

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PETER'S C E (C) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stonnall, Walsall

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124277

Headteacher: Mr K R Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 8th – 10th January 2001

Inspection number: 191450

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Main Street
Stonnall
Walsall
West Midlands

Postcode: WS9 9EE

Telephone number: 01543 372060

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr G Evans

Date of previous inspection: 10th February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr C Kessell 20695	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Mr K Oliver 01329	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs N Bee 18709	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Music Special educational needs Equal opportunities English as an additional language	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Mr M Wehrmeyer 15015	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education The Foundation Stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 139 pupils (aged 4 to 11) on roll, 67 boys and 72 girls, and is smaller than the average primary school. It is affiliated to the Church of England. The school is popular and a significant number of pupils come from outside the school's catchment area. The majority of pupils are of white ethnic background. At just over 2%, the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals, currently 5%, is below the national average. 14% of pupils are identified as having special educational needs; this is below average. The attainment of pupils when they start school is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a friendly and caring school. The quality of teaching is good overall and all staff work well together. Because of the small year groups standards are varied but are above average at the end of both key stages when national test results are considered over more than one year. There is a commitment to improving standards. The school governors fulfil their responsibilities well and the headteacher manages the school effectively. The strengths of the school outweigh the areas for development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in English and mathematics at the age of seven.
- The majority of teaching is good. Pupils learn well.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good overall.

What could be improved

- Current standards in English, mathematics and science at the age of eleven.
- The use of assessment to inform teachers' planning and monitor pupils' progress.
- Some of the higher attaining pupils could be challenged more effectively.
- Planning and resources for the Foundation Stage.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection in February 1997. The positive features identified during that inspection have been maintained and most of the key issues have been addressed. However, the key issue about assessment procedures requires further development. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and standards have risen in information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has been enhanced. Insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils was also identified in the previous inspection and is still an area for development. Improvement in test scores has not improved as much as other schools nationally because of 2000 national test results that were below average in English and science.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	B	D	E
Mathematics	C	B	C	E
Science	A	A	D	E

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

The results of the 2000 national tests indicated that standards in mathematics were average but below the national average in English and science. When compared to similar schools standards were well below average in all three subjects. However, care should be taken when trying to draw any conclusions about these results because the school has small year groups and the effect of one pupil in terms of the school percentages can be quite considerable. When looking at the performance of pupils over the three years from 1998 to 2000, they exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science. Although standards are currently above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. The percentage of pupils in the current Year 6 with special educational needs is above the school average and this impacts on the standards in these subjects. Pupils' achievements are satisfactory overall, however, and in many lessons pupils learn well and make good progress. The targets the school has set in English and mathematics for 2001 are challenging given the percentage of special educational needs pupils. The schools trend of improvement for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science is below the national trend, but again because of the small year groups, care should be taken when trying to draw any conclusion from this.

In all other subjects, standards are in line with those expected by pupils at the ages of seven and eleven.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning. They are keen and eager to come to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in lessons, during play and in the lunch break is very good. The pupils move around the school in a calm and orderly manner.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' relationships with each other, teachers and other adults in the school are very good.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is better than the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. During the inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching and 64 per cent of lessons were good or better. During the inspection sixteen per cent of lessons were very good and 36 per cent of lessons satisfactory. In the best lessons, pupils are highly motivated by the teachers' enthusiasm and the very challenging and interesting learning experiences. Pupils of all abilities learn effectively and make good progress in the best lessons. All teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. The management and organisation of lessons is very good. Teachers are caring and there are good relationships between the teachers and pupils, which ensures that pupils are happy and confident learners. In some lessons, the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently. Other areas for development in teaching include the use of day-to-day assessment and a more consistent use of homework in Key Stage 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school curriculum is satisfactory. It is well balanced and fulfils statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and, on the occasions they are withdrawn from lessons to receive extra help, the work they do is closely related to their individual needs. The school has responded positively to the Code of Practice and a staged referral system is in operation. All pupils identified have individual education plans and most contain clear targets. These plans are reviewed regularly and parents are involved in this process. The provision is well monitored by the headteacher.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Although the school has a higher than average number of pupils who use English as an additional language, all of these pupils have reached appropriate levels in their English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and is a strength of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils.

The school welcomes and encourages contact with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and is appropriately supported by the senior staff. The school has a positive ethos and the staff work well as a team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well and is very supportive of the school. They have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teaching is well monitored by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. The school has identified priorities for moving the school forward. Assessment data could be used more effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Staff and resources are used effectively. However, there are times when the reception pupils do not have sufficient classroom support. All staff are appropriately qualified and support staff contribute well to the pupils' educational experiences. The school makes best use of its well maintained accommodation. The school is clean and good quality displays enhance the corridors and classrooms. Outdoor play facilities for children in reception are currently inadequate but will be developed in the near future. All subjects are adequately resourced although the Key Stage 2 library requires further development. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour in the school is good. • Teaching is good. • The school expects pupils to work hard. • It is a caring environment where pupils become mature and responsible. • Older pupils look after the younger ones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lines of communication are weak. • The range of activities outside lessons. • Homework. • Leadership and management.

The above views are taken from the pre-inspection meeting and the 50 responses to the 139 parents' questionnaires sent out. Evidence from inspection supports the parents' positive views.

- The inspection team would judge the school's links with parents to be satisfactory but the headteacher is seeking ways to improve the quality of contact and the information provided.
- The range of activities outside lessons, including day and residential visits and clubs for football and netball, are satisfactory.
- Homework is not consistent in Key Stage 2. The school is aware of this problem and will address this issue.
- The school is managed effectively by the headteacher, governors and senior staff.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 The school's assessments of the children when they start in the reception class shows that their level of attainment is average. Overall, the children make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage although progress is better in some areas of learning than others. The children mix well with the other pupils in the school and are able to maintain their concentration during lessons. They listen carefully to each other and the adults in their class. The children learn the routines and expectations of the school quickly and their personal, social and emotional development is average. They listen to stories attentively and enjoy songs and rhymes. The children use books appropriately and are beginning the early stages of reading. Standards in communication, language and literacy are average overall although some pupils are achieving above average standards. The children's mathematical understanding is in line with that expected for their age. They use appropriate mathematical language and understand simple number problems. Using containers full of sand, children are able to make comparisons. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is average. The children use a range of computer software to support other areas of learning and show satisfactory understanding of the computer keyboard and mouse. They recall events from the past in their family lives and make observations about objects that float and sink. Physical development is in line with that normally found in children of this age. Although the children have their own timetabled physical education lessons in the school hall they have limited access to specialist and appropriate outdoor play opportunities. Some children lack the skills required for tools such as scissors. Their creative development is in line with the levels expected for children of this age. They use paints and collage to create bright pictures, but opportunities for children to explore their own ideas through structured play are limited and some have difficulty in responding sensibly to these activities.

2 Although much of the planning for the Foundation Stage is linked well to the new national guidelines for children under five, the children are given limited access to suitably structured play activities to develop exploratory and investigative play and to consolidate their learning. The development of skills, for example, those required to use scissors are not sufficiently well planned and tightly focused. This limits some of the progress made by the children in the different areas of learning.

3 The National Curriculum tests in 2000 at Key Stage 1 showed that pupils' results were above average in reading and writing but below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, results were average for reading, below average for writing and well below average for mathematics. At Key Stage 2, National Curriculum tests showed that pupils' results were average for mathematics but below average for English and science. When compared with similar schools, all three subjects were well below average. Care has to be taken when trying to draw conclusions from these results because the school has small year groups and the effect of one pupil on the school percentage can be quite significant. When looking at the performance of the pupils over the three years from 1998 to 2000, they exceeded the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 this exceeded the national average in English, mathematics and science when these three years' results are taken together. The previous inspection identified the 2000 Year 6 year group as being below average and evidence from inspection would indicate that many of these pupils actually made good progress in relation to their prior attainment at Key Stage 1. Standards are currently above average in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. However, at the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below average in

English, mathematics and science. This again shows the impact of small year groups. The current Year 6 cohort of pupils has changed by 24 per cent as a result of pupils leaving or joining the school since Key Stage 1. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs in this year group is above the school average and this impacts on the standards in these subjects. Trends over time in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are below the national trend but because of the small cohorts care has to be taken before drawing any conclusions. Before the 2000 test results, the school's trend of improvement was above the national trend.

4 By the age of seven pupils talk confidently, listen very well to instructions and communicate well with each other and the adults they work with. They read a wide range of texts and are able to discuss what they have read sensibly and with enthusiasm. Pupils read with confidence and demonstrate a good understanding of the books they read. They write in sentences and the majority of pupils have some idea about the use of capital letters and full stops. Pupils form their letters accurately and many of them join their writing neatly. Although the pupils' speaking and listening and reading are above average, standards in writing are in line with those found nationally. In mathematics the pupils use mathematical language well and understand simple place value. They count to 20 and beyond accurately and answer simple number problems successfully. They recognise the characteristics associated with two-dimensional shapes, measure accurately using non-standard and standard measures and complete data-handling exercises using Venn diagrams and bar charts. In science pupils develop their enquiry skills through good, focused practical work.

