

INSPECTION REPORT

BRINDLEY HEATH JUNIOR SCHOOL

Kinver, Stourbridge

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124094

Headteacher: Mrs C A Collins

Reporting inspector: Mr P Edwards
21069

Dates of inspection: 6th – 10th March 2000

Inspection number: 191447

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Enville Road Kinver Stourbridge West Midlands
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Derek Hemming
Date of previous inspection:	5 th November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr P Edwards	Registered inspector	Information technology Design and technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mr B Eyre	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development The quality of links with the community How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? The extent to which the school makes the best strategic use of its resources.
Mrs P Goodsell	Team inspector	Science Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
Mrs L Alvy	Team inspector	English Art History	The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mr C Scola	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	How well the school cultivates pupils' personal development

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Brindley Heath Junior is a co-educational school with 272 pupils on roll, 132 boys and 140 girls, which is a similar size to the average primary school. The school serves the village of Kinver, a short distance from Stourbridge, but a significant minority of the pupils attend from outside the area. Most of the pupils are of white ethnicity. No pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Thirteen pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is low compared to the national average. One child has a statement of special educational needs and 24 pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is low. Unemployment in the area is low, many parents commuting to the larger towns in the area. The majority of pupils attend the local infant school prior to admission and their attainment on entry is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many very good features. The pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics, information technology, art, design and technology, history and geography. The quality of teaching is usually good or better and the senior management team and governing body provide very effective leadership. The school has a very low income and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve good standards in English, mathematics, information technology, art, design and technology, history and geography.
- Overall, teaching is good, with almost a third of lessons observed being very good or better. The strategies used for the teaching of literacy are particularly effective.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the senior management team and governing body.
- The procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress in English and mathematics are very good and the information is used effectively to plan lessons.
- The school makes good use of the community to help further the education of the pupils through links with colleges and a range of visits and visitors.

What could be improved

- Standards in science through more effective tracking, assessment, and improved teaching.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection in 1996 found Brindley Heath to be a good school and under the strong leadership of the headteacher it has continued to improve. Although there was a slight downturn in the pupils' test results in 1998, the overall trend has been upwards with an above average number of pupils attaining higher levels in both English and mathematics in 1999. The key issues identified in the previous report have been addressed very effectively. Schemes of work have been securely implemented and procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment in English and mathematics have been developed very successfully. There have been improvements in the layout of the open plan building although there are still constraints due to the large class sizes and limited space.

STANDARDS

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

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

By the age of eleven, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level in English and mathematics is well above the national average and above average in science. Significantly more pupils reach the higher level in English and mathematics than is seen nationally. In science, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level is similar to that seen nationally. When compared to similar schools the pupils reach average levels in mathematics, above average levels in English but below in science. The school's above average results in English and mathematics are substantiated by the inspection evidence. The inspection evidence also shows that whilst more pupils are reaching the average level in science than is seen nationally, fewer pupils than might be expected reach the higher level.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils enjoy their work and are very responsive in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour in lessons and in the playground is usually good. There is no evidence of bullying although there is some boisterousness in the playground. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good. The pupils are respectful and they treat property and equipment with care.
Attendance	Attendance is good and the lessons start promptly.

The pupils have good attitudes towards school, are keen to learn and behave well both in lessons and in the playground. The relationships between staff and pupils is very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
68 lessons seen overall	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.

Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is good. It is excellent in nine per cent of lessons, very good in 22 per cent, good in 43 per cent and satisfactory in 22 per cent. It is unsatisfactory in four per cent. The teaching of English is very effective and enables a significant proportion of the pupils to achieve high standards. The quality of teaching in mathematics, design and technology, information technology, art, history and geography is frequently very good or better and, as a result, the pupils achieve high standards in these subjects. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught, enabling the pupils to make good progress throughout the school. The good provision for pupils with special educational needs and the quality of teaching enables pupils of all abilities to learn effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets statutory requirements. Sufficient time is devoted to all subjects. A range of extra-curricular activities, links with other establishments and visitors to the school have a significant impact on the pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The pupils are provided with effective support that enables them to make good progress in line with their prior achievements.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual development and good provision for moral and social development. There is very good provision for their cultural development which helps them to understand their own and other cultures. The teachers are good role models and there is a clear understanding of right and wrong.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for monitoring the academic and personal progress of its pupils. There are good procedures in place for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils.

The strategies for the teaching of literacy have been very well implemented and there are good strategies in place for the teaching of numeracy. The links with local colleges and the range of visits and visitors to the school have a significant impact on the pupils' learning. There are good links with parents and homework is used effectively to enhance the work carried out in lessons.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a very effective leader and she is well supported by the senior management team. There is a positive ethos that includes a commitment to raising standards. The monitoring of pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy and the employment of additional staff for these areas has been an important factor in raising standards. The accommodation is adequate, although somewhat cramped for the number of pupils, resources are generally satisfactory and there is an adequate number of experienced staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities and makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of the school. Governors visit regularly and take a keen interest in how the school is performing.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff regularly monitor the quality of teaching and there is a clear analysis of the pupils' performance. The staff recognise that pupils' achievements in science are not as high as they might be.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Expenditure is linked to priorities in the school development plan. The school regularly compares its results with those of similar schools and seeks to employ additional staff where appropriate to improve performance. Governors ensure funding is used efficiently and seek advice from the local authority to ensure the principles of best value are applied.

There is an adequate number of teaching and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. The accommodation is adequate although the large number of pupils in some classrooms places constraints on the teaching. The range and quality of resources is generally satisfactory although some of the reading material is dated and in need of replacement. The school applies the principles of best value by comparing its academic results with those of other schools and governors seek quotations for any work that is carried out.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The high standards achieved by their children in reading, writing and number work.• The good quality of teaching.• The support available for the lower achievers.• The good standards of behaviour.• The way moral values are taught	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework given to the children – some too much, some too little.• The number and range of extra-curricular activities.• Information about how well their children are performing.• More opportunities to be involved with their children's education.

The inspection team agrees with the positive view expressed by the parents. The amount and range of homework is good and it enhances the pupils' learning. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Parents have three opportunities to discuss the work their children are doing and the school is considering how the format of written reports can be improved. A number of parents come into school to help with reading and other classroom activities and the school would welcome more help.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the Key Stage 1 test results indicate that the majority of pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with the national average. The results of the national tests show that, at the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils' performance in English and mathematics is well above the national average and above the national average for science. When compared to similar schools, attainment in English is above the average, mathematics is in line and science is below. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level in English is well above the national average and above average in mathematics. In science, the proportion is broadly similar to what is seen nationally.
2. The results for the four years 1996 to 1999 show the performance of the pupils in English is well above the national average, above the national average in mathematics and close to the national average in science. The trend for all three core subjects is broadly in line with the national trend. The results show that over the same period, the performance of boys was above the national average and well above the average for girls. In mathematics, the performance of boys was well above the national average and above average for the girls. There was no difference in performance for science.
3. The school is well on course to meet its literacy and numeracy targets for the Year 2000 and beyond. The targets are challenging but realistic. Inspection evidence reveals that reading is well taught. The pupils use a variety of strategies and become fluent readers by the end of the key stage. They read with confidence for both pleasure and for research. Standards of writing are good. The pupils write neatly, with correct punctuation and for a variety of audiences. They produce poems and evocative writing of a good standard. The standards attained in numeracy at the end of the key stage are high. The pupils achieve good levels of mental arithmetic skills and they use these effectively when carrying out investigative work and during numeracy activities. The pupils' achievements in both literacy and numeracy are good. The National Literacy Hour and the National Numeracy Strategy have been implemented successfully and have helped to raise standards. The range of writing is impressive and numeracy skills are developing well. The pupils' attainment in science by the end of the key stage is in line with national expectations. Fewer pupils than might be expected, however, achieve the higher level. The school recognises that it has not been as effective in teaching science as it has been in English and mathematics.
4. The pupils achieve good standards in information technology by the end of the key stage. They develop good word processing skills and are competent in using computers for data handling and control activities. The regular teaching of information and communication skills has had a significant impact on the pupils' learning. Achievement in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of the key stage.
5. The pupils' achieve high standards in art. The quality of work produced by the pupils using a wide range of media was most impressive. Standards in design and technology, history and geography are also above national expectations and they attain high standards by the end of the key stage. In all of these subjects the pupils are presented with challenging work in all year groups and they achieve well. Their achievements in music and physical education are broadly in line with what is seen nationally. The teachers work hard to make the activities in all subjects challenging and interesting and to ensure they achieve high standards.

6. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Assessment procedures are effective and the needs of these pupils are met through carefully targeted support and work that is planned to meet their needs.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. In the majority of lessons observed the pupils demonstrated a keen interest in their learning. They are well aware of their teachers' high expectations and they respond accordingly. The pupils collaborate well in lessons. They listen carefully and they respond well to the teachers' questions. They present their work neatly. The pupils are helpful and courteous to each other and generous in the praise they offer when good work or effort is drawn to their attention.
8. The behaviour of the pupils is good. Movement around the school is orderly at all times of the day. A few of the older pupils occasionally misbehave in their lessons and when playing but this is rare and it is dealt with sensitively by the staff. At the meeting prior to the inspection a small number of parents expressed their concern over bullying. There was no evidence of this during the inspection although there were isolated incidents of boisterous behaviour by some of the older boys. The school has recently introduced additional mid-day supervision enabling the pupils to utilise all of the playground space at lunchtimes and this is having a good effect on behaviour. The pupils also assist at playtimes with games activities. There have been no exclusions.
9. The pupils' personal development is good. They undertake a range of personal responsibilities that involve them in the organisation of the school's routines. They assist their teachers in the organisation of classroom routines, set out the hall for assemblies and undertake the duties of prefects. All age groups are encouraged to participate in these activities. For example, Year 3 pupils were observed setting out benches and mats for their physical education lessons. The pupils are courteous to all adults in the school, friendly and helpful towards visitors. The pupils settle quickly and sensibly to their lessons. They have excellent conversational skills; discussions held between the inspectors and the pupils were both pleasing and informative occasions.
10. Attendance levels are just above the average for primary schools and the level of unauthorised absence is very low. The school has maintained the good situation reported in the last inspection. The pupils are punctual and demonstrate an evident pleasure in coming to school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is good. Nine per cent of the lessons observed were excellent, 22 per cent were very good, 43 per cent good and 22 per cent satisfactory. Four per cent was unsatisfactory.
12. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very effective. Planning is carried out in year groups and co-ordinated well, ensuring work builds on what has gone before. Classes are set throughout the school and this, coupled with very good planning, has enabled the teachers to match the work very closely to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This enables pupils to make good progress and achieve high standards by the time they leave the school. The teachers plan effectively and ensure that both literacy and numeracy make a significant contribution to the whole curriculum. For example, opportunities are taken to provide the pupils with extended writing activities in history and geography and numeracy skills are developed when carrying out investigative work in science. In all year groups the teachers plan together and this ensures the pupils in different classes in the same year group cover similar work. Good use is made of teacher expertise. Lessons are planned to enable the members of staff with

particular subject strengths take the lessons for the whole year group. This too has a positive impact on the pupils' achievements.

13. In the best lessons the teachers have very good subject knowledge, high expectations of behaviour and present the pupils with challenging and enjoyable activities. In these lessons, the pupils are very keen to improve their understanding and enjoy the activities. For example, in an excellent Year 3 literacy lesson the pupils were required to write a letter describing the characters in a nursery story. They did so with obvious enjoyment and motivation, while improving their ability to use appropriate adjectives, to describe emotions and feelings. The preparation for the lesson was outstanding and excellent questioning by the teacher ensured all of the pupils made excellent progress. In an excellent Year 5 numeracy lesson, the teacher's planning and questioning ensured the pupils understood the task, and the positive delivery made the lesson fun, giving the pupils every opportunity to learn and succeed. Very good quality teaching was seen in most areas of the curriculum. In geography and history the teachers' enthusiasm for the subjects, clear planning and structure enabled the pupils to achieve very high standards. Homework is used effectively to support learning throughout the school and has a positive impact on the pupils' achievements.
14. The overall quality of teaching in science is satisfactory with some good teaching observed but it does not reach the high standards observed in literacy and numeracy. This is partly due to the fact that the teachers do not plan work that builds effectively on what has been previously taught. The school has recognised the need to improve the assessment and tracking of the pupils' progress in science in order to raise standards. A significant minority of the pupils benefit from the provision of free music tuition. There is particularly good teaching in history, geography, art and design and technology and this enables the pupils to achieve high standards in these subjects.
15. There is very little unsatisfactory teaching. Where it does occur, it is usually related to the teacher's failure to manage the more challenging behaviour of a minority of the pupils. As a result, too much time is spent on disciplining them, affecting the pace of the lesson and ultimately the progress made by the whole class.
16. There is good support and teaching for those pupils with special educational needs. Assessment procedures are implemented effectively to determine the future needs of all pupils. The lower achieving pupils are often taught in smaller groups and a learning support assistant provides additional support. These measures assist the pupils in making good progress throughout the school.

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

17. The school's curriculum is broad and balanced and includes good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. All statutory requirements are met, including sex education and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school has a well-planned curriculum providing a good quality and range of learning opportunities; this has a positive impact on the progress of the pupils. A high priority is given to developing the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The curriculum for the pupils is enriched and enlivened by visitors to the school. These include local clergy, school governors, members of the Rotary Club, and the school nurse. Together with visiting artists, musicians, and actors they provide stimulating learning experiences contributing to the personal development of the pupils as individuals and members of the community. The extra-curricular activities offered to the pupils are good and include sport and music, line dancing and chess whilst the wide range of educational visits enrich the pupils' learning.

18. A key issue from the previous report was to ensure that the new schemes of work were securely implemented. This has been fully carried out and further review and monitoring of the curriculum has been instigated, in particular in English and mathematics. In some subjects, units from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work are being used and the school intends to fully review the use of these schemes during the implementation of the latest curriculum changes. Teachers plan in their year groups and the plans are monitored on a weekly basis by the headteacher. Lessons are carefully prepared to provide for the needs of all the pupils. The activities are varied and good use is made of individual, group and whole class teaching. In particular, the organisation of the literacy and numeracy classes into similar ability sets is providing all pupils with a good range of high quality learning opportunities that have a positive impact on their learning.
19. The school has very good links with the community. The links with the secondary school are well established with a range of joint teaching initiatives and pre-transfer visits. Links with the infant school are developing; they are strongest in the quality of pastoral information and the sharing of information regarding levels of achievements is improving.
20. The school promotes itself well and in return receives support from local business groups, the churches, colleges and other training establishments, and visiting artists. Pre-Christmas activities are organised with considerable flair and this is made possible by the combined efforts of the school, parents, local churches including the Salvation Army and Rotarians. This enhances the sense of community that is evident in the school.
21. The school's provision for spiritual, moral social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development is promoted successfully through the curriculum areas of art, music, history and dance. Through religious education lessons and in collective worship, the pupils are provided with knowledge and insight into the religious beliefs of Christians and those of other religions. There are good links with local churches and the Methodist minister is a regular visitor to the school. In assemblies, there is always time for personal reflection and opportunities are taken to raise spiritual awareness during acts of collective worship.
22. Provision for the moral development of the pupils is good. The school's behaviour policy is effective and there is a strong moral framework for the pupils. The school successfully teaches the principles that distinguish right from wrong. There are distinct, clearly documented structures in place to promote good behaviour and each class has its own rules and aspirations displayed. A weekly assembly to celebrate success reinforces good behaviour.
23. The social development of the pupils is good. They contribute actively to the life of the school and are taught to take responsibility from an early age. The older pupils are involved in a range of tasks that assist the smooth running of the school. There are good links with a variety of local industries and agencies that bring mutual benefit. For example, two members of the community teach chess to a group of pupils and the school musicians participate at various functions. Over the year, the school supports several charities.
24. The cultural development of the pupils is of a very high standard and is successfully promoted through a range of activities both within and outside lessons. The school makes good use of the local area as a resource for the pupils' learning and this develops understanding of the community and its cultural heritage. Appreciation of their own and other cultures is furthered by lessons in history, geography and religious education. Visits to historical sites and visiting performers and theatre groups make a very positive contribution that widens and develops the pupils' cultural development. A good example of this is the increased knowledge and understanding the pupils

have of Kenya through the work done with an ex-pupil who brings her personal experience of that country.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

25. The school's assessment procedures and the way in which assessment information is used to guide curricular planning and to support the pupils' academic progress in literacy and numeracy are strengths of the school.
26. There are very good arrangements in place to track the progress of the pupils in English and mathematics and these are used effectively to raise standards. When the pupils enter the school good use is made of the Key Stage 1 assessment tasks and tests results to group the pupils into similar ability sets for literacy and numeracy lessons. Soon after their entry to the school further information is gained from standardised reading and non-verbal reasoning tests. Throughout the key stage a range of standardised tests is used to track the pupils' progress. The information gained is analysed carefully and used to set and group the pupils, and to establish targets for learning. An analysis of the end-of-key-stage test results is used to identify areas for development with future classes. Scrutiny of the teachers' planning shows that they are clear about what the pupils are to learn, particularly in numeracy and literacy lessons and how this will be achieved. In science lessons the assessment procedures are not sufficiently rigorous and the teaching and learning objectives do not have the same sharp focus. The very good use that is made of assessment information in literacy and numeracy makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved and the good progress the pupils.
27. The school has good procedures for promoting the safety and well being of the pupils. The child protection policy complies with locally agreed procedures. It is managed effectively and parents have clear guidance about the school's legal responsibilities. The staff have an appropriate understanding of the procedures.
28. Staff are well informed about those pupils who have specific medical needs and care arrangements are well established. However, limitation of space means that there is no dedicated area in which first aid can be given. The teachers are alert to their responsibilities for the safety of the pupils, including safe practices in science, physical education and in hygiene during food technology lessons.
29. There is very good support from teachers and classroom assistants to enable all of the pupils to have full access to the curriculum; this enhances the progress they make. Support for their personal development is good and for the pupils who have special educational needs it is very good. There are no pupils in the school who are at an early stage of learning English. The monitoring of attendance is good and this has a positive impact on the pupils' attendance and punctuality.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

30. The response to the questionnaires distributed before the inspection indicates a high level of confidence in the school. Parents acknowledge the approachability of staff and the efforts they make to ensure that school is an enjoyable experience for their children. The parents expressed some concerns regarding the behaviour of a few children, suggesting that some bullying took place. No bullying was observed during the inspection although some pupils did engage in

boisterous behaviour. This apart, the school is highly regarded by parents for the quality of the educational experience it provides.

31. The school has good links with parents and carers. Good quality information is shared at consultation evenings. A few parents help in the classrooms and in the library. Information and consultation about the curriculum developments and health education is shared.
32. The annual reports parents receive are less effective in telling the reader what it is that the individual has achieved or what has been studied and the school is in the process of revising these.
33. The governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements. It contains contributions from the chairman; each committee also explains what it has done to assist in the management of the school.
34. The school is effective in seeking the involvement of the parents in their child's reading and homework. The introduction of the home/school agreement was very well managed. The good consultation processes were combined with help from parents on design, presentation and layout. The introduction of regular homework and the involvement of parents has had a positive impact on pupils' learning. The school brochure gives parents clear information about the school's routines. The parents of children who have difficulty in their learning are kept informed and consulted.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the staff and governors. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Where appropriate, new schemes of work have been introduced and implemented. The National Literacy Hour and the National Numeracy Strategy have been implemented successfully. Effective procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment have been introduced. The layout of the school has also been improved, enclosing some of the open plan spaces to make better teaching spaces.
36. The headteacher has rightly given priority to the introduction of national initiatives and this has had an impact on the standards achieved in both literacy and numeracy. However, through effective management procedures, all aspects of the curriculum are given sufficient coverage. Co-ordinators manage their subjects well and have been effective in ensuring the pupils achieve well in many areas of the curriculum. The quality of teaching is monitored effectively, the focus having been on literacy and numeracy.
37. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. The Chair and Vice-chair visit regularly and discuss issues with the headteacher. The governors regularly receive curriculum updates at their meetings and some governors have observed literacy and numeracy lessons, enabling them to report to their colleagues. The governors are aware of the literacy and numeracy targets and take a keen interest in the school's success. The committees meet regularly and the governors demonstrate a clear understanding of what is happening within school.
38. The school development plan is a good working document that gives clear direction to the school. It gives appropriate priority to the school's areas for development and has relevant time scales, costings and criteria by which success can be judged. The governors and staff are involved in the preparation and implementation of the plan and its progress is reviewed regularly. There is a very positive ethos and the learning environment is supportive; this is reflected in the high

standards of behaviour and the close relationships that exist between staff and pupils. The school is very successful in meeting its aims.

39. The school has a very clear understanding of its responsibilities to make proper use of its resources including funding. The planning process, prior to the establishment of the budget is linked to educational priorities; subsequent management of this is supervised periodically by the governors. Specific grants are used for their intended purposes.
40. The governors and headteacher carefully considered the proposals to allocate additional monies to the school under the fair funding initiative. They concluded that the potential savings would not equate with the additional demands that would be made on the headteacher's time. Applying the principles of best value they resolved to buy back into the full range of local authority services.
41. There is an appropriate number of qualified staff to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. These are successfully deployed to make best use of specialist knowledge and expertise. This is particularly effective where teachers in classes with the same age group of children work and plan closely together. This ensures children consistently receive a similar curriculum and standards of teaching and learning are raised as a result. The governors' decision to employ extra teachers to support the literacy and numeracy strategies where children are grouped according to their prior attainment is very effective as it gives pupils of all levels of ability the opportunity to succeed. A particular strength is the way in which the curriculum is made more meaningful to the pupils with special educational needs. They benefit from working in the smaller groups often with the additional support of a well-informed classroom assistant. Appropriately trained classroom assistants also support the groups where pupils have been identified for additional literacy support. This is effective in raising the pupils' attainment. The administrators and midday staff work effectively, enabling the day-to day life of the school to operate efficiently.
42. The range and quality of educational resources is satisfactory overall with improvement in information technology, religious education and geography. The recent installation of a computer suite has had a positive impact on standards in information technology. The history and art curriculum is enriched by educational visits and visitors to the school. This is instrumental in raising the standards in these subjects.
43. The previous report expressed concerns about the layout of the building affecting teaching and learning. The headteacher, staff and governors have given careful consideration to this issue. Classrooms are now enclosed and areas carpeted to reduce noise levels and improve opportunities for quiet reflection. Effective use is made of all available space including the hall. Standards in information technology are supported by the opportunity for each class to use the computer suite on a regular basis and, although the reference library is small, it is used well by the pupils for personal research. Additional class libraries are easily accessible to the pupils but the well-worn condition of some of the books and the range and quality of many books does little to excite some of the pupils who choose to read books from home or to visit the local library. In contrast, the very good quality displays in most classrooms and around the school effectively support all areas of the curriculum. Literacy, art and history have a high profile in most displays and act as very good examples of the standards that can be achieved by the pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve standards further and the quality of the education provision, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- raise standards in science by;
 - (i) improving procedures for monitoring the teaching of science
 - (ii) implement procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
9	22	43	22	4		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	272
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	24

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	30	28	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	26	29
	Girls	23	23	22
	Total	48	49	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83(72)	84(66)	88(83)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	26	28
	Girls	26	24	26
	Total	53	50	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	91(74)	86(77)	93(79)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	271
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Average class size	34

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
	£
Total income	363,197
Total expenditure	353,738
Expenditure per pupil	1,325
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,850
Balance carried forward to next year	27,309

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	272
Number of questionnaires returned	91

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	49	8	1	
My child is making good progress in school.	38	57	4		
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	64	4	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	56	12	5	4
The teaching is good.	36	58	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	66	12	4	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	42	7	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	49	5		1
The school works closely with parents.	17	59	18	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	35	56	1	4	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	60	4	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	52	15	9	10

Other issues raised by parents

A small number expressed concern over bullying. A significant number expressed concerns over the safety of their children on entry and exit to the school due to the traffic.

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

ENGLISH

44. The results of the end-of key-stage tests for eleven-year-olds show attainment that is above the national average and above that in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. Inspection evidence supports the view that the pupils' attainment in reading and writing is above average by the end of Key Stage 2. Attainment in speaking and listening is also above average. Performance in both reading and writing has kept pace with the national trend over four years and is broadly in line. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection with evidence of improvements in the pupils' handwriting and presentation.
45. Standards of literacy are above the national average and above the standards in most other schools in all aspects. The pupils read fluently and accurately and discuss the content of their books with interest and understanding. Higher achievers read expressively with lively interest and have well developed research skills. Writing, often of a good quality, is produced across the curriculum for a range of purposes and audiences. Challenging texts are used to support the pupils in the development of extended and independent writing. The pupils, including lower achievers are encouraged to use words of increasing complexity in their writing as they progress through the school. Effectively structured work in the literacy hour supports this development very well. Writing and poetry are a particular strength and examples of high quality work can be seen in subjects throughout the school. The overall standard of handwriting, punctuation and spelling is good.
46. By the age of eleven, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are better than expected for their age. The pupils in Year 3 are highly motivated by the teachers' excellent rendition of 'Little Red Riding Hood' and their expression and interpretation of the story duplicated and attempted to reach the same high standards of delivery. Lower achievers in the 'set' group of Year 4 pupils were engrossed as they listened to the teacher's enthusiastic delivery of a story ending written by a pupil. The teacher encouraged them to listen carefully and used their interest to talk about the improvements in punctuation and spelling that could be made. They were able to ask and answer questions with confidence and transferred these skills to their own writing in the lesson that followed. In Year 5, the pupils listened carefully to narrative poems such as 'Matilda' by Hilary Bell and expressed themselves clearly when discussing the moral of the story. In Year 6 during a discussion about an extract from a Sherlock Holmes book 'The Red Headed League' the pupils were eager to articulate their suspicions as to who might have committed the crime. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are sensitively encouraged to contribute during lessons other than literacy. During an art lesson for example, skilled adult support enabled the pupils with special educational needs to contribute productively in discussions and to evaluate each other's work. In history, a group of Year 6 pupils express themselves confidently and clearly when presenting their research on aspects of social history during Queen Victoria's reign.
47. By the age of eleven the pupils read with interest, confidence, fluency and accuracy. They are eager to discuss at length their reading habits and choice of books. The higher achieving pupils explain the content of stories eloquently and have a lively interest in a range of reading material. They use their skills to research independently. The pupils have a good range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and often correct themselves when they make a mistake or skim the text to find cues. In writing, while lower achievers sometimes struggle with their spelling and punctuation, most of the pupils try hard to write with imagination. Higher achievers produce work of a good quality, showing a sense of form, in for example their poems about 'Hopes and

Dreams'. The pupils have a very well-developed feeling for atmosphere and are able to choose words that evoke the response they want. For instance, in an excellent piece of writing about Aztec Sacrifice, a Year 4 pupil writes 'memories of others who had also died, my heart pounds, the burning sun on my back'. The pupils write for a variety of purposes with appropriate awareness of their audience. In Year 6 there is some very thoughtful and evocative writing entitled, 'Nobody Understands Me'. It contains moving and often poignant views about world affairs. The pupils improve their writing through drafting and editing and through using a word processing program. Parents felt that their children make good progress in writing and this confirmed by the inspection evidence.

48. The pupils, including higher achievers and those with special educational needs, attain good standards in English throughout the school. Analysis of the test results at seven is used to group the pupils and the school's effective implementation of the literacy hour, consolidates, extends and develops their prior learning. In Year 3 for example, during a shared text session, the teacher targeted questions very expertly and, as a result, the pupils enjoyed talking about words and subsequently used interesting adjectives in their writing. In Year 4, the pupils develop their skills and are able to articulate facts and opinions in examples of mature writing such as the excellent poems on the Battle of Salamis. Work on grammar and comprehension is taught well. The higher achieving pupils in particular show an increasing awareness of the importance of developing more complex sentences and sustaining ideas in order to hold the reader's interest. Because of the frequent opportunities provided through the literacy hour to read aloud and the planned time to read silently, the pupils are able to tackle increasingly difficult words so that by Year 5 and Year 6 they read with expression, obvious enjoyment and understanding. Literacy skills have a high profile throughout the curriculum and there are many opportunities to use reference books and information technology such as CD-ROMs. The pupils were frequently seen in the library researching information in their own time or poring enthusiastically over facts about the Aztecs or the Spanish Armada in lessons.
49. The quality of teaching is very good overall with examples of excellent teaching in Year 3 and Year 4. The one unsatisfactory lesson was affected by the inability of the teacher to discipline a number of pupils whose behaviour had a negative impact on the work of the whole class. Overall, the teachers have a thorough knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy. The planning and content of lessons is clearly focussed and provides challenging learning experiences. Expectations are high and questions and tasks are matched well to the different levels of attainment. In the excellent lessons seen, the teacher's enthusiasm and expertise were evident throughout. Excellent relationships with the class ensured all of the pupils were highly motivated, very well behaved and learning opportunities were maximised. In the very good lessons the teachers used interesting, well-focused questions and well-prepared resources. There was very good pupil management. Occasionally the lessons lack pace and challenge, allowing a few pupils to become distracted. This results in careless mistakes in writing and presentation for some of the older pupils. Support staff play a full and effective part in lessons, enabling lower achievers and pupils with special educational needs to take a full and active part. The marking of written work is constructive and sets out clear targets for improvement. Teachers in almost all cases expect high standards of presentation. Homework is used very effectively to further develop confidence and skill in reading and to promote the habits of independent study and enquiry.
50. The co-ordinator has overseen the effective implementation of the literacy hour. Good use is made of a range of assessments to track the pupils' progress and to set realistic targets for attainment. The school has a clear picture of the pupils' attainment on entry and monitors standards year-on-year. Some classroom and reference libraries still contain old and unattractive stock and are not as stimulating and inviting as they might be. Attractive and well-produced

displays of the pupils' written work in all subjects provide very good examples of standards achieved by the pupils.

MATHEMATICS

51. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils' attainment in Mathematics is well above the national average. This is confirmed by the 1999 end-of-key stage results. Four fifths of the pupils reached Level 4 or above, and a third of the pupils reached the higher Level 5.
52. Standards are high in the current Year 6. The majority of the pupils have a good understanding of number operations and can use them appropriately. For instance, the pupils were observed carrying out inverse operations to check their subtraction of numbers when working to two decimal places. They are confident in rounding and estimating numbers to the nearest ten, hundred or thousand. They recognise percentages as fractions of a hundred and have a good understanding of decimals and fractions. They are able to apply and use this knowledge when problem solving. They have an understanding of negative numbers and are able to measure angles. They have investigated the nets of shapes and rotational symmetry of simple shapes.
53. The school takes every opportunity to link the mathematics curriculum with other subject areas. For example, when designing a Victorian puppet theatre the pupils used their measuring skills well and applied their understanding of calculating area to construct the finished product. The pupils performed a series of aerobic exercises in physical education and the results were used in an information technology project on data handling. In experiments on how materials dissolve, the pupils use their understanding of capacity to good effect when calculating and comparing their results.
54. The previous inspection identified standards in mathematics as above average. It also judged mathematical knowledge and skills to be well integrated into the curriculum. The school has built on and developed these strengths. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, together with the emphasis the school has given to mental arithmetic, has raised standards even higher.
55. The overall quality of teaching is good. Lessons range in quality from excellent to one unsatisfactory lesson with most lessons being good or better. The teachers use good techniques to teach mental strategies when calculating number problems. In all lessons teachers provide tasks that are closely matched to the pupils' ability. This is a particular strength of the teaching because lessons move from whole class activities and discussion to more focused number work, which is challenging and very well matched to the pupils' ability. This is also helped by the setting of mathematics across the school, which is very successful. Most lessons are well paced with a good balance of mental arithmetic and written investigations. The pupils with special educational needs have relevant and targeted support and the work is matched to their specific learning needs.
56. In the majority of lessons the pupils make very good progress in their learning because of high quality teaching. However, there are occasions where the pace of the lesson fails to ensure that the higher achieving pupils are sufficiently challenged or where poor behaviour is allowed to impede progress. But generally the pupils have high standards of behaviour, sustain concentration and work very effectively together. The teacher reminds the pupils of the objectives at the beginning of the lesson and this enables all pupils to check their learning. All the pupils do homework. This is very relevant to the work done in the class and the pupils receive good feedback from the teachers on the work they have done at home.

57. The mathematics curriculum is very well planned and the school has been successful in implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. There is a very strong emphasis on developing the pupils' numeracy skills using mental arithmetic and quick-recall techniques. The mathematics co-ordinator has scrutinised the pupils' work and visited classrooms to monitor the progress that the pupils are making. The school has a very effective assessment system in place; targets are set and the pupils' performance in national tests is analysed to enable teachers to focus on gaps in learning. For example, the pupils' ability to check and explain their methods and answers is an area of the curriculum that has received special attention and the pupils' work shows considerable improvement. Resources are plentiful and accessible. Every class has a broad range of equipment and supporting materials to help the pupils develop a greater understanding of numbers, shapes and measures.

