

INSPECTION REPORT

NORTHFIELD MANOR PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103304

Headteacher: Mr A Blake

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis
20893

Dates of inspection: 20th – 23rd May 2002

Inspection number: 191999

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Swarthmore Road Selly Oak Birmingham
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Stewart
Date of previous inspection:	March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D J Curtis 20893	Registered inspector	English Physical education English as an additional language	How high are standards? (The school's results and achievements)
Mr P Dannheisser 1165	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Attitudes, behaviour, relationships/personal development and attendance) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
Mr J Griffiths 20097	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
Mr R Battey 2866	Team inspector	Science Music Special educational needs	
Mrs K Campbell 22856	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology History Foundation Stage	How well are pupils taught?
Mr J Zealander 32106	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Northfield Manor Primary School is situated in Birmingham. It is a larger than average sized primary school, with a total of 395 pupils on roll in 14 classes. Twenty per cent of pupils come from multi-ethnic families of whom a significant number have parents with links with the university. Seventy-four pupils have English as an additional language, of whom 34 receive specialist funding for their learning; this proportion is above the national average. There are 115 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, with eight pupils having a Statement of Special Educational Need; as a proportion this is above average. One hundred and twelve pupils are entitled to free school meals; as a proportion this is above average. Children enter school with standards which are above average for the local education authority. The number of pupils who join or leave the school at times other than of normal admission/transfer is high. There has been a significant turnover of teaching staff in the past 18 months, mainly due to promotion.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Currently, the school provides a satisfactory standard of education. By the end of Year 6, standards in English and science are above average. However, at the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are not high enough. Pupils' attitudes, values and relationships are good. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with strengths in the management of the school during a period of significant instability. The school currently gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of 11, pupils' standards in English and science are above average. By the age of 7, their standards in geography exceed expectations. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils' attitudes, personal development and relationships are good.
- The quality of teaching in Year 1 is very good.
- The teaching of personal, social and health education is good.
- Procedures for the assessment of pupils' learning are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. Standards in history by the end of Year 6.
- The provision for the teaching of music; the school is not meeting National Curriculum requirements.
- Pupils' spiritual development.
- The use of the results of assessment to plan pupils' future learning.
- Equality of opportunity, particularly in ensuring that pupils are not withdrawn from the same lessons every week.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, including for pupils with special educational needs, and using the results more effectively in planning for school improvement.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE PREVIOUS INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected in March 1997. It has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues. The quality of teaching has improved, particularly for more able pupils and children in reception. There has been insufficient progress in improving the quality of the school improvement plan.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	B	C	A
Mathematics	B	A	C	B
Science	A	A	A	A*

Key

top 5% nationally A*

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Similar schools are those with more than 20 per cent and up to 35 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

In the 2001 National Curriculum assessments, results in science placed the school in the top 5 per cent of similar schools nationally. Standards in English and mathematics were affected by one of the Year 6 classes having four different teachers during the year.

Current inspection findings judge that, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Variations in standards are accounted for by one of the current Year 6 classes having at least four different teachers in the current school year. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design, in design and technology and in geography, standards meet national expectations. In history, standards are below national expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in music and physical education.

Current inspection findings judge that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are below average. More able pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. However, less-able pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. In mathematics, standards are average and have improved as a result of successful teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards in science are average and have improved as a result of more effective teaching. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In geography, standards exceed expectations for seven-year-olds. In art and design, design and technology, history and physical education, standards meet expectations for seven-year-olds. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their physical and creative development. They exceed them in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and personal and social development.

Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress as a result of effective teaching.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils show positive attitudes to school and lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory; pupils mainly behave well in lessons, at breaks and lunchtimes and when moving around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are good. Pupils are polite and friendly.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory and a significant number of pupils are

	often late in arriving at school.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Teaching and support staff have a secure knowledge of this age group, work closely together and provide children with an interesting range of well balanced activities. Planning is good and adheres well to the six areas of learning for this age group. Group work is well organised. Support staff are of high calibre and make a major contribution to pupils' learning.

Strengths of teaching in Years 1 to 6 include secure relationships and a well ordered environment in which pupils learn effectively. In these lessons, planning is detailed, expectations are very high and teachers motivate their pupils well, using a variety of methods which guarantee that pupils work hard and produce their best. The purpose of lessons is shared consistently with pupils and time is allocated at the end of sessions to discuss whether it has been achieved.

Where teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, there are weaknesses in teachers' planning, which is inadequate to meet the different learning needs of pupils, and in the management of pupils' behaviour.

The teaching of literacy is good, although it ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. Most teachers implement effectively the National Literacy Strategy in lessons, but weaknesses in planning contribute to underachievement in Year 2. The teaching of numeracy is good. Teachers implement successfully the National Numeracy Strategy and the teaching methods advocated have a positive impact on pupils' learning.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. It is good in those lessons where pupils are supported effectively by learning support assistants and work is closely matched to targets set in their individual education plans. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good and contributes to the good progress they make in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory because the school is not meeting the National Curriculum requirements for the teaching of music. In addition, too many pupils are withdrawn from the same lessons each week and this impedes their progress.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory; most individual education plans deal satisfactorily with the pupils' literacy needs and occasionally their numeracy needs. They do not deal sufficiently with their behavioural, emotional and social development.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; the specialist support teacher and bilingual assistant plan a detailed programme for these pupils which ensures their full inclusion in all lessons. Work is matched carefully to their specific learning needs.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good for social and moral development and makes a positive contribution to pupils' positive attitudes and good relationships. Personal, social and health education lessons (PHSE) make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Spiritual development is unsatisfactory, with cultural development satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory, with strengths in procedures for pupils' day-to-day care. While assessment procedures are good, the use of information gained is unsatisfactory in terms of planning pupils' future learning.

The small number of parents who returned questionnaires were mainly supportive of the work of the school. The provision for pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need is inconsistent with the targets set in their individual education plans.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory, with strengths in the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's vision for the school and in managing a significant period of staffing instability. There are weaknesses in the quality of planning for school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory, with strengths in the governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, governors are not sufficiently involved in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory; recent high staffing turnover has meant that the school has not spent sufficient time in monitoring this aspect of its work.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory, especially funding for pupils with special educational needs. Funding for pupils with English as an additional language is used efficiently.

The accommodation is currently adequate for the pupils in the school. Staffing and resources are satisfactory and support pupils' learning. The school applies satisfactorily the principles of best value in its spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • Their children like school. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • Teaching is good. • They are comfortable in approaching the school with concerns or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework their children receive. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Twenty-two parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector and 103 questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings mainly support the positive views of parents. In relation to homework, parents felt there was either too much or too little. Inspection findings judge that the amount of homework is suitable for pupils of this age. The school is providing a satisfactory range of activities outside of lessons, not dissimilar to those found in most primary schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the reception classes with standards which are above average for the local education authority. They make satisfactory progress and, by the time they start Year 1, exceed the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in their personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. In their physical and creative development, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals¹.

Years 1 and 2

2. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were average in writing, but well below average in reading and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3² and above was above average in writing, average in mathematics, but well below average in reading. These figures indicate that more able pupils are challenged successfully in writing and mathematics. When compared to those in similar schools³, results were above average in writing but below average in mathematics and well below average in reading. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 and above was well above average in writing, above average in mathematics but below average in reading. These figures show that in comparison with those in similar schools more able pupils achieve particularly well in writing and mathematics. In the teacher assessments for science, results were well below the national average, although the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 and above was above average.
3. Taking the three years 1999 to 2001 together, trends show standards in reading and mathematics to be below average, with those in writing average. In mathematics, boys achieve higher standards than girls do. A further analysis of results shows that, while the school is successful in teaching more able pupils, it is less so with pupils of below average ability⁴. This is reflected in the high proportion of pupils achieving the Level 2c⁵ in the National Curriculum assessments. This depresses the school's overall results.
4. Current inspection findings judge standards in reading and writing to be below average. More able pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. However, below-average pupils are not sufficiently challenged in their learning. Weaknesses in the teaching of literacy in Year 2 contribute to standards not being high enough, particularly in work not being matched to the learning needs of below-average pupils. In mathematics, standards are average and have improved as a result of successful teaching of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards in science are average and have improved as a result of more effective teaching.
5. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In

¹ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

² It is the national expectation that, by the age of seven, pupils should achieve Level 2 or above in the National Curriculum assessments.

³ Schools with more than 20 per cent and up to 35 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

⁴ [This group does not include pupils with special educational needs.](#)

⁵ Level 2 is divided into Levels 2c, 2b and 2a, with 2a being the highest. [Pupils of average ability are expected to achieve Level 2b.](#)

geography, standards exceed expectations for seven-year-olds. In art and design, design and technology, history and physical education, standards meet expectations for seven-year-olds. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in music.

6. As measured against the findings of the previous inspection report, standards have declined in reading and writing. In all other subjects, with the exception of music where no current judgement is made, standards have been maintained. In reading and writing, standards have declined because the school is not challenging successfully pupils of below-average ability. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been unsuccessful in meeting their learning needs.

Years 3 to 6

7. The results of the Year 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were well above the national average in science and average in English and mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5⁶ and above was well above average in science and above average in English and mathematics. These figures indicate that more able pupils are suitably challenged. When compared to those in similar schools, results in science were very high and placed the school in the top 5 per cent of similar schools nationally. In English, results were well above average and in mathematics they were above average. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 and above in science was in the top 5 per cent of similar schools. In English and mathematics, the proportion was well above average.
8. Taking the three years 1999 to 2001 together, trends show standards to be above average in all three subjects. In science, boys achieve higher standards than girls do. Variations in standards at the end of Year 6 are affected by a number of factors which include:
 - the large number of pupils who leave or join the school at times other than of normal transfer/admission; of the current Year 6 pupils only 64 per cent were in the school at the start of Year 3;
 - in the previous and current academic years, one of the two Year 6 classes has been affected by staffing instability, with the classes over the year being taught by up to four different teachers;
 - the number of pupils who join the school from abroad who speak little or no English.
9. Current inspection findings judge standards to be above average in English and science and average in mathematics. The factors outlined above are the main reasons for variations in standards since the previous year.
10. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In art and design, design and technology and geography, standards meet national expectations. In history, standards are below national expectations. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards in music and physical education.
11. As measured against the findings of the previous inspection report, standards in English and science have improved as a result of the school successfully meeting the learning needs of more able pupils. With the exception of music and physical education, where no current judgements are made, standards have been maintained in all other subjects. However, in history standards have declined.

⁶ It is the national expectation that, by the age of 11, pupils should achieve Level 4 or above in the National Curriculum assessments.

12. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. They are supported effectively by teachers and usually receive good support from learning support assistants. Pupils achieve satisfactorily against targets set within their individual education plans.
13. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. They are supported effectively by the specialist support teacher and the bilingual assistant. The identification of their learning needs and the high quality of support in lessons contribute significantly to the good progress made. An example of the progress made is the following (unedited) poem written by a pupil who, one year ago, entered the school with not a word of English. In addition, it gives a very powerful insight into what it must feel like in a new and strange country and school.

*'When I come to school
I haven't got any friends
No one plays with me...
The boys push me
The girls pull me
I've got that trouble everyday
I doesn't know in English
The children talk to me
But I don't know what they say.
I cry evry time
When the children see
They say to me
You little baby you are
Crying like the baby
I'm scared of them
So I tell my mum
I'm sick I can't go
To school my mum
Said no you alright
Go to school please.
I go to school everyday
Every time so I know the English.
When the children talk
To me I knows what they say
So I'm happy know I like to go to
School every week every time every year.'*

14. The school has set challenging targets and is mainly successful in meeting them. However, high pupil mobility and the significant turnover of teaching staff in the last 18 months have contributed to the school not fully meeting all of its targets. Inspection evidence confirms that the school has the capacity to meet its future targets, particularly in classes where there is stability of teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils' attitudes to school are good and their behaviour is satisfactory. Their attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory.
16. The majority of parents that answered the pre-inspection questionnaire thought behaviour at the school was good and said that their children like school. All the pupils who spoke to inspectors said they like coming to school and feel very well looked after. Pupils report that when they have had personal problems their teachers are friendly, helpful and supportive. All pupils understand that if there are problems at school they should discuss them with an adult and they are confident that they will be helped.
17. The majority of pupils show good attitudes towards their work. These pupils are keen to learn. They apply themselves with enthusiasm to their work and work hard in lessons.

Most of the older pupils in the school show high levels of concentration, enthusiasm and positive attitudes to their class work. They enjoy being careful and thorough. They frequently collaborate well in pairs or small groups. For example, pupils in the oldest year group worked well together in a science lesson when they were measuring and recording the effects of exercise on their heart rates and temperature. The young children in the reception class quickly settle to lessons and try hard to produce their best work. They have well developed routines and enjoy co-operating, for example, to prepare a shopping list. Children are good at listening and show good independent skills when painting and preparing to paint. They tidy up well and appreciate each other's achievements. In assemblies, pupils of all ages are attentive. They listen carefully and take part in singing and this contributes to a calm and secure part of their day.

18. Relationships in the school are good. Pupils rapidly learn how to relate well to each other. In the playgrounds, they show considerable ability to co-operate in games. Pupils are friendly, considerate, open and helpful to visitors. They respect one another. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are keen and are well supported by classmates when in the classroom. There is an absence of oppressive behaviour, including bullying, racism and sexism. There were three permanent exclusions in the previous year involving pupils who were a risk to themselves and others. The school has good links with the behavioural support services of the local education authority.
19. In classes, behaviour is mostly good and sometimes very good. During the inspection, behaviour was good during lunch times. Pupils move from task to task quickly and quietly. However, there were lessons in which behaviour was unsatisfactory and even poor. This was mostly associated with particular classes and more prevalent amongst some junior-age pupils. These are classes in which pupils have experienced considerable change and some pupils have the greatest difficulty in settling down and concentrating.
20. Outside the classroom, pupils show their ability to accept responsibility for their own behaviour while thoroughly enjoying and benefiting from the experience. Most pupils understand and accept the rewards and sanctions and feel that they are fair. They recognise that this helps them develop a good understanding of how their behaviour affects others. They are proud to receive recognition for good work or behaviour. They act responsibly outdoors and observe the rules, for example, about playing football.
21. Most pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to their teachers and helpers. They mainly cope well with potentially difficult situations and give due attention to the ideas and opinions of others. The school develops pupils' understanding of responsibility by providing them with a wide range of tasks in the school. Older pupils enjoy helping 'buddies' in their first junior year once a week with their reading. Others help in assemblies, in the library and when delivering dinner registers. The school council, which has not met recently, helps junior pupils to make a contribution and prepares them for life in a democracy.
22. Attendance figures are below the national average for primary schools and there are many regular latecomers. Around 20 pupils were late on one of the inspection days and this disrupts their own learning and that of fellow pupils. Registers are completed twice a day and meet legal requirements. The school works very closely with the educational welfare officer, who responds to requests for support and visits the school termly. Pupils are polite and attentive during registrations and the time is used productively to help counting and the recognition of written names.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Inspection evidence endorses parents' positive and negative views and recognises a wide variation in the quality of teaching. Teaching in 53 per cent of lessons was good or better, with 14 per cent judged very good. One excellent lesson was also observed. Six per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory or poor.
24. Teaching in Year 1 is of a consistently high standard and is a strength of the school. Both teachers plan thoroughly and present their lessons with great enthusiasm. In response, pupils' participation is total and frequently results in very good progress. For much of the time, teaching in Year 3 and Year 5 is good and pupils learn well. Overall, teachers expect more of their pupils in Years 3 to 6 and, as a consequence, standards are higher by the time pupils leave the school. In contrast, teaching in Year 2 is not of the same high standard, with 14 per cent of lessons being judged unsatisfactory. Pupils in this year group do not always make enough progress or achieve standards in line with their ability.
25. The education of pupils in one Year 4 and one Year 6 class has been severely disrupted by staffing problems in the recent past. Each class has experienced an unacceptably high turnover of teaching and supply staff, with the result that a handful of pupils are disaffected, with no strong work ethic. Although the school has taken every step to restore stability, the pace of learning in these classes is often too slow and some pupils have got out of the habit of applying themselves to work. Not all teachers have the strategies to cope with such difficulties. The unacceptable behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in a Year 4 class adversely affects the progress of the majority.
26. Despite the instability, the overall quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and a much greater proportion of the teaching is good or better than was the case before. Positive aspects noted at that time have been maintained and most of the weaknesses have been rectified. The amount of unsatisfactory or poor teaching has decreased. The new deputy headteacher and many recently appointed staff are of high calibre and have contributed in no small measure to the improvement. Teachers are committed and hard working and reflect carefully on the quality of their teaching. Planning is much more consistent than in the past and most staff are aware of the importance of clear learning objectives for each lesson. However, the previous inspection report noted that pupils were not given sufficient opportunities to carry out research and that marking did not include clear targets for improvement. To some extent, these weaknesses still remain.
27. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage has improved. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated and teaching methods have been modified to provide a more appropriate and less formal structure for children in this age group. Reception class teaching is always at least satisfactory, with half of lessons observed good. Teaching and support staff have a secure knowledge of this age group, work closely together and provide children with an interesting range of well balanced activities. Planning is good and adheres well to the six areas of learning. Group work is well organised. Support staff are of high calibre and make a major contribution to pupils' learning. However, the purpose of some activities is not always defined clearly enough. As a result, tasks do not always match the needs of individual children, particularly those of the more able.
28. The best teaching is characterised by very secure relationships and a well ordered environment in which pupils learn effectively. In these lessons, planning is detailed, expectations are very high and teachers motivate their pupils well, using a variety of methods which guarantee that pupils work hard and produce their best. The purpose of lessons is shared consistently with pupils and time is allocated at the end of sessions to discuss whether it has been achieved. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed at every opportunity. Work is linked well to previous learning and teachers skilfully guide pupils to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in an excellent

science lesson the teacher held pupils' attention totally, discussed their ideas and with supreme skill guided them to a clearer understanding of fair testing as they worked out how to check whether their umbrellas were waterproof. Discussions between pupils and teacher were stimulating, with every minute of the lesson being part of a very positive learning process; the level of challenge was high for even the most able. At the end of the lesson, pupils of all abilities spoke and listened very well as they explained their findings. They were justifiably proud of their achievement.

29. In lessons where pupils do not learn effectively and the rate of progress is too slow, the teaching is frequently dull and unchallenging or the teacher does not have effective behaviour management strategies. Often pupils become bored in lessons when the pace is leisurely or when teachers rely heavily on worksheets. In lessons where some pupils behave unacceptably, the management of this poor behaviour dominates the lesson. The current range of strategies for dealing with such incidents is ineffective and other pupils suffer because they do not have enough opportunity to learn. In many lessons, insufficient attention is paid to the range of ability within the class and activities do not always match the needs of individuals. Time is sometimes wasted when lessons start late and not all teachers make sufficient use of their classroom support during the introductory part of Literacy and Numeracy Hours. On these occasions, good quality support staff sit unoccupied for long periods of time.
30. The teaching of English is good overall, although it varies from very good to unsatisfactory. In Year 1 it is very good. It is good or very good particularly in Years 5 and 6. Mathematics is also taught well in Years 3 to 6. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The overall approach helps pupils to learn well. In the most disrupted Year 4 class the benefits of such a structured approach are most noticeable. Pupils who achieve very little at other times respond to the structure of literacy and numeracy lessons well, behave acceptably and consequently make progress. Much of the teaching motivates and challenges. In a very good Year 5 literacy lesson on adapting letter writing for different audiences, the teacher shared the purpose of the lesson with pupils, asked skilful questions and displayed very secure subject knowledge. She checked regularly to ensure that everyone, including pupils with English as an additional language, understood the task. Every part of the lesson was of high quality and the teacher used the last part of the lesson very effectively to assess pupils' levels of understanding and to show them how much they had achieved. In another lesson the teacher successfully showed pupils how to double numbers. She helped them devise secure strategies for working out answers. She tailored questions to ensure that pupils with English as an additional language could participate fully. The classroom assistant provided very effective support for pupils with special educational needs and pupils of all abilities made equally good progress.
31. Science is also taught well throughout the school and the quality of teaching makes a major contribution to the standards achieved by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. Most teachers are very secure and confident with this subject. They transmit their enthusiasm and promote literacy and numeracy skills particularly well and pupils find the practical nature of the work exciting and challenging. Consequently, they learn well.
32. There are no subjects in which teaching, based on all inspection evidence, is weak. The teaching of information and communication technology has improved since the introduction of a computer suite. Better resources and a range of training opportunities have led to increased confidence and a resulting improvement in pupils' information technology skills. All staff make good use of their timetabled sessions in the suite, but do not make enough use of computers in their classrooms.

33. Although the overall quality of teachers' planning is good, all too often teachers do not recognise the importance of day-to-day assessment. Although assessment opportunities are incorporated into lesson plans, they vary considerably in quality. Some teachers demonstrate good practice when they adapt lessons after assessing pupils' levels of understanding from previous work. Others add vague comments to their lesson plans that lack any real purpose or understanding.
34. Marking is mainly adequate, although not in every class. In only a few classes does marking contain comments that will help pupils to improve. Homework makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning, although its quality and quantity vary considerably across the school. Some teachers plan homework into topics, others do not and parents were rightly concerned about the inconsistency of approach.
35. Teachers work hard to ensure that their lessons are inclusive and that pupils of all abilities participate fully. They take great care to ensure that pupils who have English as an additional language understand. They ensure that boys and girls contribute equally during class discussion and they provide appropriately for pupils with special educational needs. However, on some occasions it is difficult for teachers to maintain momentum when pupils are withdrawn for various activities throughout the day. During one lesson observed, only half the class was present at a given time. There was a constant flow of pupils going to and returning from extra literacy work or peripatetic music lessons. This was not an isolated incident. On such occasions pupils miss valuable teaching input and skills' development when they miss the same part of a lesson on a regular basis.
36. The teaching of pupils with special education needs is satisfactory. Teachers, sometimes with the aid of learning support assistants, support these pupils satisfactorily in their classes. They show a satisfactory awareness of the targets expressed in their individual education plans. However, some of their targets do not accurately express the needs of the pupils. For example, a pupil who has a Statement of Special Educational Need that indicates the need for help with his numeracy does not have targets in his individual education plans to meet this need. Assessment is not used effectively to modify pupils' tasks to meet their individual needs. When opportunities arise, pupils with special educational needs learn satisfactorily alongside their fellow pupils. For example, pupils with learning difficulties in literacy successfully discuss work with their support assistants and complete their written sentences with satisfactory levels of understanding and accuracy. When pupils are taken out of lessons for additional support in literacy from the co-ordinator for special educational needs, the work they are doing is insufficiently linked with their work in class. Teachers do not sufficiently record the progress of their pupils to inform the co-ordinator of their pupils' needs in order to support her decision on whether they should be registered as having special educational needs or not.
37. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good and makes a significant contribution to the good progress pupils make in their learning and to their inclusion in lessons. The specialist support teacher and the bilingual assistant work effectively together and in close partnership with teachers to identify learning needs and to plan suitably challenging work. Individual lesson plans are written and adapted to pupils' needs, but follow the main lesson plan of the class teacher. As a result, pupils follow the same key learning objectives adapted successfully to their individual stage of English acquisition.

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

38. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in reception are satisfactory and meet the statutory requirements for this stage of education. For pupils between the ages of five and eleven, although the school's curriculum includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, it is unsatisfactory. This is because the full range of the music curriculum is currently not being taught and, therefore, does not meet statutory requirements.
39. The recently appointed deputy headteacher has a detailed overview of the whole-school curriculum and is already having a positive impact upon the planning strategies in the school. Although in the early stages of implementation, these strategies provide a clear framework for the progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, information and communication technology has an 18 unit plan covering the six years' work and has been planned with care, taking into account the age and abilities of pupils. Each term teachers use this overview to plan work in more detail. Teachers with pupils of the same age in different classes work very closely together to ensure that as far as possible they receive similar lessons. Subject co-ordinators monitor lesson planning for their curriculum to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered.
40. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented satisfactorily across the school. The frameworks they provide are intended to raise standards in both English and mathematics, but despite these strategies being used systematically in all classes, they are not as effective as they could be. Weaknesses in the use of the strategies to plan pupils' day-to-day work contribute to underachievement in Year 2.
41. The school adds to the breadth of its curriculum with a promising programme of personal, social and health education and includes the appropriate provision for sex education and the dangers of drugs misuse. This programme is in its early stage of development and topics are still in the process of being developed to cover this area of the curriculum. The programme includes discussions on issues such as feelings, emotions, healthy living, drugs abuse and sex education. For example, in a good lesson dealing with emotion and feelings a Year 2 class worked in pairs to act out particular feelings, such as anger and loneliness. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, were good at portraying an emotion for the remainder of the class to identify. Later in the lesson, pupils' made good suggestions to help deal with feelings of sadness. The teacher skilfully highlighted an earlier incident during the week when two pupils had an argument but had recently decided that they should make friends again. The pupils confidently explained to the class why they should make up. In a very good lesson following a visit to the school by the Birmingham Health Education Caravan, Year 6 pupils sensibly identified and discussed substances commonly found in the environment. They made thoughtful suggestions about what to do when someone finds it difficult to make friends. The programme also includes 'Circle Time',⁷ during which pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is usually agreed that no interruptions occur and only one person at a time will speak.
42. A good range of visits enriches the curriculum and the social aspects of personal development. Year 1 visit the science museum and Year 2 visit a farm. Year 3 make a visit to Cadbury World while Year 4 visit Selly Manor. Work in art and science is supported when Year 5 visit Birmingham Art Gallery and science museum. Prior to taking their National Curriculum assessments, pupils in Year 6 take part in a residential trip to Bell Heath to help with their revision. An example of its effect upon pupils is seen in the

⁷ During Circle Time pupils discuss personal and general issues. One pupil at a time speaks in turn, and no-one interrupts. Pupils feel confident that they can talk freely and openly, and that the teacher and other pupils will listen.

poetry that they wrote while sitting in a woodland area. One pupil composed a very moving poem entitled 'My Perfect World' that shows not only good literacy skills, but also the capacity for mature sensitivity and thought. This trip, paid for by the school, forms part of the 'Birmingham Primary Guarantee' under which every pupil within the local education authority experiences a residential trip.

43. Pupils who receive support for special educational needs, have peripatetic music lessons or follow the additional literacy strategy are denied equality of access to the curriculum. There are insufficient checks to make sure they have equal opportunities in all aspects of the curriculum. Some pupils miss as many as three different lessons weekly. Many miss whole lessons and when they return to class are inadequately supported to help them to catch up with what they have missed. A frequent example is when pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for literacy support during the numeracy lesson. The opportunities for pupils to study music are under-developed across the school.
44. The school offers satisfactory levels of support and provision for pupils with special educational needs across the school. Due to the amount of time some pupils spend out of class for individual and group support, they sometimes miss important parts of the curriculum. The school has not fully moved towards providing the new Code of Practice⁸ that has to be in place with effect from September 2002. Most individual education plans deal satisfactorily with the pupils' literacy needs and infrequently with their numeracy needs. They do not deal sufficiently with their behavioural, emotional and social development. The individual education plans are reviewed regularly and parents are invited to make comment. The school has no means of informing parents in writing of the implications of their children being placed on the register of special educational needs in the case of those on the current Stages 1 and 2 and to invite them to attend reviews. The process of reviewing individual education plans with parents and specialists from outside the school is too informal. Insufficient information is gathered to make accurate decisions when reviewing the pupils' progress and future needs.
45. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Sporting clubs, such as those for football, netball, cricket, rounders and cross-country, take place after school. Pupils have the opportunity to sing in the recently restarted school choir. Pupils can also learn to play a musical instrument, such as the violin, cello, recorder or guitar.
46. The local community satisfactorily contributes to pupils' learning. Infant pupils perform their Christmas play in local homes for the elderly. The local church is used for the Carol Service at Christmas and other times.
47. There are good relationships with partner institutions. Teaching staff in the reception classes visit nursery schools in order to meet children about to enter the reception classes. A good, close relationship exists with Shenley Court Secondary School, to which many Year 6 pupils transfer when they leave. The head of Year 7 in the secondary school visits Year 6 pupils. Year 6 pupils visit Shenley Court School and its new 350-seat theatre, where they will perform a production at the end of their time in Year 6 from next year. Year 6 pupils also combine with Year 6 pupils from other schools and the head of performing arts at Shenley Court School to visit Birmingham Repertory Company to see a matinee performance. The school receives students on work experience and also those training to be teachers. A member of staff has responsibility for both liaising with the college and supporting the students while they are in school.
48. The pupils' spiritual development is encouraged satisfactorily in assemblies and through religious education lessons and residential visits. Each class has the opportunity of

⁸ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.

spending about half an hour a week in a personal and social education lesson talking and thinking about their relationships and feelings. Such lessons often include 'Circle Time', in which pupils have the opportunity to explore their thoughts and feelings, which helps them to understand the values and beliefs of others.

49. However, a spiritual dimension is not evident elsewhere in the curriculum. There are no planned opportunities for pupils to give some time to thinking about the deeper meaning and value of the facts, figures and skills that they are learning. In an art lesson, for instance, pupils saw examples of the use of perspective. Techniques were taught, but pupils were not being encouraged to value, celebrate and marvel at the extraordinary beauty and achievement of the world famous paintings, both religious and secular, which they were being asked to look at.
50. Moral development is promoted successfully throughout the school and the complex set of increasing rewards and sanctions are understood by pupils and felt to be reasonable. All members of staff have secure relationships with pupils and provide a firm basis for the development of their moral understanding. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and they all take part in creating their own class rules at the start of each academic year. This helps them to understand the meaning of and reasons for moral codes, which they have regular opportunities to explore further in 'Circle Time'.
51. Pupils' social development is promoted well and is one of the things that most pleases parents. Social values are promoted well by adults throughout the school and pupils are encouraged to care and take responsibility for others. Pupils willingly accept responsibilities, such as distributing materials in lessons, organising chairs and equipment for school assemblies and tidying up at the end of lessons. Pupils in Year 6 have some responsibility for running the school, for example manning the library and setting up the overhead projector for assemblies. Teachers encourage pupils to examine problems in the wider world context. The school successfully promotes an atmosphere in which pupils discuss important questions and concerns. There are useful contributions from visitors. The inclusion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need supports social development and promotes tolerant attitudes. The school arranges several visits and residential journeys that help to foster good social attitudes and habits.
52. Provision for cultural education is satisfactory. There are good displays showing a variety of cultures and prominent flags representing the national backgrounds of pupils at the school. Teachers provide many useful opportunities for pupils to study a range of artists and their works. The range of educational visits is reasonable and includes different cultural experiences and there have been visits by musicians, an author and a dance group. The pupils study ancient civilisations and gain an understanding of the life and times of these people.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

53. The school has good procedures for the care of the pupils. Staff and governors contribute to a caring school in which the personal needs of the pupils are met. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are identified early and given appropriate support to help them make progress. Many parents have made a point of saying how supportive the school has been when there have been difficult situations concerning their children.
54. There is a very positive atmosphere in the school. Pupils say that all the staff are kind and supportive. Pupils feel secure and know they can rely on their teachers. Pupils with special physical needs are well cared for and staff provide for these pupils' needs without drawing attention to them. Child protection procedures are satisfactory, but the school recognises that all staff, including all supply staff, would benefit from up-to-date training to

make sure that they are familiar with current requirements and procedures. At playtime and lunchtime, pupils are carefully supervised, although there is a need for occasional training and the recruiting of more supervisors. Several members of staff are trained in first aid and there are records of all incidents.

55. There are regular checks on the safety of portable electrical appliances, fire extinguishers and physical education equipment. The school does not undertake regular and formal health and safety audits. Governors are involved in surveying the state of the building, but are not specifically looking at health and safety aspects. The school is addressing a number of issues which came to light during this inspection, including the need to ensure adequate fencing around the pond in the wild areas and that routes to fire doors are adequately indicated and kept clear.
56. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is monitored carefully and there are good systems in place to help pupils and staff evaluate progress, particularly during times when there have been relationship problems. Class and school rules in classrooms remind pupils to be aware of the impact of their actions. Both the race relations policy and the policy for children in care are presently in draft. The system of rewards and sanctions is well understood by pupils and mainly effective. Nevertheless, there are pupils in some classes for whom these approaches are less effective. These classes have had a high staff turnover and a large percentage of pupils who have come from other schools. In these classes, procedures for promoting good behaviour that is effective with younger and more settled pupils are not so successful.
57. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Certificates for perfect attendance are given to pupils. The school monitors attendance well using a computer system and works closely with the educational welfare officer when necessary. Registers conform to legal requirements. Pupils and their families are kept fully aware of the importance of punctuality and the school is usually informed of the reasons for absences. A record of latecomers is kept and unexplained absences are followed up on the same day. However, the school has not taken advantage of the information on its database to analyse the reasons for the low attendance figures. For example, a significant proportion of absences in the previous school year were due to holidays taken in term time, all of which were authorised. A proportion of absences were due to an outbreak of influenza.
58. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. This is due to the recent very good input by the new assessment co-ordinator. The assessment co-ordinator has not had time to monitor and evaluate the consistency and effectiveness of practice across all classes and there is an uneven application of the procedures across classes. Testing on entry to the school in reception and in Year 1 is used to plan appropriate work and to assist in the early identification of pupils with special educational needs. The school uses a wide range of tests and assessments in reading, spelling, writing, mathematics and science to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. These provide helpful data for monitoring overall performance, but are not always used sufficiently by all staff to analyse performance, for example between year groups and the relative achievement of boys and girls. Teachers' planning for English, mathematics and science is suitably modified to initially match work to the differing needs of the pupils, although this is not consistent in all classes. The practice of sharing the assessment targets with pupils and helping them to understand their own learning and the small steps to be taken to make improvement is not fully developed across the school.
59. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning and the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are unsatisfactory. Teachers do not sufficiently evaluate the impact of their lessons on pupils' attainment in order to identify the learning targets for differing groups and individuals in future lessons. As lessons progress, there

is an insufficient use of recording to determine what pupils know or do not know. For example, support assistants for pupils with special educational needs are not encouraged to make notes on the progress of the pupils they are supporting. There is too much reliance on them giving occasional verbal feedback to teachers. This means they cannot accurately inform teachers about the pupils' understanding and progress that can be used to inform the content of future lessons and the termly reviews of their individual education plans. The lack of reliable recorded information on pupils' progress results in them making uneven progress and not achieving standards as high as they might.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. The comments in the parents' questionnaires and those made at the parents' meeting held before the inspection were predominantly supportive.
61. Parents report that the school works closely with them and keeps them informed, but a very small minority disagree. Ninety-two per cent feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems and all parents spoken with during the inspection said that they felt that staff were always very willing to listen to their concerns. Nineteen per cent of parents say that they did not feel that the amount of homework was right for their children. It is not easy fully to interpret this result. Some parents feel that there is too much homework and others too little. There is a clear homework policy saying what is to be expected, but the quantity and type of homework set are inconsistent.
62. A significant percentage of parents who completed the questionnaires disagreed that the school provided an interesting range of activities outside lesson. However, the inspection found that the school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities outside the classroom, including visits, visitors and good residential experiences.
63. Communication with parents is satisfactory. The school makes a good effort to involve parents. Newsletters are sent out on a regular basis and cover events, dates and concerns. At the start of each year, parents are given brief information about topics that are planned, but this is not sufficiently detailed in order that parents can fully participate and contribute to pupils' learning. The school ran a mathematics workshop which was appreciated by those parents who attended. At the end of the year, parents are given an opportunity to discuss reports on their children's academic progress. These reports are detailed and helpful and some include targets for the future.
64. Parental involvement with the school is satisfactory. It starts before their children attend, when parents visit the school to find out how they can help their children settle in school. Parents support their children's efforts by attending special events such as annual performances. Attendance at meetings with teachers to discuss children's progress is good. Very few parents regularly come into school to help, but there is very good attendance and a lovely atmosphere created by the proud parents of pupils involved in giving their all in a class assembly.
65. The school association is run by a small and dedicated group of parents with the active support of staff. It raises useful funds and contributes significantly to the school community by arranging an ambitious series of events from cake sales to discos. A trained parent-link worker is developing programmes aimed at involving more parents in the work of the school and at the same time contributing to their own and their children's learning. She has started successful coffee mornings and has organised a workshop, with over 20 parents and their children taking part. The school supports her work and a very promising start has been made.
66. Parents are given opportunities to help their children with homework. They hear children read at home and this has a positive impact on pupils' confidence in reading. Parents

record the amount of reading done at home in a reading record book and staff respond to their comments. There is no homework book, but as pupils usually take work sheets home parents can usually see what is expected.

67. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the regular reviews of the individual education plans from Stage 3⁹. When there is any concern about their children's behaviour, they are fully involved with the school's monitoring of pupils' success in achieving agreed behaviour targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

68. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher provide satisfactory leadership based upon a strong commitment to encouraging all pupils to do their best at all times. They have ensured that the impact on pupils of the difficult staffing conditions has been reduced by committing themselves to teaching. The deputy headteacher is teaching full time in Year 6 to ensure that the pupils receive consistent teaching, while the headteacher takes one of the sets for mathematics each morning. This has meant that some of the developments that would support further improvement in the school that were to be completed this year have had to be postponed. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have a shared vision for the school that they would like to implement and expect that the resolution of the staffing problems will enable this to happen. Although they have begun to outline areas for the school development plan, this is not informed by a long-term plan for the future direction for the school. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher recognise that currently staff with management responsibilities (many of whom have only recently been appointed) have not had sufficient time to make a significant contribution to the work of the school.

The school recognises the need to ensure that:

- initiatives are properly costed and funded;
- curriculum developments are planned within a cycle that gives a reasonable balance of activities in any year;
- all teachers who have responsibilities as curriculum co-ordinators are fully conversant with the strengths and weaknesses within their subject;
- all staff and governors make a contribution to the development and implementation of the school development plan.

69. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities and statutory duties satisfactorily. It has agreed a regular calendar of meetings that are supported by meetings of committees and working groups. The chair has an effective partnership with the headteacher and they have dealt with recent difficult situations together in the correct manner. The governing body has nominated governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. The headteacher prepares the school's spending plan in conjunction with the finance committee and this is presented to the governors for adoption each year. Governors receive regular reports from the headteacher and their understanding of the school is enriched by visits to classes. These are planned to focus on particular subjects, such as numeracy or literacy; governors are also linked to classes. The governors are committed to trying to improve the standards in the school. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in standards and are beginning to monitor the school's performance against that of similar schools. They use national data to support this work. However, the lack of a strategic plan for the school means that their work is not as effective as it could be.

⁹ [Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.](#)

The headteacher and deputy headteacher understand that the work of the governors would be improved by:

- ensuring that they help to shape the future direction of the school and allocate funds to support initiatives;
- developing an annual calendar of meetings that addresses regular items as well as new initiatives;
- receiving regular reports from curriculum co-ordinators on the strengths and weaknesses in each subject.

70. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have recently put in place stronger procedures with which curriculum co-ordinators can monitor their subjects. Many co-ordinators have only recently been appointed to the school or have had responsibility for the subject for a short time. This means that there is only a limited amount of monitoring or evaluation evidence in the school. However, all are keen to ensure that pupils make good progress in their subject. All co-ordinators have a subject file that contains information to support them in the task and some are beginning to analyse pupils' performance and learning. This is especially good in English and science, where co-ordinators have a clear understanding of strengths and weaknesses. The school recognises that in order to develop these initiatives it needs to:
- build on the good practice in English and science and ensure that each co-ordinator has a secure understanding of the monitoring process and can evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in their subject;
 - use staff meetings and professional development opportunities to focus on curriculum issues and the raising of standards of teaching and learning;
 - devise a calendar of development that includes all subjects, while maintaining a balance that will make curriculum improvements manageable in terms of time and resources.
71. The school appropriately uses grants that it receives for specific purposes, including those for pupils with English as an additional language. The finance officer supports the school in monitoring its spending and the audit report shows that the accounts are kept properly. The closure of some university accommodation within the school's catchment area led to an increase in the number of pupils who leave or join the school at times other than of normal admission/transfer. This, coupled with increased costs due to staffing difficulties, meant that the school overspent in 2000-2001. The headteacher and the governors have made provision with the local education authority and have set a budget for this year that will enable it to repay most of the money previously overspent.
72. The management of pupils with special educational needs is not effectively performed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. She spends most of her available time supporting pupils for their literacy skills as individuals or in small groups. She spends little time monitoring and evaluating the provision across the school or advising supporting and training staff. However, the usually good team approach amongst staff supports the satisfactory levels of provision. Funding for special educational needs is satisfactorily used. The governors do not comment sufficiently on the implementation of the policy for special educational needs and access for the disabled in their annual report to parents.
73. The management of pupils with English as an additional language is good and has a positive impact on their progress in the school. There are good systems in place to identify pupils' learning needs. Resources are good and used efficiently to support pupils in lessons.
74. There have been a considerable number of changes in staffing. Recent appointments now mean that the situation is more stable. The school's teaching staff has a wide range of experience and is appropriately qualified to teach the National Curriculum. The

teaching staff is deployed satisfactorily and each teacher has a curriculum responsibility.. At present the deputy headteacher, apart from having a full-time teaching role to cover a long-term sickness, is also acting as the upper-school co-ordinator. Newly-qualified teachers, as part of their professional development, have a supporting role within the curriculum. All colleagues welcome teachers who are new to the school. They are satisfactorily supported and each newly-qualified teacher has a personal mentor. Support staff are appropriately qualified, although their induction and ongoing training are weaknesses. However, both teaching and support staff have opportunities to develop their expertise. For example, two members of the support staff in the reception classes have embarked on courses that will eventually result in qualified teacher status. All teaching, support and administrative staff work well as a team, continually striving to ensure that the school is a welcoming environment where children and pupils can learn effectively.

75. The accommodation provides adequate teaching space for the number of pupils in each class. There is an information and communications technology suite that provides adequate space for the classes using it and makes a strong contribution to the development of pupils' skills. However, ongoing problems with both software and hardware hamper the benefits this resource provides. Many classrooms have good displays of pupils' work and provide an attractive and pleasant learning environment for the pupils. The outside areas of the school have been improved by the recent building of an attractive sitting area in the grounds. The two playgrounds for upper and lower school pupils are adequate for the numbers in the school. However, the fenced area for children in the reception classes is too small and does not allow sufficient room for their physical development. The outside area contains a wild section that can be used for work in science. The pond that was a concern because it was unsighted at the time of the last inspection is now silted up, but plans are being developed to build another one. The building and grounds are well maintained and kept to a high standard of cleanliness. However, while the main fabric of the building is satisfactory, many window frames on the south side of the building are in a poor state. Peeling paint spoils the visual appearance of the building.
76. The learning resources available in the school are satisfactory overall and in science they are good. There is an adequate supply of good quality artefacts for the teaching of history. However, the quality and quantity of books in the library, the classrooms and the reading books for the reception children are unsatisfactory. Currently, some computers are in a poor state of repair both in the suite and in classrooms. This impedes pupils' access to the computers. Subject co-ordinators are well aware of the resources they have and the need for replacement and updating when necessary. Subject co-ordinators and teams are responsible for their own budget and the school improvement plan lists the monies available for each subject.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education offered to its pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) improve standards in **history** by the end of Year 6 by ensuring that pupils in Year 6 are taught the subject during the course of the year and by improving the co-ordination of the subject; improve standards in **reading and writing** by the end of Year 2 by improving the quality of teaching to ensure that the learning needs of below-average pupils in particular are met fully; (paragraphs 2-4, 10, 24, 40, 99, 102, 104, 106 and 109)
 - (2) ensure that music is taught to the full requirements of the National Curriculum; (paragraphs 38, 168)
 - (3) improve the range of planned opportunities to promote pupils' spiritual development; (paragraphs 49 and 128)
 - (4) improve the use of marking and the results of assessment to plan pupils' future learning, particularly by sharing this information with subject co-ordinators; (paragraphs 33-34, 59, 125 and 127)
 - (5) ensure that pupils are not withdrawn from the same lesson each week for additional support or peripatetic music lessons; (paragraphs 35, 43-44 and 169)
 - (6) improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the school, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, and use the results more effectively in planning for school improvement, particularly in developing a long-term school improvement plan. (paragraphs 68-70 and 72)

In addition, the governing body may wish to include the following in its action plan:

- to continue to work with parents and pupils to stress the importance of regular attendance and good punctuality; (paragraph 22)
- to improve the consistency in homework; (paragraphs 34 and 61)
- to develop further pupils' independence, particularly in their investigative work; (paragraphs 81, 97-98 and 115)
- to improve the consistency of the quality of pupils' handwriting; (paragraphs 104-105)
- to improve the range and quality of books and improve the quality of book corners/reading areas in classrooms. (paragraphs 76 and 112)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	89
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	12	34	37	3	2	0
Percentage	1	13	39	42	3	2	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	395
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	112

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	105

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	74

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	82
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	62

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	35	34	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	24	27	24
	Girls	21	23	21
	Total	45	50	45
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	76 (86)	85 (78)	76 (76)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	25	30	28
	Girls	22	21	22
	Total	47	51	50
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (76)	86 (75)	85 (76)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	29	21	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	22	21	29
	Girls	16	15	19
	Total	38	36	48
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	76 (80)	72 (80)	96 (89)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	20	21	29
	Girls	17	15	19
	Total	37	36	48
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	74 (74)	72 (82)	96 (82)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	11
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	0
Indian	10
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	1
White	241
Any other minority ethnic group	66

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	272

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	1
Black – other	4	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	11	2
Other minority ethnic groups	3	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	955,913
Total expenditure	909,703
Expenditure per pupil	2,524
Balance brought forward from previous year	-34,131
Balance carried forward to next year	12,079

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 26%

Number of questionnaires sent out	395
Number of questionnaires returned	103

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	48	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	45	8	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	52	8	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	51	14	5	0
The teaching is good.	48	45	3	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	55	9	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	30	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	39	5	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	31	55	9	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	34	47	4	5	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	51	4	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	49	17	6	10

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

78. There have been a number of improvements since the previous inspection. The teaching of the school's youngest children now adheres well to the suggested curriculum for children of this age. There is a better balance of activities on offer that is far less formal. Children enter the reception year with an above average level of attainment. Overall, they make satisfactory progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
79. The initial assessments made when children start in the reception classes are thorough and the school has started to track progress more accurately. However, it does not use the results of assessments sufficiently well to plan an appropriate range of activities at the right level for each child. Consequently, some children find the work too easy.
80. A small minority of children has English as an additional language. The school offers sound provision for these children, enabling them to make sufficient progress to participate fully in all aspects of school life. Children who are identified as having special educational needs receive appropriate support, particularly from teaching assistants, and they make as much progress as others do.
81. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is at least satisfactory. Its quality has improved since the time the school was last inspected. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed; half of lessons were satisfactory and half were good. The Early Years' co-ordinator has provided a helpful policy to guide planning and this has led to a significant improvement in linking work to the Early Learning Goals. Teachers and support staff manage children well and use praise and encouragement very successfully to build their confidence. As a result, relationships between children and adults are very strong, children are keen to learn and standards of behaviour are very good. The staff encourage children to discuss ideas and think about what they are doing. They ask purposeful questions to promote learning and successfully increase understanding. However, there is a tendency for staff to over-direct some group activities, with the result that children do not learn to make choices for themselves and do not have enough opportunity to experiment. This lack of freedom is most noticeable when children's creativity is stifled at times other than literacy and numeracy sessions. The key issue from the previous inspection relating to improving this part of provision has only been partly addressed. There is still room for further improvement.
82. Staff have worked hard to achieve an attractive learning environment. Classrooms are bright and displays are lively and interesting. Although learning resources are adequate, there are too few reading and library books. Some books are scruffy and do not encourage the development of good reading habits. In addition, the fenced area for outdoor play activities is too small. There is sufficient room for only a few children to ride bikes and use wheeled toys at any one time. Climbing apparatus can only be used in fine weather as there is no covered area. As a result, children miss important opportunities to develop physical skills further. The commitment of staff is high and there is a clear sense of direction. The school is well placed to make further improvements in the future.

Personal, social and emotional development

83. Most children have well developed personal, social and emotional skills on entry to school, although initial assessments show that a few have significant needs in this area. All children make good progress so that by the time they reach Year 1 many will have exceeded the Early Learning Goals. Children feel safe and secure and display a good level of trust, for example, in the way they arrive at the start of the day. They confidently leave their parents and carers. Reception staff teach personal development well and

create an atmosphere of mutual respect. Children of all abilities contribute confidently in lessons because they know that their ideas are valued.

84. In a good lesson linked to work on the local shops the teacher deliberately grouped more-able with less-able children. The pairings were very effective because more-able children had to think very carefully about how they were going to help their partners. Several children sat with their arms around each other. There was much humour and enjoyment. Children behave very well and are keen to be involved. They work and play together amicably. They clap spontaneously and enjoy the success of others. There is a clear commitment to developing independence and children respond well when asked to tidy up or get changed by themselves for physical education lessons.

Communication, language and literacy

85. Children enter the school with above-average speaking, listening and early reading skills. Their writing skills are not as strongly developed. Through satisfactory teaching, children make sound progress. The vast majority of children in the current reception classes have already achieved the Early Learning Goals and will reach above-average standards overall by the time they reach Year 1, although writing development remains weaker.
86. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well through a good variety of activities. For example, four boys working in the sand tray negotiated with each other successfully as they tried to work out how to build a road structure around the edge. The activity was full of good-humoured discussion. On another occasion, children visited their classroom shop and tried, with varying degrees of success, to spend '10p'. Some lacked confidence, others were very articulate, but all made progress and gained in confidence. Children with English as an additional language participate fully because they are supported appropriately by a number of adults, some of whom explain in the children's first language so that they fully understand what they have to do.
87. Children enjoy books. In discussion they are inquisitive about print. During one guided reading activity pupils talked animatedly about their dogs as they read the story of 'Me and My Dog' together. Most knew what 'blurb' meant. Pupils of all abilities believed they were readers and made steady progress. Some read whole books unaided, while others needed help to follow the print from right to left. However, children do not get sufficient opportunity to develop their reading skills through sharing books on a one-to-one basis with an adult. Some are given books that are far too easy and the school relies heavily on children reading at home. Although many parents provide a good level of support, it is not enough to ensure that children develop skills in line with their ability. Reading records do not identify areas for development. These weaknesses, combined with the lack of good quality reading books, hinder the progress of more-able children most. Parents were justifiably concerned about this area of provision.
88. In both reception classes, elements of the National Literacy Strategy are being used effectively to develop good word-building skills. Morning registration time is a purposeful time when children listen to a tape about letter sounds. They sing along, join in and enjoy working out the letter sounds of new words. Evidence taken from previous work and from lessons observed indicates that, although children make satisfactory progress in developing their writing skills during the Literacy Hour, there are insufficient opportunities for purposeful development at other times and more-able children frequently complete work that is too easy for them. Children display a wide range of ability in their writing skills. Some write their names unaided, while others are not secure with letter formation. The heavy reliance on worksheet-based activities does not promote the development of writing skills well. Once again, more-able children suffer most as their writing skills are not developed sufficiently. There is a writing area in each classroom, but it is not organised sufficiently well to encourage use. This lack of independent writing experience

contributes to only satisfactory levels of attainment in writing by the time children enter Year 1.

Mathematical development

89. Most children enter the school with above-average mathematical skills. The quality of teaching is consistently good, resulting in good progress. Children with special educational needs receive well-targeted support and contribute fully in lessons. All members of staff know the children well and promote the use of mathematical language effectively. Children are provided with a good variety of interesting activities and staff use every opportunity to develop mathematical skills successfully. As children line up to go out to play, they sing number rhymes. At the beginning of one lesson they all joined in 'Five Currant Buns in the Baker's Shop' with great enthusiasm. The vast majority of children knew how to calculate one less as the currant buns disappeared. Lessons are very well organised and the practical activities prepared for children with special educational needs are well matched to their ability. Children with English as an additional language are not held back by their lack of language skills and receive an appropriate level of support. Occasionally, however, more-able children do not receive work that is sufficiently challenging. In one lesson a very capable boy could count to 100 and was confident with all denominations of money, yet he was working on sums involving numbers to 10 and very basic money work. None of the activities on offer matched his ability. A few parents were rightly concerned about the lack of challenge for some children.
90. Most of the current reception children have already achieved the Early Learning Goals. Approximately half have a mature level of mathematical understanding and are on course to reach above-average levels of attainment at the end of reception.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

91. Children enter the school with a secure knowledge of the world in which they live. They make sound progress through satisfactory and sometimes good teaching. They develop greater understanding through a purposeful range of activities linked to a central theme. During the week of the inspection they were studying the local shops. All staff promoted language development well, as they discussed street furniture and other important features. Children displayed an impressive amount of knowledge. Many were aware of the reasons for the speed bumps outside the school, they knew where the nearest postbox was situated and they talked about the purpose of lamp posts and street signs. One boy started to voice his opinions, with great authority, about the differences between the local shops and the nearby supermarket.
92. Children develop good computer skills. During lessons they displayed a good level of independence as they clicked on the mouse and needed very little support to print their finished designs.
93. A significant proportion of children have already achieved the Early Learning Goals and will enter Year 1 with a very secure knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live.

Physical development

94. Children's physical development on entry to school is at the expected level. The quality of teaching is good and children of all abilities make good progress towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. In one physical education lesson the day-to-day routines of dressing and undressing independently were already well established. Children understood the importance of exercise to keep healthy. They had good awareness of

each other's space as they hopped, skipped and ran during their warm-up activities. The teacher had prepared an enjoyable range of activities to motivate children well and created exactly the right atmosphere for an enjoyable learning session. Children responded by learning at a fast rate as they found new ways to use a variety of balls, beanbags, hoops and rubber rings. They giggled excitedly as they involved themselves totally in all the activities.

95. The outdoor play area provides some opportunity for children to develop their physical skills, but it is too small for more than a few children to use at any one time. Although staff make best use of the current provision, it is difficult for them to provide enough opportunities for children to explore and develop their physical skills. In addition, because there is no soft landing surface, large apparatus has to be used with great care.
96. Children write with reasonable pencil control and use scissors with increasing competence, although they do not always receive sufficient opportunity to develop skills when teachers cut things out for them. There is still a weakness in the number of opportunities available for children to explore and experiment with tools and materials of their choice. The key issue from the previous inspection, relating to this area of provision, has only been partly addressed.

Creative development

97. Children make satisfactory progress overall in their creative development. Although they develop skills adequately through role-play, activities to develop artistic skills are not as well promoted. There are insufficient opportunities for children to experiment or explore with a wide variety of materials. This is an area of weakness. Displays of children's work are effectively linked to topics and examples of previous work on display, ranging from self-portraits to minibeasts, show good artwork.
98. Children know a good range of songs and rhymes. They remember words well and sing with great vitality. Their responses to music are spontaneous. During the inspection a child gave the inspector an accurate rendition of a nursery rhyme as he pretended to play the piano from his picture in a storybook. Music is a good social occasion in which children learn well. At the end of one lesson, teachers and children rose to the challenge of trying to keep up with the increasing pace of the music as they listened to 'Zorba the Greek'. Despite the lack of opportunities for independent exploration and investigation, children make sufficient progress to achieve most of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year.

ENGLISH

99. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing are below average. In speaking and listening, standards are average. More able pupils make good progress and achieve above-average standards. However, pupils of below-average ability make unsatisfactory progress as the result of teaching not meeting their learning needs. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning as a result of effective teaching. