

INSPECTION REPORT

**GUARDIAN ANGELS RC
JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL**

Shard End, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103420

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Percival

Reporting inspector: David Penney
23039

Dates of inspection: 14th – 18th February 2000

Inspection number: 190495

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior and Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hurst Lane Shard End Birmingham
Postcode:	B34 7HN
Telephone number:	(0121) 747 2782
Fax number:	(0121) 749 3004
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Laurence Green
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Penney	Registered inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? - The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Philip Andrew	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How high are standards? - Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed? - adequacy of staffing, accommodation and resources
Christopher Coombs	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science	How well does the school care for pupils?
Teresa Manzi	Team inspector	Under fives Art Design and technology Information technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd
7 Hill Street
Bristol
BS1 5RW

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is of broadly average size with 198 pupils on roll aged between four and 11 years. Overall, in the school there are more boys than girls. The current admission number is 30 and the school is under subscribed because of demographic reasons. Pupils enter the school once a year; this is spread out over the first few weeks of their first term. At the time of the inspection, there were 51 children and pupils aged under 6, 24 in the reception year and 27 in Year 1.

The school is a Roman Catholic Aided school, serving the local parish of Castle Bromwich and Shard End. It is a member of the Shard End and Kitts Green Education Action Zone, which is committed to raising the levels of pupils' attendance in school and to improving their rates of progress and the standards they achieve.

There are no significant ethnic minorities and no pupils with English as an additional language, which is low in national terms. Pupils' mobility is not a significant feature. There are 52 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs of whom two (1 per cent) are in receipt of statements; this percentage is below the national average. Over 36 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is above the national average and has increased over recent years. There is a high number of one-parent families and increasing incidence of pupils with special educational needs and behaviour problems. A small minority of pupils have been identified as persistent absentees.

Pupils' attainment levels on entry to compulsory education are varied, but, characteristically, are below the national average, with specific weaknesses in the understanding of number and in reading.

The school's targets for improvement are:

- (i) to continue to raise standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science;
- (ii) to identify and provide for pupils with special educational needs, including those pupils who are higher attaining;
- (iii) to implement the planned developments in information and communication technology.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. The overall results in the end of key stage national tests have improved over the last four years by a faster rate than the national trend in all tests except in reading at the end of Key Stage 1. The standards achieved by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in the national tests in 1999 were in line with those of schools with similar intakes in reading and mathematics and were above them in writing. In the same year, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 was above those of similar schools in English and was well above them in mathematics and science. The school exceeded its targets in English and mathematics in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999.

The quality of the teaching is good in about half of lessons, particularly towards the end of Key Stage 2, in one Year 4 class and in Year 2. Because of this, pupils generally make at least satisfactory progress in their learning in all classes and subjects and, in just under half of their lessons, they make good progress. Nearly all pupils are now beginning to achieve the levels of work of which they are capable. However, while pupils generally have reasonable attitudes to their work and behave well in class and around the school, there are some classes in which some pupils find it difficult to listen and behave in an acceptable manner that supports their own learning and that of other pupils.

Because of recent staffing changes and the absence through long-term sickness of other members of staff, too many management responsibilities have had to be assumed by the headteacher and her deputy; this has adversely affected many of the developments identified as necessary in the school. Nevertheless, the co-ordinators for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have made many significant improvements in the planning, monitoring, delivery and assessment of their subjects. The governing body has many new members and is beginning, through a restructuring of its committees and good levels of training, to develop a sound view of the strategic direction of the school.

For these reasons, the school gives satisfactory value for money, even though the cost per pupil is high in national terms.

What the school does well

- Because teachers manage pupils well and plan their lessons thoroughly, relationships are strong and questioning is used skilfully, the teaching is of a good quality and pupils generally learn well in lessons.
- There is a comprehensive scheme of work for the early years children in the reception class, the environment is stimulating and the teaching is good. As a consequence, children make good, sometimes very good, progress in their learning.
- The schemes of work for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been improved and provide good support for teachers; results of national and annual tests have been analysed well and appropriate subsequent action has been taken to improve subject provision. This has resulted in improved standards of pupils' work, particularly in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's results now compare very favourably with those of schools with similar intakes.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social education and so nearly all pupils have good attitudes to their work, behave well in and around school and willingly accept responsibilities when they are offered.
- The school cares deeply for the pupils in its care, the Catholic ethos is strong and teachers act as good role models. These factors have a significant and beneficial effect on pupils' behaviour and personal development.

What could be improved

- Pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening are not developed consistently and effectively throughout the school in all subjects and so their attainment levels are below the expected levels for pupils of their age.
- The provision for information technology is inadequate and does not meet statutory requirements. As a result, pupils do not have the expected range of knowledge and level of skills expected.
- Some schemes of work for foundation subjects do not support teachers effectively

enough and do not make secure provision for the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in logical sequence.

- Subject management responsibilities are shared by too few teachers and so developments are not always taking place within the timescale planned.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in November 1996 and has addressed the key issues raised in that report well. Assessment procedures and their use have much improved. Provision in design and technology and, consequently, pupils' attainment in this subject at the end of Key Stage 2 are much improved. There is much better provision for pupils to develop their skills of investigation in mathematics and experimentation in science. The standards of class music have improved. The quality of the short term planning by teachers has improved greatly. The schemes of work for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are now good. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning has taken place and is of a satisfactory standard. The induction procedures for newly qualified teachers are sound. The governing body has reviewed its structure and procedures and is now beginning to develop a strategic view of school development. These improvements are good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	D	D	B	well above A average above B average average C below average D well below E average
mathematics	E	D	B	A	
science	D	E	C	A	

This table shows that the results of pupils taking the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 have improved in mathematics and science over the three years to 1999 at a faster rate than

the national trend while those in English have maintained a level that is below the national average. The standards achieved in 1999 were in line with the national average in science and were above them in mathematics. When these results are compared to those of schools with similar intakes, they are above the average in English and they are well above the average in mathematics and science.

The school's targets for the percentage of pupils achieving the nationally expected standards in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 are challenging at 65 per cent in English and 74 per cent in mathematics.

During the inspection, pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were close to those expected nationally in mathematics, science, art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, but were below those expected in English and information technology. Pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with their capabilities except in information technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Generally satisfactory, although there is a small number of pupils whose attitude to learning is not good enough for them to benefit fully from the teaching they are offered.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	This is nearly always good, both in classes and around the school. There is no evidence of any bullying; in fact, pupils generally care well for each other. Some pupils do not behave well enough in class.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils are strong throughout the school. Pupils show good respect for each other's feelings and beliefs, often giving and accepting constructive criticism well.
Attendance	Satisfactory, but there are too many pupils who arrive late to school in the mornings, some of them persistently.

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.

Because of the thorough planning teachers undertake and the clear understanding they have of what it is that pupils are to learn, lessons move at a generally good pace and pupils' interests are captured and retained. Teachers use questions skilfully to probe and extend pupils' understanding. They have generally high expectations of their behaviour and application; because relationships are nearly always good and a rapport has developed between teachers and their pupils, there is a good working atmosphere and pupils learn at a rate that is nearly always at least satisfactory and often is good.

The quality of teaching in the school is good in nearly all classes and subjects, including the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Literacy skills are taught effectively; numeracy skills are taught well. Ninety-seven per cent of lessons were of sound or better quality; three per cent were unsatisfactory. Twenty per cent of lessons are very well taught.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Sound, overall, but elements of the curriculum for information technology are not being taught. The teaching of numeracy skills is beginning to raise the speed of pupils' recall of basic number facts. The quality and quantity of extra-curricular provision are now good because of the extra input that arises as a result of the school being in the local Education Action Zone.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory, overall. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall, especially for spiritual, moral and social education. Provision for pupils' cultural education is sound.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory monitoring systems, overall. The school cares deeply for the pupils in its care.

The school makes good efforts to work in partnership with parents, but few help in school. The annual report to parents is not always explicit enough about the progress that individual pupils have made.

The schemes of work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been effective in raising standards, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is now good, partly because of extra input from the Education Action Zone.

The curriculum for information technology does not fulfil statutory requirements because the elements of modelling and monitoring are not provided. Developments in this subject have been delayed, but are now scheduled to begin before Easter 2000.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound, overall. The headteacher provides good pastoral leadership and sets a sound educational direction for the school's work. Co-ordinators for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have been effective in improving provision and standards in their subjects. The senior management team is not sufficiently involved in developing a strategic view of the school's future development. Management responsibilities are not spread widely enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a sound committee structure. They are well aware of the need to formulate a strategic development plan to focus the school's efforts and have a good understanding of the school's current strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Sound overall. The headteacher and the co-ordinators for the core subjects have effectively raised standards through a programme of monitoring and evaluation. National test data have been analysed well. The senior management team does not meet regularly enough to influence the developments in the school systematically.
The strategic use of resources	Sound management of financial resources, but the school lacks a long-term plan to enable them to prioritise developments and expenditure. The deployment of educational support assistants needs review.

The staffing levels, accommodation and resources are adequate and meet the needs of the curriculum. The school gives satisfactory attention to spending its money wisely when buying goods and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like going to school. • The school has high expectations of their children. • The quality of teaching is good. • The school listens to them and deals effectively with questions and complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of information about their children's attainment and progress. • The range of activities outside lessons. • More consistency in the way homework is used in the school.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments expressed above. The range of activities available for their children outside lessons has recently improved, partly through the extra provision available to the school through the Education Action Zone and is now good, overall. The annual school reports to parents give a satisfactory overview, but the team

agrees that they are lacking in precision and clarity about the progress the child has made and the level of attainment achieved. The amount of homework is generally reasonable and is used reasonably consistently throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the national tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieving the expected levels was well below the national figures in all tests. This was also the case for those achieving higher levels, except in writing, where figures were close to national averages. When compared with the results for similar schools, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels in reading was well below average, was below average in mathematics and was close to the average in writing. However, the proportion achieving the higher levels was below average in reading, close to the average in mathematics and above it in writing.
2. When the average Key Stage 1 results are calculated for these tests, pupils' attainment in writing and mathematics was below the national figures and, in reading, was well below. Compared with similar schools, however, pupils' standards in reading and mathematics were in line with averages while writing was below. This changed picture in writing was because fewer pupils achieved the higher levels than was the case nationally; in reading and mathematics, it was because the distribution of attainment was more typical of schools with similar intakes of pupils than it was of all schools nationally. There has been significant under-performance in all these tests by boys at the end of Key Stage 1 over the last three years.
3. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels was close to national averages in English and science and was above them in mathematics. There were many fewer pupils achieving the higher levels in English than are found nationally, but, in mathematics and science, the proportion was close to the national figures. Compared to similar schools, the proportion achieving the expected levels was above average in English, well above in maths and above in science. For the higher levels, the proportions were well below average in English, well above in maths and above in science.
4. When the average points score is calculated for the 1999 Key Stage 2 results, pupils' standards are above national averages in mathematics, below them in English and in line with them in science. Compared to schools with similar intakes, these results were well above the average in all three tests at the expected levels, as they were in maths at the higher levels. In science at the higher levels, pupils' standards were above those of similar schools, but were well below them in English. Although, over time, there are some minor variations, boys tend to outperform girls in all subjects.
5. Small cohort sizes mean there may be considerable variation in a school's average National Curriculum test results. These variations mean that care is necessary in the interpretation of change in the school's results from one year to the next. More reliable indicators of performance are the trends in results over a longer period of time.
6. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 over the last four years, the school's average points score has risen more swiftly than national averages have in writing and

mathematics. Over the same period of time, improvements in reading standards have been slight and have, recently, not kept pace with national trends.

7. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 over the same four-year period, there have almost always been year on year improvements in the average performances in all three subjects. The improvement from 1998 to 1999 was extremely significant in maths and science. In these subjects, improvements have far exceeded the national trend. In English, the upward trend has been broadly in line with the national picture, but standards have always been below the national figures.
8. In 1999, the school exceeded its targets for the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected levels in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2. As a result, new and challenging targets have been set for the year 2000. These are likely to be met in mathematics, but it is unlikely that they will be met in English because of the high proportion of Year 6 pupils who are on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs.
9. Currently, most children attain standards by the age of five that are least in line with national expectations in all areas of learning - personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. In the reading aspect of language and literacy and the number aspect of mathematics, a few children make very good progress and achieve above expected standards. Overall, the children make good progress in all areas of learning, except in physical development where progress is satisfactory, and are achieving well.
10. Pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are close to those expected in nearly all subjects, including the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Two exceptions to this are information technology, where their standards are below those expected, and physical education, where they achieve standards above those expected. Over time, pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. In two thirds of the lessons observed, pupils made good progress because of the good quality of teaching and their own attitudes to their work: these good attitudes were particularly evident at the end of the key stage. They achieve satisfactory standards.
11. The pupils who sat the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 are currently in Year 3. They are now working at levels that are, broadly speaking, close to those to be expected for pupils of their age. However, because of the absence of the class teacher over a considerable period of time and the consequent succession of supply teachers, insufficient attention has been paid to the differing needs of all pupils, particularly the higher attaining, and some pupils are underachieving. The headteacher is well aware of this problem and has taken all possible steps to try to ensure a continuity of experience for this year group.
12. Pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below the national expectations in the core subject of English and in information technology, but are close to those expected in all other subjects, including the remaining core subjects of mathematics and science. Over time, pupils in Key Stage 2, including those pupils with special educational needs, make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment and their achievements are

satisfactory. In a small majority of classes and in just over half of the lessons observed, pupils made good or better progress because of the quality of the teaching and of their response to it; in these classes and lessons, pupils achieve good standards.

13. In English, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 attain standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing that are satisfactory, overall. They listen well to their teachers and to each other. Most pupils read accurately and with good understanding, although they lack fluency. Some attention is given to grammar and punctuation through set exercises, but this is not transferred sufficiently into their written work. Spelling is often poor and handwriting is variable, although some pupils are beginning to write in a clear joined script. The inspection findings differ from the results of national testing in 1999 because of the difference in capabilities between the two groups of pupils being judged. As mentioned before, small class sizes mean that there may be considerable variation between the overall attainments of consecutive year groups in a school.
14. Overall, standards of speaking and listening in the school are close to those expected although they vary between classes. In those classes in Key Stage 2 where opportunities for speaking and listening are clearly provided as part of lessons, as in Year 6, standards are satisfactory. In other classes, some lack of enthusiasm and a reluctance to contribute on the part of many pupils leads to standards of speaking and listening that are below those expected. Standards of reading at the end of Key Stage 2 are below national expectations, although pupils are making satisfactory progress in relation to prior attainment. Although overall standards of writing in Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with national expectations, in Year 6, where half the class have special educational needs, standards are below those expected. There is a lack of attention to correct spelling, punctuation and grammar and the skills taught in literacy are not carried over sufficiently into pupils' other writing. The National Literacy Strategy is, however, beginning to have a positive impact on standards of attainment and rates of progress in nearly all classes.
15. The standards pupils attain in mathematics are close to those expected of pupils of their respective ages at the end of both key stages. This is different from the 1999 national test results in both cases because the groups of pupils concerned have different capabilities from their peers of last year. In the case of the current Year 2 pupils, they have a lower proportion of low attaining pupils while in Year 6 this year half the pupils are on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs.
16. In Year 2, average attaining pupils add and subtract tens and units correctly. Higher attaining pupils use their skills of splitting two digit numbers into tens and units soundly to calculate totals. In this year group nearly all pupils have made good progress in their number work since the beginning of the year and satisfactory progress in other areas of the mathematics curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress, overall, in their number work since the beginning of the academic year. Average attaining pupils use the appropriate number operations securely. They factorise numbers accurately, work confidently with negative numbers in familiar contexts and accurately calculate the percentage equivalent of simple familiar fractions. Higher attaining pupils use appropriate number operations with decimal fractions to two and, sometimes, three places with confidence and accuracy. In nearly all classes, all pupils achieve satisfactory standards. The school has rightly emphasised number work throughout the school and the adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to have a positive effect on

the standards that pupils achieve and the rate of progress they make. Pupils' speed of recall of basic number facts is, however, generally still too slow and this inhibits their ability to work quickly.

17. Pupils' current work in science is in line with the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1, but below them at the end of Key Stage 2. The present Year 6 class has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this is reflected in their levels of attainment. In lessons observed, there was no difference in the attainment of boys and girls. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils plan well an investigation into the effect of exercise on their bodies. They understand the need to measure the heart rate for the same length of time before and after exercise to ensure fairness in their results. Higher attaining pupils make thoughtful predictions about which exercises and explain their reasoning well based on their previous knowledge. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils devise good investigations and have a clear understanding of the need to alter only one variable in their experiment in order to make it fair. They carry out their investigation both efficiently and sensibly and record their findings well in a table. Pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, develop satisfactorily in their learning.
18. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below nationally expected standards by the end of both key stages. Pupils do not have the expected range of knowledge and skills, as they have not studied this subject in sufficient depth. Progress is unsatisfactory in both key stages as it is sporadic, is not clearly defined and much is left to chance and the enthusiasm of the teacher or pupil.
19. During the inspection, no music lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 and so no judgement is possible about the standards pupils achieve or the progress they make in this subject in this key stage. However, pupils' standards at the end of both key stages are close to those expected nationally in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education, as they are in music at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' achievements are broadly satisfactory in these subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. Children aged under five are happy and well behaved. They enjoy school and respond well to the secure learning environment. They have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They co-operate well, share equipment and resources and are able to sustain concentration. The children enjoy helping in the classroom and follow the routines that they understand well. They are confident and able to discuss their own needs and feelings and those of others.
21. The pupils have a positive attitude towards the school and most attend very willingly; this supports the views expressed by parents. Pupils like and enjoy school. In the lessons observed, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were at least good and sometimes better in just over half the lessons observed. However, the behaviour in two classes was not always of a satisfactory standard. In nearly all lessons, pupils are keen and eager to learn, especially when there is good teaching.
22. The school is an orderly community. Pupils come into school and move around the buildings quietly and show good consideration to others. Behaviour in the playground

and the dining hall is good and well supervised; there is good interaction between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves. There were no incidents of inappropriate behaviour seen during the inspection and the school is a community free from any type of oppressive attitudes. The pupils' conduct reflects the strong Christian influence in the school.

23. The pupils are articulate and talk easily with adults. In the classroom, they invariably listen carefully to each other, although this is not the case in some physical education lessons in the hall; they almost always show respect for points of view expressed, do not deride mistakes and congratulate achievements. They work sensibly and co-operate well. At a meeting of the recently formed school council with two members elected from each class, there was a reasoned discussion of a number of issues affecting all the pupils. The members of the council volunteered to act as mediators should disagreements arise in the playground.
24. There is a willingness amongst the pupils to accept responsibilities and duties in the running of the school. This is particularly evident in Year 6, where pupils are given a wide range of responsibilities around the school. These range from helping escort the reception and Year 1 pupils to the weekly Mass in the church, wheeling away the computers from classrooms to safe storage areas at the end of the school day and being library monitors. These duties are carried out cheerfully and efficiently and have a positive affect on the personal development of the pupils.
25. Attendance at the school, at 94.7 per cent, is satisfactory and unauthorised absence is just below the national average. The current level of attendance represents a substantial improvement since the last report. Unfortunately the level of late arrival is high at 4.95 per cent and has an adverse effect on pupils' attainment and the rate at which they make progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

26. Overall, the teaching is of good quality. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 97 per cent of lessons; in three per cent it was unsatisfactory. In 65 per cent of lessons the teaching was good or better. Seventeen per cent of lessons were very well taught and in three per cent the teaching was outstanding.
27. Teaching was of good quality, overall, in both key stages and for the children aged under five years. It was good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science as well as in geography, history, music and physical education. No teaching of design and technology was observed. Teaching was typically of good quality in both classes in Key Stage 1 and in the majority of classes in Key Stage 2, particularly towards the end of the key stage, which is where the outstanding teaching took place.
28. The rate of pupils' acquisition of new knowledge, skills and understanding is closely related to the quality of the teaching they receive, but is also dependent on the attitudes they bring to bear on the work they are required to do. Pupils' rate of learning was, typically, good in Key Stage 1, one Year 4 class and in Years 5 and 6.

29. Generally, throughout the school, including the reception class, teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and are clear about what pupils are intended to learn. Often, these objectives are shared at the beginning of the lesson with the pupils and this helps them to understand the purpose of their activities. In many lessons, teachers address these objectives again at the end; this helps teachers and pupils to assess the extent of learning. Teachers conduct their lessons at a generally good pace, which keeps pupils interested and concentrating on their tasks. Many teachers use questions skilfully to probe pupils' understanding and to ensure that all pupils remain involved in the lesson. They have high expectations of the standards of pupils' behaviour and attention; these are generally met. Relationships are good and so the pupils are generally keen to behave and to do well. These factors result in a rate of learning that is at least satisfactory and is often good.
30. Where the teaching is most effective, the management of pupils' behaviour is very good and relationships are very strong between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves. The pace of these lessons is very good and no opportunities are lost to extend pupils' learning. Pupils are managed very well and are made to feel valued because their contributions are valuable. This maintains pupils' interests and motivates them to learn at a fast rate.
31. Where the lessons are less effective it is because there is a lack of rapport between the pupils and the teacher. These lessons also move too slowly and pupils become bored and restless. In other lessons, teachers have low expectations of pupils' behaviour and application to their tasks and do not manage them well enough. The result of these characteristics is that pupils make less progress in their learning than they could or should.

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

32. There is a comprehensive early year's scheme of work to cover the reception year. All the required areas of learning are covered and the curriculum meets statutory requirements for children of that age.
33. The school provides a broad curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 that promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares them soundly for the next stage of education. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, provision for information technology is unsatisfactory, with insufficient planning and no time allocated on Key Stage 2 timetables. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including those for sex and drugs education. Personal, social and health education is not a discrete part of the school's curriculum, provision being made within religious education. The school has introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively and both are promoted appropriately in other areas of the curriculum. The school's decision to include timetabling for extended writing is proving beneficial, although the links between this writing and the learning objectives in literacy are sometimes unclear. Careful use is made of time; registers are taken efficiently so that lessons can start promptly. A particularly good feature is that, when Years 5 and 6 are unable to have outdoor games and have to divide the time for using the hall, suitable, relevant, extra lessons are prepared.

34. The school recognises that having focused on literacy and numeracy, a further review of the curriculum is now required. Satisfactory opportunities are now made for investigation in science, for using and applying skills in mathematics and for planning and evaluation in design and technology. The scheme of work for music remains unsatisfactory, with insufficient attention being paid to the logical development of skills and there is inadequate guidance for non-specialist teachers. History and geography now use government guidelines as a basis for their work. However, the school's own schemes of work are now in need of revision to include the topics being taught and guidance on how subject skills are to be developed.
35. The school provides sound learning opportunities for pupils of all abilities and lessons are planned, taking account of these ability groups. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs, often with the help of learning support assistants or through teaching provided through the Education Action Zone. Year 6 booster classes and a homework/study club, organised by the Education Action Zone, offer further effective support.
36. Parents expressed concerns at the range of activities available outside lessons. There is now, however, good provision for extra curricular activities. Older Key Stage 2 pupils take part in a wide range of competitive sport including netball, touch rugby, rounders, athletics, football and cross-country running. The school has recently started its own newspaper and a gardening club. The Education Action Zone runs a story club for Year 2 pupils and has organised activities, including trust activities, art, Christmas decorations, a computer club and general social activities, which run for a fixed number of sessions.
37. The school has made good links with the community to further pupils' learning. Apart from the strong ties with the church and parish, links have been made with a local bakery through a design and technology project and a local supermarket. The school has had a workshop organised by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and pupils have visited a local car production firm. Year 6 pupils have close contact with senior citizens who are part of a local history group and have been able to talk to them about their lives and experiences. Pupils from the reception class visit a local builders' yard and the school takes part in the Shard End Carnival.
38. Satisfactory links have been made with partner institutions. As well as making very careful social and emotional provision for Year 6 pupils transferring to the local Catholic secondary school, some curricular links are now being established. Pupils in Year 6 start work on an agreed science topic, which is completed when they start at the secondary school.
39. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall.
40. Provision for spiritual development is good. It is promoted mainly through whole school and key stage assemblies, where there are opportunities for pupils to respond to song, music and prayer with sensitivity and reflection. Class prayers, said at the start and end of the day, offer quiet times for reflection. This was particularly effective in a

Year 4 class where pupils led the prayers. There are some occasions in lessons where pupils sense moments of 'otherness', such as in a Year 5 circle time where pupils were acting out emotions.

41. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are taught and know the difference between right and wrong and treat each other with consideration. Assemblies and religious education lessons often include moral themes that are discussed by pupils. Classes also discuss and formulate their own class rules at the start of the year. The strongest influences on pupils are the day-to-day dealings between staff and pupils. Pupils are consistently praised and encouraged in lessons and good behaviour is acknowledged. In award assemblies, pupils nominate those pupils for an award that they feel have behaved well or gone out of their way to help others. In their dealings with each other the members of staff act as good role models.
42. The school makes good provision for the social development of pupils. They are given many opportunities to work together in lessons. All pupils are given responsibility within the class, for example, giving out materials and equipment and tidying up after lessons. Older pupils have responsibilities around school, such as library and bell monitors and helping with younger pupils during wet playtimes. A school council has recently been set up with representatives from each class. The provision of extra curricular activities and competitive sport provide many opportunities for social development. Personal and social skills are further promoted through visits that pupils make, including residential visits for older pupils and the links the school has with the local community. Pupils are encouraged to take part in charitable fund raising and have supported local and national concerns such as the 'shoe box appeal' for Romanian orphans.
43. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' cultural development. The previous inspection reported that pupils' knowledge of other cultures was weak. Pupils now have an awareness of their own culture, past and present, developed through art, music, history and geography. However, their understanding of life in a multi-cultural society is less secure, with little evidence of books that promote cultures in Britain today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

44. The school monitors attendance satisfactorily. There are sound procedures to ensure that pupils attend school regularly and the school prospectus emphasises the importance of regular attendance. There is, however, no established procedure to ensure that the school checks a pupil's non-arrival on the same day. There is a significant amount of lateness and this means that pupils who arrive late may miss the beginnings of lessons. This has a negative effect on pupils' progress.
45. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. The behaviour policy reflects well the caring Catholic ethos of the school by its emphasis on valuing all other people as God's children. All pupils have a good understanding of the kind of behaviour expected and respond appropriately. The behaviour policy is generally effective; pupils strive to gain house points and the various other rewards. The headteacher deals with serious misbehaviour appropriately. The school has an appropriate anti-bullying policy and, although parents raised concerns about bullying,

there was no evidence of this during the inspection. There was no evidence of any racist or sexist behaviour.

46. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory in English and mathematics, are good in science and are developing in the other subjects. A useful marking policy is being developed to ensure that all teachers give helpful and constructive advice to enable pupils to improve. Regular assessments are made in English, mathematics and science – normally half-termly – to establish pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Test results are analysed carefully by the school and are used satisfactorily to ensure that all pupils make appropriate progress. This information, plus that gained from the regular assessments in the core subjects is used well to inform the planning of the next stages of pupils' work. This was a key issue in the previous inspection report.
47. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. The school has recently introduced systems to track in detail the progress of a representative sample of six pupils in each year; this development is expected to improve the school's setting of targets for pupil achievement and learning and to enable changes to schemes of work to reflect better the needs of the pupils.
48. There are informal but effective procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. The headteacher has in-depth knowledge of most pupils and their families. In this relatively small school the staff shares much information about pupils informally.
49. Child protection arrangements are satisfactory and comply with those adopted by the local Area Child Protection Committee. The headteacher is the designated senior member of staff and other members of staff are aware of child protection procedures. The school has appropriate health and safety procedures and statutory duties are carried out regularly.
50. The school special needs policy clearly states the criteria by which pupils with special educational needs are identified. The school policy is based firmly on the *Code of Practice* for special educational needs and is readily available for parents and others to consult. Pupils' special needs are identified soundly. Parents are informed appropriately, normally by letter, about concerns and are invited to discuss these with the appropriate staff. The school prospectus gives all parents brief and basic information about the school's special needs policy. The school accommodation does not allow appropriate wheelchair access for people with physical disability nor is there any modified toilet arrangement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. The school has strong informal links with the parents and there is a drawing together of the school community and the parish. Overall, the parents have a very favourable view of the school, albeit with some qualifications.
52. The school operates an open door policy and the staff and head teacher will see parents at any time without an appointment. There is an adequate number of formal meetings arranged with parents each school year to discuss their children's progress and personal

development. These are held, by appointment, in the autumn and spring terms and it is the school's intention to introduce the discussion of targets for individual improvement very shortly. Meetings are held in the summer term to discuss the annual report. The majority of parents attend these meetings.

53. There is a satisfactory amount of information given to the parents, with letters sent out at the beginning of each term detailing the main events taking place in the term ahead and letters on particular topics that are sent when necessary. However, the school does not give any written guidance on the curriculum or on special topics to be studied each term. The inspection team agrees with the minority of parents who said that this is an area for development that would improve communication between them and the school still further. The annual school reports to parents, whilst giving a satisfactory overview, are lacking in precision and clarity in defining the progress made and the level of attainment achieved.
54. The Parents and Friends Association is well organised by a core of parents and friends. The main functions organised are well supported and in 1999 the association supported the school very well financially.
55. The school makes a determined effort to reach out to the parents to enlist their involvement in their children's education. However, only some parents respond fully.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. Overall the leadership and management of the school are sound and ensure that the aims of the school are met and that the standards of pupil's attainment are improving. The headteacher has responded well to issues raised in the last inspection report and has developed a sound understanding of the need to introduce rigour and structure to the school's work. The headteacher maintains a high level of pastoral support and the ethos of the school is strong. There is a deeply caring atmosphere and the aims of the school, which relate both to academic attainment and to the development of the whole person, are fulfilled in practice.
57. Recent staff changes and the absence through long-term sickness of other staff have resulted in too many management responsibilities being assumed by the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. This has adversely affected many of the developments identified as necessary in the school. All members of staff with management responsibilities are keen to raise standards, but the senior management team does not meet regularly enough to enable them to plan, organise and co-ordinate the way forward efficiently. All members of staff have job descriptions, but these are now in need of review. The headteacher agrees that delegation of responsibilities is necessary. Nevertheless the co-ordinators for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science have made many significant improvements in the planning, monitoring, delivery and assessments of their subjects. In order to raise the quality of teaching and improve the range of expertise and experience throughout the school, the headteacher has monitored the quality of teaching and recruited new teachers. Newly qualified teachers are given appropriate support. The school intends to make the monitoring of lessons more systematic and rigorous next year but currently there is no system to support and develop teachers through appraisal. However, the combined efforts of the headteacher and

subject co-ordinators are helping to raise the quality of both teaching and learning. The results of the end of key stage tests are monitored and show a steady improvement over the last few years and the science co-ordinator is tracking the progress of selected pupils throughout their time at school. The school has set challenging targets for raising pupils attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 next year.

58. The governing body has many new members and is beginning, through a restructuring of its committees and good levels of training, to develop a sound view of the strategic direction of the school. Governors support the school well and work well in partnership with the headteacher. They are clear as to the ways in which the school needs to improve. They are aware that governors have had too little input into the school development plan, but have firm plans to become more actively involved. The school development plan is only for the year ahead; this does not help the school to develop a long-term view or to prioritise developments into a realistic number of aims to be met over time. The governing body monitors expenditure regularly and, with the headteacher, has taken steps to recoup monies owing. The governing body does not, however, meet its statutory obligations in three areas: ensuring that appraisal for teachers takes place, setting targets for the headteacher and ensuring that the school offers the full curriculum for information technology to all pupils.
59. The office staff use computers efficiently to give governors and staff reliable financial information. They provide a good service to staff and parents and are friendly, welcoming and efficient. Specific grants and funds, such as from the Education Action Zone and for pupils with statements of special educational need, have been used effectively to improve provision for pupils. Computers have been purchased and a room has been set aside for their use; however, during the inspection they could not be used effectively despite the teachers' good efforts. There are insufficient accessible electrical plugs to enable teachers to deliver well-planned lessons to best effect. In addition, the computers in the new computer suite have yet to be networked to enable reliable, quick access to the Internet. Throughout the school, pupils' information technology skills are underdeveloped. The full curriculum for this subject is not delivered across the school. Teachers are trying to redress previous gaps in pupils' knowledge and skills.
60. The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. However, the long-term absence of one teacher has resulted in a succession of supply teachers in what is now the Year 3 class; this has resulted in an inevitable loss of continuity of teaching style and expectations of behaviour and standards within the class and, consequently, disruption in their education. The school is receiving effective extra support, funded by the Education Action Zone initiative, to support pupils, for example, in numeracy and writing. There is a strong team of lunchtime supervisory staff who ensure that this period of the day is carefully and effectively monitored. The broad based programme of staff development is used effectively. The induction policy for newly qualified teachers has been effectively implemented during the current school year.
61. The accommodation is adequate to support the delivery of the curriculum. The school does not have any grassed playing fields; however, it uses the playing fields of a neighbouring school when needed for matches and this imposes some minor restrictions on the full and routine development of some skills, for example, of tackling in football.

The interior of the building and the grounds are well cared for and cleaned, but the buildings themselves are in need of re-decoration.

62. In general, the resources for learning are adequate. There are, however, some areas that are unsatisfactory. There are insufficient resources for English and reading books are due for replacement; in ICT, some equipment is not fitted with electrical plugs. The sinks in the area outside the Key Stage 1 classrooms were underused during the inspection. However, the amount and quality of the music resources have been improved since the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. In order to raise pupils' attainment and to improve their rates of progress, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- ensure that teachers develop pupils' reading, writing, speaking and listening skills consistently and effectively in all subjects and throughout the school;
(Paragraphs 1 –4, 7, 8, 12 – 14, 62, 76 – 82, 84, 90, 110)
- implement the planned developments in information and communication technology;
(Paragraphs 10, 12, 18, 33, 59, 89, 101, 110, 127 – 133)
- devise schemes of work for information technology, art, geography, history and music that identify clearly the knowledge, skills and understanding to be developed at each stage of a pupil's development;
(Paragraphs 34, 115, 120, 126, 129, 131, 133, 139)
- share management responsibilities more equitably so that the necessary developments are rigorously and regularly implemented.
(Paragraphs 57, 115, 120, 126, 133, 140)

Other issues that should be considered by the school are contained in the following paragraphs:

16, 21, 25, 31, 44, 53, 57, 58, 60, 62, 66, 72, 74, 85, 87, 88, 95, 100, 101, 108, 115 and 142.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	52

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	17	45	31	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	198
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	69

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	52

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	20	10	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	14	15
	Girls	9	10	9
	Total	21	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (75)	80 (73)	80 (83)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	16	13
	Girls	9	10	7
	Total	22	26	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (79)	87 (81)	67 (79)
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	12	14	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (50)	77 (55)	81 (50)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	5	6	7
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	15	15	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (59)	58 (68)	65 (64)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	6
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	167
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	24.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67.5

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	399,683
Total expenditure	397,275
Expenditure per pupil	1,967
Balance brought forward from previous year	1,309
Balance carried forward to next year	3,717

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	198
Number of questionnaires returned	79

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	33	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	39	6	4	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	43	9	5	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	33	16	11	1
The teaching is good.	52	38	4	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	39	25	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	23	4	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	32	3	3	3
The school works closely with parents.	35	39	18	8	0
The school is well led and managed.	47	39	8	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	30	6	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	29	23	19	8

The table shows that a significant minority of parents are concerned about:

- the range of activities available for their children outside lessons – the inspection team finds that this has recently improved, partly through the extra provision available to the school through the Education Action Zone, and is now good, overall;

- the lack of information available to them about their children's progress - the annual school reports to parents give a satisfactory overview but the team agrees that they are lacking in precision and clarity about the progress the child has made and the level of attainment achieved and that the school could do more to inform them about the work their children will be doing each term;
- the closeness of the partnership between them and the school - the team judges that the school makes a determined effort to reach out to the parents and to involve them in their children's education but only some parents respond well;
- the amount of homework – the team finds that this is generally reasonable.

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

64. The school admits pupils into the reception class in the September of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. They attend on a full time basis and remain in the same class until they transfer to Year 1. At the time of the inspection, half of the children in the reception class were under five years of age. Most of the children have attended a pre-school playgroup or nursery.
65. The overall level of attainment, on entry to school, is below that which is usual in children of this age. The baseline assessment for the current reception class shows that, shortly after starting school, these children had knowledge and skills which were significantly below the expected levels in speaking and listening, all aspects of number and in their attitudes to learning. Their skills were as expected in reading, writing and relationships towards others.
66. By the age of five, most children attain standards in all areas of learning which are least in line with national expectations. In the reading aspect of language and literacy and the number aspect of mathematics, a few children make very good progress and achieve above expected standards. Overall, the children make good progress in all areas of learning - personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Satisfactory progress is made in physical development but opportunities are not provided for pupils to climb, balance or use wheeled vehicles during outside play. There is no secure outside play area to enable the teacher to plan for use of the school's equipment throughout the whole year.
67. Children's personal and social development is satisfactory. The reception class teacher visits the nurseries and playgroups in the term prior to admission in order to get to know the children and plan for their start at school. Although all children start on a full time basis, appropriate steps are taken to ensure that their first days at school are pleasant. The children are happy, well behaved and enjoy school. They respond well to the secure learning environment. There is a clear understanding of right and wrong. They co-operate well, share equipment and resources and are able to sustain concentration. The children enjoy helping in the classroom and follow the routines that they understand well, for example, tidying up after activities. These opportunities help to build their self-

esteem. Children are confident and able to discuss their own needs and feelings and those of others.

68. In language and literacy, children are keen to communicate and express their ideas. The majority of children attain satisfactory standards and a few acquire good reading and writing skills. Nearly all children listen intently to stories and are eager to join in with repeated words or stories with which they are familiar. They enjoy contributing to class discussion, acting out plays and telling their news, but are also able to listen to others and wait their turn. Children enjoy books and handle them carefully. They know that print carries meaning and are beginning to decode it, using a range of strategies, including the initial letter sounds and using the illustrations as prompts. Several children have a growing sight vocabulary when using the 'reading scheme books.' Several children can read simple stories and others pick out familiar words. Many children retell well-known stories in almost the correct order of events. Writing skills are developing soundly alongside reading skills. Children are able to form most of their letters correctly. They are making good attempts at the early stages of writing, for example, 'having a go' at writing on their own or using a combination of copying some words from their own 'word book' and writing others that are known. Most children recognize and write their own name and the name of their friends.
69. In mathematics, children develop skills and understanding through a variety of activities. The majority of children attain satisfactory levels of attainment and a few acquire good number skills. The children know and participate in a range of number and counting rhymes. They count numbers forwards and backwards to ten, identify numbers by their written shape and are familiar with larger numbers from their everyday lives. Most children are able to 'add one more'. Higher attaining pupils add two numbers. Several pupils count beyond ten. They sort and match animals and place them in sets. Children name and identify basic two-dimensional shapes. Through a variety of practical activities, for example, drama in the re-telling of 'Goldilocks and the three bears', they develop and use the early measuring vocabulary of 'bigger and smaller.'
70. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children make models using construction kits and with adult support use the class computer and various computer toys. Overall, their development of knowledge and skills in this area of learning is satisfactory. They are competent at manipulating a computer mouse to design shapes in an art programme. They are aware that many people have important jobs and they act out the job of a builder within the role-play area. They have recently benefited from the annual visit to a farm. The teacher's clever zigzag display of their 'coloured in' pictures of two types of birds illustrates the difference between animals. The children have a good knowledge of the different types of materials and know that some materials are good for certain purposes, such as glass for windows. Through examining the class display of an old iron, carpet beater and fireplace, they appreciate that things were different in the past. After a walk around the local community the children were able to identify road names and different types of buildings. Children develop sound observational skills through studying and drawing pictures of themselves. They cut out templates and assemble them with split pins so that they will move. Children use tools safely for appropriate purposes.

71. Children's creative development is satisfactory. By the time that pupils are five years of age, they have used a suitable range of media, including paint, crayons and collage. Children make handprints, which are displayed well to show that they are valued. They also print carefully with sponges. Displays generally show pupils' reasonable cutting skills, but as each piece is so similar it does not show the children's individual creative skills. In music, they name and use simple percussion instruments such as the triangle and bells. Pupils perform as a whole class and play their instruments at the correct time to create effects to illustrate a story. They learn to sing nursery rhymes. They use their imagination, when using the 'builders' yard' role play area, buying items and giving change from the till and, when acting out a play, they use their voices expressively and walk around the room in a majestic way.
72. In physical development, children are beginning to use the large hall space appropriately. They roll a ball and pass and receive a ball reasonably accurately and a few children throw, catch and pass the ball well. Girls are generally better at the skill of throwing than boys. Hand-eye co-ordination is being developed by the use of construction kits and small equipment. Malleable materials and tools are used safely and with control; a few children have good cutting skills. The areas of physical development observed were satisfactory. However, there is a lack of large climbing equipment and wheeled toys in a secure outside play area to promote a range of physical skills, including balance, co-ordination, co-operative play and problem solving. This means that it is not possible for the teacher to plan for frequent activities to develop the children's skills in all the requirements of this area of learning for children under five.
73. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In all eight lessons observed, teaching was at least satisfactory. In nearly one half of the lessons, teaching was good and, in one literacy lesson, teaching was very good. In this lesson there was a good range of activities that closely related to the aims of the lesson. These activities were well matched to the interests of the pupils and to their prior skills and knowledge. Planning for lessons is good. Pupils were enraptured by the teacher's story telling skills and responded well to gentle encouragement. Generally the teacher and classroom assistant have a good rapport with the children and have a consistently calm manner that children respond to well. A stimulating environment is provided and a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum is offered. Good routines are established which the children understand and follow. The children are expected to behave well and they respond by being courteous and working well with their classmates. Occasionally, particularly during mathematics sessions, children are required to sit listening for too long and so they lose concentration.
74. There is a comprehensive early year's scheme of work to cover the reception year. Short term planning includes clear learning objectives. There is appropriate assessment of children's achievements soon after they start school and again at the end of the reception year. This information is used effectively to identify children who may need extra support. These identified children receive appropriate support and make satisfactory progress, as do all the children in the reception class. However, ongoing assessment of children's achievements and difficulties is ad hoc as there is no system to check or track that all children have benefited from the wide range of opportunities offered. There are times when the classroom assistant is not used to best effect, particularly during the teacher's input to, for example, the literacy hour, numeracy session and music lesson.

75. Good use is made of the indoor teaching area and provision for children's development is satisfactory. Learning resources are appropriate, particularly now that new resources, including wheeled vehicles have been purchased with funds from a special grant. They are well organised and accessible. Although the early years do not feature in the school development plan, the good standard of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection.

ENGLISH

76. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels in reading was well below the national average, as it was at the higher levels. The pupils' attainments in writing were generally below the national average, although the figure for those achieving the higher levels was close to the national average. When compared to similar schools, pupils' performance in 1999 in reading is close to the average and above average in writing. Inspection evidence shows that, overall, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are likely to meet national expectations, because of the emphasis recently placed on improving reading standards.
77. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was close to the national average, but the proportion achieving the higher level was well below the national average. Teacher assessments were insecure, showing significant differences from actual test results. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance is above average. The current Year 6, which contains 50 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs, is unlikely to maintain this overall improvement and results are not likely to meet national expectations in the tests at the end of the key stage this summer.
78. In these tests, girls at the end of Key Stage 1 generally outperform boys in both reading and writing. Boys generally outperform girls at the end of Key Stage 2. However, when there are small numbers of pupils in a year group, results are unreliable as a specific indicator of a school's performance; an analysis of trends over time is more reliable. Over the last four years, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading has remained well below the national average, whereas attainment in writing has shown a steady improvement at a rate that is faster than the national trend. Over the same four years, there has been a steady improvement in results at the end of Key Stage 2 that is in line with the improvement in results, nationally.
79. Standards in speaking and listening are satisfactory, overall. Year 2 pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 listen well to their teachers and to each other. The combination of suitable subject material with carefully targeted questions provides good opportunities for speaking and listening, for example a discussion about flow charts. In Key Stage 2, where opportunities for speaking and listening are clearly provided as part of lessons, standards are satisfactory. In Year 5, pupils discussed myths and legends throughout the lesson, both in the introduction and within group work. In other classes, some lack of enthusiasm and, for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, a reticence to contribute to some class discussions result in standards of speaking and listening that are below those expected nationally.

80. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are in line with national expectations. Most pupils read accurately and with good understanding, although they lack fluency. They attempt to sound out unknown words and to use context clues for longer words. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below national expectations, although pupils are making satisfactory progress in relation to prior attainment. Throughout the key stage, except where pupils have had a succession of teachers, standards are satisfactory. Texts are carefully selected in group reading sessions; too often, however, no check is made on individual reading books to ensure that the reading level is suitable. By the end of the key stage, some pupils possess the reading skills necessary to undertake research, but there is insufficient provision for this form of enquiry.
81. Pupils' standards of writing are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils produce a satisfactory range of writing for different purposes and audiences, with some imaginative and creative work. They are beginning to produce extended writing, using story-planning sheets to prepare their work. Some attention is given to grammar and punctuation through set exercises, but this is not transferred sufficiently into their other written work. Spelling is often poor and standards of handwriting are not consistent; some pupils, however, are beginning to write in a clear joined script.
82. Although overall standards in Key Stage 2 are broadly in line with national expectations, in Year 6, where half the class have special educational needs, standards are below those expected. Overall, pupils produce a varied range of writing. Extended writing is on the whole well planned, but there is a lack of attention to correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. Skills taught in literacy are not carried over sufficiently into pupils' other writing. Although dictionaries are available at both key stages, they are not used routinely to find the meanings and spellings of words.
83. The National Literacy Strategy is beginning to have a positive impact on standards of attainment and rates of progress in nearly all classes. Reading and writing are encouraged in other subjects of the curriculum and specialist subject vocabulary is generally being developed satisfactorily, for example in mathematics and music. Opportunities for discussion are provided in almost every lesson, where learning objectives are shared and opening and closing discussions are an integral part of the lesson.
84. Pupils in Key Stage 1 generally make good progress in their learning. Lessons have good pace and pupils concentrate well and are interested in their tasks. In a Year 2 lesson on flow charts, tasks were well prepared and explained, enabling pupils to work independently and productively. However, teachers make pupils work their way through workbooks to consolidate their knowledge of sounds; this strategy does not take sufficient account of sounds that are clearly already known by pupils and, so, lessens learning opportunities. Good support is given by learning support assistants to pupils with special educational needs to help them recognise high frequency words; this enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. The sharing of learning objectives with pupils and the reference made to them in the plenary sessions, clearly helps them to know about their own learning and the progress they are making.

85. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, in their learning. In a Year 5 lesson where pupils were looking at myths and legends, the pace of the lesson and the challenging activities enabled all pupils to make very good progress in understanding and using pronouns. In the Year 6 class, well-prepared and appropriate tasks, linked to persuasive writing, enabled all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress in forming opinions. In the Year 3 class, where there had been several changes of teacher, the poor attitudes and behaviour of pupils clearly contributed to unsatisfactory learning. Their writing was careless and poorly presented, with many mistakes in simple spelling and punctuation.
86. Overall, pupils in both key stages are making satisfactory progress in reading. Group reading within the literacy hour is carefully assessed to help plan future provision. Teachers also hear individual readers and keep records of their progress.
87. Pupils generally enjoy their English work and respond well to the challenge of the literacy hour. Most listen well to their teachers and to each other. They are generally well behaved and concentrate on their lessons. Group tasks are well explained and provide opportunities for pupils to work independently. In a few lessons, where there was a lack of rapport between the class and teacher, pupils became restless and inattentive and were unenthusiastic about their work.
88. The quality of teaching, overall, is good; no lessons were less than satisfactory. One lesson was very well taught. Teachers plan lessons well with careful adaptation of tasks to the needs of pupils. They have good subject knowledge and their interest and enthusiasm are appropriately conveyed to their classes. They generally have a good relationship with classes that precludes problems with management and discipline. Their effective questioning, directed to the whole ability range, and clear explanation of tasks ensures that all pupils have opportunities to learn. In a Year 4 lesson on writing newspaper reports, the teacher questioned well, with pupils answering freely, not afraid of making wrong answers. The teacher set challenging work and had high expectations. Most lessons have pace and variety to sustain pupils' interest. Where teaching is less satisfactory, planning is insufficient, not enough time is allowed for discussion and the management of pupils' behaviour is less secure. Lessons are well prepared, with sufficient resources. Work is consistently marked, often with useful comments to aid future learning, but insufficient attention is paid to correcting and improving pupils' poor presentation and spelling. Efficient and effective use is made of learning support assistants. In one lesson, the assistant kept a record of spoken contributions made during the introduction, to help the class teacher monitor standards of speaking and listening. Satisfactory use is made of homework that is set consistently.
89. The curriculum is broad and balanced between all aspects of the subject. The policy documents, taken with the national literacy framework, provide useful guidance on most aspects. The scheme of work for creative writing needs to be reviewed to link more closely with the learning objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. The use of information technology in English is underdeveloped, although it is used within classrooms for word processing. Pupils visit the local library and are encouraged to use its facilities. Booster classes are held in school time to help some Year 6 pupils make further progress.

90. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic coordinator who has held the post for almost two years. She has observed all teachers taking a literacy lesson and has monitored their short- and medium-term planning. They have also had the opportunity to observe the coordinator's teaching. Her feedback to teachers has been positive and has included targets for development, which have improved standards of teaching and learning. Results from national and other testing have been analysed effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses. Satisfactory assessment records are now being kept for different ability groups within classes and are being developed to provide clear records for individual pupils throughout their time in school. Good use is made of learning support assistants in literacy; the school benefits from the teaching support provided through being in an Education Action Zone. Resources are adequate, but there is a need for further resources at Key Stage 1 and for more dictionaries and thesauruses throughout the school. The school library is currently underused; books have not yet been audited, reviewed and sorted to enable pupils to gain maximum benefit from its use.

MATHEMATICS

91. In the national tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 who attained the expected standards was well below the average for all schools nationally and was below the average for schools with similar intakes. The proportion achieving the higher levels was well below national averages, but was close to the average for similar schools. When the average results for this group are calculated, the standards achieved are below those of all schools nationally, but are in line with those for schools with similar intakes. Girls have, over the last three years, performed better than boys in these tests. Over the last four years, the school's results have improved at a rate that is faster than the national trend.
92. In the same year, the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected levels at the end of Key Stage 2 was above the national figures and well above those for similar schools. A greater proportion of pupils achieved the higher levels than was the case nationally and a far greater proportion than was the situation in schools with similar intakes. The average results are above national figures and are well above those for similar schools. In these tests, boys tend to perform better than girls. There have been improvements in these results for each of the last four years and they have been at a far faster rate than the national trends. The one-year improvement from 1998 to 1999 was a very significant one.
93. Currently, pupils' standards at the end of each key stage are close to those expected of pupils of their respective ages. The difference between the inspection findings and the results of last year's national tests is because:
- a) there are different pupils in the year groups;
 - b) the current Year 2 contains fewer low attaining pupils than last year's group;
 - c) half of the current Year 6 pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs.
94. In Year 2, pupils who are lower attaining add tens to units, generally securely, while average attaining pupils add and subtract tens and units correctly. Higher attaining

pupils use their skills of separating two-digit numbers into tens and units to find as many ways as they can to find the total 20, for example. Some higher attaining pupils recognise that addition is the inverse operation to subtraction; average attaining pupils have some difficulty with this concept. Pupils accurately measure length, using standard measures and higher attaining pupils measure mass in non-standard units. In this year group nearly all pupils have made good progress in their number work since the beginning of the year and satisfactory progress in other areas of the mathematics curriculum.

95. Half of the pupils in the current Year 6 have been identified as having special educational needs. Nevertheless, the standards they achieve, overall, are close to those expected nationally of pupils of their age, particularly in number work. The school has rightly emphasised this area of work and pupils have made good progress, overall, since the beginning of the academic year. Pupils' speed of recall of basic number facts is, however, generally still too slow and this inhibits their ability to work quickly. For example, in their work on horizontal division, because they have to struggle to do the arithmetic and lose sight of the overall process, very few pupils understand why the final answer is a smaller number than the original. Lower attaining pupils use multiplication and division by ten generally soundly in arithmetic calculations, but find it difficult to transfer this knowledge into the context of money. Average attaining pupils use this knowledge securely and sometimes use brackets in their work to help order the sequence of calculations correctly. They factorise numbers accurately, work confidently with negative numbers in familiar contexts and accurately calculate the percentage equivalent of simple familiar fractions. Higher attaining pupils use appropriate number operations with decimal fractions to two and, sometimes, three places with confidence and accuracy.
96. There is no evidence of a difference in the performance between the genders that could be attributable to factors other than individual capabilities. In nearly all classes, all pupils achieve appropriate standards. They use their numeracy skills soundly in other areas of the curriculum, for example tabulating the results of their science experiments to clarify their results.
97. The present Year 3 class, however, has had a succession of supply teachers, because the class teacher has been intermittently absent through illness. This has meant that it has been difficult for successive supply teachers to develop enough understanding of the needs and capabilities of each individual pupil in the relatively short periods of time that they have been in the class. Consequently, some pupils, particularly those who are average or higher attaining, have not been sufficiently challenged to achieve the standards of which they are capable and, therefore, these pupils are underachieving.
98. The quality of teaching is good, overall, in both key stages. Two thirds of lessons are of good or better quality and nearly half of lessons are taught very well. One lesson in nine is not taught to an adequate standard and, in a further one lesson in nine, strengths and weaknesses are finely balanced. As a consequence of this generally high standard of teaching, pupils gain skills and knowledge quickly and securely.
99. Generally, throughout the school, lessons are well planned and the clear learning objectives are shared with the pupils so that they know the purpose of the activities.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and use this to make timely interventions to support pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, many pupils were experiencing difficulties in their work with money; the teacher talked to them together and, by doing so, clarified common areas of concern and enabled pupils to make sound gains in their learning. Assessment is used well by all teachers; they frequently restate the purpose of the lesson at the end and invite pupils to comment on their own efforts and the extent of their learning. This gives pupils a clear understanding of what they have learned and what remains to be done and nearly always motivates them well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and generally manage them with sensitivity and purpose. Where this is accompanied by warm relationships and a good atmosphere of mutual respect, for example in Key Stage 1 and most of the classes at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils try hard to produce work of a high standard and are confident to attempt new aspects of the subject, secure in the knowledge that their efforts will be appreciated and valued. This leads to a good rate of secure learning.

100. Where the teaching is less successful, for example in a minority of classes in Key Stage 2, there is a lack of rapport between some pupils and the teacher. As a consequence, these pupils do not make sufficient effort in their work and do not work as productively as they should, because they feel that their efforts are not valued. They behave generally satisfactorily, although many call out unnecessarily and disrupt the flow of the lesson. They are, however, unable to work to the same level that they show with other teachers and in other subjects. Many of these pupils, therefore, are not achieving consistently highly enough. By contrast, pupils in Key Stage 1 and in most of the classes in Key Stage 2 are consistently challenged to achieve the best work of which they are capable. In the most successful classes, the quality of the relationships is very good, as is the quality of the questioning, which forces pupils to think about their replies and extends their understanding. In these lessons, pupils are eager to learn and collaborate well. They concentrate well and work productively.
101. The school has adopted the National Numeracy Strategy as a basis for its scheme of work and has received good levels of associated training. This builds well on work already undertaken to improve the speed of pupils' recall of basic number facts; this aspect of the key issue from the inspection of November 1996 has been dealt with well and the standards of pupils' mental work has improved, although much remains yet to be done. There is now regular provision for all pupils to undertake investigational work; this too is an improvement since the last inspection. The use of information technology to support pupils' and teachers' efforts has not been sufficiently developed. New annual assessment procedures have been analysed thoroughly and have been used well to identify strengths and weaknesses within the school's provision. The actions taken as a result, for example an increased emphasis on problem solving, have been effective in raising pupils' standards. Satisfactory recording systems have been developed, although teachers have not had sufficient time to use them and to judge their effectiveness and manageability. The co-ordinator and the headteacher have begun to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in each class; comments are thorough and strike a good balance between acknowledging strengths and identifying areas for further development. However, this system is not securely enough in place in the school's routine practices to know whether the areas indicated for individual improvement have been addressed effectively.

SCIENCE

102. Teacher assessment for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 indicated that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels was well below both the national average and that for schools with similar intakes. The proportion achieving higher levels was judged to be well below the national average and below average when compared to schools with similar intakes. In particular, results were very low in comparison to the national average for materials and their properties.
103. In the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels was close to the national average as was the proportion reaching the higher levels. In comparison with similar schools, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected levels was well above the average and the proportion reaching the higher levels was above average. Boys outperformed girls in this test.
104. In the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, there has been a year on year improvement in results each year for the last four years, based on averaging National Curriculum tests points, at a rate that is faster than the national trend.
105. Pupils' current work is in line with the expected levels at the end of Key Stage 1, but below them at the end of Key Stage 2. This is because the present Year 2 group has a greater proportion of pupils who are average or higher attaining than last year's group. The present Year 6 class has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than was the case for last year's Year 6 group and this is reflected in their levels of attainment. In lessons observed, there was no difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
106. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils working on life processes and living things plan well an investigation into the effect of exercise on their bodies. They understand the importance of exercise and know that proper exercise is needed to keep healthy. Most realise that, to measure the effect of exercise, such as increased heart rate, in their investigation, they must choose short periods of exertion such as skipping, jumping or running on the spot. They understand the need to measure the heart rate for the same length of time before and after exercise to ensure fairness in their results. Higher attaining pupils make thoughtful predictions about which exercises will make their hearts beat faster and explain their reasoning well. Pupils have good knowledge of sugary and fatty foods and understand the effects of these on their bodies. They are aware of the uses of drugs such as medicines and know about the dangers associated with misuse of them. From their work on keeping clean, they develop a sound understanding of the importance of personal hygiene. In their work on forces they have some understanding of the effects of pushing and pulling on objects and they have limited knowledge of some effects of friction. They know about the dangers associated with mains electricity and make simple electrical circuits using batteries and bulbs. In work on materials, pupils understand how it is that light travels through certain materials, but not others.
107. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils devise good investigations into how different materials reduce or increase friction. They have a clear understanding of the need to alter only one variable in their experiment in order to make it fair; for example, by

altering the height of a ramp by the same amount when measuring how far a toy car will travel across the floor. They demonstrate good understanding of how friction slows down a moving object and how reducing the friction between surfaces is important to enable surfaces to slide over each other more easily. They carry out their investigation efficiently and sensibly and record their findings well in a table. They explain clearly to the rest of the class what they have discovered and the conclusion they draw from it. In their work on physical processes, they demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of simple electrical circuits and they know how differently shaped mirrors, such as convex and concave, affect the images seen. They have secure understanding of how to increase the loudness or pitch of various sounds and they know that sounds are caused by vibration. From their work on the earth and beyond they have a sound understanding of the effects of the rotation of the earth on seasons and on day and night, as well as the phases of the moon. They make good use of appropriate terms such as dissolving and solution in work on materials and their experiments to separate them.

108. Pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress, overall, in their learning. Pupils' behaviour is at least satisfactory in seven-eighths of the lessons seen and is good or very good in more than half. Generally, pupils concentrate well on the tasks set and they show good understanding of an investigation's requirements and how to record their findings. In more than half of the lessons seen, they have good or very good attitudes to their work. Pupils in both key stages listen well to their teachers and make good efforts as they develop their skills and understanding. Older pupils discuss well what they are learning. They listen well to other peoples' views. They are enthusiastic and concentrate well on the tasks set. These aspects have a positive impact on their learning. However, where their attitude is unsatisfactory, as in a Year 4 lesson when pupils were restless and noisy and called out unnecessarily, their own learning and that of others, suffer. As a result, progress in these lessons is unsatisfactory.
109. The overall quality of teaching is good; no teaching is less than satisfactory. Teaching is good in over half the lessons seen and, occasionally, excellent. Teachers know their subject well. Lessons are planned carefully and well to fulfil learning objectives based firmly on the relevant National Curriculum programmes of study. A good emphasis is placed on the use of investigation and activities are provided to ensure that pupils develop necessary basic scientific skills such as careful observation and measuring. Teachers have high expectations of what their pupils can achieve and lessons ensure that learning objectives match pupils' prior attainment levels; this has a positive effect on their learning and the standards they reach. Skilful questioning is used to assess pupils' understanding and to build on previous knowledge. Explanations are given clearly and well to develop pupils' understanding. Relationships between the teachers and their pupils are good and pupils are usually managed well. Good use is made of time at the end of the lesson to reinforce learning and to check on pupils' understanding. Work is marked carefully and helpful comments assist pupils to develop understanding. These factors have a positive impact on pupils' learning.
110. The co-ordinator for science has worked very hard and effectively to ensure that investigative work is used throughout the school. This was a key issue in the last inspection. She has written the policy and scheme of work to ensure that the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered fully and has devised good assessment and

monitoring procedures. She plans to develop the use of information and communication technology in science as well as to link science more closely with the work in literacy. There have been good improvements in science since the last inspection and the current plans are on line to continue this.

ART and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Only one lesson was observed in each of these subjects and, often, both of these subjects are taught together. Consequently, judgements have been made by looking at displays and samples of pupils' work.
112. By the end of both key stages, pupils achieve the standard expected for their age in art and in design and technology. In both subjects and in both key stages, pupils make satisfactory progress. The display in the hall of pencil portraits clearly shows the improvement of skills throughout the school; younger pupils draw portraits full-face and in reasonable proportion while older pupils show increased maturity and technical skills in drawing heads in profile. Two of the Year 6 portraits are expressive and are of a good standard. Standards in design and technology have risen since the last inspection when, in Key Stage 2, standards were below national expectations.
113. Throughout the school, pupils are developing a good understanding of the full design process for design and technology. Pupils at both key stages confidently plan their work to a design brief, select materials, make the item and evaluate its success and suggest ways to improve. In Year 6, pupils have designed and made a healthy soup, using their word processing skills well to record their work. In Year 5, pupils, during a project on water wheels, worked collaboratively to produce a good report on the way in which natural energy has been used to the benefit of man. The group allocated research tasks to each other and have worked well together. Pupils in this year also use satisfactory sawing skills when making their maze games. In Year 4, there are good links with history and geography and pupils use their skills inventively and creatively, for example, when modifying wheel hubs to produce items such a working clock and a desert island.
114. In art at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use a variety of media, such as clay and paint and various materials for collage. Pupils' skills are competent. They mix colours correctly and produce careful studies of tone and shade. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 are aware of the work and styles of famous artists, such as Seurat. This knowledge is used to influence the work of pupils in Year 6; they reproduce paintings in pointillist style and experiment soundly with appropriate techniques, including brush and pencil control. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils also practise the use of line and shape by using and experimenting with a reasonable variety of pencils and pastels to produce observational drawings. A few of these are of a good standard.
115. In the one art lesson observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory; the quality of teaching in the design and technology lesson was good. In both lessons, the teachers planned well and had clear learning objectives that related to the National Curriculum. In the design and technology lesson the teacher had a good relationship with the class,

but in the art lesson the teacher was new to the class that has had several teachers recently. There were two teachers in this class and they gave conflicting messages as to the standards of behaviour expected. There is a detailed scheme of work for design and technology and also a co-ordinator who advises and helps teachers. The co-ordinator for design and technology monitors standards of work and has recently used the expertise of a local bakery to enhance the work of the school by delivering a topic on the making of sandwiches. She has also introduced an effective system for monitoring and assessing the pupils' knowledge and skills in this subject. There is no co-ordinator for art and the scheme of work is old and barely adequate. Until a co-ordinator is appointed, the headteacher is overseeing this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

116. The previous report showed that pupils in Key Stage 1 were making satisfactory progress in geography and that, at Key Stage 2, progress was good. Evidence from this inspection shows that standards are now in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages and pupils are making satisfactory progress, overall.
117. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 use their own homes as a resource and make reasonably accurate plans of their bedrooms. They gain a sound awareness of their own environment through studying different types of transport and a comparative study of Birmingham and Barra, giving their opinions about which aspects of the two places they like or dislike. They appreciate that the world can be shown on globes or in atlases. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound grasp of a relevant range of conditions for people in other lands through using contemporary news events as a starting point for finding out about other countries. They have a secure knowledge of physical geography, for example, mountainous areas of the world, climates and weather conditions. From a further study of the school and local environments, they quickly realise that these are being polluted and make sensible and appropriate suggestions as to how improvements can be made. Mapping skills are satisfactorily developed along with these areas of study.
118. Pupils' attitudes towards geography are good. They pay careful attention during the introduction to lessons and are enthusiastic about their work. In one lesson, they were sorry to have to stop working when time was up; in another lesson where the video recorder failed, pupils accepted the situation without any fuss and the lesson moved on satisfactorily.
119. In the two lessons observed, teaching was good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are carefully planned, learning objectives are shared with pupils and teachers set a challenging variety of activities. Because of this, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils had to survey the litter around the school, report back their findings using graphs and charts and design posters to counteract this pollution. They learned at first hand that there was more litter than they had expected and that it tended to accumulate in particular areas because of the prevailing wind. In a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were studying weather throughout the world, they used the Internet to find the forecasts for the next day and those areas that were experiencing hot weather. This ensured that they learned how to interpret a weather map and that a southwesterly wind was likely to bring rain.

120. Over the last year, geography has lacked leadership and co-ordination. Qualification and Curriculum Authority materials were adopted in September 1999 and geography and history topics are now taught alternately throughout the year, although the school's policy and scheme of work has yet to be suitably amended. There is no monitoring of pupils' work to ensure that topic areas are being covered sufficiently or skills being developed adequately. No formal assessment is made of pupils' learning. Resources, although sufficient, are not clearly sorted and matched to the new topic areas being studied.

HISTORY

121. Standards in history remain satisfactory at the end of both key stages, as in the last inspection.
122. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop sound skills of looking and comparing. They study different forms of lighting and place them accurately on a time line; they study the life of Florence Nightingale and sequence the events in her life correctly. They contrast and compare household objects and hospitals past and present, making sensible observations of changes over time. Pupils also develop a satisfactory awareness of historical evidence, for example when looking at the diaries of Samuel Pepys and his first-hand account of the Great Fire of London. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils consider evidence from archaeology soundly, when studying Ancient Greece. They develop a good understanding of how people lived and worked in more recent history through looking at Victorian photographs and pictures and sensibly consider how and why things have changed. They interview people from a local history group about their lives and experiences during and since World War Two and, so, interrogate primary sources of evidence well.
123. Pupils are enthusiastic about history and enjoy the challenging activities that are set. They work well together in groups, helping each other and sharing materials. When talking with visitors, they show both empathy and respect.
124. Literacy skills are well developed in history. Pupils are actively involved in discussions, read and analyse prepared texts and instructions and make use good of their writing skills.
125. The quality of teaching is never less than good, with two fifths of lessons being very well taught. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils. Rigorous questioning during the introduction to lessons stimulates pupils' interest. Resources are well prepared and used. In a Year 1 lesson, a collection of kitchen equipment, past and present, brought the lesson to life; in a Year 5 lesson pictures and photographs were used to raise questions about life in Victorian Britain; in a Year 6 lesson very good use was made of speakers from a local history group. Activities are well planned and challenge pupils, including those with special educational needs, enabling them all to make good progress. Teachers have a very good relationship with their classes.

126. Over the last year, history has lacked leadership and coordination. Qualification and Curriculum Authority materials were adopted in September 1999 and geography and history topics are now taught alternately throughout the year, although the school's policy and scheme of work have yet to reflect this. There is no monitoring of pupils' work to ensure that topic areas are being covered sufficiently or skills being developed adequately. No formal assessment is made of pupils' learning. Resources, although sufficient, are not clearly sorted and matched to the new topic areas being studied. Good history displays around the school include pupils' work and make a positive contribution to the learning environment.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

127. Pupils' attainment is below nationally expected standards by the end of both key stages. Pupils do not have the expected range of knowledge and skills, as they have not studied this subject in sufficient depth. Across the school, pupils are developing 'word processing skills' well, but this is only one strand of the National Curriculum.
128. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 use the computer to re-write and improve their writing by typing in their work, using appropriate capitals and by using the enter and return keys to repeat phrases. They do not save or retrieve work, as the class teacher does this. To date, little work has been undertaken on control technology. However, in preparation for this they are learning to write a series of directional instructions, such as left, right and forwards, but, as yet, the pupils have not used the school's 'Roamer.' Pupils in Key Stage 1 are reasonably competent at using the computer 'mouse' and tape recorders.
129. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils use a range of different machines for word processing, data handling and are just beginning to use the Internet to find information. In word processing, pupils are able to change fonts, colours and import graphics that give good support to their history topic on World War Two. Pupils with better skills have computers at home and are encouraged to use them. The one instance of scanning pictures and research was completed at home. Pupils at both key stages had no general concept of the wide range and use of computers. Overall, the strength of this subject is communication through word processing, but the aspects of controlling, simulation and modelling are underdeveloped.
130. Often, computer skills are used to support other subjects such as geography and English. Since the last inspection, standards have dropped. They were previously judged as in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1 and no judgement was made about Key Stage 2.
131. Progress is unsatisfactory in both key stages because provision is sporadic, is not clearly defined and much is left to chance and the enthusiasm of the teacher or the pupil. Although most pupils have regular opportunities to use a computer, the knowledge, understanding and skills level of the teacher are a major contributory factor to the rate of pupils' progress. In one Key Stage 2 class, there was no evidence of any computer work. Because the learning support assistant financed by the Education Action Zone works in her free time to help them to produce a school magazine, a few pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. These pupils save, modify and

retrieve their work. However, other such pupils make unsatisfactory progress, in line with their peers.

132. During the inspection, several of the seven lessons observed were the early attempts of teachers to use new equipment; nevertheless, in all lessons, the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In the one lesson observed at the end of Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was good. However, this lesson had the potential to be very good. It was very well planned; the teacher has good expertise, very good relationships with the pupils and is enthusiastic and determined to extend the pupils' knowledge and skills to enhance their learning. This lesson was spoilt by the unreliability of equipment and the power supply. Another teacher bravely tried to use the new computer suite without sufficient support. Yet another teacher is developing an assessment sheet to help track pupils' progress. Generally teachers are trying to catch up on the pupils' lack of previous experience, are keen to deliver the full curriculum well and to receive extra training to build their confidence and expertise.
133. However, there is no scheme of work to support them adequately in planning work. Because they know their pupils well, they are using those parts of the government's guidelines for teaching this subject which are set for pupils who are two years younger than their class; this is appropriate. The information technology co-ordinator has left the school and there is now no co-ordinator with relevant expertise to monitor provision and help teachers. Whilst the headteacher has been successful in gaining grants and improving facilities for delivering this subject, it is timetabled only for Key Stage 1; it is not timetabled in Key Stage 2. It is recognised by the school that there are many weaknesses that need to be remedied as a matter of urgency. The local education advisor has recently visited the school to help them plan for the future and training for teachers is to take place shortly.
134. The school is helped by the fact that pupils enjoy opportunities to use the computers and they show respect for the resources available to them. Pupils' behaviour whilst using computers is good and, when sharing is required, they take turns easily and fairly. Pupils are often very patient, waiting for support.

MUSIC

135. No music was observed in Key Stage 1 and so no judgements are possible about the standards pupils achieve or about the quality of the teaching and learning in that key stage.
136. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attain standards that are in line with those expected nationally of pupils of their age. These standards have improved since the November 1996 inspection. Pupils perform in groups, sustaining their own part effectively as they accompany their own advertisement jingle. They give good attention to rhythm and the effect of the instruments they choose. However, few pupils sustain a steady pulse and more often they follow the rhythm of their spoken words. They rehearse effectively to improve their performance. Having recorded their work, they give and accept constructive criticism freely.

137. The quality of teaching is always at least good and is more often very good. Teachers' planning is very thorough and lesson objectives are clear; these are shared with the pupils, who then are aware of what is about to happen. Teachers prepare their resources and the lesson well, which ensures that time is used efficiently and that pupils' interests are retained. There is a good range of percussion instruments, which the pupils use to good effect, for example, when composing a sound story to accompany the reading of a poem or a story. Because teachers' subject knowledge is good, they use technical terms correctly and at the correct moments to ensure that pupils' knowledge is developed well. Pupils' ideas and suggestions are incorporated well into lessons and so they are motivated to work even more productively because they feel that they have made a real contribution to the success of the lesson. The quality of the relationships, which is often very good, and the very good way that teachers organise and manage the pupils ensure that they concentrate well on the tasks they are given and that the pace of lessons is good.
138. The progress that pupils make in these lessons is never less than satisfactory and is good, overall. It is very good when they use their knowledge of the musical elements, for example of timbre, texture and structure, to influence and improve their own compositions, as in a Year 5 lesson to illustrate a poem. The pupils enjoy making music and treat the instruments with care and respect. They behave very well and collaborate well. Older pupils give and accept constructive criticism well.
139. However, the progress that pupils make over time in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding is less than it should be and is hampered by the lack of a scheme of work that is effective in helping the non-specialist teacher. For example, during the inspection the same lesson was given to pupils in Year 5 as was given earlier in the week to one of the Year 4 classes. The existing scheme, although put in place since the last inspection, as required, does not clearly enough address the acquisition of skills in logical sequence. In addition, it does not give enough guidance to teachers on how to develop the ideas that are included and there is insufficient guidance to ensure that pupils listen to a wide enough range of music of other times and cultures. The school intends, sensibly, to adopt and, as time and priorities permit, adapt the imminently available national guidance as its scheme of work.
140. The development of this subject has not been a priority because the school has devoted appropriate attention to improving standards and provision in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and because the headteacher has had to assume the nominal role of co-ordinator as a temporary measure, due to the repeated and intermittent absence, through long term illness, of the substantive co-ordinator. The subject has, therefore, lacked a consistent and clear direction from the co-ordinator. There is no provision for extra-curricular activities in this subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. The standards that pupils attain at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally of pupils of their respective ages. There are examples of levels of co-operation and of following complex instructions at the end of Key Stage 1 that are above those expected, for example, when pupils are practising their skills of catching and throwing. These ball skills are developed soundly through Key Stage 2 and pupils

in Year 6 catch, strike and receive balls generally correctly in a suitable variety of contexts, such as volleyball, netball and football.

142. The teaching is generally of good quality, although, in a small minority of lessons, the teacher's expectations of pupils' attention, behaviour and levels of attainment are not high enough to ensure that they learn sufficiently well. More typically, however, teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons thoroughly, so that little time is wasted and opportunities to improve pupils' skills are recognised and used. Lessons are conducted at a generally good pace and with enthusiasm; this keeps pupils active and, in many instances, communicates the teachers' own enthusiasm to the pupils. On too many occasions, however, a small minority of pupils in Key Stage 2 do not respond well enough to this challenge and become noisy; some pupils are truculent and determined not to respond positively to the teaching they are offered in spite of the teachers' best efforts. These pupils do not listen well enough and often answer the teacher back or talk when being instructed. They fail to allow themselves to make adequate progress and are determined to underachieve.
143. The school has a good scheme of work that provides effective support for the non-specialist teacher. The range of extra-curricular activities is good, with a suitable amount of competitive sport against other schools in spite of the lack of a grass play area on site; the school makes effective use of the playing field of a neighbouring school. When the weather is unsuitable for outdoor games and Years 5 and 6 have to divide the time for using the hall, suitable, relevant, standby lessons are prepared. This is a very good use of the available resources and also of the time available.