5 By the age of eleven pupils listen showing good concentration and respond to questions appropriately using their developing skills to justify a viewpoint or idea. Reading is below average, with many pupils reading with little expression and having difficulty sounding out unfamiliar words. Higher reading skills such as those associated with using the library are under-developed. Pupils write for a range of purposes and often imaginatively but not all pupils have a sound understanding of basic sentence construction. They solve number problems effectively in mathematics, understand percentages and calculate the perimeter and area of different shapes. Pupils study science topics like Earth and space, the human body and animals and their environment. They undertake investigations to extend their good knowledge of fair testing, predicting outcomes and measuring carefully. However, a significant percentage of pupils will not achieve the appropriate Level 4 in mathematics and science.

6 Standards in other subjects are in line with those expected nationally and the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In information and communication technology and design and technology this is an improvement on the previous inspection when standards in these subjects were judged to be below national expectations.

7 Although pupils often make good progress in many lessons, particularly when teaching is good or better, pupils' achievement through both key stages is judged to be satisfactory overall. Not all pupils, particularly the more able, make the progress of which they are capable. This was also reported during the previous inspection. The pre-inspection meeting with parents and the responses to the parents' questionnaire showed that the majority of parents were happy with the standards in the school and that their children were making good progress. However, a minority of parents raised concerns about whether their children were making sufficient progress and their views are supported by inspection evidence. There are no significant variations in attainment among pupils of different gender, ethnicity and social background.

8 Teachers are aware of the pupils with special educational needs in their classrooms

and when work is well matched to pupils' individual needs they make sound progress. They often make good or very good progress when they receive extra support from their teachers, the specialist teacher or the teaching assistants who support them. Occasionally work is not accurately matched to pupils' individual needs. This has an effect on learning during lessons and on progress over time. Pupils with English as an additional language make sound progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 The school is happy place and pupils' attitudes which were praised during the previous inspection, are very good. They are keen and eager to come to school. This reflects the views of the parents. At the pre-inspection meeting parents commented that their children were happy to come to school and 94 per cent of parents agreed with the statement, *My child likes school*, when responding to the parents' questionnaire.

10 Pupils' relationships with each other, teachers and adults in the school are very good. Pupils are polite and respect authority. A Year 5 pupil for example, was thanked by her teacher for quietly and confidently pointing out an error on a classroom marker board. Pupils respect one another and are genuinely delighted with each other's achievements in the classroom. In a Year 2 music lesson the rest of the class congratulated a pupil who played the glockenspiel particularly well. Pupils willingly and enthusiastically applaud on special occasions such as whole school assemblies, where individuals are congratulated and praised for their work and contributions to school life. There is respect for lunchtime supervisors, who play an effective role in the pupils' pastoral care and pupils are well mannered, friendly and polite to visitors.

11 The expected standards of behaviour are adhered to well. Behaviour in class, the rest of the premises and out in the playground is very good. Pupils move around the school in a calm, quiet and orderly manner. They care for their school and its equipment and materials. They are trustworthy and respect each other's property. Occasional incidents of boisterous behaviour are dealt with promptly and supportively. Should the need ever arise there are well-understood systems in place to deal with bad behaviour and bullying. There have been no exclusions since the previous inspection.

12 Pupils enjoy responsibility. They work well together and Year 6 pupils for example, confidently prepare and organise themselves for their next lessons and tasks. Generally pupils are attentive and enjoy their lessons. Older pupils are confident in explaining what is happening in the school, for example explaining the dinner arrangements or discussing their work on the computer.

13 Older pupils also help to look after younger ones. They talk to them in the playground and are on hand to lend a caring hand if anyone gets upset. Pupils know what is expected of them. They are tolerant and have a strong sense of fair play. In one class a pupil politely corrected a comment by another pupil, because he thought it showed religious intolerance. On another occasion, during lunchtime play, a Year 2 pupil voluntarily apologised to a friend he had upset.

14 Attendance, which is better than national averages, is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15 The quality of teaching is good overall, with 64 per cent of lessons being good or better. Sixteen per cent of lessons were very good and 36 per cent of lessons, satisfactory. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed. This is an improvement on the previous

inspection where four per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory and only two per cent were judged to be very good. This reflects the views of the parents in their responses to the inspection questionnaires where 92 per cent of parents agreed with the statement, *The teaching is good*. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory but the children are given limited access to suitably structured play activities and time to consolidate their independent learning. The development of skills appropriate for reception children are not sufficiently well planned and tightly focused. This limits some of the progress made by the children in the different areas of learning. Teaching across the rest of the school is of a good quality, although there are some inconsistencies in both key stages. Support staff are used well and make a significant contribution to the positive learning experiences that most pupils receive.

16 In the very good lessons, pupils are highly motivated by the teachers' enthusiasm and the very challenging and interesting learning experiences. This enables pupils of all abilities to make rapid progress in their knowledge, understanding and acquisition of skills. For example in a Year 1 and 2 literacy lesson based around *Little Red Riding Hood*, the classteacher had high expectations in terms of looking, listening and reading accurately. Very good emphasis was placed on reading with expression. Consequently, pupils put considerable effort into their reading and also showed very good listening skills. Good questioning was used to reinforce the language being used in the class story and to identify the individual feelings of different characters which enabled pupils to use vocabulary from the text in their work. In these lessons, all pupils are involved in their learning and take a pride in their achievements.

17 There is a wide range of expertise in the school, and teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge which leads to pupils acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for them to learn effectively. The basic skills are generally taught well although there are some inconsistencies in English. The school's literacy and numeracy strategies are used well and lessons are planned to the strategies' recommendations. However, the evaluation of literacy and numeracy lessons as part of day-to-day assessment is less consistent and does not have the impact on future planning that it should. Although lessons are planned for different ability groups, analysis of pupils' work indicates that pupils of different ability are often undertaking the same activities. Although extension activities for the higher attaining pupils are sometimes organised, teachers do not insist on pupils achieving these. During the inspection, observations were made of a small minority of pupils who found some of the activities that they were undertaking too easy. Lower attaining pupils and sometimes those with special educational needs occasionally receive work that is not accurately matched to their individual needs. This happens because teachers do not consistently evaluate lessons effectively and use assessment information to inform their planning and future teaching. Most teachers make effective use of subject-related vocabulary, enhancing pupils' technical knowledge particularly in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. Subject knowledge is also emphasised in good classroom displays. The teachers link different subjects of the curriculum well. For example, a very good Year 4 and 5 physical education lesson also had good links with science and mathematics. Information and communication technology (ICT) is also used well by all teachers to reinforce learning in other subjects.

18 The teachers' management and organisation are very good. Teachers are caring and the very good relationships between teachers and pupils contribute well to the ethos of the school. Most pupils are happy and confident learners. There is a calm and industrious atmosphere in all classrooms with pupils responding well to teachers' high expectations of good behaviour. Pupils are keen to learn and most concentrate for long periods of time, particularly when the activities are interesting and stimulating. The pupils respond positively to opportunities to discuss their work and to think for themselves. Intellectual, physical and creative effort is consistently applied. The scrutiny of pupils' work showed that pupils take

pride in their learning. Work is well presented and in a majority of cases, always finished. When marking the pupils work all teachers provide positive comments that help to motivate pupils, but few go further than this. There is very little evidence of marking that provides clear guidance to pupils on what they need to improve and how to move on to the next stage of learning. Twenty per cent of parents disagreed with the statement in the parents' questionnaire: *My child gets the right amount of work to do at home*. Evidence from inspection indicates that homework organisation is inconsistent in Key Stage 2. The school would acknowledge that this is an area for improvement.

19 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. It is occasionally very good. Pupils are well supported by the specialist teacher and the classroom assistants and good relationships are developed between the adults working with the pupils and the pupils. This results in all pupils having positive attitudes to lessons and impacts on learning. Reading records are under-developed and do not consistently identify areas for development.

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

20 The curriculum is well balanced and meets the statutory requirements to teach the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The day-to-day planning of work for under fives is linked to the new national guidelines but further work needs to be done to ensure that all of the demands of the Foundation Stage are met. Useful policies are in place and there are schemes of work for teachers to plan work effectively for all subjects with the exception of art at both key stages and physical education at Key Stage 2. In design and technology the new national guidelines are used to plan lessons and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Teaching time is slightly below the recommended time in both key stages. Pupils receive specialist teaching in music. The school has begun to develop a system whereby subject co-ordinators monitor and review the curricular opportunities to ensure that they match the needs of pupils and that all teachers follow the whole-school procedures. This has begun in English and mathematics and is an improvement since the last inspection. During the inspection some literacy and numeracy hours were too long which ultimately affects the performance of some pupils as they can find it difficult to sustain concentration.

21 The school provides a sound range of worthwhile opportunities within the curriculum, which are relevant to the pupils' needs. The curriculum provides equality of opportunity and access in order for all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, to make progress. The teachers have worked hard to develop good strategies for the teaching of numeracy, in particular with regard to assessment and recording progress through the National Curriculum. Strategies for the teaching of literacy are sound. The skills gained by the pupils in literacy and numeracy are frequency reinforced in other subject areas, particularly in ICT, music and art.

22 Cross-curricular work is a sound feature of teachers' planning, which makes pupils aware of connections between the subjects they study. For example, in Years 4 and 5 the theme from the science topic was cleverly linked with the physical education lesson and measurement activities taught in mathematics. Other pupils in Year 2 link science with art as they use white chalk to draw realistic skeletons on black sugar paper. The provision for pupils' personal and social education is sound. Issues are discussed in 'circle time' in all classes and topics like are discussed in science and religious education lessons. Appropriate provision is provided for sex and drugs education.

23 Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum and, on the

occasions they are withdrawn from lessons to receive extra help, the work they do is closely related to their individual needs. The school has responded positively to the Code of Practice and a staged referral system is in operation. All pupils identified have individual education plans and most contain clear targets. These plans are reviewed regularly and parents are involved in this process.

24 The school provides a sound range of extra-curricular activities, which enhance pupils learning. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in musical activities, which involve singing and playing musical instruments and sporting activities such as football and netball. These activities are open to boys and girls and they make a valuable contribution to extending their learning and experiences. All older pupils have the opportunity to take part in a residential visit, which enables pupils to interact socially and develop social skills. Mutual benefits have been developed from constructive relationships with partner institutions such as the local secondary schools. There are sound links between the pre-school playgroup and the school. The school is well supported by the local education authority's advisory service whose staff provides advice on individual pupils.

25 Good community links have been established. Pupils regularly visit the 'Coffee Club' and sing, entertain and talk to the senior citizens. The school has developed strong links with the local church, which pupils visit, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils have the opportunity to take part in educational visits to local places of interest such as Shugborough Hall or the local agricultural college. Pupils have the opportunity to visit a local football club and a theatre in Birmingham. These planned visits within the local community enrich the curriculum in many areas such as history, geography, English and physical education.

26 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is a significant improvement, particularly for spiritual and cultural development which were a weakness at the previous inspection. The staff have worked collaboratively to produce policies and statements to detail their vision for education of the whole child. The policies for religious education, assemblies and acts of collective worship interlink with the policy for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. These documents enable the teachers to plan these elements in their lessons, and also to grasp any opportunities that present themselves.

27 As well as regular teaching about spiritual matters, the staff have successfully attempted to create an ethos in which pupils reflect on what they are learning. This is seen, for instance, in science where, from the earliest years, children are thinking about cause and effect. There are many instances of pupils' amazement at the things they see or hear in lessons, for example the Year 1 and 2 pupils, who could not believe that some fruits would float but others would not until they tried it several times for themselves.

28 The pupils are encouraged to develop a responsible attitude, a willingness to listen to each other's ideas and an openness to cultures and faiths different to their own. They learn well from religion and demonstrate this in the happy and calm atmosphere of the school and the way they show concern for the younger pupils, based on the good model presented by the staff. Pupils have a good understanding of what is right and what is wrong. Regularly pupils tell each other off if they feel classmates have been unkind in their remarks about differences in views or circumstances. Assembly themes effectively introduce pupils to the impact of spiritual or moral issues, and the improved links with St Peter's Church and the local community reinforce this. Many aspects of the planned curriculum involve moral elements, such as the environment in geography, pollution and healthy living in science, and the constant theme of right versus wrong in literature.

29 Many opportunities are planned for pupils to work in social contexts, usually as paired

or group work in lessons. When pupils work at the computer without direct supervision they are expected to work sensibly and purposefully. Opportunities arise for more experienced pupils to help the less experienced. The opportunity for pupils to take on jobs to help in the daily life of the school is valuable, and could usefully be extended. Pupils are encouraged to become involved in the wider world by supporting foreign charities. The Year 5 and 6 scrapbook of photographs of the popular residential trip show clearly how pupils are learning to live together in out of the ordinary, and often adventurous, conditions. This opportunity is particularly valuable for pupils who have special educational needs, giving them the chance to shine.

30 The school has gone to considerable lengths to promote the cultural development of its pupils. Teachers raise pupils' awareness well through the curriculum of art, music, dance, literature and history. By lessons and displays the school introduces pupils to the diversity of cultures in modern Britain. This programme is well supported by visitors into the school, and visits to places of interest.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31 The school takes good care of all its pupils. The site is secure and pupils are closely supervised throughout the school day. Great attention is paid to health and safety. There is, for example, one fully qualified first aider on site and five other staff have received basic first aid training. Arrangements for risk assessment, which were criticised in the previous report, are good. Good child protection procedures, which feature links with all the appropriate local agencies, are in place.

32 Registration procedures and the record-keeping systems are very good. If any problems do arise with, for example, unauthorised absences, there are well-established and effective arrangements for dealing with them.

33 All staff have high expectations that the pupils will behave well. There is a very successful whole-school approach to behaviour and discipline. It is based on a code of conduct and a system of sanctions and rewards which deal with any problematic behaviour, including bullying, which might occur. Pupils throughout the school understand and accept this code. They know what is expected of them.

34 Teachers are well aware of their pupils' personal strengths and weaknesses and encourage them by rewarding and celebrating successes. A wide range of rewards, involving stickers, badges and certificates are used and assemblies are often occasions for major celebrations of pupils' achievements. 'St. Peter's Golden Book', which is displayed in the main entrance to the school, is a high profile, permanent record of pupils who have been recognised for their outstanding work, individual effort and contributions to school life.

35 The school has good links with external agencies and uses them when necessary to support pupils with special educational needs. In particular, the special educational needs teacher is used very well to support individual pupils.

36 The three pupils with English as an additional language have similar monitoring arrangements to the other pupils in their classes because they do not have difficulty speaking English. The school uses external specialists well and they are used when required.

37 The school has made sound progress in developing assessment procedures since the previous inspection. However staff have not sufficiently worked on using this information so that all pupils are challenged to do their best work and achieve maximum progress. Although procedures for assessment are now satisfactory, teachers do not consistently use this detailed information which they collect to move pupils on to the next stage of learning.

38 The school fully complies with the requirements to administer statutory tests at the end of the key stages and these results are beginning to be analysed. All pupils are now tested at the end of each year in Key Stage 2, but these procedures have not been in place long enough to have impacted on standards. The idea of target setting for pupils has been discussed and some pupils do have targets in English, but there are no consistent procedures throughout the school.

39 Procedures for assessment are satisfactory in English and science and good in mathematics. Teachers regularly assess the learning in these subjects to identify what the pupils have learnt. Most teachers keep copious records of what individuals can do; however these vary in quality and quantity. For example, reading records are not adequate. Planning for some subjects indicates clearly that assessment opportunities are identified but this is not consistent in all of the subjects. In mathematics, staff have recently worked hard to develop a consistent assessment and recording system which clearly will show progress and what each pupil has achieved. The headteacher is aware of the need to develop these procedures in other subjects and then monitor assessment practice carefully.

40 Teachers identify more able pupils, but this information is not consistently recorded in planning documents and they are not always given work that is challenging for them. This was a weakness identified in the previous report. Other pupils, including those with special educational needs are sometimes given work that is not accurately matched to their needs. Teachers' planning does not clearly show that assessment informs the next step to be taught. There is little evidence to show that teachers assess the learning objectives identified in their plans and that they record what is needed to develop learning for individuals or groups. Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is sound. They all have individual plans containing clear targets that are well tailored to their individual needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41 Parents are pleased to send their children to St. Peter's. They believe that it is a caring, and supportive small community. They feel that the teachers know their children well. The school welcomes and encourages contact with parents. It values their vital contribution to the pupils' education. A home-school reading diary, for example, helps parents support their children's reading and keep in touch with teachers.

42 The majority of parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and problems. The headteacher holds an 'open surgery' every Thursday afternoon and he and the rest of the staff are available at the beginning and end of every school day to meet parents to discuss any aspect of their children's progress. Routinely, at the end of the day, all the teachers escort their pupils to the school gate and informally mingle with waiting parents. Urgent matters are always dealt with as and when they arise.

43 Documents such as 'Information to Parents' and the governors' annual report to parents are comprehensive and well produced. Letters on specific subjects and a more general fortnightly newsletter are used to give parents news of their children's achievements and keep them in touch with what is going on. There is a bulletin board in the main entrance to the school.

44 Most parents of pupils with special educational needs are pleased with the support which their children receive. They think that the provision has improved since the previous inspection.

45 The school provides an Open Day for new parents and pupils. Every term there is a formal meeting, which gives parents the opportunity for one-to-one discussions with teachers about their children's progress. End of year reports are comprehensive, providing parents with information about their children's performance across the whole curriculum. In addition the school organises special events for parents such as the spring 2000 briefing evening on the numeracy hour and a recent course for parent helpers in the classroom.

46 Parents make a major contribution to the life and work of the school. They voluntarily give their time and talents. Amongst them is a group of fifteen trained helpers, who regularly come into school in order to listen to readers, help teachers with group work, assist with support and help out on a wide range of school trips. The Parent-Teachers' Association, which was commended for its work in the previous inspection report, continues to thrive. It raises valuable additional funds, puts on social events and organises voluntary help for activities such as the redecoration of classrooms.

47 In spite of the above comprehensive arrangements and activities a minority of parents feel that the school does not work closely enough with parents. It is critical of the amount of information provided about progress and, particularly at Key Stage 2, homework. The headteacher is already aware of these criticisms and is seeking ways to improve further the quality of contact and information provided. The inspection team's judgement is that, in spite of these criticisms, the school's links with parents are at least satisfactory.

48 Some parents feel that the school does not provide an interesting enough range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team's findings are that the school has a range of activities such as clubs, trips and residential visits, which are well matched to pupils' interests and needs and which enhance learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49 At the time of the previous inspection the current headteacher had only been in post for about five weeks and so judgements about his management were limited. In response to the current parents' questionnaire, out of 139 questionnaires distributed, 50 were returned. One fifth of those 50 disagreed with the statement that the school is well led and managed. It is the view of the inspection team that the headteacher is a good manager and also has a good understanding of current educational issues and a vision for the future. He is well supported by a knowledgeable governing body and the leadership and management of key staff including the subject co-ordinators is satisfactory. The headteacher would accept that a minority of parents have negative perceptions about the school and acknowledges the need to address this issue. Since the previous inspection it has taken time for the headteacher to appoint and develop his own teaching and non-teaching team. However, it is now clear that all staff work well together and there is a supportive and positive atmosphere in the school. Because it is a small staff decisions are made collectively after open and honest discussions. The 'positive ethos of care and the expectation of pupils that they will conduct themselves sensibly, responsibly and purposefully' has been maintained and developed since the previous inspection as have the other positive features identified.

50 The monitoring of teaching is good particularly in English, mathematics and science. When this process was first started general observations were made of lessons and this was found to be unsatisfactory and not rigorous enough. Focus and criteria are now agreed with all staff and issues that come out of observations are discussed at staff meetings. The subject co-ordinators of the above subjects are involved in the observations and the headteacher also aims to observe all classes once a term. He has a good understanding about the quality of teaching in the school. The governor with responsibility for literacy has also been involved in observations. Because of the trust and honesty that now pervades the school, staff talk about issues related to teaching and learning regularly and it comes as no surprise that the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory overall.

51 The school's governors are supportive and knowledgeable. There is a good mix of experienced governors and those new to the position. Because of this situation governors see themselves as entering a 'new era' in their relationship and management of the school. They see the school developing positively. Governors have a good understanding of the school and are well informed about what is happening. They are a well-organised body, with a number of committees that support the smooth running of the school. The curriculum committee, for example, meets with subject co-ordinators to improve their understanding of the school and this is good practice. They fulfil their role as 'critical friend' well. They question and challenge budget proposals put forward by the headteacher, question subject co-ordinators about the curriculum and review the school development plan. This is a useful document that identifies well the school's priorities for action. A significant feature of the current plan is the development of ICT and a number of debates have occurred on the best way to resource and organise the subject for the future. All teaching staff are involved in reviewing development planning and subject co-ordinators are expected to devise action plans for their subjects. During the development of the most recent plan a questionnaire was sent to parents to obtain their views on school development. As a result of this process, some of the 'playground furniture' was removed and will eventually be replaced because it was considered dangerous. The school and governing body fulfil all statutory requirements. Although the school's statutory targets for literacy and numeracy are challenging, one would have to question how realistic they are for 2001 given the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 group.

52 The provision for special educational needs is well monitored and effectively managed by the headteacher. Funding for pupils with special educational needs is used well, in particular, to give additional support to help them develop basic skills in the areas of literacy

and numeracy.

53 Financial management and administration are satisfactory. All specific grants are used for their designated purposes. The school receives no extra funding for pupils with English as an additional language. All priorities for development are carefully costed and supported through the school's financial planning. Only four years ago the school was operating a deficit budget that has now been turned into a 'healthy' carry-forward. Some of this money has been used to improve classroom support and provide specialist special educational needs teaching. Resources have also been earmarked for the development of ICT. Good use is made of new technology in administration and management, and computerised systems are used well by the school secretary. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily for all services and resources that the school requires. Some consultation has been undertaken with parents and the school looks carefully at its performance against a national perspective and with similar schools. However, spending is not yet evaluated for its impact on standards. Learning resources are used well and the school makes the most of its building.

54 There is a good balance of experience and expertise amongst the teaching staff. They are qualified to meet the demands of the curriculum and the age groups they teach. Relevant job descriptions are in place. Support staff have a good understanding of their roles and make a positive contribution to the learning of all pupils. However, there is insufficient support for the children in the Foundation Stage and this is unsatisfactory, particularly as not all of the demands of the Foundation Stage are being met in their daily work. The school is committed to professional development and although priorities for training are linked to whole-school developments, for example ICT training, staff are encouraged to attend courses that will help them develop professionally. Subject co-ordinators regularly attend subject 'updates' provided by the local education authority. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) are good. The school's NQT describes the help and support she receives as 'second to none'.

55 The school is set in delightful surroundings and provides well maintained, if not spacious, accommodation. Space is used well and resources are stored effectively and are accessible for teachers or pupils. The school hall, which is used for assemblies, dining and physical education, is cramped, but appropriate consideration for health and safety is made during dance, gymnastics and indoor games lessons. Attractive displays are used to enhance the internal accommodation that is kept very clean by the caretaker and cleaning staff. There is no evidence of graffiti or vandalism and the outdoor hard and grassed areas are adequate for the number of Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils. However, there are currently no outdoor play facilities for children in reception although these are being developed. There are two library areas for the two key stages. The Key Stage 2 library is underused and in need of an audit and cataloguing. This was mentioned in the previous inspection. Levels of resources are at least adequate in all subjects. Resources for mathematics and religious education are good. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when resources for design and technology were described as poor.

56 With the good teaching, the pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour and the care provided by the school, the school continues to provide satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57 The inspection team recognises the school's drive to improve standards. In addition to the work already being undertaken, to improve the standards and the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2 by:

- Continuing to implement and develop assessment procedures to ensure the monitoring of all pupils' progress and to influence future planning effectively; (Paragraphs 17, 18, 37, 38, 39, 40, 74, 77, 78, 83, 98, 107, 115, 121 and 128)
- Ensuring that all higher attaining pupils are challenged sufficiently through work planned for the different ability groups found in the classes and providing extension activities for these pupils that they are expected to complete. (Paragraphs 7, 17, 40, 77, 78, 80 and 82)

(2) Develop the curriculum and resources for the children in the Foundation Stage by:

- Planning activities that are more appropriate to the needs of young children; (Paragraphs 1, 2, 15, 20, 59, 60, 61, 62, 64 and 65)
- Formulating a Foundation Stage policy that reflects the new national requirements and the Early Learning Goals; (Paragraph 60)
- Providing full-time classroom support for the reception children. (Paragraphs 54 and 60)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	16	48	36	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		139
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		20

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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
		2000	9	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	7	9
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	18	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (96)	89 (96)	100 (100)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	9	7
	Girls	10	10	10
	Total	16	19	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (100)	100 (100)	89 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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
		2000	9	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	6	6
	Girls	5	7	8
	Total	9	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	50 (86)	72 (90)	78 (90)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	6
	Girls	7	8	9
	Total	13	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (86)	78 (90)	83 (90)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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	1
Indian	3
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	112
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: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
	£
Total income	276740
Total expenditure	276090
Expenditure per pupil	2081
Balance brought forward from previous year	10520
Balance carried forward to next year	28706

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	139
Number of questionnaires returned	50

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	26	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	44	6	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	70	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	56	18	2	2
The teaching is good.	46	46	2	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	30	42	26	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	42	10	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	40	56	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	20	42	32	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	18	56	12	8	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	32	62	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	12	14	38	30	6

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

58 Children under the age of five are admitted to the reception class in September. The school provides a sensitive induction into classroom routines during the first three weeks by requiring the children to attend in the mornings only. Some of the children visit the reception class from their playgroups in July, which helps them become familiar with the surroundings beforehand. The 15 reception children share the classroom with eight Year 1 pupils. The headteacher and staff in Key Stage 1 have made timetable adjustments to allow the class teacher as much time as possible with the reception on their own. This amounts to roughly 15 per cent of the week, and is a valuable opportunity for the teacher to get to know the children better and provide activities which are more suited to the age group.

59 The children are given a simple test at the beginning of the year to measure their attainment. The test is repeated at the end of the year to see how much progress the children have made. The information from the test is useful to the teachers, who are able to spot children who may encounter difficulties and then keep a close eye on them. Information from this process indicates that their attainment on entry to the school is average. This is supported by inspection findings. It also enables the teacher to begin to put the children into effective working groups and give them tasks that are suited to their attainment. The day-to-day planning of work is linked to the new national guidelines for the reception year but further work needs to be done to ensure that all of the demands of the Foundation Stage are met.

60 The school does not have a co-ordinator for what is now an education stage in its own right. One consequence of this is that the overall strategy for adopting this initiative has not been fully worked out. The policy for early learning does not refer to the new arrangements. It therefore does not offer a satisfactory level of guidance for a newly qualified teacher to easily step into the complex organisation required for a mixed-age class containing children at two stages of education, each with distinct learning requirements. The teacher usually has one of the school's classroom assistants or nursery nurse to help in the lessons. This help is not available for roughly 20 per cent of the week. Although the support is of good quality it is an insufficient resource overall particularly in supporting children to develop personal interests and take responsibility.

Personal, social and emotional development

61 The children's personal, social and emotional development is average. They respond well to opportunities to work in groups and interact confidently. The children mix appropriately with older pupils and have a distinct sense of belonging to a class and a school community. Reception children are able to sit still and listen, often with rapt attention. Well-planned routines train the children in polite behaviour, and require them to tidy up after activities. The younger ones benefit from the model of the older pupils around them. They make good progress, and after only a few weeks they are like old hands at lining up to go to the hall, and in assemblies they are indistinguishable from the older classes in good behaviour. The teaching is sound, but does not give sufficient opportunities for the children to develop their capacity to select activities, develop personal interests and take responsibility.

Communication, language and literacy

62 Literacy is an exciting time, as the staff tell stories in a lively manner. Within the fun of *Goldilocks* the teacher ensures the detailed teaching of basic skills about letters and sounds. The children have 'big books' to look at, discuss and thereby extend their vocabulary. The teaching is sound. The teacher supports all the groups well. Good recording by the nursery nurse of pupils' achievements in lessons is used well to ensure that they are moved further in the next lesson. This valuable assessment procedure is also used in mathematics, but does not extend to other areas of learning, where it is equally important. Some children showed by their agitated behaviour in the puppet theatre that they are not yet ready to use their speaking skills in a controlled manner. They lack sufficient opportunities to practise these important skills.

Mathematical development

63 The teacher builds sound practical activities to give the children hands-on experience about capacity by filling containers in the sand tray, or reinforcing simple number problems by using dominoes. This experience supports children's mathematical development effectively. Reception children share the lesson introductions with Year 1, looking at number patterns and counting, but then go on to their own activities. They also practise using numbers in their heads and make sound progress in this. The teaching is sound during numeracy sessions, but children do not get enough practice during times of general activities. However, the teacher is good at spotting younger or less confident children who are on the point of wanting to contribute to discussions, and encourages them to give their views. A particular strength is the way that the teacher is able to match the tasks set for the different attainment levels of the children. The standards are broadly average and children make sound progress in preparation for the start of the formal National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64 The children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted more by focused teaching sessions than by a learning environment filled with objects to stimulate their curiosity and interest. Their level of knowledge is in line with that expected for their age. They make sound progress when working through the practical experiences planned for them, such as the observation of objects floating and sinking. They are taught how to use mathematical skills in recording their observations as simple charts. They learn about the world in and around the school. They receive good direct teaching on the use of various computers, with software carefully selected to match the content of the lessons. The children develop an awareness of past times from events they recall in their family lives. Although the teachers foster and satisfy a sense of curiosity in the children, it is not of the kind where children consistently learn to explore and eventually structure their own investigations.

Physical development

65 The children's physical development takes place in the school hall with their own timetabled gymnastic and music and movement lessons. The teaching is good, keeping all the children concentrating on the task and thinking quite creatively. Although they display above average balance and control, with clear instructions and the opportunity to practise they make good progress in increasing the range and quality of movements to interpret the *Noah's Ark* story. It is part of the school's action plan to develop the outdoor play area that has been surfaced and is awaiting the fencing. Funds are available for the necessary large play equipment. The children are agile, alert and enthusiastic. Many of the classroom activities involve the precise handling skills of glue spreaders, scissors and other small tools. Some of the children find these tasks difficult because there has been no structured

programme to train them in these skills. Their progress in this area is not monitored.

Creative development

66 The children's creative development is near to the average for their age. They make sound progress in a range of activities through generally satisfactory teaching. Children develop enthusiasm and confidence to explore their own ideas, but the number of opportunities is more limited than usually found in a reception class. In music they show the capacity to learn words of songs alongside the infants and juniors. The children's paintings and collage, and the technology models they have made are beginning to enliven the classroom environment.

67 The headteacher is monitoring the provision for the Foundation Stage. As in many schools this a trial period and the staff will use the findings of their review to guide the arrangements for subsequent years.

ENGLISH

68 Standards in English are higher than those reported in the last inspection for seven-year-olds but are lower for eleven-year-olds. Results in the 2000 national tests dropped to below average at the end of Key Stage 2, but previously were consistently above the national average. The 2000 tests show that at age eleven, standards were well below average when compared to those in similar schools. The number of pupils who reached the higher level (level 5) was well below the national average. This continues to be an issue from the previous inspection. At age seven, pupils' results in the 2000, show standards to be above the national average in reading and writing. The percentage of pupils who reached the higher level were close to the national average in writing and above the national average in reading. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. When compared with similar schools standards were below average in writing and average in reading.

69 Evidence shows that the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school and a few pupils make good progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Inspection evidence clearly shows that a number of pupils in both key stages make good progress over time in the lessons where teaching is good. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in relation to the targets on their individual education plans and often make better progress when they receive very good individual support from the specialist special educational needs teacher. When they receive good quality support from classroom assistants they gain confidence when reading and writing and this has an impact on the quality of the work they produce. A good example of this was seen in the Year 4 and 5 class when pupils used white boards well to develop drafting and re-drafting skills as they wrote poems whilst working with a classroom assistant.

70 Inspection findings broadly reflect the 2000 test results. They indicate that attainment varies within both key stages. In Year 6 there are a significant number of pupils who have joined the school during the year or key stage and the number of pupils with special educational needs is above the school average. These factors influence the standards the pupils achieve. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is average but in reading and writing it is below the national average. Pupils in Year 5 are functioning below what would be expected nationally. However in Years 3 and 4 attainment is above average.

71 At the end of Key Stage 1 the levels of attainment for speaking and listening and reading are above average. Very good teaching at the end of the key stage, in particular the

way vocabulary is developed and resources are used to promote the teaching of basic skills in both speaking and listening and reading and writing, contribute to these high standards overall. A very good example was seen in Year 1 and 2 as pupils confidently read the story of *Little Red Riding Hood* showing a very good understanding of words such as Bramley' (referring to an apple). Later, masks from characters in the story were used very well as one pupil took on the role of Granny and the other pupils maturely asked her questions. Pupils talk confidently, listen very well to instructions and communicate well with each other and the adults who work with them. Learning is good during lessons when teachers engage all pupils in answering questions in class discussions. As they get older the pupils develop their ideas thoughtfully. A good example was seen in a Year 4 and 5 lesson as they thought about how they could use one of Turner's paintings to develop poetry. Good questioning from the teacher, added to the pupils' enthusiasm for learning and their confidence in speaking, enabled the majority of pupils to articulate their thinking well. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils listen with good concentration, respond accurately to questions and begin to use their skills to justify their viewpoint. Speaking and listening skills are well promoted in all curriculum areas. Most teachers set consistently high standards and insist that pupils listening correctly and this results in most pupils in both key stages developing good listening skills.

72 Standards in reading are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, pupils read a wide range of different texts and discuss the story they read and hear with enthusiasm. Most read with confidence and demonstrate good understanding. Pupils of all abilities identify the title and author of the books they read. More able pupils name the illustrator and the publisher. They begin to use their knowledge of sounds to help them. Learning is good when adults encourage pupils to use the pictures and the sounds to guess new words. Average and above average pupils in Year 2 confidently and correctly sound out words such as 'attempted' and 'arranged'. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 visit the satisfactorily resourced library in Key Stage 1 and have the opportunity to borrow books each week.

73 In Key Stage 2, pupils are given many opportunities to study a variety of texts, which are written in different ways. For example in Year 4 they read instructions and make a 'Grinning Monster'. A few pupils had difficulty reading and following the instructions but were confident enough to ask for extra help. In Year 5 and 6 they read appropriately graded acrostic poems with accuracy. By the end of Key Stage 2, reading is below average. Many pupils read with little expression and have difficulty sounding out words with a number of syllables in them. They have difficulty predicting what might come next in the texts they read. Library skills are under-developed because classes are not timetabled to develop them. The library in Key Stage 2 is under-used and the books are not effectively catalogued. Pupils say it is difficult to find books because of this. Pupils were not seen working in the Key Stage 2 library during the inspection. This continues to be an issue from the previous inspection.

74 The school has a policy where pupils have to read all of the books in the reading scheme. Evidence shows that there are pupils of all abilities, in all year groups who are reading books that are too easy for them. Many pupils are reading far harder books at home. For example two below average pupils in Year 4 and 5 read 'Harry Potter' books at home but read books at school that are of a low level and do not challenge them sufficiently. Teachers' records are under-developed and show coverage of books through the reading scheme and evidence of pupils reading in groups in the literacy hour. However they do not consistently show what aspects of reading the pupils are having difficulty with and what they need to do in order to improve. Few records show what sounds or blends younger pupils need to learn in order to develop their reading skills and this weakness in the teaching of reading impacts on learning within lessons and progress over time.

75 At the end of Key Stage 1 standards in writing are in line with those seen nationally. By the age of seven, pupils begin to write in sentences and most have some idea of when to

use a capital letter and a full stop. They spell familiar words independently and begin to develop dictionary skills to help them spell more difficult words. Most pupils begin to form letters correctly and many pupils develop a sound cursive script when writing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils write for a wide range of styles. They write imaginatively, in the form of diaries, letters, scripts, ships' logs, and autobiographies. Learning is sometimes hindered when teachers do not promote the importance of basic sentence construction such as the necessity of using capital letters at the beginning of sentences. In both key stages, pupils develop an idea of writing poems, instructions, stories and summaries of events. All pupils have the opportunity to develop word-processing skills on the computer. A good example was seen on a classroom display in Year 3 and 4. Pupils produced a newspaper using a digital camera and cut and pasted pictures into their texts showing that ICT skills are used well to support literacy.

76 Pupils' attitudes to learning are positive in both key stages. They listen and behave well because all teachers expect high standards of behaviour. Pupils enjoy their lessons, are well motivated and respond well to tasks they are given. This has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The quality of teaching in the literacy hour varies slightly between the key stages and is good at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2. Very good teaching was seen in the Year 1 and 2 class as the teacher skilfully questioned the pupils to reinforce and develop the vocabulary in the text that she was reading. Displays in the classroom reinforced the activities taught and activities were accurately matched to the needs of all pupils. These all had impact on the very good learning the children made during the lesson.

77 Teachers have worked hard to implement guidance and materials of the National Literacy Strategy into their teaching. In all lessons teachers show good subject knowledge and support staff are used effectively. Where teachers do not promote basic skills, in particular in writing at Key Stage 2, writing is not as good as it should be. All activities are well resourced but do not always match the needs of all pupils. This weakness in teaching has a significant impact on learning and results because the quality of teachers' day-to-day assessments vary and teachers do not consistently use this valuable information to inform the next step of learning. Teachers manage their classes effectively and have high expectations regarding behaviour. The use of English across the curriculum is satisfactory. Marking is generally supportive but does not consistently inform the pupils of what they need to do to improve. Displays in classrooms celebrate the work of the pupils and in the best instances reinforce literacy skills taught.

78 Management in English is sound. The literacy co-ordinator has monitored the teaching of English. Some pupils have targets for English but this is not consistent throughout the school and there is little evidence of them being referred to during lessons. Assessment procedures for English are sound but teachers do not consistently identify assessment opportunities when planning lessons and there is little evidence of any evaluation of what has been taught or what is needed in order to move individuals or groups forward. There is no consistent approach where assessment systematically informs the next step in learning in English. Resources are of sound quality and are used well although the library in Key Stage 2 requires an audit. ICT is used well to support the curriculum. The English curriculum is enhanced by visits to the local theatre.

MATHEMATICS

79 Current standards in mathematics are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 but below average at the end of Key Stage 2. The 2000 national test results reflect a completely different picture with standards being below average at Key Stage 1 and average at Key Stage 2. Standards were well below average when compared with similar schools. However, these fluctuating results reinforce the impact that small year groups have on results and the

high percentage of pupils with special educational needs that are found in some classes. However, since the previous inspection, where standards were judged to be close to the national average, standards have improved steadily at Key Stage 1 until 2000. Although there has been more variation in Key Stage 2, evidence from inspection would indicate that the test results in 2000 show that pupils made good progress since the previous inspection, where their standards were judged to be below average. Taking the results of the last three years together shows that standards exceeded the national average in both key stages.

80 All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. However, a small minority of more-able pupils could make better progress. In the 2000 national tests the percentage of pupils who achieved level 5 or above at Key Stage 2 was below the national average. The percentage of pupils who achieved level 3 or above at Key Stage 1 was well below the national average even though every pupil achieved level 2 or above which was a very high percentage in terms of national averages. Challenging the more able pupils was identified during the previous inspection.

81 By the age of seven pupils have a good mathematical language and count accurately. They add and subtract numbers to 20 and double single-digit numbers successfully. Pupils use money and simple apparatus to show their understanding of place value and measure accurately using non-standard measures like a pen or hand span and standard measures such as metres and centimetres. They identify number sequences and produce number sentences involving three numbers and work with halves and quarters. Pupils estimate how long it will take to complete a specific task and as part of data-handling use Venn diagrams and produce bar charts of class surveys. By the age of eleven pupils have developed their understanding of place value and relate this to using centimetres and kilograms and calculating percentages. They solve number problems effectively, use square roots and look for the median while handling data. Pupils work with two and three-dimensional shapes and calculate perimeter and area. However, a significant percentage of pupils will not achieve the appropriate level 4 as their mathematical knowledge and understanding are less well developed. Throughout the school, pupils show enjoyment of the subject. When asked, many pupils identify mathematics as their favourite subject. There are very few examples of unfinished work and overall the pupils' presentation is good.

82 The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school; however, there are some inconsistencies. In all of the lessons observed, pupils were grouped very effectively according to their ability and given work appropriate to their needs but the analysis of pupils' work revealed that this good practice is not always consistent enough and pupils of different abilities are sometimes set the same work. In many lessons extension activities are prepared to challenge the more able pupils but on some occasions insufficient demands are made on these pupils to achieve these extra tasks which they are fully capable of. In all classes there are one or two pupils who find their work too easy and could be challenged more effectively. In a very good lesson observed in the Year 1 and 2 class every aspect of the lesson focused on effective learning. The mental mathematics session at the start of the lesson was brisk and challenging but also fun, which inspired the pupils as learning was enjoyable. Pupils of all abilities were involved in the session so even those pupils who were less confident with the subject remained interested. The different learning activities were well organised. Year 1 pupils worked effectively with a classroom support assistant whilst the Year 2 pupils worked at different activities related to their ability. The class teacher interacted with all of the different ability groups well to monitor learning and to support or challenge individual pupils. An excellent plenary session at the end of the lesson reinforced the pupils' learning and also provided the classteacher with information about their understanding.

83 All teachers are familiar and secure with the National Numeracy Strategy, which is applied effectively and used well to organise lessons. The mental and oral sessions that start the lessons are used effectively and the pupils have a good understanding of what is expected of them. These sessions set the tone for the rest of the lesson and explain the pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. They are delivered quickly and no time is wasted. They are well organised and most of all – fun! The use of mathematical language is always actively encouraged and reinforced. The excitement generated at the start of the lesson is then continued into the main teaching activities. All lessons are well planned using the three-part structure recommended by the national initiative. However, lesson evaluations which are part of the teachers' day-to-day assessments are used less effectively to monitor pupils' progress or influence future planning.

84 The use of ICT is good and is used well to promote pupils' mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. Year 1 and 2 pupils used a computer programme to reinforce their understanding of place value, whilst pupils in the Year 3 and 4 class used the *Stepping-Stones* software to support their counting and problem solving. A good example was also observed of using mathematics to help learning in other subjects. In a very good physical education lesson, Year 4 and 5 pupils used measuring tapes and stopwatches to support their monitoring of different physical activities and their estimating skills to calculate the length of standing long jump.

85 Mathematics is well managed by the subject co-ordinator. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and has contributed to the good teaching and learning. There is a good assessment schedule in place but as it was only introduced in September it is too early to judge its impact. Resources for the subject are good and well organised. There is plenty of class based equipment that is accessible to the pupils.

86 Although there are still some pupils who need to be challenged further, the subject has developed well since the last inspection. Teaching has improved significantly and there is now a greater urgency in all lessons. Resources have been developed well and the pupils continue to display very positive attitudes.

SCIENCE

87 For several years pupils' results have been above average, but in the 2000 national tests for Year 6 they dipped to below the national average. The 2000 teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 showed standards to be close to the national average but standards at both key stages were well below those of schools of a similar type. The school is concerned about this alteration of the trend that had previously been rising. The co-ordinator has analysed the test results and found the study of physical processes to be a particularly weak area. The lesson planning has been adjusted to increase the attention given to this topic. The school has purchased a range of additional resources to enable teachers to strengthen the study of physical processes to give pupils a hands-on approach. Although all through the school pupils are making at least satisfactory progress, including those pupils for whom English is an additional language, standards are likely again to fall below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2 in the current year. Considerable support is given in class to pupils who have special educational needs to enable them to also make satisfactory progress.

88 However, the school's determined response to improve standards is proving effective for pupils in Year 2. The teachers were unable to assess any pupils in the 2000 year group as able to achieve Level 3. Although all pupils reached Level 2 in the study of living things, relatively few did well in scientific investigations. By planning work of a practical nature, more closely matched to the needs of the age and ability of the pupils, and by increasing the focus on pupils' understanding of cause and effect in science experiments, the indications are that

standards are now closer to the expected level. Pupils are making good progress. By the end of Year 2 sufficient pupils are likely to reach level 3 for standards to be in line with the national average for teacher assessments. Girls and boys in both key stages generally achieve equally well.

89 Teaching is good in the Key Stage 1. Teachers set high expectations for pupils to observe closely and express their ideas clearly. In one very good lesson teachers prepared activities that had pupils hopping up and down with excitement. Pupils were in awe and wonder at the reasons why some objects float and others sink. A strength of the teachers' approach is that they allow pupils to explore their own reasoning, predict their own solutions and then test them. This promotes a valuable independence in learning, and a particularly purposeful attitude, seen in the faces of the children making paper boats to test the theory of water-tightness. Year 1 pupils share these lessons, but the teachers' questioning is designed to stretch the groups of older pupils much further. So Year 2 pupils are expected to test more precisely using quantities of weights, and to record their findings in a more structured way with charts or graphs. This is making good use of their numeracy skills.

90 Sound teaching in Key Stage 2 promotes positive attitudes in the pupils. This is apparent in their books, which contain a good quantity of work, always finished, with good presentation. Their work displays a good depth of study of topics like the Earth and space, the human body and animals and their environment. They undertake investigations that extend their familiarity with aspects of fair testing, predicting outcomes and using careful measurement. ICT plays a valuable part as pupils access CD-ROM disks full of relevant information. Software, which simulates the heartbeat under different conditions, prepares pupils well for experiments, which they will set up for themselves.

91 Year 5 and Year 6 pupils are taught together for science. This works well, particularly during the sex education topics, where the Year 5 pupils benefit from the model of sensible and responsible behaviour set by the older pupils. The two-year cycle of planning topics ensures that there is no repetition or overlap of teaching. One disadvantage, however, is that the work for the more able is not sufficiently challenging to push them into independent thinking early enough. This is linked to an insecure system of assessment, so that teachers are not able to monitor pupils accurately through the years and judge if they are moving through the attainment levels fast enough.

92 The co-ordinator, by observing teaching in this subject, has promoted a good level of enthusiasm for, and teamwork in science. An important part of the development of the subject has been identified as the upgrading of the scheme of work to one designed to meet the needs of mixed-age classes more effectively.

93 The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

94 Pupils' attainment in art is in line with the expectations of the National Curriculum by the end of both key stages. All pupils make sound progress including pupils with special education needs and those for whom English is an additional language. These standards reflect the standards from the previous inspection. The enthusiastic co-ordinator has a clear vision of what is needed to improve the standards further. She is aware of the need to monitor what is being taught more closely and that this will have impact on improving standards overall. This was an issue identified in the previous inspection. Teachers are looking at the new national guidelines but at present they do not have a consistent plan to ensure the progressive teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding in art and design.

95 No teaching of art was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on discussions with teachers and pupils and a scrutiny of planning and previous work.

96 Most activities show good cross-curricular links with other areas of the curriculum. In Year 1, there are good links with mathematics as pupils use scissors and glue as they develop colourful pictures using squares, triangles, rectangles and circles. Pupils begin to develop the idea of printing as they print fruits with sponges, which link their artwork with the story *Handa's Surprise*. In Year 2 they print with their hands using 'cold colours'. Pupils in Year 2 look carefully at a skeleton and create drawings using chalk which links art with their science. Pupils take part in class projects as they work together, using basic shapes to make a large jug of flowers, which is attractively displayed in the hall. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently use a variety of techniques and materials and develop artwork of which they are proud.

97 Observational drawing skills and knowledge of other artists develops soundly throughout the school. In Years 3 and 4 pupils were given a homework task after studying the work of Guiseppe Archimoldo. They very carefully cut out fruits and vegetables to make interesting collages. Pupils look at the work of Paul Klee and explore different techniques such as painting and printing. They use polystyrene to print on fabric. Planning shows that Years 5 and 6 are to make three-dimensional models using papier-mache and recycled materials. One idea is to link their model with their geography topic as they create a mountainous landscape. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils increase their knowledge of famous artists as they study the work of Piet Mondrian and produce a stunning display by painting in his style. Sketchbooks are developed and used appropriately in Key Stage 2.

98 All pupils have satisfactory opportunities to work in clay. Resources are satisfactory. There is some evidence to show that information and communication technology is used to support the curriculum but assessment procedures are under-developed. Throughout the school, art displays create an attractive visual environment and clearly demonstrate the sound progress pupils make in all year groups.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99 Standards are average at the end of both key stages. All pupils including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make sound progress as they move through the school. The standards that the pupils reach are higher than those reported in the last inspection. The previous report identified many weaknesses in this subject area and the school has worked hard to address these issues and has greatly improved the opportunities in the subject. There is now a clear policy in place and teachers follow the new national guidelines to plan lessons. Resources have been developed and there is a two-year rolling programme that addresses the mixed-age classes and the issue of pupils of the same age group in different classes. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. There is little evidence to suggest that at present ICT is used to support the curriculum effectively.

100 Judgements are based on discussions with teachers and pupils and a scrutiny of planning and completed work. Three lessons were observed. In Year 1, pupils have the opportunity to look at different fruit and use tools, which cut fruit and make a fruit salad. Pupils explain what they are making and name the tools they use as they cut paper and join it to wooden sticks to make shadow puppets. Years 1 and 2 use pictures and words when they draw puppets and identify what they are made from as they name basic materials such as string and card. In Year 2 pupils begin to join and combine materials such as card and 'binca' with needles and thread. Planning indicates that by the age of seven, pupils will have had the experience of drawing and following simple plans, designing and making puppets from felt and evaluating their finished product.

101 In Years 3 and 4 planning shows that pupils have made moving Christmas cards. Last year's work shows that Years 5 and 6 used leather and designed, made and evaluated slippers. Future planning indicates that later this term they will plan, design, make and evaluate model fairground rides after they have looked carefully at old toys and investigated how they move.

102 The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Classes are well managed and most teachers prepare appropriate tasks, which motivate pupils well. All pupils work hard to complete the activities set for them. This was noticeable when the Year 2 pupils were sewing and many found the task quite difficult. Sound opportunities are provided for pupils to learn skills. Subject-specific vocabulary is reinforced well, for example in Years 5 and 6 when pupils were encouraged to recall what they have learnt about circuits. All adults develop good relationships with the pupils. Consequently all pupils respond very well to the teacher's high expectations regarding behaviour and completion of the task.

GEOGRAPHY

103 To ensure a broad curriculum the school kept a good geography coverage during the period when requirements for this subject were relaxed. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection in a Key Stage 2 class. Discussions with pupils and evidence from the work in their books enables the judgement to be made that standards are generally in line with those expected for the pupils' ages at the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Their knowledge of places and how people use those places develops steadily through the years. Pupils in Year 2 for instance, learn to make simple maps of, and comparisons with, the Isle of Struay. By Year 4 these simple accounts have extended to well-researched studies of the climate, to explain, for example, how various weathering effects are damaging parts of the school building.

104 From the evidence available, teaching is satisfactory. The new scheme of work, based on national guidelines, is more helpful to teachers than the one in use during the previous inspection. Teachers use it effectively to guide the planning of topics on a two-year cycle to take account of the needs of the mixed-age classes, and this ensures that elements are not repeated unnecessarily. The planning of work to match the ability of the higher attaining pupils is not always evident in the lesson preparation for some older pupils. Year 6 pupils know about maps and contour lines, but they can only explain co-ordinates in terms of two figures.

105 Teachers plan for a variety of approaches in their lessons, and use the pupils' experiences well as a basis for lessons. For instance the technique of 'brainstorming' motivates the pupils well because they can use information they understand. In this way Year 4 and 5 pupils constructed lists of work, leisure and recreational activities to link to places on a map of Stonnall. This not only gave them an insight into land use, but also involved them in the different use of words. Teachers are quick to seize opportunities to put in teaching points related to literacy. Numeracy skills are encouraged and used effectively in lessons where pupils convert their findings into tables or graphs.

106 ICT is not used as much in geography as in other subjects, and there is no co-ordinator at present to monitor the resourcing and development of the subject. Trips however are planned to link more frequently and more closely to geography topics than at the time of the previous inspection. For example, the visits to Rodbaston College and the recent residential visit introduced pupils to features of land use and orienteering skills that could not have been tackled in the classroom. Pupils who have special educational needs benefit particularly from these, boosting their confidence and giving them concrete examples to think about.

107 The use of assessment to record pupils' attainment and to monitor pupils' progress through the attainment levels has not developed further since the previous inspection. As a result teachers do not have a sufficiently clear picture of how near pupils are to achieving appropriate levels in the mixed-age classes.

HISTORY

108 Only one lesson was observed, in a Key Stage 1 class. Discussions with pupils and evidence from the work in their books enables the judgement to be made that standards are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Their knowledge of events, and to a lesser extent their awareness of enquiry skills in history develops steadily through the years. Pupils in Year 1 for example, learn to make simple recordings of the Fire of London. By Year 6 these simple accounts have extended to well reasoned arguments, which try to explain why Henry VIII became involved with so many wives!

109 From the evidence to hand, teaching is satisfactory. The new scheme of work, based on national guidelines, is stronger than the one in use during the previous inspection. Teachers use it effectively to guide their planning. Topics are planned on a two-year cycle to take account of the needs of the mixed-age classes, and this ensures that elements are not repeated. The matching of work to ability, which would stretch the higher attaining pupils further, is not always evident in the planning. Teachers create variety of approach in their lessons, which motivates the pupils well and also introduces them to a good range of sources of evidence. Pupils use hard copy from computer programs to illustrate their work. The effect on Year 3 and 4's work on Roman mosaics was to make it look more professional. The digital photographs of the children in these classes wearing their Roman togas made an

interesting contrast of old and modern technologies to point the differences between then and now. This is a good strategy for learning, which is training pupils to be increasingly independent in the use of the latest tools for research and recording information.

110 The teachers take care to get older pupils to look at greater depth for the reasons why events happened as they did. They encourage pupils to work quietly with good concentration. If pupils who have special educational needs encounter difficulties, they are quickly given extra help by the teacher to enable them to progress at the same rate as their peers. Teachers use and develop the pupils' literacy skills well setting different tasks such as writing as a character in the event, in a journalistic style or as a diary. Numeracy is not as much to the fore, and pupils are not working as well with figures, for instance lengths of time, such as reigns. Consequently their sense of chronology, how long ago events occurred, is not secure. Pupils get some opportunity to handle artefacts from the past to exercise and extend their investigation skills on concrete evidence, but not as much as the teachers would like, and the school is building up this area of resources. The use of trips to historical sites such as Wall and Whittington Barracks has increased since the previous inspection. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning by making history come alive. The co-ordinator plans to extend the brief recording of pupils' attainment into a system which will allow pupils themselves to see the picture of their learning progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

111 Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is an improvement on the previous inspection where pupils' attainment was judged to be unsatisfactory through the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. This is also an improvement on the previous inspection when progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. Although resources are no better than satisfactory, pupils have good and regular access to a range of ICT activities that are used well to support other areas of the curriculum, as well as improving and developing their understanding of ICT and their skills. Only a limited number of lessons were observed during the inspection so judgements are made which include the evidence provided by teachers' planning, class displays and discussions with pupils and staff.

112 Pupils in the reception and Year 1 class confidently use the computer to support their work in English and mathematics. Displaying appropriate keyboard skills, the pupils fit initial letters to pictures and reinforce their understanding of place value. Pupils in the class covering the Year 1 and 2 age range use headsets to listen to the story of *Noah's Ark* as part of a religious education lesson. In literacy the Year 2 pupils listen carefully to the story of *The Hare and the Tortoise*. In discussions with Year 2 pupils, they talked confidently about the programs and resources they have used in school including programming instructions into the *Roamer* and use a data-handling program to compile graphs related to a class traffic-survey. They also mentioned uses for computers out of school, including cash dispensers in banks and supermarket checkouts.

113 Pupils in Year 3 and 4 use a laptop computer and CD-ROM to see and hear an Israeli child describe her life in religious education and retrieve information as part of their research in science on the function of tears for the eye. Year 4 and 5 pupils also used ICT to support their learning in science, using a heartbeat simulation to support the class teacher's introduction to the lesson. Year 6 pupils repeat the confidence shown by Year 2 pupils in discussions about ICT. They say how much they enjoy the subject at school and confidently talk about the uses of ICT. They show good awareness of some of its weaknesses and some of the concerns people have about ICT, for example, the lack of confidentiality when sending an e-mail in comparison to ordinary mail. They discuss using the Internet to visit

web-sites for mathematics and producing pie charts and bar graphs for data-handling. In science the pupils regularly use the CD-ROM to retrieve and research information.

114 Although only two ICT lessons were observed, the quality of teaching was good. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. In the Year 3 and 4 class the class teacher gave a good and informative introduction to the whole class about saving work on disk. The lesson linked well with the pupils' current understanding of accessing programs from the desktop and retrieving and saving work on the hard disk. Questions were used well to challenge the pupils and check on their understanding and appropriate subject-specific vocabulary was encouraged. The pupils were excited about what they would have to do but sustained their concentration and listened carefully to the teacher and each other's views. It was quite clear from the teacher's planning that over the following week all pupils would have access to this activity and would be able to develop their skills and understanding. In the Year 5 and 6 class a good, well-organised lesson provided pupils with an opportunity to edit digital photographs that had been taken on a residential visit. In good links with science, other pupils in the class answered a questionnaire providing information for a class database. This lesson started with a good class discussion about the advantages and disadvantages of electronic mail and the Data Protection Act. This was nicely linked to the information that the pupils were going to provide about themselves for the class database.

115 At the time of the previous inspection criticisms were made about the subject policy document and the lack of clear direction for the subject. These views are no longer valid. The subject is now appropriately managed by a new subject co-ordinator who has a good understanding of ICT. The subject also features significantly in the school development plan and there is a particular focus on raising teachers' confidence and competence in the subject. The school has a satisfactory policy and scheme of work that ensures that the subject should develop progressively through the school. However, the school is looking very closely at using the national scheme of work. Assessment is less consistent and is not always used effectively to monitor pupils' progress or plan the next stages of learning.

116 At present resources are satisfactory. However, some classes still only have one computer and this limits pupils' access to the subject. One of the reasons for the average standards found in the school, is the opportunity that pupils have at home to work with computers. For example, those Year 6 pupils who have sent e-mails have done so at home and not at school! However, the school has not yet reaped the benefits of the national funding for ICT and a further three computers have been ordered for the school. The school and governors are still considering whether to build a separate computer suite and funds are available for this project. Software to support the use of ICT with other subjects has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

MUSIC

117 It was only possible to observe one music lesson in each key stage. Additional evidence was gained through listening to pupils sing in assemblies and discussions with pupils. Further evidence was gained by looking at planning and having discussions with the talented music specialist who takes each class for music. This evidence clearly indicates that standards at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected nationally.

118 Satisfactory progress in music has been maintained since the previous inspection. In the two lessons seen teaching was good. Lessons are well planned, they identify clear learning objectives and all activities are interestingly thought out. On-going assessment is beginning to inform the next step of learning although assessment procedures are underdeveloped. These all have an impact on learning as have the pupils concentrating well, showing interest and enthusiasm in the subject and working well together. The co-ordinator

has been in post for one and a half years but this consistently good teaching has not yet impacted on standards at the end of Key Stage 2.

119 Pupils throughout the school sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. By the age of seven pupils identify tuned and untuned instruments and recognise and explore how sounds can be arranged. In Year 2 they identify confidently high and low, fast and slow and loud and soft sounds. Pupils move confidently to sounds made by the teacher and individual pupils are encouraged to demonstrate their ideas.

120 By the age of eleven pupils look at the lyrics in pop songs such as *Rock DJ* by Robbie Williams. They have many opportunities to perform with tuned and untuned percussion instruments. Pupils speak of listening to different kinds of music and most have a sound idea of the names of one or two famous composers such as Beethoven and Mozart. In Year 3 and 4 pupils listen carefully and repeat rhythmic patterns. Learning is good because the teacher knows the pupils well and matches activities and questions carefully to pupils' individual needs. Pupils work well together because relationships are good between each other and with the teacher and by the end of the lesson they successfully combine layers of sound.

121 Instrumental music tuition is offered to all pupils at Key Stage 2. Approximately sixteen pupils have lessons to play the clarinet, the violin or brass instruments. The co-ordinator runs a weekly music session where pupils are encouraged to work together to form a mini orchestra which frequently performs in assembly. The school has developed good links with the local community through the music curriculum and pupils have the opportunity to sing at the local 'Coffee Club' and the church. These are all improvements since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has identified the need to develop resources to complement the new national guidelines, which she follows when she plans lessons. There are few displays around the school which promote the subject, but the co-ordinator has identified this as an area to develop. Assessment procedures are under-developed and there is little evidence of ICT supporting the music curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

122 Only two lessons were observed in Key Stages 1 and 2 but discussions with pupils and staff and scrutiny of teachers' planning would indicate that standards in physical education are average across the school. Standards in swimming are above average and the majority of pupils exceed the national expectations for this element of the subject by the end of Key Stage 2. This is mainly due to the well-organised swimming programme provided by the local education authority and the good opportunities for the pupils to go swimming, provided by the school. All pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Progress in swimming is good. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection.

123 The quality of teaching was good overall in the two lessons observed. Both lessons were well prepared and organised and followed an appropriate lesson structure which included a warm-up session, the main activity and a cooling down period. Lessons were active and there was a good balance between pupils undertaking activities and instructions and challenge being offered by the teachers. Year 1 pupils took part in a dance lesson focused around a commercial tape. They showed good progress in their warm-up session, from moving around the school hall bunched together to showing good spatial awareness, using all of the space and travelling in all directions. This was a good vigorous session that prepared the pupils well for their dance activities. The majority of pupils showed appropriate control as they linked their dance actions to the demands of the tape's narrator and the music that they heard. Year 4 and 5 pupils undertook exercises as part of their science work related

to the human body. They were provided with a well-structured warm-up session that built from a gentle start to energetic activity. Questioning was used well by the teacher to encourage the pupils to think how their bodies change during exercise. The pupils talked confidently about the effects of exercise on their bodies with one pupil describing the warm-up session as having, "Woken my muscles up!" The pupils listened to instructions very carefully and had a good understanding of what they had to do for the main activity. Good links with mathematics were made as pupils timed and measured themselves jumping, doing push-ups and other physical activities. The pupils worked very hard and gave plenty of physical effort as well as enjoying the session.

124 Resources for the subject are satisfactory. There are suitable grassed areas and hard playing surfaces for outdoor games and although the school hall is small, appropriate attention is paid to removing large obstructions, for example, the school piano, before indoor sessions. The management of the subject is satisfactory although the scheme of work for Key Stage 2 requires further development. Football and netball clubs after school support the subject and also offer some pupils the opportunity to play competitive games against other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125 By the time the pupils leave the school their knowledge and understanding is at the level expected by the locally agreed syllabus for pupils of this age. All pupils make satisfactory progress through both key stages. While maintaining the effective links with other subjects noted in the previous inspection, the teachers have adopted a more systematic planning structure to ensure that pupils get sufficient and regular religious education lessons. They plan the lessons to promote a good depth of thinking about a wide range of topics. A sound policy for religious education links with policies for spiritual and moral development, and assemblies and collective worship, to promote a stronger spiritual ethos and general atmosphere for reflection. Pupils who have special educational needs are also well supported with advice to build their self-esteem.

126 The sound teaching in Key Stage 2 encourages pupils to convey their own ideas in a variety of forms. A strength of religious education is the individuality of the pupils' thinking showing through their work. Sometimes pupils record their impressions in poetry, as a diary, or as a participant in the events. For example, the Year 4 and 5 booklets about religion in Stonnall reflect the increasing importance the school and its pupils place on the local community. The pupils used ICT well for this to make their work look polished and professional. Equally pupils are encouraged to look at beliefs from further afield. Year 3 and 4 pupils study the Jewish faith and show a depth of understanding of what the festival of Purim means. They appreciate the need for support of the poor, but realise that this may involve an element of embarrassment too. The teachers use the school's comprehensive collection of artefacts well. The Christian artefacts, missing at the time of the previous inspection, are now in good supply. They enriched the Year 5 and 6 lesson, being studied by the pupils with interest and curiosity, and were handled with respect. The teachers encourage the older pupils to reflect on the deeper meaning of the texts they read by good questioning and comments in lessons, although not yet in the marking of the pupils' books.

127 Year 2 pupils also have a thoughtful and caring attitude. The good teaching there promotes a sound knowledge about Christianity, the life and death of Jesus, and the meaning of Christmas. Pupils are made aware of Christian festivals and celebrations, and know that they occur in other beliefs, such as Divali. The teachers have responded to the previous report of limited resources. In lessons such as the Noah's Ark topic, they provide a particularly wide range of approach, where pupils read different versions of the Bible, study it on tape and disk, in models and posters. Pupils 'brainstorm' their ideas, and in writing,

creating collages and by presenting puppet plays secure their learning of the key facts and reinforce their literacy skills.

128 The headteacher has ensured good development of the subject in the absence of a co-ordinator with specific responsibility. The next improvement identified is to establish a system of assessing pupils' attainment so that their progress can be more effectively monitored.