate to pupils' learning needs.
116. The co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work for both religious education and assemblies, which is based on the locally agreed syllabus for Wolverhampton. She has targeted the scheme for updating. She has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject but has few opportunities to monitor work in the classroom or to work alongside colleagues. The quality of long-term planning is good and teachers regularly evaluate the topics. There is no portfolio of pupil's annotated work to help support teachers in assessment and no systematic tracking of skills and understanding. Links with leaders from local religious communities and visits to local places of worship are underdeveloped. Pupils are not well prepared for life in a multi-faith, multi-cultural society. This is similar to the judgement in the previous inspection report. The subject is supported well through cross-curricular topics. For example, the Reception work on the life cycle of the butterfly, Year 1 work on the development of babies and the Year 2 work on insects all contribute to the pupils' understanding of the cycle of life and our place within that cycle. The subject is soundly resourced with a variety of religious artefacts. Assemblies are well planned with weekly themes and topics. Lessons in the subject make a sound contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils.