

INSPECTION REPORT

PACKMOOR COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Packmoor, Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke

Unique reference number: 123979

Headteacher: Mrs G. Pickersgill

Reporting inspector: Mr F. Carruthers
21285

Dates of inspection: 5th – 9th June, 2000

Inspection number: 190109

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior
School category: Community Primary
Age range of pupils: 3 - 11
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Carr Street
Packmoor
Stoke-on-Trent

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. H. Oakes

Date of previous inspection: June, 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr F. Carruthers	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology English as another language	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught?
Mr. K. Ross	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, behaviour & personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs K. McArthur	Team inspector	Religious education Art Geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr. E. Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities	
Mrs L. Spooner	Team inspector	Under fives History Music	
Mr. M. Duggan	Team inspector	English Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This community primary school is situated to the north of Tunstall, one of the original five pottery towns of Staffordshire, and serves an area which consists of both terraced housing and recently built private housing estates. There are 402 pupils on roll aged three to eleven, including 48 children who attend full time in the nursery. There are more girls than boys on roll. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils' families are broadly average overall and this is reflected in the fact that about ten per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. There are 47 pupils on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs and there is one pupil with a statement of special educational need. This is slightly below the average for primary schools nationally. The children's attainment on entry to the nursery is below average. There are eleven pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds who do not have English as their first language and whose families have come from Africa, Asia and Europe. At the time of inspection, there are plans to re-build the school on its present site.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The pupils make good progress and the standards that they achieve by the time they leave the school are generally good. The leadership and management and the quality of teaching are good and the school has made good progress since the last inspection. The cost of educating a pupil at the school is in line with the average for schools nationally and as a result the school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well across a range of subjects, including English, mathematics and information technology.
- Teaching is good or better in three out of every four lessons and is satisfactory in the remainder.
- The school encourages in pupils very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour. The school promotes their personal development very well, especially through its provision for the pupils' moral and social development.
- The school cares for and supports the pupils well and has very positive links with parents, including the provision of courses for parents to promote skills of information technology and classroom support.
- The school is very effectively led by the headteacher and senior staff and there is positive direction provided by the governing body.

What could be improved

- More pupils could achieve higher levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science by the age of eleven.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June, 1996. Since then, the school has made good progress. The school has successfully addressed the key issues raised in the report, which were to make pupil achievement the central aim of the school, to develop the expertise of teachers, to improve the planning of the curriculum and to develop the role of subject co-ordinators. In addition, the following improvements have also been made. Standards have risen in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The number of pupils achieving higher levels in English and mathematics has risen. There has been a very good improvement in standards in music, especially in Key Stage 2. Attainment in geography has improved from being unsatisfactory at the last inspection to satisfactory. The provision for pupils' personal development has improved. The involvement of parents working as support staff or as volunteer helpers has developed well. The school is making very good use of its improved provision for teaching information technology to both pupils and parents in the recently developed room. The school is well placed to meet its targets for pupils in English and mathematics.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	C	C	C
Mathematics	B	C	B	B
Science	B	D	D	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Results in tests over the last three years have fluctuated but have risen broadly in line with the national trend upwards. There was an improvement in English, mathematics and science between 1998 and 1999 and standards continue to rise in the current Year 6. Overall, pupils achieve well and standards of literacy and numeracy are good. However, more higher-achieving pupils could be attaining the higher levels in tests by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has set good targets for pupils to achieve in English and mathematics. In 2000, the school intends 84 per cent of pupils to achieve the expected level or better in English and 88 per cent of pupils to achieve that in mathematics. In addition, the school has targeted more pupils to achieve higher levels in the tests. Standards in work seen in the current Year 6 reflect the test results. Pupils read and write well and have good skills in mathematics, solving problems well. Pupils have good investigational skills in science and their achievement in information technology is above that expected of pupils at the age of eleven. Attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Attainment is above that expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in art, music and physical education. It is in line with that expected of pupils in design and technology and geography. In history, attainment is broadly in line with that expected but skills of investigation and interpretation are less well developed. Standards in the current Year 2 are in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics, although the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 is below the national average. Standards in science, information technology and physical education are good. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The great majority of pupils have very good attitudes to their work in school and enjoy talking to adults about what they are doing.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in classrooms and around school. Pupils are courteous and parents confirm that bullying is very rare and dealt with well by staff.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils and pupils are very good and there are many examples of pupils taking on responsibilities around school on a daily basis.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are in line with the national average and levels of unauthorised absence are below average. The pupils are punctual to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good across both key stages and the under-fives. All the teaching is satisfactory or better. Fourteen per cent of the teaching is very good and 84 per cent is good or better. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be satisfactory overall but 17 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Team teaching of children in the nursery and reception classes and of pupils in Year 1 is effective and the children make good progress. Teaching of literacy and numeracy in both key stages is consistently good. The quality of pupils' learning is of a good standard. Pupils work hard in lessons, concentrate well and show a good measure of independence, for instance when they carry out investigations in science lessons. The pupils have a good awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs, especially by learning support assistants, and there is good provision for pupils identified as having particular gifts or talents. The teachers display confidence in teaching information technology and as a result pupils achieve well. There is some inconsistency in how staff follow the school's policy on marking pupils' work. Teaching is good in art, geography, music and physical education. No judgement was possible in design and technology and in history in Key Stage 1. Teaching of history in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall but opportunities for pupils to acquire skills of interpretation and investigation are inconsistent.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum are good and there is a very good range of extra-curricular activities. There are no weaknesses.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is good and the support that pupils receive from both teachers and support staff helps them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are very few pupils learning English as an additional language. They receive good support from staff and their needs are well catered for. As a result, their progress is the same as all other pupils in school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This a strength of the school. Provision for the pupils' moral development is excellent and for their social development it is very good. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is good and for their spiritual development it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils and teachers know them well. The pupils are safe and there are good procedures for child protection and monitoring attendance and very good procedures for promoting good behaviour. Procedures to monitor the pupils' progress in their school work have improved since the last inspection and are good. As a result, the pupils have a good understanding of their own abilities and try hard to improve.

Links with parents are very well established and are a strength of the school. There is good, active participation by parents in the daily life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership by the headteacher and deputy headteacher is very good. They encourage high standards of work by pupils and real teamwork among staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They have a clear understanding of their role and provide good leadership.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Through its school improvement plan, clear target-setting and good examples of monitoring the school's provision, the management team know how well the school is performing and take action to develop and improve.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses grants for specific purposes well, such as special educational needs and the professional development of staff. The senior managers apply principles of best value well.

Staffing levels are good and there are well-trained classroom assistants working throughout the school. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and buildings are due to be replaced in the next few years. The grounds are spacious and used well. Levels of resources for learning are satisfactory overall and there are no deficiencies.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children enjoy school and make good progress. • The children behave well and the school helps them to become mature. • Teaching is good and the school is well led and managed. • The school keeps the parents well informed about how their children are getting on and parents feel welcomed in school. • There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents queried the consistency with which homework is set. • Some parents were concerned about the size of year groups in reception classes and in Year 1.

Inspectors fully endorse the positive views expressed by parents. In relation to the setting of homework, inspectors find that there are many good examples of learning at home making a good contribution to the pupils' achievements. The school is due to review its provision for home learning at the end of this school year. In relation to class sizes, inspectors note that pupils in the reception class and in Year 1 are generally taught by staff in groups that are broadly in line with the sizes of classes in most primary schools. The team teaching approach in these year groups has a number of benefits for pupils and they make good progress. The school may wish to help communication with parents by assigning pupils in these classes to specific teachers, so that parents know to whom they may refer concerning their own child.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children are admitted to the nursery mainly from the local area and most are eventually admitted into the reception classes. The school uses the local education authority's baseline assessment of children on entry to the nursery. These results indicate that attainment is below expectations for children of this age. The results of baseline tests given on entry to the reception class indicate that the children's attainment in literacy and mathematics is below national expectations.
2. By the age of five most children, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, have made good progress during their time in school. Attainment in all of the six areas of learning recommended for children of this age is at least in line with national expectations and in personal and social development and physical development and in their competency in information technology, standards are above what might be expected of children of this age. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when attainment overall was reported as broadly average. The children are developing skills of reading, writing and mathematics well.

KEY STAGE 1

3. Pupils continue to make good progress in Key Stage 1. In reading, the percentage of pupils reaching expected levels or above in end-of-Key Stage 1 tests in 1999 was close to the national average and also in line when compared to similar schools. Fifteen percent attained the higher level, which was below the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining the expected level or above in writing was above the national average while the proportion reaching higher levels was comparable. Overall the trend in reading over the past four years has been constant, either close to or just below the national average. In writing standards have increased steadily and results are above the national average and those in similar schools. Evidence in the current year shows an improvement in all aspects. Most pupils know letter sounds and blends and read independently for pleasure. They write stories, poems and factual accounts with good attention to interesting vocabulary and punctuation.
4. In mathematics, the results of the Key Stage 1 national tests in 1999 showed attainment, based on average National Curriculum points, to be well below the national average and well below standards found in schools in similar contexts, thus following the pattern of the previous three years. However, from lesson observations and looking at finished work, the pupils at present in Year 2 are now achieving standards overall as expected for their age. This is the result of improvements in teaching with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the number of pupils reaching higher levels remains below that expected. Most pupils have a secure understanding of number and place value up to one hundred and they recall addition and subtraction facts to twenty.
5. In science at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are above the national average in that almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected level. However, few pupils achieve higher than that. Standards in the current Year 2 are similar to those achieved by pupils in end-of-key stage tests last year, when 97 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level or better. Attainment in religious education meets the expectations of

the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in information technology and physical education are above those expected of pupils at the end of the key stage and standards in all other subjects are in line with those expected.

KEY STAGE 2

6. Overall pupils achieve well in Key Stage 2. There is scope, however, for more pupils to attain the higher levels in tests at the end of the key stage.
7. The results of the end-of-Key Stage 2 tests in 1999 indicate that standards are in line with the national average and with those of similar schools. Seventeen per cent of pupils reached the higher Level 5, which was just below the national average, and also below when compared with similar schools. Over the past four years the trend has been upwards and results have always been in line or above the national average. During this period there has been little difference between the performance of boys and girls. Evidence from work seen in the current Year 6 indicates that standards are continuing to rise. Standards of speaking and listening are good and this is evident when pupils contribute to classroom discussions. Most pupils are fluent, independent readers and they write well in a variety of styles and forms, such as play scripts, newspaper reports and letters. Overall, standards of literacy are above average.
8. In the 1999 end-of-Key Stage 2 tests for mathematics, based on average National Curriculum points, attainment in mathematics was above the national average and also above the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that these standards have been at least maintained with more pupils now achieving Level 5. Standards in Key Stage 2 have risen since 1996. Pupils are confident in how they tackle problems and they are particularly good at constructing and reading information in tables and graphs. Overall, standards of numeracy are above average.
9. From evidence in the current Year 6 standards in science at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with the national average. The great majority of pupils achieve the level expected of pupils nationally in this subject but the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels are just below the national average. This is confirmed by results in the 1999 end-of-key stage tests but because the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was below average, the school's results in 1999 were below the national average and those of schools in similar contexts. Results in tests since the last inspection have fluctuated. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Most pupils have developed good skills of investigation and they predict, test and record their investigations well.
10. This year the school intends 84 per cent of pupils to achieve the expected level or better in English and 88 per cent of pupils to achieve that in mathematics. In addition, the school has targeted more pupils to achieve higher levels in the tests. The school has taken positive steps to achieve these challenging targets, such as setting individual targets for pupils, providing 'booster' classes, and grouping pupils in mathematics by prior attainment.

11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to prior attainment throughout both key stages. Their individual education plans are carefully tailored to their specific needs, set realistic yet challenging and achievable targets and are regularly reviewed. They achieve at least satisfactory standards in all subjects and sometimes exceed expectations in literacy and numeracy. Work in class is provided at a suitable level which has a positive effect on the good progress pupils make. The few pupils who learn English as an additional language receive good support from staff and their progress is the same as all other pupils in school.
12. Pupils' attainment in religious education meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of the key stage. Attainment in art, information technology, music and physical education is above that expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils achieve well. This is because of the good quality of the provision in information technology and the quality of teaching in these subjects. Attainment in design and technology and geography is similar to that expected of pupils at the end of the key stage. Attainment in history, in particular historical knowledge, is in line with that expected of pupils at the age of eleven but skills of interpretation and investigation are less well developed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to work, behaviour, relationships and personal development are very good overall. This is a similar finding to the last inspection and remains a strong feature of the school. Parents indicate that their children like coming to school and inspection evidence confirms this. Children under five develop very good attitudes and respond well to the positive environment of the nursery and reception class. Pupils throughout the school show interest, are enthusiastic, stay on task and enjoy their learning, for example in a Year 3 art lesson when pupils were identifying common features of colour and design in Chinese art and making use of these features in their own designs.
14. Discussions with pupils in Key Stage 2 indicate that pupils take a pride in the school. They believe that everybody is friendly, that the school has a good reputation and they appreciate the opportunities the school provides. Very good standards of behaviour have been well maintained since the previous inspection. During this inspection, the behaviour of all pupils, including the children under five, was very good both in lessons and around the school. This very good behaviour has a positive impact on the progress made by pupils. Pupils respond well to the school's behaviour policy and the school and class rules, as well as the staff's consistent approach to behaviour management. Pupils with special educational needs with identified emotional and behavioural difficulties are well managed in class and during playtime. They participate fully in lessons and their behaviour is not detrimental to their own learning or to that of their friends. The pupils have an appropriate understanding of right and wrong and respond well to the role models provided by all staff. No incidents of bullying were seen or reported during the inspection. There were no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection.
15. Relationships in the school are very good. The pupils are courteous and friendly towards each other and to all adults working in the school. They make visitors feel welcome and are often pleased to explain what they are doing. They appreciate and show empathy for other people's feelings and respect their values and beliefs. They take care of their own and other people's property.

16. Pupils cooperate well when working in small groups, for example in a Year 3 mathematics lesson when pupils were working together on problems involving capacity and using containers to measure fluids. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Pupils take responsibility for routine classroom tasks around the school such as distributing registers. Each year group is responsible for keeping an area of the school free from litter. Older pupils support younger pupils by taking them from the dining room to the playground. There is a pairing and caring scheme. Pupils in Year 5 adopt a nursery child, get to know their names and play games with them. The school council is very effective and pupils undertake their responsibilities conscientiously. Class meetings are held and views are taken to the school council. Pupils set their own targets, one of which is often a target for personal development. They also add their own comments to end-of-year reports.
17. Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. Nearly all pupils arrive on time and settle in class promptly at the start of the school day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good. All the teaching is satisfactory or better and there is no unsatisfactory teaching. In 14 per cent of lessons, teaching is very good. In 84 per cent of lessons teaching is good or better. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection, when 17 per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The school has addressed well the key issue regarding teaching. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have been raised and their planning has clear objectives. There is quality in depth across both key stages, where approximately three quarters of all lessons are good or better and in the provision for children in the nursery and reception classes, where over 90 per cent of lessons are good.
19. The nursery is staffed by two senior nursery nurses and two nursery nurses. Two teachers and a nursery nurse staff the classes containing children of reception age. The quality of the teaching observed in the under-fives age range was good in over 90 per cent of lessons with some very good features. Teaching was satisfactory in the remaining ten per cent. These were particularly in connection with children's personal and social development, the effectiveness of teaching methods and the very high quality of teamwork, which is based on a team teaching approach. Teachers and nursery staff have a good understanding of the early years curriculum and the needs of both individual and groups of children and they have high expectations of children's behaviour and effort. The management of children and the promotion of good relationships are of a very high quality. Classrooms are well organised into learning areas and useful observational diaries are maintained to note the children's attainment. A good range of play activities is provided in all classrooms.
20. The teaching of English is mostly good and sometimes very good, and has improved significantly since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good in 80 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. In Key Stage 2, teaching is very good in a quarter, good in one half and satisfactory in a quarter of all lessons. All teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy successfully. Key skills are well taught and this is a major contribution to pupils' learning. Lessons are well planned, pace is good and expectations are high. Instructions are clear and questions are effectively used to revise pupils' previous learning and to challenge their thinking.

21. The school has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy to good effect and the quality of teaching and learning in these lessons is good overall. Two thirds of teaching is good or better. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good in two thirds of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. In Key Stage 2, teaching is very good in 20 per cent of lessons, good in seventy per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. The good teaching has a significant positive impact on the pupils' learning as they progress through the school. Teachers have a good understanding of the strategy and are implementing it confidently and effectively. They structure their lessons accordingly with all aspects of the subject being successfully taught each year. Lessons are planned most carefully with clear objectives that are appropriately shared with the pupils at the commencement of each lesson to help pupils focus on the learning intentions and make good progress.
22. The pupils' learning is good and this is the direct result of the quality of the teaching. A significant feature, for example, is how the teachers share the objectives for the lesson with the pupils and often refer back to them at the end. This helps the pupils to focus on the relevance and importance of what they are learning. This feature, coupled with the emphasis teachers put on targets for individual pupils, means the pupils have a good awareness of what they need to know and do in order to achieve more. Most lessons have good pace and the pupils know that a lot is asked of them. The pupils put effort into their work and as a result, develop good skills of independent learning and this is very evident in lessons in Years 5 and 6.
23. The school caters for all pupils, boys and girls, well. Teachers give good support in class to those pupils who have special educational needs. Work is usually set at an appropriate level to enable such pupils to make good progress and is often linked to the targets set in the individual education plans. Learning support assistants and classroom assistants are used particularly effectively when their work is carefully planned and their skills are fully utilised in all parts of the lesson including when the teacher is addressing the whole class at the start of literacy and numeracy sessions. Learning support assistants keep careful written records of their work and note not only what they have done in a lesson but also the achievements of those pupils they are supporting. This information is appropriately shared with the class teacher and the special needs co-ordinator to help them plan suitable work for the next lesson. The few pupils with English as an additional language are also catered for well by staff and this results in them making the same progress as all other pupils. Teachers have also identified well any pupils who have particular gifts or talents. Teachers challenge these pupils by, for instance, teaching them with other year groups. This happens in mathematics lessons. Staff encourage pupils with particular talents in subjects such as music by including a good range of instrument tuition by visiting specialists.
24. The teaching of investigative skills in science has improved since the last inspection and the pupils now have many opportunities for first-hand investigations, which promote their knowledge well. Teachers across all classes have benefited from good quality in-service training in computer skills and this has raised the expertise of staff to teach all element of information technology well. The teaching of religious education is good overall. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, ensure pupils know the learning objectives for each lesson and set pupils challenging work. Teaching in art, geography, music and physical education is good. There was insufficient evidence to judge teaching in design and technology and in history at Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in history but opportunities for the pupils to acquire skills of interpretation and investigation are inconsistent.

25. Homework is set regularly. Younger children read at home and this has a positive impact on reading standards. In other classes across both key stages, there are many good examples of learning at home making a good contribution to the pupils' achievements.

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

26. The curriculum provides pupils with a good range of broad, balanced and relevant learning experiences to promote high standards and achievements. The Mission Statement 'Learning, Love and Laughter,' supported by the school improvement plan, sets out the school community's aims for the pupils to become lifelong learners, caring and useful members of society, in a secure and happy environment.
27. The previous inspection identified two aspects for improvement. The school has addressed these issues thoroughly and successfully. A rigorous review of the curriculum led to the preparation of the school improvement plan. This was underpinned by the aim of raising the aspirations and expectations of the whole school community, and governors, staff and parents were involved in the process. The school has sought to raise achievement by improving the quality of teaching and learning. The document "A quality classroom at Packmoor Primary School" produced by staff and governors outlines the shared understanding of the high standards expected throughout the school.
28. The curriculum for children under five in the nursery and reception class is good. Work is planned in six learning areas leading to National Curriculum work. A wide range of activities is aimed at giving the youngest children good learning opportunities in all their learning areas. Assessment opportunities are built into the planning process. Overall, planning is good. There is scope for reviewing the early years policy with particular regard to planning and assessment across the Foundation Stage in the coming school year, with more focused learning objectives to support the children's progress. Children have targets for language, mathematics and social development. Early literacy and numeracy work is introduced. There is a good balance of adult-directed and independently chosen activities. The classes share the secure outdoor play area.
29. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad, balanced and relevant. It complies with all requirements of the National Curriculum. The governors have adopted a policy for sex education, which is taught mainly through personal, social and health education. In Year 6, pupils have a more specific programme of sex education, led by staff. Parents are invited to view the scheme and resources before it is taught to the pupils, and are made aware of their right to withdraw their children from these lessons. Classes make good use of Circle time for aspects of personal and social education. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are involved in a programme of drugs awareness, run by the police. Religious education follows the local Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus. The staff have worked hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy successfully, and the 'literacy hour' is seen as having a positive affect on standards of achievement. The National Numeracy Strategy was introduced to good effect at the beginning of the current school year.
30. The curriculum section is an important part of the school improvement plan. All subjects now have schemes of work, which are regularly monitored and reviewed. Targets for achievement are set for staff and pupils. There is a good system of planning covering a two year cycle. Medium term plans cover blocked units of learning

on particular aspects of subjects, as well as continuous learning in English and mathematics. Short term plans show details of learning outcomes, the way the lessons will be organised and evaluations which are then used for future planning. The curriculum manager oversees all planning activities, reviews the planning cycle and monitors learning objectives.

31. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs which enables them to make good progress. What they are taught is closely linked to their individual education plans. They receive good quality support from teachers, learning support assistants and classroom assistants. Where appropriate, the curriculum is modified to meet the specific needs of individual pupils and class teachers, learning support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator closely monitor their progress.
32. The very small number of pupils with English as a second language are well supported, fully integrated into all activities and make good progress. Every pupil has full and equal access to the National Curriculum and religious education and all statutory requirements are met.
33. The school offers pupils a very good range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtimes and in the evening. Both boys and girls make full use of the opportunities available. The computer club is very well attended, and runs eight sessions each week. A teacher from an associated high school runs a French Club, a good link for pupils before they enter secondary education. Musical opportunities are offered through the choir, the band, recorders, and guitar club. There is drama and chess. A good range of sports activities is offered, including the opportunity to play for school teams, athletics and cycling proficiency. There is a joint football team with the local special school. Older pupils go on residential visits every year. Pupils in Year 5 go to Stanley Head, and in Year 6, they visit Standen Bowers and enjoy rock climbing, caving, walking and orienteering.
34. The school places great emphasis on community involvement and has established links which make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Many parents are helpers in classes. There are opportunities for parents to attend courses in school, organised either by the school, or by Stoke-on-Trent College. Parents make good use of the computer suite. There are links with local churches. Working together on the Millennium Green project has been an excellent opportunity for school and community to improve the area for everyone, and pupils, staff and parents have benefited from working with a local ceramic artist. Good links exist with the local special school, and with the high school to which most pupils transfer. Pupils are able to access the world-wide web by using the Internet to extend their learning.

35. Overall, the school makes very good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils. Since the last inspection, satisfactory standards have been maintained in the provision for spiritual development, the provision for moral and social education is still a great strength of the school and the provision for cultural development remains good.
36. Daily assemblies foster the pupils' spiritual development appropriately. They are well planned to give pupils a sound understanding of Christian beliefs and those of other world faiths such as Judaism and Islam. Assemblies meet the requirement for a daily act of worship and have prayers and quiet moments in which pupils can reflect on their own lives and those of others. Opportunities for spiritual development are also planned in Circle time and in other subjects such as science and art. For instance, the pupils in art and science lessons in Year 1 were observing the patterns on the shells of live snails and were filled with wonder at the beauty of the natural world.
37. The provision for the pupils' moral development is excellent. It pervades all aspects of the school's daily life, fully reflects the aims of the school and is supported by all members of the school community. The behaviour policy is implemented in a consistent and caring manner. Staff provide excellent role models in their everyday dealings with each other and with the pupils in their care. Pupils are taught right from wrong from the moment they join the school and are actively encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and the effect it can have on both adults and other pupils. Older pupils have strongly developed moral values that they have learned through assemblies, Circle time and discussions about local and global moral issues. For example, they debated in depth the arguments for and against the building of a new urban village near the school and its possible impact on both the environment and the community. Year 6 pupils write the school's anti-bullying policy each year for submission to the governing body. This they do with great enthusiasm and show an excellent understanding of all the issues involved.
38. The caring atmosphere throughout the school and the high quality of relationships support the pupils' social development very well. Weekly achievement assemblies celebrate both the individual and school successes and build up a most positive community spirit. The team point system recognises and rewards hard work and good behaviour. It successfully develops the pupils' positive and enthusiastic attitudes to each other and to their learning. Older pupils are given many opportunities to take an active part in the life of the school. Year 6 pupils nominate a charity as a focus for their fund raising each year. Pupils in Year 5 are paired with nursery children in a 'buddy' system and, when they move into the reception class the following year, help them to adjust to life in the main school most successfully. The school council, which consists of elected representatives from all the Key Stage 2 classes, meets regularly and provides very good opportunities for pupils to have a say in the school's organisation and decision making processes. During the inspection the council debated how best to spend a £250 grant from the governors. After much mature discussion and many good suggestions from all members of the council they voted on a shortlist of possible choices and appointed two pupils to investigate the cost of their chosen option. Many other planned activities support the development of social skills, for example, the two residential visits for pupils in Years 5 and 6 where they learn to live in harmony in a close community away from home.
39. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Many lessons give pupils a good sense of their own heritage as well as that of other cultures from around the world. In geography, pupils learn about other lands and sometimes have direct contact with children from abroad. For example, during the inspection the older pupils

were waiting with great expectation for the replies to their e-mails that they had sent to the pupils in a school in Finland. In religious education, pupils learn about other major world faiths and their festivals and ceremonies. Art and music provide good opportunities for pupils to experience and enjoy the work of famous artists, such as Kandinsky and Clarice Cliff, and composers from their own and distant lands. Music is played at the start of assemblies and the style and instruments played discussed with the pupils. During the inspection the music was from India and linked to an assembly about the life and beliefs of Gandhi. Pupils learn about their own local history. There is a prominent display in the school about an ex-pupil who was a First World War hero and awarded the Victoria Cross. His regiment was the Grenadier Guards, who still maintain links with the school and present a trophy each year to a Year 6 pupil for outstanding achievement. Interesting displays around the school, many with multicultural artefacts, promote an interest in and an understanding of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The positive situation found at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. All staff are caring, dedicated and know pupils well. This, together with the school's caring ethos, promotes an environment where pupils feel secure and valued. Parents are appreciative of the care and support provided. They feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible and believe the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. The inspectors support this view.
41. The school's procedures for child protection are good. There is an appropriate child protection policy and the headteacher is the designated person responsible. All staff have received training in how to identify and act on child protection issues. The school is a safe environment and there are effective procedures to report health and safety concerns and to record any remedial action taken. Regular safety checks of equipment are completed and fire drills occur at regular intervals. These are correctly recorded. Risk assessments, however, have not yet been completed for all areas of the school. Good procedures are in place to care for pupils who become ill or get hurt whilst at school. Sufficient staff are trained in first aid and injuries are recorded systematically.
42. The arrangements to welcome new children into the nursery are very good. Known as the PALS scheme, procedures ensure that children settle quickly and enjoy coming to school. The transition to full time schooling in reception class is also well managed. Good arrangements are made each year to help pupils transferring between classes including 'Bump Up Day' during the summer term when pupils spend an afternoon in their new classes. Arrangements to ease the transfer of pupils to secondary school are good, ensuring a smooth and effective transfer of pupils to the next stage of their education.

43. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality are good. Parents are fully aware of the need to keep the school informed of any absences and readily comply with this requirement. Registers are completed using an optical marking system, ensuring the accurate recording and ease of monitoring of pupils' individual attendance patterns.
44. The measures that are in place for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good and they are applied consistently throughout the school. Rewards and sanctions are well understood and accepted by pupils. There is good involvement of pupils in designing policies for promoting good behaviour. Each year each class reviews the school's rights and responsibilities. A 'reflection cycle' is used to help any breakdown in the responsible behaviour of pupils and these occurrences are monitored. Lunchtime routines are well established and midday supervisors work very effectively to ensure that the lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion. Each day the children in the nursery are supervised by the nursery staff but there is a relatively long session of about one hour at lunchtime when activities are less focused. During this period, although children are safe and some are prepared to join groups and settle to the activities provided, a significant minority spend too much time unoccupied. Procedures to eliminate oppressive behaviour and harassment are very good. In the autumn term Year 6 pupils write the anti-bullying policy which is presented to the governors.
45. Procedures for the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress are good overall. The school has a clear and comprehensive policy in place that is regularly reviewed in consultation with staff and the governing body. The assessment of children's attainment begins with an initial baseline assessment a few weeks after admission to the nursery. Statutory baseline assessment in the reception classes and end-of-key stage assessments in English, mathematics and science are fully in place. The school uses standardised testing materials to assess pupils' attainment in English and mathematics from Year 2 to Year 6. Regular assessments are also used to monitor pupils' attainment and progress when units of work or topics have been completed. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers and staff keep on-going observation diaries and records to monitor children's attainment and progress. Class records in the nursery do not, however, provide a clear and efficient overview of the progress being made by individual children. Teachers in all classes throughout the school keep well-maintained individual portfolios of samples of pupils' work. These are useful records of progress. All pupils in the school are involved with their teachers in setting their own learning targets. These are reviewed twice each year and provide good opportunities for pupils to be involved in their own learning.
46. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school life and are accurately assessed. They are given suitable work and, where applicable, good quality individual education plans drawn up by their class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator. These plans are reviewed each term with new and appropriate targets set. The one pupil with a statement receives support from a tutor, provided by the local education authority, for two and a half hours each week. The school fully meets the statutory requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is monitored closely and appropriate action taken when necessary.

47. In line with school policy, assessment opportunities are integrated into medium-term planning for all subjects. Satisfactory use is made of lesson evaluation information to inform future planning. In most of the lessons observed, teachers demonstrated good questioning skills to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. The school's marking policy expects teachers to provide pupils with a clear view of how they might improve their work through evaluative commentary and setting targets for improvement. This is not consistently followed across the school. Information from statutory and non-statutory tests is used very effectively to track individual pupils' progress, identify weaknesses in curriculum provision and to set learning targets for individuals and year groups. The school does not, however, have a collection of work moderated against National Curriculum levels of attainment for teachers to use as a framework for assessment.
48. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils as individuals. Pupils set their own targets and add their comments to end of year reports and this means they have a good awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses. As a result, the pupils are motivated to achieve well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. Partnership with parents is a priority and strength of the school. Parents hold the school in high regard and are very pleased with the school's values, pupils' academic progress and standards of behaviour. The previous report was also positive about partnerships with parents and these links have been improved. At the parents' meeting, in the questionnaire completed prior to the inspection and in discussions with parents during the inspection week, parents were very supportive of the school and believe it encourages their involvement and that the teaching is good. They find the staff are very approachable. Any concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively. Inspection evidence supports the views of parents.
50. Appropriate steps are taken by the school to evaluate the effectiveness of its relationship with parents. For example, a selection of nursery parents are asked to comment on how the school can improve induction of families into school. They are also asked about communication and learning and the feedback is used for improvements. From the first contact with the school when children start in the nursery, a positive partnership is fostered.
51. The quality of information provided for the parents is good overall. The prospectus is very detailed, well presented and provides parents with a helpful insight into many aspects of school life. Communicating information to parents is by a monthly newsletter plus a community newsletter, where parents may add anything they wish. They are kept informed on such matters as school trips, key dates for the term and details of school targets for pupils in English, mathematics and science. Leaflets are sent to parents explaining how they can play an equal part in their child's education by reinforcing and extending the work being done in the classroom. They receive details of topics from team leaders and useful ideas on how they can support their child at home. Various group meetings are held for parents relating to pupils' sex education, statutory tests and curriculum initiatives. These are reported as being well attended. The school also runs an activity room or crèche to enable parents of young children to attend. Pupils' annual written reports are satisfactory and meet statutory requirements. They also show some targets for improvement and a general overview of pupils' social development and achievements. Both pupils and parents can make comments. Parents are given an invitation to discuss the report with the child's

teacher.

52. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about their child's progress. If their child has an individual education plan then they are always provided with a copy. The school actively encourages them to be involved in the provision to maximise the progress made by their child.
53. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school and their contribution to their children's learning, both at school and at home, are very good overall. Parents are welcomed into school and feel encouraged to play an active part in its life and work. A large number help in classrooms under the supervision of the teachers. They are well briefed and are able to make a valuable contribution to pupils' education. Following a request from parents, the school arranged for a Before-and-after school club to be set up. This runs from the school and is very successful. The friends' association, called COMPAS, raises significant funds which are used to purchase valuable resources for the school, for example new play equipment for the under fives.
54. Some parents raised concerns about class organisation in the reception class and Year 1. They have concerns about the large number of pupils in the classes. In these classes, the pupils are generally taught by staff in groups that are broadly in line with the sizes of classes in most primary schools. The team teaching approach in these year groups has a number of positive benefits for pupils and they make good progress. The pupils are not assigned to specific teachers, however, to help parents when they wish to discuss a matter about their child.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. Since her appointment the headteacher has quickly established the confidence of governors, staff, pupils and parents. She and her central management team have worked together closely to provide effective leadership. They have established a good working relationship with the governing body.
56. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very effective leadership and have a clear vision of their role. They are committed to raising standards in the school but also value the pupils for themselves and places great emphasis on their welfare. They are supported well in this by all teaching and support staff. The school is successful in meeting its aims and values as reflected in its mission statement. Consequently a calm, positive atmosphere is generated where a close working partnership is the norm. This ensures effective contribution to teaching and learning, and above all pupils' achievements.
57. The governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Its role in shaping the overall direction of the school is good and still developing. Governors are clear about their own responsibilities and those related to the headteacher. They are keenly involved in discussions about targets for the school improvement plan and are aware of the information necessary to evaluate the school's performance, especially in relation to pupils' achievement. This is an appreciable improvement since the previous inspection. This is a confident governing body which provides good strategic leadership. Governors have become well informed about the provision for special educational needs and the teaching of English and mathematics through the visits to classrooms. Links in some other subjects, though formally established, have not yet been so actively implemented. In

all aspects of the school's management the governors and the headteacher employ the principles of best value. Comparative data is used well to support the identification of priorities and the governors keep a keen eye on competitive tendering. For instance, careful consideration was given to the relative merits of three quotations for a security door to ensure that cost-effectiveness did not compromise on quality. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties.

58. The school improvement plan contains relevant targets for improvement and has been well constructed through the involvement of teachers, governors and parents. Priorities are well costed and linked to appropriate resources with realistic time scales and monitoring procedures in place.
59. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have developed a procedure for subject managers to monitor teaching and learning through lesson observation. To date the monitoring of English, mathematics, science and physical education has been carried out. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. To enhance professional development, all members of the central management team have received performance management training, which is already having a positive impact on classroom practice. All staff members have job descriptions and effective induction, mentoring and appraisal systems are in place.
60. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator has half a day per week to perform her administrative duties. These she does efficiently and keeps records up-to-date, writes individual education plans and meets with teaching staff, support staff and parents. She keeps the governing body fully informed of the number of pupils on the special needs register, their progress and the level and effectiveness of the provision. There is a designated special needs governor who is a frequent visitor to the school and who is keen to develop her role to further support and monitor the provision. The few pupils with English as an additional language are well managed and their progress monitored by teachers and senior staff.
61. Day-to-day financial control and management of the school are very good as a result of the overview of the headteacher and a very efficient school administrator and part-time secretary. The governing body is appropriately involved in the school's financial affairs through reports, relevant discussion at each of its meetings and through the work of its very focused finance committee. Financial planning is good. Funding, such as the special educational needs funding, is appropriately allocated for the needs of pupils and to target in-service training for staff. The school makes good use of computerised systems to monitor financial and other data. Finances are monitored well by the headteacher, chair of finance committee and school administrative officer, who presents a monthly balance sheet ensuring that the budget is on track. The latest auditor's report provides the school with sound assurance and many of the recommendations have already been implemented.
62. The school has a sufficient number of teachers who are trained and experienced to match the demands of the curriculum. There is a good balance of experience and expertise on the staff. Special needs support staff are well trained and briefed for their work. A good range of professional development courses are available to all staff. Staff receive training linked to the school improvement plan to fit them for their roles. There is a sufficient number of nursery nurses and classroom helpers in the nursery and reception class. There is a good number of classroom assistants who are very well skilled to support teaching and learning. All staff have a negotiated job description which is based on function, role and tasks and linked to raising standards. The

caretaker, cleaning staff, cook and kitchen staff and lunch-time supervisors all make a valuable and valued contribution to the smooth running of the school and the welfare of pupils. Lunchtime staff work efficiently and promote high standards of behaviour.

63. The accommodation is made of corrugated aluminium, is over fifty years old and built with a design life of only ten years. Although the accommodation is spacious and places no significant limitations on the teaching of the curriculum, there are many problems. For example, there is a huge area of glazing which gives a 'greenhouse' effect - cold in winter and overheating in summer. Some floor areas are uneven and starting to crack. Consequently the school is not an ideal learning environment. The accommodation includes a specialist room for information technology, which has been opened since the last inspection and provides 16 networked computers. A new building to accommodate the whole school is planned to be built on the same site. The school is awaiting notification of the date of commencement. There are ample playing fields and two hard surface playgrounds, which make a positive contribution to the subjects such as science, art and physical education. The school has an appropriate enclosed play area for children under the age of five.
64. The quality and quantity of resources for teaching and learning are adequate overall to meet the needs of the curriculum. The school library has a satisfactory selection of fiction and non-fiction books. Good use is made of the local education authority loan service to supplement the school's range of multi-cultural artefacts and of the West Midlands Travellers Support Service to extend the resource for early years. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory. Resources throughout the school are used well.
65. Given the average level of spending, attainment on entry, the good progress that the pupils make, standards of achievement and overall level of provision, the school is providing good value for money, which is an improvement since the last inspection when value for money was satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. Governors and staff should

in order to raise further the attainment of pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils, pursue the existing effective strategies, such as:

the targeting of individual pupils' achievements;
implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies;
the grouping of pupils by attainment in mathematics; and
the use of effective questioning strategies by teachers in all subjects, especially science.*

(paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 87, 101, 115)

67. In addition, governors and staff should consider for inclusion in their action plan the following points for improvement,

- a) review the consistency with which the school's policy on marking pupils' work is put into practice; (paragraphs 46, 98, 108, 115)
- b) teach skills of interpretation and investigation more consistently in history in upper Key Stage 2 classes; (paragraphs 24, 133, 135)
- c) review how well learning objectives and assessment opportunities are identified in the planning of work for children in the nursery and reception class; (paragraphs 28, 44, 85)
- d) review lunchtime arrangements for children in the nursery in order to improve how well the time is spent. (paragraphs 43, 70)

* Features in the school improvement plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	14	64	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	48	354
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		39

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	47

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	20	40	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	15
	Girls	36	38	35
	Total	51	54	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (76)	90 (80)	83 (71)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	18
	Girls	38	38	40
	Total	53	54	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (78)	90 (76)	97 (83)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	26	33	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	24	23
	Girls	29	31	24
	Total	50	55	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (67)	93 (65)	80 (70)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	23	24
	Girls	31	32	30
	Total	50	55	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86 (79)	93 (81)	92 (81)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	300
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	166

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	626013
Total expenditure	622611
Expenditure per pupil	1527
Balance brought forward from previous year	13688
Balance carried forward to next year	17090

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

402

Number of questionnaires returned

279

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	35	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	40	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	52	34	8	2	4
The teaching is good.	67	32	1	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	37	9	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	25	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	28	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	33	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	34	3	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	66	33	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	54	33	5	1	7

Other issues raised by parents

- Some parents queried the consistency with which homework is set
- Some parents were concerned about the size of year groups in reception classes and in Year 1.

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

68. At the time of the inspection, 48 children attended the nursery on a full-time basis. Forty-three children were in the reception class. Eighteen of these children were still under five years of age. The nursery is staffed by two senior nursery nurses and two nursery nurses. Two teachers and a nursery nurse staff the class containing children of reception age. Organisation across the early years is based on a team teaching approach.
69. Children are admitted to the nursery mainly from the local area and most are eventually admitted into the reception classes. The school uses the local education authority's baseline assessment of children on entry to the nursery. These results indicate that attainment is below expectations for children of this age. The results of baseline tests given on entry to the reception class indicate that the children's attainment in literacy and mathematics is below national expectations.
70. By the age of five most children, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, have made good progress during their time in school. Attainment in all of the six areas of learning recommended for children of this age is at least in line with national expectations and in personal and social development and physical development and in their competency in information technology, standards are above what might be expected of children of this age. This represents a significant improvement since the previous inspection when attainment overall was reported as broadly average. Provision has continued to develop well and has included new classrooms for the reception aged children and a corridor linking them to the main school.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

71. In the nursery, children settle quickly into the established routines at the beginning of sessions. They relate confidently to adults they know and to visitors. They are attentive and willing listeners and are able to maintain concentration for a good length of time, waiting until it is their turn to speak during discussion times. In focused classroom activities children follow instructions well, listen carefully to questions and maintain a good level of concentration on their tasks. Each day, following lunch taken in the dining room, supervised by the nursery staff, there is a relatively long session of about one hour when activities are less focused. During this period, although some children are prepared to join groups and settle to the activities provided, a significant minority spend too much time unoccupied.
72. Children of reception age are developing social skills to a good level. They are confident and have established good relationships with other children and adults in the class. They work well as part of a group and when set tasks to complete are able to sustain good levels of concentration. They enjoy their learning and are eager to contribute during discussion times. They are sensitive to others and are developing a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. In class assemblies and in a lesson where a parent came to talk about aspects of Muslim culture, all children demonstrated a mature response to a range of moral, spiritual and cultural experiences.

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

73. By the age of five, most children have made good progress and have attained many or all of the desirable learning outcomes for this aspect of their learning. In both the nursery and the reception classes, children enjoy stories and listen attentively. They join in with familiar stories and rhymes and are keen to take part in discussions and answer questions. A majority of children have a narrow vocabulary when they start in the nursery. Some children are able to express themselves using extended language skills but the majority are not yet sufficiently confident in their use of language to enable them to draw on a range of vocabulary to describe their experiences. Children's listening and speaking skills develop well and by the time they are five many can use more extended speech to talk about subjects of immediate interest, using whole sentences and a range of appropriate vocabulary.
74. Children in the nursery handle books carefully and demonstrate that they know how storybooks are organised. They are able to concentrate for an appropriate length of time when looking at books or asked questions about what the story or pictures are about. They 'read' the stories by looking at the pictures and are able to recognise a small range of letters. They know that writing in books represents words. In the reception class most children have made good progress in recognising many of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds. They enjoy reading books and are generally confident when reading to adults. They read from the early books of the school reading scheme and the majority are able to recognise and read familiar words. Higher-attaining children use their knowledge of letter sounds to build simple, unfamiliar words and are developing early skills of expression when reading aloud.
75. In the nursery, the majority of children are able to make marks to represent writing. A few are able to write letters of the alphabet to represent meaning. In the reception class the majority of children can write recognisable words and higher-attaining children are able to write one or two sentences independently. Pencil control develops satisfactorily and by the age of five, handwriting is clearly shaped and legible. Many children write their names without help.

MATHEMATICS

76. The majority of children have made good progress in mathematics by the age of five, especially in numeracy and have attained most of the desirable learning outcomes for this aspect. The majority of the children in the reception classes are working towards Level 1 in the National Curriculum.
77. In the nursery, the children recognise and name correctly shapes such as square, circle and triangle. They count to five and some to ten. When counting ducks in a "pond" they were able to say how many more were needed to make a particular number. They checked their answers by counting one to one with a satisfactory level of accuracy. Children in the reception class correctly identify shapes and sequence numbers to ten. The majority of children can add to ten and higher-attaining children are able to subtract from ten and work with small value coins.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

78. The children make at least satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge of the world. By the age of five they have attained the desirable learning outcomes in most aspects and standards in information technology are above what is expected of children of this age.
79. In the nursery, the children develop a sense of time through daily routines. They talk about things that are to happen and run the 'ice-cream shop' with confidence. They remember animals from a visit to a farm and know that milk comes from cows and that cheese and butter are made from milk. Their work on the incubation of chicks has caught their imagination and interest. As a result, the children have developed a good understanding of the cycle of events during both incubation and hatching.
80. Children in the reception class have a good awareness of the routines of the week and of the layout of the school. They know about aspects of Muslim life. They can make a prediction when guessing how many spoonfuls of sand will be needed to fill different sized containers and make good guesses as to the rate at which biscuits soften and disintegrate in water. Standards in information technology are high. Children demonstrate good skills with the mouse and keyboard, they can open and start a program, mostly without adult help, and can enlarge the text on screen.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

81. By the age of five, the children's physical development is above national expectations. Children in the nursery play confidently outdoors with the large toys. Many have made good progress in learning to pedal wheeled toys. They climb and balance on the climbing frame with a satisfactory level of control and confidence. They handle jigsaws, paintbrushes and salt dough tools with developing skill.
82. In the reception class children know the routines well in physical education lessons. They find a space quickly and take care when moving around the hall to create space for others. They listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and follow them well. When observed learning the skills of travelling with a ball, they were able to use their feet, ankles and knees in a very controlled way. Many are beginning to learn how to evaluate the quality of their own and others' work by identifying which movements are easy and which are difficult. In design and technology lessons, children demonstrate good use of tools to join pieces of wood.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

83. Good progress is made in creative development and by the age of five, the large majority of children have attained the desirable learning outcomes in this aspect. Children in the nursery listen carefully to the piano and interpret the sounds through movement. For example, they walk like elephants and jump like frogs according to the music being played. Most are able to jog, creep slowly, hop and jump. They draw and paint independently. When singing with the piano, they know the words of a range of familiar songs and rhymes and sing with a satisfactory level of tunefulness.
84. Children in the reception class sing a range of familiar songs. In their work related to the Islamic culture they demonstrated good observational skills in drawing mehndi patterns and making observational drawings of Islamic artefacts.

85. The quality of the teaching observed was good in over ninety per cent of lessons with some very good features evident. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. Good features were particularly in connection with children's personal and social development, the effectiveness of teaching methods and the very high quality of teamwork. The staff teach all the six areas of learning well. Teachers and nursery staff have a good understanding of the early years curriculum and the needs of both individual and groups of children. Lesson planning is detailed and comprehensive with activities matched well to the learning needs of individuals and groups. However, learning objectives and related assessment opportunities are not always precise enough to provide a clear plan of what children are expected to know, understand and do within a specific lesson. Teachers have high expectations of children's behaviour and effort. The management of children and the promotion of good relationships are of a very high quality. Teachers use questioning effectively to check the children's understanding of what they have learned and to provide opportunities for the development of language skills. Good opportunities are in place for parents to support their children's learning through reading and home learning tasks. Classrooms are well organised into learning areas and useful observational diaries are maintained to note the children's attainment. A good range of play activities is provided in all classrooms.
86. The quality of long and medium term planning is good. It addresses the six recommended areas of learning. It provides effectively for children to attain the desirable learning outcomes in the areas of development and prepares them well for starting National Curriculum subjects. Nursery staff plan together under the guidance of the Early Years co-ordinator. In the reception class, the teachers and nursery nurse plan together. At present, there are no joint planning or assessment procedures in place across the early years phase. In the nursery, on-going records of attainment and progress are in place but their organisation does not currently provide an efficient and manageable system. In all classes, effective procedures are in place to set individual learning targets and provide good opportunities for the children to be involved in the process. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for enhancing early years provision. She is actively involved in the planning of provision but currently does not have sufficient opportunity to monitor its impact. This has been acknowledged in the school's forward planning strategy and from the beginning of the next school year the co-ordinator will work directly in the nursery and reception class for a proportion of her time.
87. The accommodation in the nursery is spacious and light and is enhanced by attractive displays. Outdoor provision is satisfactory and is available to children in both the nursery and reception class. The playground area is not marked out. This limits opportunities for the children to develop control skills in steering wheeled toys. Resources are generally adequate to support learning and teachers make good use of these and the school hall for music and physical education. The wheeled toys are very worn and are in need of replacement.

ENGLISH

88. The results of the Key Stage 2 tests in 1999 indicate that standards are in line with the national average and with those of similar schools. Seventeen per cent of pupils reached the higher Level 5, which was just below the national average, and also below when compared with similar schools. Over the past four years the trend has been upwards and results have always been in line or above the national average. During this period there has been little difference between the performance of boys and girls. The percentage of pupils reaching expected levels or above in end-of-Key Stage 1 tests for reading in 1999 was close to the national average and also in line when compared to similar schools. Fifteen per cent attained the higher level, which was below the national average. The proportion of pupils gaining the expected level or above in writing was above the national average and the performance of similar schools, while the proportion reaching higher levels was comparable. Overall the trend in reading over the past four years has been constant, either close to or just below the national average. In writing it has increased steadily.
89. The school is determined to continue to raise standards and has set challenging but realistic targets for each year group in both key stages. A thorough analysis of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning has enabled the school to target appropriate resources and training. A good start has been made on improving the quality of pupils' creative writing by helping them to broaden the range of expressive vocabulary and to use techniques which engage the reader. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective and has brought added vigour to teaching and learning. It has raised teachers' expectations, increased the pace of lessons and the rate of pupils' learning. Consequently the percentage of pupils gaining higher levels at the end of both key stages has increased since last year.
90. Inspection findings confirm an improving picture in both key stages, and especially at the end of Key Stage 2. Evidence which includes an analysis of pupils' past and present work, lesson observations and discussion with pupils indicates that standards in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average and above in speaking and listening. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above the national average. Overall this is an appreciable improvement since the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and achieve well.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

91. Pupils' attainment in language and literacy at the age of five is average. Most pupils continue to develop as confident communicators. By the age of seven, for example, higher-attaining pupils demonstrate good listening skills when responding quickly to the teachers' questions about the author, Dick King Smith. Average and lower-attaining pupils explain their work well, give reasons for issues such as school rules and describe a favourite character. They can re-tell stories and take part in imaginative play. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class could recall accurately, using appropriate language, the events and main characters in 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf'. They read aloud and enact a story as well as sharing ideas about characters and places, as another Year 2 class did while analysing the 'Prodigal Son' in a religious education lesson. Throughout the key stage pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other and confidently explain their ideas, especially at the beginning and end of lessons.

92. In Key Stage 2 the standards of speaking and listening are good. By the age of 11 pupils are attentive and eager to contribute to classroom discussion. This is encouraged in many final sessions of lessons. A large majority of pupils are articulate and will venture opinions about the text which they are studying. Such an example was noted in a Year 6 lesson on the use of 'personification' in 'Daughter of the Sea'. In debating situations pupils pay close attention to their peers, challenge an opposing view politely by picking up on points made earlier and expand on these ideas. This was much in evidence during a school council meeting about the best use of £250 for a Millennium project. In some Year 3 classes, pupils' listening skills are not so finely tuned. They are usually eager to contribute their ideas but the rule about signalling their intention to speak is not always firmly established, and pupils do not consistently listen well to each other.

READING

93. Reading is strongly promoted within the school. All pupils are particularly well supported by the high quality system for encouraging reading at home. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils read a selection of literature, express their opinions about stories they have read and use a range of strategies when reading independently, such as knowledge of letter sounds, prediction and the context of the story. Most pupils are enthusiastic about books and particularly enjoy reading simple narratives such as 'The Little Red Hen' and 'Puss in Boots'. In lessons they show curiosity and excitement about features of non-fiction text such as a glossary and are keen to explore the definitions of such words as 'tornado' with their teacher.
94. By the age of 11 many pupils read fluently, using expression that reflects the meaning of the text. Standards are above average. All use their knowledge of letter sounds and blends to tackle unfamiliar words. Whilst higher-attaining pupils derive meaning from textual clues, lower-attaining pupils find this more difficult. In the library most pupils can locate information and find the books they need efficiently. During many lessons pupils use a thesaurus and dictionary well to enhance vocabulary skills. Most pupils at this stage understand how increasing vocabulary adds to one's enjoyment of reading and writing. They read a wide range of literature that includes modern poets, for example Ogden Nash, and classical works which include Shakespeare's 'Macbeth'. Many pupils select challenging books such as Charles Dickens' 'Oliver Twist' for independent reading. They benefit from group reading sessions and can discuss plot and characterisation fluently. In Year 6 they understand the use of figurative language, recognising for instance that 'there's daggers in men's smiles' is a reference to treachery.

WRITING

95. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to write in different forms, such as recipes for menus, lists of clothes they wear, accounts of stories and poems. Year 1 pupils write descriptions of Bonfire Night, rhyming couplets and letters to friends. Pupils in Year 2 use some imaginative vocabulary when re-telling the story of 'The Gingerbread Man'. The focused and systematic teaching of literacy is evident in examples of extended writing, for instance in history and religious education. Spelling skills are developed progressively. Although writing is usually neat and well formed, few pupils consistently use joined script in their everyday writing. By the end of the key stage, punctuation is becoming more accurate and words are often chosen carefully, especially by higher-attaining pupils.

96. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write for a range of purposes and readers, for example persuasive letters to the local council, play scripts, poems, newspaper reports, biographies and interview formats as well as creative and descriptive stories. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand the use of tenses, adjectives and synonyms. The skills of dialogue and paragraphing are steadily developed in Years 5 and 6. The pupils have opportunities to improve their work by drafting, editing, proof-reading and then presenting the final form. The quality of creative writing is high, especially in the upper key stage years, and reflects the good depth of reading experience. Some imaginative choices are evident. For example, pupils in the mixed Year 5/6 class studying personification in Berlie Doherty's 'Daughter of the Sea' frequently produced sentences such as 'the wind, strong and ferocious, pulled and tugged us through the mountainous waves'. Such interpretations and subsequent own written work reinforce in pupils the importance of language as a means of communication. Some higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 use similes and metaphors effectively to enhance their descriptions. In Year 5 classes, writing based on 'Beauty and the Beast' includes colourful analyses of characters and sensitive and thoughtful writing from another viewpoint. Pupils learn banks of words to spell correctly and many have developed legible handwriting in a cursive, flowing style, using ink.
97. Literacy is being developed effectively through the use of the National Literacy Strategy. Throughout the school, pupils' literacy skills are being constantly improved through other subjects, for example, the importance of listening to and carrying out instructions in physical education, in writing up a science investigation correctly and composing play scripts for the story of Abraham in religious education.
98. Pupils' attitudes are very good and this, combined with effective teaching, ensures that learning is good in both key stages. This includes those pupils who are especially talented or who have English as an additional language or special educational needs. Pupils are generally well motivated, enthusiastic and eager to learn. A good example was noted in a Year 1 class involved in 'story setting' of a rainforest. Most enjoy the activities. They display interest in what they are doing, usually sustain concentration well and take pride in their work. Resources are handled with care and the pupils develop the capacity for personal study, as was observed in a Year 5 lesson studying traditional folk tales. In lessons they are well behaved and courteous, relating very well to adults and their peers, working well collaboratively and individually when required.
99. Teaching is mostly good and sometimes very good, and has improved significantly since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good in 80 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. In Key Stage 2, teaching is very good in a quarter, good in one half and satisfactory in a quarter of all lessons. All teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy successfully. Key skills are well taught and this is a major contribution to pupils' learning. Teachers generally make the most of spontaneous opportunities to develop language from pupils' own interest. For example, in a Year 4 lesson about persuasive writing, pupils were given the opportunity to identify and attribute powerful verbs and adverbs to a variety of their own experiences. Teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of writing systematically. Appropriate strategies for reading are promoted. They choose suitable texts to emphasise aspects of literacy, as in Year 3 when the text 'Care of Henry' was used to illustrate descriptive narrative. Where teaching is best, lessons are well planned, pace is good and expectations are high. Instructions are clear and questions are effectively used to revise pupils' previous learning and to challenge their thinking about the new topic. This was eminently illustrated in two Year 6 classes, one concentrating on skimming and scanning techniques, the other on the use of

personification in story writing. Teachers' close liaison with support assistants has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school, especially for pupils with special educational needs. Good examples were noted in all Year 1 classes where pupils' word level skills were being developed through shared and guided reading. Assessment opportunities are always taken at the end of lessons to reinforce learning objectives. The quality of marking varies. At best it is positive, evaluative, sets clear targets and helps pupils to improve. Often, however, it lacks these aspects.

100. The co-ordinator is an enthusiastic advocate of the subject. She ensures that the curriculum is planned well and that good coverage, balance and continuity ensue. She has carried out an extensive review of provision and in conjunction with other staff has drawn up a policy and schemes of work which reflect the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. Medium-term planning is thorough. Assessment includes annual reading tests, regular spelling tests, National Curriculum and standardised comprehension and writing tests, together with the moderation and levelling of pupils' work. However, short-term assessment procedures sometimes omit the sharper focus which ensures that they provide specific strategies to promote the pupils' next stage of learning. Throughout the school all pupils are set individual targets, which are reviewed on a termly basis.
101. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of pupils' attainment and learning over time and monitors teachers' planning regularly. She has carried out classroom observations, offering written and verbal comments to teachers on the quality of learning. This is an area of significant improvement since the previous inspection. Resources are sound and used effectively. All classes are adequately supplied with books and the stock in the central library is satisfactory overall. Overall the subject is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator, who is committed to continue to raise standards throughout the school.

MATHEMATICS

102. Standards are in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Key stage 2. In 1999, the results of the Key Stage 1 national tests showed attainment, based on average National Curriculum points, to be well below the national average and well below standards found in schools in similar contexts, thus following the pattern of the previous three years. However, from lesson observations and looking at finished work, the pupils at present in Year 2 are now achieving standards overall as expected for their age, although the number of pupils reaching higher levels remains below that expected. This improvement is the result of more focussed teaching, using the National Numeracy Strategy. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests, based on average National Curriculum points, attainment was above the national average and also above the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence shows that these standards have been at least maintained with more pupils now achieving Level 5. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 have since 1996 and this indicates that progress for all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, is good throughout the school.
103. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can understand the language of number, have a secure knowledge of place value to at least a hundred and can quickly recall addition and subtraction facts to 20. Higher-attaining pupils can mentally add two digit numbers, such as 37 and 16 accurately. They can recognise and name a variety of two and three-dimensional shapes, such as squares, triangles, cubes, cylinders and rectangular prisms and have learned some of their properties. They have a good

understanding of reflective symmetry and can draw the line or lines of symmetry on those letters of the alphabet that are symmetrical. Pupils can work accurately with money in shopping situations and can calculate change from a pound. They can tell the time in hours and know a half and a quarter past each hour. Pupils can successfully create their own bar charts from data they have collected about subjects such as favourite pets.

104. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a good understanding of place value to at least a thousand with higher-attaining pupils able to handle numbers and computations to a million. Pupils can confidently and accurately add, subtract, multiply and divide such numbers, with the majority of pupils working to at least two decimal places. Pupils use correct mathematical vocabulary and have a good mental recall of a range of number facts including multiplication tables. They have a good knowledge of angles and can measure and construct them accurately using a protractor. Pupils have a good understanding of probability theory as it applies to everyday situations and can mark the likelihood of an event happening on a probability line. Data handling is particularly well understood by pupils and they can construct and read a variety of tables and graphs such as line graphs, pie charts and scatter grams. Pupils are able to use information technology to help them in their work and produce computer-generated graphs from data they have collected and entered on a spreadsheet.
105. Standards and provision have improved since the last inspection. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were judged to be in line with national expectations and are now above the national average. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy and are implementing it confidently and effectively.
106. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In all lessons the teaching is at least satisfactory with two thirds of teaching being good or better. In Key Stage 1, teaching is good in two thirds of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. In Key Stage 2, teaching is very good in 20 per cent of lessons, good in seventy per cent and satisfactory in the remainder. The good teaching has a significant positive impact on the pupils' learning as they progress through the school. The teachers structure their lessons according to the Numeracy Strategy with all aspects of the subject being successfully taught each year. Lessons are planned most carefully with clear objectives that are appropriately shared with the pupils at the commencement of each lesson to help them to focus on the learning intentions and make good progress. This was clearly seen in a Year 6 class where pupils were using a range of equipment to investigate, for example, the probability of throwing two sixes, taking a particular coloured toy from a box and tossing coins. The work was carefully planned by the teacher to challenge the thinking of all pupils and they made rapid steps in their learning during the lesson.
107. Learning support assistants and classroom assistants are often used effectively to support individuals and groups of pupils, record their work and often make notes to help keep the teacher informed of the progress of the pupils they are supporting. Every lesson starts with a brisk mental or oral session that, in the best lessons, fully involves all the pupils and gives them opportunities to explain and discuss the strategies they employed in finding the correct answer. This was particularly well demonstrated in a Year 5 numeracy lesson where pupils had individual question and answer cards and played a snappy game that moved on swiftly, held their attention and was played with great enthusiasm and enjoyment. The teacher timed how long it took for the whole class to complete the game so that they could try to work even quicker next time. Teachers explain work carefully and ensure, through careful questioning, that all pupils fully understand exactly what to do during individual or

group activities. Pupils willingly ask or answer questions and often make valuable contributions to class discussions.

108. Numeracy work is well planned in year groups with the needs of all pupils catered for, including higher-attaining pupils and those who have special educational needs. This joint planning also enables teachers to share their expertise and ideas and ensure that pupils receive suitable work well matched to their prior attainment. Teachers manage their pupils well and create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in their classrooms that helps pupils to concentrate on their work, free from intrusive interruptions. Pupils respond well to this and behaviour in lessons and attitudes to learning are always satisfactory and often good or very good. Mathematics is used well in science work for recording experiments. This was particularly evident when pupils in Year 4 produced line graphs to plot results of investigations. Teachers mark pupils work regularly and often add encouraging comments but rarely use marking to explain to pupils how to improve their work or set targets for them to aim for in the future.
109. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in the subject and supports his colleagues well. He has taken a leading role in introducing the numeracy lessons by giving staff in-service training sessions. Teachers' planning is monitored to ensure full coverage and to check that pupils are being provided with work at a suitable level. The results of tests are analysed to identify areas for improvement and to set future targets for individuals and groups of pupils. The school is fully committed to raising standards even higher and the co-ordinator is well supported by the central management team and the governors. One governor takes a particular interest in the subject and has attended the numeracy training for governors and visited the school to observe lessons.

SCIENCE

110. Standards in the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The great majority of pupils achieve the level expected of pupils nationally in this subject but the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels are just below the national average. This is confirmed by results in the 1999 end-of-key stage tests but because the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was below average, the school's results in 1999 were below the national average and those of schools in similar contexts. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Results in tests since the last inspection have fluctuated. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are above the national average in that almost all pupils achieve the nationally expected level. However, few pupils achieve higher than that. Standards in the current Year 2 are similar to those achieved by pupils in end-of-key stage tests last year, when 93 per cent of pupils achieved the expected level or better.
111. Pupils in Year 6 are able to design a fair test in their investigations. They generally have developed good skills of investigation. For example, in a lesson comparing how well different types of soils will drain, they are able to use prior knowledge about the samples to predict which will drain well. They can select appropriate equipment, such as filter funnels and paper, measuring jars and timers, and they recognise, as they carry out their test, when they have made a mistake. They understand the need to use correct terms and most pupils use them correctly. This was evident in another lesson when pupils in Year 6 examined different types of rock and could distinguish between igneous, metamorphic and sedimentary. They used terms such as pressure, temperature and layers in their answers. Some lower-attaining pupils while testing the hardness of the samples confused strength with weight and were unsure

how to proceed. Most pupils, however, quickly grasped what might be needed and some groups chose to scratch, others to drill or hammer the rocks. One higher-attaining pupil could give a good account of why he thought igneous rock would be hard before he tested it. Across a range of topics, such as sound, light, the Earth and beyond, reversible and irreversible change and forces, the pupils have a good grasp of key concepts. They are able to record their findings in various charts and tables. Pupils achieve well and standards of presentation are generally good.

112. Pupils in Year 2 carry out simple investigations in topics on friction, wind power and floating and sinking. During the week of inspection, the pupils were finding out about minibeasts. They tested which surfaces snails move best on and they observed closely the trails they leave. Most could describe in simple terms what the trail indicates about the movement of snails. Other pupils investigated what kinds of fruit they might like and gave sensible suggestions about why they seemed to prefer bananas and apples to oranges. A group exploring the grounds for minibeasts understood why worms that they found prefer dark, damp places, while ladybirds prefer leaves and flowers. They were delighted to spot a frog in the pond area. After trying to attract insects outdoors with different coloured paper, the pupils decided they wanted to repeat the investigation on a sunny day to check whether it might make a difference to their findings. Pupils can make simple tables and charts to record their findings and they write simple sentences about what they have found.
113. In both key stages, pupils achieve well. This is because in almost all lessons, pupils are interested and pay close attention. There is much emphasis on pupils finding out through investigation and as a result they become good independent learners, able to collect equipment for themselves and get on with observing and testing, sharing out the tasks of doing and recording. By Year 4, pupils are making connections between concepts. For example, while testing the absorbency of different brands of kitchen roll, pupils begin to relate the strength of the towel, through pulling, with absorbency. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to prior attainment through the quality of the support they receive. Learning support assistants know the pupils well and help them to take a full part in activities. Classroom assistants provide good guidance for the groups they take because they are well briefed and support lower-attaining pupils well. In a minority of lessons, a few pupils with behavioural difficulties are easily distracted and support staff are used well to keep the pupils on task. This was evident in a lesson investigating materials in Year 3.
114. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving provision. Investigational skills, which were considered unsatisfactory then in Key Stage 1, have improved through good quality in-service training for staff as well as recent appointments of staff with good expertise for teaching these skills. At the last inspection, teaching was unsatisfactory in a third of lessons. Teaching is now good in both key stages. It is good in two thirds of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. Some staff had insecure knowledge of the subject at the last inspection and their lesson plans lacked targets. Pupil progress was variable across classes and there was insufficient challenge for higher-attaining pupils. All these aspects have been resolved and the quality of provision is now good.
115. Strengths of the teaching include the emphasis staff give to practical work in which the pupils gain first-hand experience of observing and testing. Teachers use classroom assistants and parent volunteers well to work with groups and this means that the pupils are fully engaged in the work. The assistants contribute well to the learning by managing the pupils and the activities well and asking questions of the pupils as they work. Lessons have clear objectives, which are shared with pupils, and

often the teacher refers to them again at the end of the lesson, noting whether they have been achieved. A good feature in some classrooms is the use of interactive displays which promote the pupils' thinking. For example, a very well designed classification chart in a Year 2 classroom provided the pupils with good opportunities to consolidate what they have found out about the minibeasts they are studying. More variable is the quality of questioning by teachers. There are good examples of teachers asking open-ended and probing questions, for example, when they question pupils about their predictions. There are occasions, however, when the probing is not deep enough and does not extend higher-attaining pupils, for example in a Year 6 lesson when the teacher moved on too quickly to the tools that might be used to test hardness of rocks before exploring what is meant by hardness. On occasions lessons are too long and the pupils cannot sustain concentration. Marking of pupils' work is variable. In some classes, for example in the mixed Year 5 and 6 class, it very effectively helps the pupils' learning, and in Year 1, work is dated and often annotated. This helps staff to assess the pupils' understanding. In other classes, however, marking does not add significantly to learning. There are examples of good homework assignments that focus on science, for example finding things that will and will not rust. Overall homework makes a good contribution to the work.

116. The subject co-ordinator has put in place a good scheme of work, which closely follows the nationally recommended guidelines and is based on a two-year cycle to cater for mixed age classes in school. The co-ordinator monitors planning and pupils' books regularly and analyses test papers. As a result, staff have concentrated on teaching correct terminology so that pupils are better prepared for answering questions. The subject features in this phase of the school improvement plan and the scheme of work is to be reviewed in the light of curriculum changes and the fact that there are no mixed age classes now other than upper Key Stage 2. As part of this year's focus, the co-ordinator will have the opportunity to monitor teaching across the school.

ART

117. The attainment of pupils is good at the end of Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and achieve well. Observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' sketch books and work on display around the school indicate that pupils attain the levels of achievement expected nationally for their age and many achieve above that.
118. Year 1 pupils were observed drawing live garden snails, looking carefully at the spirals on their shells, and reproducing delicate snail trails in good detail. Pupils in Year 3 have made a study of ethnic art, looking at Chinese examples. They have identified common features of colour and pattern, and used these to produce bright, lively designs. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 and members of staff were making clay tiles for the seating area on the Millennium Green, led by a local ceramic artist. Each pupil prepared a design, and used tools and leaves to create texture on their tiles. Their work showed a good degree of skill and a careful eye for attention to detail. Pupils make careful observational drawings, with good regard for shape and line. Older pupils showed good progression in the development of skills when Year 6 pupils drew self-portraits using pencil and pastels, with very sensitive colour blending for shade and tone. Pupils clearly enjoy their art lessons. They are well motivated and enthusiastic, behave very well and work with concentrated effort.
119. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attainment was found to be satisfactory to good in Key Stage 1, and satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2. The outline scheme of work covered Key Stage 1 only, and the inspection recommended that a whole school scheme be implemented. All pupils made satisfactory progress, and whilst Key Stage 1 pupils responded well in art lessons, pupils in Key Stage 2 were less enthusiastic. There was little evidence of progression. The co-ordinator has successfully implemented the recommendations of the last inspection and standards have improved.
120. In the few lessons observed, teaching was good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan work in teams to develop a common understanding of aims and objectives, and have participated in in-service work. They have good knowledge of the subject, and set high expectations for the pupils by ensuring that pupils know their learning objectives. The policy and scheme of work provide pupils with a good range of learning opportunities in a wide range of creative activities. The work of great artists is studied, and pupils may work in the style of LS Lowry, Monet, or Seurat. Links with the area's rich heritage of ceramics are celebrated through studies of the work of Clarice Cliff. An artist from West Africa has visited the school and worked with different groups of pupils. There are cross-curricular links with other subjects, for example geometric shapes used in designs, computer generated portraits, illustrations of scientific studies and costume designs. Pupils make visits outside school, for example to the Gladstone Pottery Museum.
121. The co-ordinator regularly monitors and assesses the quality of teaching and learning to ensure progression, that standards continue to improve, and that pupils experience the full range of opportunities and activities. The pupils' sketchbooks provide an on-going record of progress as they move through the school. The co-ordinator manages a large budget. There is a good range of art materials and resources are stored centrally and are accessible to all staff. Teachers expect pupils to use materials with care, and have regard to health and safety when using tools.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Pupils' attainment is in line with that expected of pupils at the end of both key stages. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on the lesson seen, a scrutiny of pupils' files, work displayed around the school and teachers' planning and discussion with pupils in Years 5 and 6.
123. Work displayed by pupils in Year 6 indicates that the pupils can design, build and modify models, such as a model time machine, and discuss their merits afterwards. Pupils sketch their ideas and some include measurements. They include simple electrical circuits in their design and build them into the models. In discussion, the pupils can suggest ways in which they might have improved their finished model. The pupils learn simple fixing techniques and use tools such as saws, hammers and drills to build. They develop a good awareness of which structures are strong in their designs and this was evident in some of the time machines, whose shape was a triangular-based pyramid. Pupils have designed and built kites and written instructions for their assembly. They have designed a fruit salad and evaluated their efforts, grading them for taste, enjoyment and for the teamwork that went into making them.
124. The pupils' achievements in the subject are at least satisfactory and often good. As the pupils go through school, they develop skills of cutting, joining and gluing appropriately. In Year 1, pupils make a design and build an Easter Egg holder and a simple two-dimensional toy teddy bear with moving joints. The pupils have designed and made a badge and uniform for a new club they invent. This is part of a wider topic on the theme of belonging, and links with other subjects such as religious education and English are good. The pupils examine uniforms such as those of the Brownies before they start. The pupils build using a variety of construction resources. In Year 2, the pupils make a 'thumb pot' using clay and they have the opportunity to take things apart and examine how they are constructed. In Year 4, the pupils design and make exotic fruit cocktails, which they then photograph and advertise for display. Good use is made of computer skills when they produce advertisements for their concoctions and there are good links made with literacy, with names such as Crazy Cherry and Tropical Fruits, accompanied by slogans such as 'We Make It – You Take It.' The pupils make a collage picture, using various fabrics. They tie-dye a piece of material for background and add thread and other fabric, using techniques of trapping, stitching and gluing. In this work, the pupils draw a labelled sketch which they colour in order to predict how it will finally look and after assembling the piece, they design and make a cardboard frame which will match the overall design and enhance it. The end result is work of good quality, carefully finished. The pupils discuss their work readily and describe which parts they found difficult and which please them most. The pupils in this lesson displayed sensible attitudes to using equipment such as sewing needles and enjoyed their work.
125. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the aspect of design in the subject, especially in Key Stage 2, and a detailed scheme of work provides coverage of all elements, including food technology and health and safety issues. At the last inspection there was a lack of co-ordination and monitoring. Since then the co-ordinator, who has since left the school, made satisfactory progress in developing provision for the subject. Staff received training in how to encourage skills of design. Currently the headteacher co-ordinates the subject and the school intends appointing a successor in the autumn term.
126. From teachers' planning and evidence from the one lesson seen, teachers' expertise to teach the subject is at least satisfactory. In the one lesson observed, the teaching was good and the teacher displayed good organisational and management skills. Teachers in Year 1 have produced a simple pro-forma for the pupils to use. The

pupils make a model using construction resources, then draw it on the form and pass it to friends to see if they can follow instructions and build it.

127. The subject is to be reviewed in the current phase of the school improvement plan. Whereas aspects of design and evaluation are well established during Key Stage 2, there is scope for developing them earlier with the use of simple pro-formas to encourage the pupils to think about their work before they start and to evaluate it when they have finished. At present, there are inconsistencies across classes in how pupils' work is recorded and kept and how the pupils are assessed in what they can do. There are, however, examples of good practice, for example, where pupils' work is photographed, pupils' comments are dated and annotated by teachers and kept in ongoing portfolios. The subject features well in the school's Millennium Green Project and there have been visits to local potteries and links with a construction company, when pupils found out about how roads are made. Levels of resourcing are good overall.

GEOGRAPHY

128. Attainment is in line with that expected of pupils at the end of both key stages. It was possible to observe only two geography lessons during the inspection. Additional evidence was gathered through discussions with the co-ordinator and with pupils, scrutiny of pupils' books, work displayed in the school and resources. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well.
129. During Key Stage 1, pupils begin to develop geographical skills and awareness by looking at maps and drawing simple plans. Pupils in Year 1 went outside the school to look for features, and challenged each other to identify where they occurred. The pupils learn about other countries and the lives of their people. Key Stage 2 pupils make good observations of changes in land use when they study the local area. They compare Stoke-on-Trent with Chester, and make relevant comparisons between their lifestyle and that of the people of Chembakoli in Africa. Pupils in Year 4 were competently using an atlas to identify the four countries of the United Kingdom. They drew on previous knowledge of the compass to find places located in various directions from Packmoor. Work was made more relevant by linking locations the pupils had visited. Pupils in Year 6 study Australia and develop good geographical enquiry skills by extracting information from a range of sources, including the Internet. Pupils are taught to use correct geographical terms and can use skills of inference when reading for information. Pupils show very good attitudes to geography lessons, and work with enjoyment. They co-operate and share resources well, discuss their findings with each other, listen well to each other and the teacher.
130. The previous inspection found that pupils' attainment was satisfactory at Key Stage 1, but below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching was generally sound and sometimes good. Weaknesses occurred when teachers' lacked knowledge of geography, did not link planning to National Curriculum areas of study, and did not make accurate assessments of what pupils knew, understood and could do. A policy has been written since the last inspection, and the school has successfully addressed all the issues raised. Standards have improved as a result.
131. In the two lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good and very good respectively. Pupils are encouraged and helped to formulate their own questions to research "What do I want to know about the land of Australia, and the people who live there?" "Where is the best place to find this information?" Lessons are well planned, in line with the programmes of study, and plans include opportunities for the

assessment and evaluation of pupils' learning. Samples of pupils' work are saved each year, to ensure progression. Teachers give good support to all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and in the support groups. They make good use of the final whole-class sessions in lessons to ensure that the pupils have met their learning objectives for the lesson.

132. The co-ordinator provides good leadership, maintains a budget, organises resources, supports staff and has input into staff meetings. The subject is due to be prioritised in the school improvement plan, including monitoring of the quality of learning. There are links with other local schools. Geographical studies are further developed when pupils make visits out of school to Stanley Head, Cannock Chase, or the residential visits to Standon Bowers.

HISTORY

133. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any history lessons at Key Stage 1. However, the scrutiny of pupils' previous work, work on display and discussions with pupils indicate that at the end of Key Stage 1 standards for seven-year-olds are typical of those found in the majority of schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' knowledge of historical facts is similar to that expected of pupils of this age. However, the majority of pupils in Year 6 do not have well developed skills in investigating and interpreting information drawn from historical sources. This judgement of standards at the end of both key stages broadly reflects that made at the time of the previous inspection. Improvements have been made lower down the key stage, where historical knowledge and the development of skills are broadly in line with standards in most schools, for example in Years 3 and 4 when pupils research life in Ancient Egypt. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress and those with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
134. During Key Stage 1 pupils develop a satisfactory understanding of life in Victorian times. They know how children's lives differed from their own in toys and games, education and work. They can compare present day clothes to those worn by men and women in Victorian times. They know that Queen Victoria was on the throne at the time but do not have a reasonable understanding of the time span between this historical period and the present. Pupils in Year 1 develop a satisfactory understanding of how they have changed since they were babies. Work previously completed by pupils in Year 2 indicates sound skills in comparing aspects of daily life in their grandparents' day to present times.
135. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have acquired a satisfactory understanding of aspects of life in Ancient Egypt. They are able to use a variety of sources to find information on burial customs, the use and function of pyramids and Egyptian gods. Pupils in these year groups tackle research with confidence, making efficient use of their literacy skills to locate quickly information and extract key points from text. Work done during the year indicates a satisfactory understanding of the lives of famous people such as President Kennedy and Mother Theresa. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 study the Aztec civilization and are beginning to learn about the Tudors. Pupils in Year 5 have a satisfactory knowledge of a range of aspects of Aztec life. They have a sound understanding of aspects of the Spanish Conquest and are able to explain why the Aztec civilization came to an end. Previously completed work demonstrates that pupils are able to identify some of the differences between Aztec farming methods and those of the present day. Previous work by some pupils in Year 6 indicates satisfactory development of skills of research and interpretation. This was observed in their investigations into Aztec beliefs, and comparisons of daily life from the point of

view of an Aztec and a Spaniard. However, lesson observations, analysis of work and discussions with pupils indicates that the majority have a limited understanding of history beyond historical fact.

136. It is not possible to make a judgement on teaching in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory overall with a small amount of good teaching observed in the lower part of the key stage. Lesson planning during the week of the inspection was of a good quality. The best features of teaching seen in some lessons are the provision of interesting resources to encourage pupils' interest and high levels of challenge. The school has a good selection of artefacts and these were used effectively in one lesson observed to engage pupils in meaningful research. In upper Key Stage 2 the opportunities for all pupils to acquire both knowledge and skills are inconsistent.
137. Subject planning in the long and medium term makes effective provision for the development of both knowledge and skills throughout both key stages. The policy is out of date, having been in place since before the previous inspection. The need for a policy review is acknowledged and is a part of the school development plan. The system for recording pupils' attainment and progress through assessment of units of study is satisfactory. However, the marking of pupils' work to provide them with a clear insight into how they might improve is inconsistent throughout the school. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

138. Attainment is above that expected of pupils at the end of both key stages. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line. One of the main factors in the improvement in standards is the computer suite, which, although rather small for a whole class, enables pupils to have regular access to modern computers and attractive educational software. Another important factor is the enthusiasm and expertise of the staff that is a direct result of training they have received in recent years. Pupils including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, have made good progress since the suite opened and there is a good capacity to raise standards in the subject even higher as the school has firm plans to upgrade all the computers in the suite, thus releasing the current hardware for use in classrooms to enrich the work in other subjects.
139. As soon as children enter the school they are introduced to information technology and use the computer suite regularly and with great enjoyment. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils can confidently use a computer for word processing and have a developing knowledge of many keyboard and toolbar functions to change the font and edit their work. All pupils can log on, find a chosen program by using the icons and save their work at the end of a lesson. Pupils can make a programmable toy move in different directions, turning in right angles to follow a floor map. They can input data to create a pictogram or bar chart and make attractive computer-generated, tessellated patterns. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 have well-developed skills and a good understanding of the uses of technology in the world and its impact on how we live. They confidently use CD-ROMs and a limited version of the Internet to assist them in their research work in other subjects such as history, where pupils found out useful information about the Aztecs and the Egyptians. Recently, Year 6 pupils have used e-mail to communicate with children in a school in Finland and are now waiting in great anticipation to receive their replies. Pupils create their own tables of data in

spreadsheets that they can use to find new information and print out in a variety of ways including graphs.

140. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this is used effectively to help pupils learn to use the equipment confidently and make good progress. This was very apparent in a Year 4 lesson with pupils using a music program. The clear instructions from the teacher enabled all pupils to commence work without delay and rapidly learn a whole range of new skills in both information technology and musical notation. Lessons are well planned to extend the learning of pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, who receive good support from their teachers and their peers while working in pairs. This was well demonstrated in a Year 5 lesson where the teacher had carefully paired the pupils to give maximum support to those with less confidence. All pupils benefited from this strategy and good quality learning was apparent as pupils researched Irish Folklore from a range of sources. Teachers are enthusiastic and this is transmitted to pupils, making them eager to learn more and to enjoy the opportunities presented to them. There is a constant buzz of excitement and interest as they work, they concentrate well and behaviour, despite the cramped conditions and sometimes stifling heat in the suite, is good. Resources are used well and lessons move along at a brisk pace. Pupils are disappointed when the lessons come to an end, as they are keen to continue to learn as much as possible.

141. The school has a manager of the computer suite who gives very good support to both teachers and pupils. She looks after the day-to-day running of the network and ensures that all is working correctly before lessons commence. She also runs eight extra-curricular computer clubs for Key Stage 2 pupils during lunchtime and after school. These are extremely popular, well attended and give pupils many good opportunities to extend their learning in an enjoyable and more relaxed manner. The computer suite is used in the evenings for parents to learn new computer skills. This makes them more confident in supporting their own children in the subject and also provides the school with useful revenue. The new co-ordinator has many interesting plans for the future that will further enhance the provision. These plans include more training for teachers, improved accommodation and resources, new assessment procedures and more links to literacy and other subjects. The school is fully committed to raising standards in information technology to the highest possible level and the provision meets statutory requirements.

MUSIC

142. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in music are broadly in line with expectations for seven-year-old pupils. Standards are above those found in most schools at the end of Key Stage 2 and the pupils' knowledge and skills in listening, performing and appraising are high. This represents much improvement since the previous inspection when standards at the end of this key stage were judged to be unsatisfactory and is accounted for by the improved quality of teaching.
143. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils listen carefully to music. Pupils in Year 1 clap in time to a metronome for a sustained length of time. They can name a range of percussion instruments and are able to play them in time to the piano. In Year 2, pupils identify different sounds when listening to music, for example, high and low and loud and quiet. They are able to choose instruments that match the sounds they want to make. When working in groups they compose simple pieces of music to represent syllables in poems. Pupils are developing early skills of evaluation in being able to talk about which aspects of their work they found easy and which were difficult.
144. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have acquired good skills in sustaining rhythms and layering sounds to create texture. Progress by all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. Years 5 and 6 pupils know how a major pentatonic scale works and are able to compose short pieces of music using this scale. Performing skills are well established. Pupils work very productively in groups without the need for direct supervision and are confident in explaining what they are trying to achieve. Pupils in Year 3 sing tunefully and when asked to appraise their singing correctly use terms such as beat, rhythm and melody. Year 4 pupils listen carefully to pieces of music in their studies of British songs and talk confidently about ostinato and pulse. They play and sing rhythms and melodic patterns using both graphic and standard musical notation.
145. Attitudes to the subject are good overall and in one lesson in Key Stage 2 the pupils' response to the subject was of the highest quality. Pupils listen carefully to pre-recorded music and to others' work. They make good use of their knowledge, tackling new knowledge and challenges with enthusiasm. They work productively together and as a result of high levels of collaboration are able to produce finished compositions by the end of a lesson.
146. The quality of teaching is never less than good and in one third of lessons seen it was very good. Once each week the school employs a visiting music specialist who team teaches with some classes. The quality of technical input and effective teamwork have a positive impact on standards. Teachers have a secure understanding of the subject, make good use of the school's resources and have high expectations of what the pupils should achieve by the end of the lesson. Activities are carefully matched to what pupils have learned previously and through effective explanation and questioning pupils make good gains in lessons.
147. Long and medium-term planning for the subject are good. They provide clear learning objectives with well-matched activities. Currently, there is no system in place to record what pupils know, understand and can do within the subject. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for the continued development of the subject. Very good extra-curricular provision is made for pupils in Key Stage 2. This includes a school band, choir and guitar club. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn to play brass, woodwind or string instruments through the provision of a visiting music teacher and in these ways the school provides well for pupils identified as having a talent for

music. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. During the inspection the focus was mainly on ball skills, gymnastics and athletics. Four lessons were observed. Other evidence included discussions with pupils, teachers, the subject co-ordinator and parent helpers as well as a scrutiny of planning. In the last inspection report pupils' learning was deemed satisfactory in both key stages. This inspection judges it to be good, which is an appreciable improvement.
149. The lessons observed commenced and concluded with appropriate warm-up and cool-down exercises. Pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, know the importance of these activities in relation to heartbeat and breathing. In Key Stage 1, pupils display imaginative ideas in movement as they travel around the hall, changing shape, speed and direction. For example, in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, pupils, while mounting and dismounting apparatus, showed good control on take-off and landing. More talented pupils added poise and tension as extra dimensions. All pupils executed a variety of balances, stretches and movements, linking them effectively to a short routine.
150. In Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate good techniques while running and jumping. They are beginning to measure, compare and improve their own and others' performance. In a Year 3 class, for instance, pupils advised their partners about the importance of bending knees and use of arms for thrust in two-footed take-offs. Similarly, in a Year 5/6 lesson on elongated and block sprint starts, pupils commented knowledgeably on knee-lift, posture and cadence during performance. Pupils are becoming more aware of the importance of pace and accuracy as they develop batting, passing and catching skills. Such an example was noted in a Year 4 class where pupils enhanced hand-eye co-ordination during an adapted rounders game. Pupils' learning in swimming is good and by the end of Key Stage 2 the vast majority swim the desired 25 metres, with many swimming 400 metres or more.
151. Pupils enjoy physical activities and adopt a positive and enthusiastic approach. They work energetically and are keen to succeed. By Year 6 both boys and girls know the basic rules of rugby, football and netball. Pupils listen attentively to instructions and co-operate well in group activities. They respect and value the efforts of others by applauding sequences of movements in gymnastics. Behaviour is invariably very good.
152. Overall the quality of teaching is good, ranging from satisfactory to very good. One lesson was observed in Key Stage 1 and teaching was good. In Key Stage 2, one lesson was very good and two were satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject. Their expectations are high and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. The planned work indicates clear progression and lesson objectives are matched well to individual needs. Health and safety features are observed, and teachers challenge pupils to concentrate and produce their best performance. Pupils are praised and given feedback, which moves learning on.
153. The school places strong emphasis on developing physical activity, healthy life-styles and positive attitudes. The subject is well managed and organised, and assessments and records of pupils' achievements are being developed. The subject co-ordinator is well qualified and enthusiastic, and the generous allocation of time is used well. She

is supported by a team of teachers who are willing to devote time to promote a good range of teams and clubs. Extra-curricular activities such as football, netball and athletics clubs are used to further interest and skills. School teams take part in inter-school competitions for netball, football, athletics, cross-country and swimming. They frequently emerge as winners. In addition, professional coaches from the local football clubs visit the school regularly to provide coaching sessions. To enhance further professional development, the whole staff have taken part in the 'Top Sport' training. The provision of resources and accommodation for the subject is satisfactory and they are used well.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

154. At the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. Pupils in Year 1 have had the opportunity to try on a Jewish prayer shawl and a Kippah and were able to recognise their important symbolism for Jews. Pupils in Year 2 looked at forgiveness in the New Testament when they enacted the story of the Prodigal Son and understood how the father welcomed his son back home. They could update this story into a modern setting and were aware that the message is just as important today. Pupils understand that the Bible teaches that God and Jesus love us despite our failures. The pupils know about the importance of family life in different religions. Pupils in Year 3 know about Martin Luther King, Guru Nanak and other religious figures and can understand their importance in world faiths. Pupils in Year 4 consider the nature of God by studying stories in the Old Testament and have a developing awareness of different concepts of the deity. Pupils show good attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully in lessons, discuss ideas, and listen well to each other's opinions. There is mutual respect between pupils, and between teacher and pupils. Year 5 and 6 pupils are encouraged to reflect and consider ideas in their writing and some pupils show a good level of maturity in what they write.
155. At the previous inspection, attainment in Key Stage 2 was found to be in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, but there was insufficient information to form judgements about attainment in Key Stage 1. Pupils' attitudes and progress were satisfactory overall. Teaching was judged to be sound, but the range of resources was limited. Overall, provision, including the quality of teaching, has improved since then.

156. Teaching is good in both key stages. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, ensure pupils know the learning objectives for each lesson, and set pupils challenging work. Opportunities for teachers to assess pupils' attainment and progress are built into their planning and there are some good examples of teachers making positive comments when marking their work. The scheme of work is based on the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus and aims to give the pupils opportunities to respond to fundamental questions, and to understand other people's beliefs and cultures. In Key Stage 1, they study the major world religions of Christianity and Judaism. In addition, pupils study Islam in Key Stage 2. Work may be planned as part of the school's two year cycle of topics, or as separate aspects, for example work on festivals, or other religions.
157. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and leads the subject well. Pupils' work is monitored carefully, with comments entered each term. The subject is currently a focus on the school improvement plan, to improve cross-curricular links, for example with art and design and technology and to purchase relevant CD-ROMs. The co-ordinator manages a budget, and purchases resources. There is an accessible, central base for resources. All classes have Bibles, appropriate to the age of the pupils. Older pupils are encouraged to develop research skills by using a Bible which has information and illustrations. There are links with the local Methodist church. The vicar of St James' Church, Newcastle comes in to school and pupils visit the synagogue at Hanley. As a result of this good provision, the subject makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' overall personal and spiritual development.