SCIENCE

58. By the end of the key stage attainment in science is in line with the national average and the pupils make satisfactory progress. The 1999 National test results are above the national average although they have fallen in comparison with standards both nationally and with the school's end-of-key stage results in English and mathematics. The school recognises this and has begun to identify the reasons. Recently the school has placed great emphasis on the implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, including very good procedures for assessing and tracking the pupils' progress. The same procedures have not been applied so rigorously to science and targets for improvement have not been established in the same way. There has been little monitoring and evaluation of science teaching and learning over the past two years due to the emphasis placed on literacy and mathematics. The school does not have a clear idea of the science topics studied in the infant school and does not build successfully on the pupils' prior learning on entry to the school.
59. In order to raise standards the school has analysed the results from last year's national end-of-key stage tests and has identified the problems that a minority of pupils have with understanding and using scientific vocabulary correctly. The pupils in the present Year 6 are undertaking a program of revision of the science curriculum and each pupil has been provided with a study guide to support this work. The subject co-ordinator has matched assessment activities from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) science document to the school's own scheme of work, although this assessment work is not yet being fully carried out. The school has decided to implement fully the QCA model scheme of work.
60. The pupils are generally interested in science and confidently offer answers to questions. They work well independently and in small groups and some show initiative when planning how to record their ideas and results. By the end of the key stage when they are given an opportunity to design their own experiment to test how much salt will dissolve in different temperatures of water they are able to carry this out and to predict what will happen. The pupils can explain what makes their test fair and some of them are able to suggest ways in which the test could be improved. The pupils can record their observations and explain what they have found out drawing on their knowledge and understanding.
61. The pupils can name the different parts of plants, describe the life cycle of some plants and explain how seeds are dispersed. They know the names of the internal parts of human bodies and understand how joints work. The pupils learn about the importance of a balanced diet and the health value of different foods. When carrying out an experiment using eggshells, the pupils test the effect of different liquids on tooth enamel and are able to apply their knowledge to ways of caring for their teeth. By the time they are eleven the pupils can identify living creatures using keys and understand the feeding relationships between a range of plants and animals. The pupils

find out how to separate three different solids, they recognise different materials and some are able to identify the properties of a range of materials. They know and can talk about the materials that are used in building and understand the meaning of 'transparent' and 'rigid'. They know what is needed to complete an electrical circuit and can build circuits that include buzzers and switches. The pupils are able to name common sources of light and investigate how heating and cooling can cause irreversible and reversible changes.

62. The overall quality of teaching is sound with some good teaching observed. Where the better teaching is seen the teachers use appropriate vocabulary and questioning to extend the pupils' understanding of the topics; they provide challenging activities and ensure a good pace to the lessons. This has a positive impact on the progress made by the pupils. The tasks for some of the pupils encourage independence through them making their own predictions and by organising their own methods of carrying out the experiment and recording the results.
63. The school has a policy and a scheme of work in place in which the elements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study are covered. However, although the scheme allows for progression in knowledge, understanding and the development of scientific skills, these features are not consistently applied. The headteacher regularly monitors the teachers' plans, but the curriculum co-ordinator has had little opportunity to evaluate the way science is taught in all the classes. Assessment procedures are limited and are not fully used to inform teaching and learning in the subject. These features have a negative impact on the pupils' learning and prevent the pupils from making the better progress observed in literacy and numeracy.
64. There is an adequate range of resources to support the planned curriculum and some use is made of information technology, as when the pupils discover facts about spiders. The pupils visit the neighbouring high school to use some of the science facilities; for example they experience the use of microscopes when studying the parts of plants. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equality of access to the science curriculum.

ART

65. By the end of the key stage, standards in art are above the level expected for pupils of this age. Evidence of much high quality work in photographs and displays shows the good progress that the pupils make in their learning in each year group and as they move through the school. For the oldest pupils this is most noticeable in pastel work in the style of Turner, their pencil sketches and in their clay work of 'African Masks'. In all of this work high standards are achieved.
66. The pupils have very good opportunities to explore a wide range of media and undertake three-dimensional work. They are taught a broad range of techniques and how to develop their skill in using them. From Year 3, the pupils develop their understanding of artists and their styles so that by eleven, they produce detailed and accurate landscapes in the style of Turner showing a good grasp of the possibilities of using shades of pastel colours to create depth and shadow in their work. Their drawing skills and manipulation of three-dimensional materials are well developed so that African masks drawn in pencil and crafted in clay are accurate and detailed. The pupils produce effective artwork to support other areas of the curriculum such as Celtic knotwork designs, paintings of Tudors in history and black and white pastel drawings of wheels and cogs entitled 'Human Endeavour' linked to both the science and history curriculum.
67. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good gains in their learning. Lessons in Year 3 on observational drawing and evaluating artists' work were examples of effective teaching, very good pupil management and, as a result, good standards of work. The pupils were extending their skill in observational drawing by using charcoal after producing detailed still-life drawings of fruit. Exemplars of artists' work and those of the parallel class were used to provide a very good stimulus for teaching the skills. The pupils were engrossed in their

work and produced drawings demonstrating their skills in shading, depth, texture and accuracy. Excellent use of the pupils' evaluation of their own and others' work led to further improved quality and determination to succeed. In the parallel Year 3 class the teacher encourages pupils' recall of the names and techniques used by artists such as Mondrian and Matisse. Using this, and personal experiences, she sets the scene for a lesson in developing visual literacy where pupils, including those with special educational needs, work in pairs to evaluate a range of art styles and their personal response to them. The challenging work was carefully thought out, introduced sensitively, and managed very effectively. The excellent use of resources resulted in pupils extending their skills in evaluation and developing their aesthetic and spiritual awareness through the appreciation of art. By the time they are in Year 4 the pupils experiment with tools and techniques and produce landscapes of a high standard. The teachers explain the difference between technique, style and method and give the pupils the opportunity to exercise choice and develop their own learning.

68. The pupils enjoy art and work hard to develop their skills. They are enthusiastic, persevere with work and listen carefully when being taught new skills and techniques. They work sensibly, responsively and responsibly when working with visitors; for example in learning how to make a willow sculptor or working with ceramic and glass artists. The work produced is of high quality.
69. The quality of teaching is very good overall with examples of excellent teaching that produces highly motivated pupils and consistently high standards of work. The teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and well-developed skills. They plan effectively using the well-balanced and detailed programme developed by the co-ordinator to support the art curriculum. The choice of tasks and materials show that teachers have high expectations. A good balance is achieved between teaching skills, allowing the pupils to explore a range of techniques and developing their own style. Continuous assessment during the lesson means that the teacher supports the pupils in the development of their work such as in Year 5 identifying common errors when cutting out difficult animal silhouettes to achieve perspective or supporting self-evaluation so that the pupils do not become despondent with their efforts. The joint planning between classes in the same year group is very effective in ensuring that the pupils experience a similar curriculum and both pupils and teachers benefit by sharing expertise. The teacher makes good use of additional expertise provided by the school assistant where this is available. Teachers value the work of the pupils and it is very effectively displayed throughout the school. A good range of resources is used well with additional challenging resources provided by visits to or visits from artists and sculptors.
70. The very well organised, knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator effectively supports both the staff and the subject. A strength of the art curriculum is its use in many other subjects such as English, mathematics, science, information technology, religious education, history and geography. The school has a tradition of inviting artists to work in the school and visits as well as visitors provide an impressive range of experiences in art. Displays of pupils' work such as glasswork, African masks, and ceramics, particularly the 'Creation Pictures' and glass sculptors of the pupils' hands provide stimulating exemplars of work. The pupils enter local competitions and provide support for local events such as the Millennium Exhibition and the local fair. A very comprehensive portfolio of work provides clear evidence of the standards of work achieved by the pupils as they progress through the school. The art curriculum makes a strong and effective contribution to the pupils' social, cultural aesthetic and personal development as a result.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

71. By the end of the key stage, standards in design and technology are above the level expected for pupils of this age. Whilst it was not possible to observe any lessons during the week of the inspection there is evidence of high quality work in photographs and displays around the school. This evidence shows the pupils make good progress in all year groups and that they are presented with a wide range of stimulating and exciting opportunities. The good standards that were commented on at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.
72. The pupils are given an excellent introduction to design and technology through the school's long-standing links with a local college. The pupils from Year 3 visit the college where, after an appropriate emphasis on safety, they are taught skills of bricklaying, carpentry and plumbing. Other visits have a significant impact on the pupils' learning. For example, pupils in Year 5 were invited to visit a teachers' centre where they made 'Millennium Bugs' and enhanced their understanding of hydraulics and pneumatics. There is ample evidence that the pupils are given opportunities to improve their design skills. As part of the history curriculum, the Year 3 pupils designed and made Saxon broaches and as part of the science topic they designed and made healthy sandwiches. The Year 3 pupils design and make bird shelters and the pupils in Year 6 design and make a puppet theatre. Good use is made of visitors to the school as on the occasion when the pupils worked on making a 'Millennium Dome'.
73. The subject is managed by a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She is rightly proud of the work carried out by the pupils and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved throughout the school. The high profile of the subject, including photographs of the Year 3 pupils' work on the Internet, and detailed information recording the work, contributes to the pupils' good levels of achievement.

GEOGRAPHY

74. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. However, evidence from the teachers' plans and the pupils' written work, along with discussions with the pupils indicate that standards in geography are above national expectations and that the pupils are making good progress in this subject.
75. By the time the pupils leave school they have studied various localities and have made comparisons between the human and physical features. They have reached their conclusions using both primary and secondary sources. For example they compare the settlements and local landscape of Kinver using local fieldwork with those of Barmouth. In their studies of weather the pupils progress from gathering simple data in Year 3 to collecting and recording evidence from their own weather stations and comparing their results against data from other countries. From these studies they make good progress in understanding some of the factors that influence climate. They have a good knowledge of the rivers of the UK and know for example, the main towns through which the river Severn flows. From this work they make good progress in understanding the conflicting demands of industry and leisure regarding man's exploitation of water. The pupils understand scale, interpret map symbols and can use and identify features on a variety of maps.
76. The school has addressed the weakness in the development of skills, identified in the previous inspection. There is now an effective scheme that ensures that geographical skills and concepts are systemically developed. The content of the topics chosen is now clearly linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study and a range of appropriate resources is available to support this.

77. The teachers plan work very effectively and ensure a good range of appropriate resources is available to support the pupils' learning. For example, in an excellent lesson on making comparisons between different life-styles, the variety of interesting resources available and the teacher's challenging questioning ensured that the pupils made good progress in their ability to extract information and reach conclusions by interrogating and researching a wide range of data.
78. The pupils show interest and enjoyment in their geography lessons. Apart from one lesson, where poor behaviour was not effectively controlled, they listen attentively and offer sensible and considered responses to questions. The good links with other areas of the curriculum such as history or information technology enhance the pupils' learning.

HISTORY

79. By the time the pupils leave the school, standards in history are above the level expected by pupils aged eleven. The pupils are given a good range of experiences to develop their understanding of the past. As a result, the pupils' written work demonstrates a lively interest in past events.
80. The pupils make good progress through broadening their knowledge and understanding of past societies and developing their understanding of the chronology of events. The pupils in Year 3 learn about the Romans and describe the differences between Roman Baths and the present day. They ask and answer questions, and use historical sources to write accounts. They are beginning to identify the different ways the past is represented and use this to make contrasts between then and now. In a Year 5 project on the Tudors the pupils write letters from 'a ships' boy' combining historical fact and imagination very well in their interpretation of historical events. Independent research is used effectively to deduct information about the 'Mary Rose'. Evidence of written work in books and on display show that lower achieving pupils and pupils with special educational needs make very good attempts to complete work of good quality, research information and use evidence. By the age of eleven, the pupils increase their ability to select information from a range of resources, using historical evidence effectively to make deductions, for example Elizabeth Tudors' reactions to events leading up to and during the Spanish Armada. The pupils recall facts such as reasons for the Spanish attaché visiting Britain, religious differences and other related facts of the time.
81. Achievement over time is good due to the structure of the planned experiences in each year group. The pupils have the opportunity to 'live' history and step back in time by visiting the Black Country Museum and by taking part in activities like 'Roman or Tudor Day'. The pupils have opportunities to dress up as Roman soldiers or listen to Henry Tudor extolling the virtues of his reign. The pupils, staff and parents re-enact experiences of the past and learn about life and historical events through both visits and visitors to the school.
82. The pupils have a keen, lively and enthusiastic response to history. They talk knowledgeably about events in the past, listen carefully to information and contribute articulate, sensible and often perceptive comments in discussion. The majority of pupils carefully present written work as they take pride in demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The pupils are motivated to research information independently. The pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively as a result of careful grouping, individual help and practical activities in which they have an opportunity to succeed
83. The pupils' good progress and positive attitudes reflect the overall good quality of teaching. Lessons are well planned with a clear sense of the intended learning. Effective questions, good

subject knowledge, pace and classroom management are also features that support good progress in consolidating, developing and acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. Good resources to stimulate and support learning, including a very good range of visits and visitors are effectively organised and exploited. Literacy and numeracy are used well to support the curriculum; marking is often effective in supporting development. The effective teaching is promoted by good co-ordination of the work and collaborative planning. There is clear documented guidance on what is to be taught and good support for teachers in terms of advice and resources. Work in history also contributes effectively to the social and cultural elements in the curriculum.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

84. At the time of the last inspection the pupils' attainment in information technology was said to be in line with or above the national expectations. By the end of the key stage, the pupils' attainment is above the national expectations in all aspects of the subject.
85. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have good word processing skills; a secure grasp of control technology and good skills in using data handling programs to produce graphs and charts. The youngest pupils in Year 3 are fluent in the basic operation of the computer, using the keyboard and the mouse with confidence. They use the mouse to position the cursor accurately, understand how to use menus correctly and can enter and exit programs safely. All of the pupils are proficient in saving, correcting and printing text.
86. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in all year groups. They all acquire a wide and secure range of skills as they move through the school. The progress the pupils make is clearly linked to the quality of teaching they receive. In each year group, the expertise of the staff is utilised fully. The teachers with most confidence and skills teach the lessons. In a good Year 3 lesson, the teacher had very good subject knowledge and demonstrated to the pupils the skills of deleting and amending a piece of text. She also taught them how to insert a picture into the text and how to enlarge and reduce it. As a result, the pupils made good progress within the lesson and achieved a level of skill, in word processing, above what might be expected for pupils of their age. Planning is carried out jointly in year groups and this enables teachers who are not delivering the lesson to have a clear understanding of what is being taught.
87. The quality of teachers' planning is good. It is based on the national guidelines and ensures work is demanding and based on the pupils' prior learning. It covers all elements of the subject and computers are used effectively to enhance other areas of the curriculum. For example, the Year 4 pupils develop their research skills in finding out about spiders and they make good progress in writing a set of instructions for the computer to draw a spider's web. There are good links with literacy, with many examples of word processing used for stories and poems. Data handling skills are enhanced through links with physical education when exercise information is converted into graphs. The pupils have very good attitudes towards the subject and they enjoy learning new computer skills. They co-operate very well with each other, an important feature in classes with large numbers of pupils.
88. The school has the benefit of a computer suite and very effective use is made of this facility. All of the classes use it on a regular basis. The teachers make effective use of the time, building on the pupils' previously learned skills and enabling them to make good progress throughout the school. Some of the computers are dated but the teachers' effective planning ensures that appropriate equipment is available for specific tasks. As part of the NGFL project, the computer suite is to be refurbished and this will enable existing computers to be relocated within the

classrooms. Very good use is made of portable word processing machines that allow work to be instigated or continued within the classroom. The subject is managed effectively, the co-ordinator has a good overview of what is being taught and supports colleagues where necessary.

MUSIC

89. By the end of the key stage, attainment in music is broadly in line with national expectations and the pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. At the time of the last inspection, standards in music were high.
90. The pupils in Year 6 understand the difference between, and can recognise, major and minor scales. They put chime bars in order according to pitch and the majority of pupils recognise symbols that flatten and sharpen notes. They sing reasonably well but they appear to lack enthusiasm.
91. The quality of teaching is usually satisfactory and occasionally good and very good. Where the teaching is best the teachers have very good subject knowledge and present the pupils with challenging activities that enables them to improve their learning. For example, in a very good Year 5 lesson, the teacher encouraged the pupils to explore the sound quality of their voices as part of their understanding of timbre and the reading of a musical score. The activity was well presented and challenging and the pupils were managed effectively. As a result, they enjoyed the lesson and made very good progress in their ability to compose and interpret graphical scores. In a good Year 3 lesson, the pupils made gains in their learning through the teacher's detailed questioning and use of musical vocabulary. Where teaching is satisfactory, there is a tendency for the teachers to adhere too rigidly to the scheme of work. This occasionally restricts the pupils' enthusiasm for the lesson and they do not make the progress of which they are capable.
92. The school orchestra meets on a regular basis and performs for concerts and community events and plays a role in developing the pupils' social and cultural skills. Unfortunately, few boys are involved and girls dominate the orchestra. A significant number of the pupils benefit from free brass, woodwind and string tuition and there is a school choir that also performs for school and community functions.
93. The school has adopted a commercial scheme of work. Some of the teachers, particularly those who are less confident in music, do not interpret it accurately and as a result, the pupils' progress is restricted.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

94. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations and all of the pupils, including those with special needs make satisfactory progress. The school makes sound provision for the physical education of its pupils and the curriculum includes gymnastics, dance, games, swimming and outdoor education activities.
95. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils have developed satisfactory gymnastic skills. They understand the importance of warming up and have a good bank of warm-up exercises. In a dance lesson based on "War of the Worlds" the pupils made good progress in expressing mood and interpreting the music imaginatively to create characters and conflict. In a games lesson, the pupils showed good skills travelling with a ball, passing and shooting. By the time they leave school, the pupils have experienced a variety of team and individual games such as netball,

cricket, football and athletics. Records indicate that virtually all pupils are able to swim 25 metres.

96. The teachers plan lessons very thoroughly. They have clear learning objectives and high expectations. In all but one of the six lessons observed, the teachers manage lessons well and a high overall standard of behaviour is maintained. Good use of the pupils' performance is made to demonstrate appropriate teaching points and teachers are very effective in giving good feedback to develop the pupils' learning.
97. The previous inspection identified insufficient opportunities being taken to enable the pupils to develop their own solutions to particular challenges. The teachers are aware of this and in the lessons seen, they use appropriate questions to develop the pupils' imagination and encourage them to find solutions. For example, in a games lesson the teacher's encouragement and insistence on the pupils improving their power and direction when throwing a ball to a distant partner, led to the pupils discovering and employing much better throwing techniques.
98. A range of extra-curricular sports activities provide support for the subject and extend the older pupils' learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. By the end of the key stage standards of attainment in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress, especially in the way they are beginning to relate what they have learned to their own lives.
100. The pupils are aware of special occasions and traditions in the Christian, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh faiths. They understand how important these events are to people of different faiths. For example, they learn about the coming of the Holy Spirit as part of their study of Christian beliefs. They learn about the different features of the local Methodist and Church of England buildings, and the part the churches play in everyday life for many people. They know a good range of Old and New Testament stories and have opportunities to reflect on their meaning and relevance to their own lives. The older pupils consider the features of leadership and learn about important figures from recent history and their missionary and charitable work. Feelings associated with the death of a loved person or pet, and joy at the birth of a baby are explored sensitively. The work in religious education makes a valuable contribution to the pupils' personal and social development.
101. The quality of teaching in religious education is sound with some good teaching observed. Relationships with the pupils are good and the teachers have a sound knowledge of the subjects under discussion. In religious education lessons the teachers frequently increase the pupils' learning in literacy, especially in the use of a wide range of written forms. There are some opportunities for the pupils to extend their speaking and listening skills. In the most successful lesson observed, the teacher brought the story of Esther to life by using the traditional Jewish way of telling the story in a synagogue. She made good use of the pupils' enthusiasm and encouraged participation whilst maintaining good class control and promoting successfully the learning objectives of the lesson. Where the less successful teaching is seen the focus of the teaching is unclear, and there is a lack of opportunity for the pupils to actively participate in the learning situation.
102. The monitoring of classroom practice in religious education has been a target of recent school development plans and the co-ordinator has taken the opportunities provided to evaluate the

delivery of the school's scheme of work against the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. She has identified assessment opportunities in relation to the topics that are taught and these are being incorporated into the teachers' planning. The school's resources for religious education include a satisfactory range of artefacts and books, and good use of local church buildings is made to extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity.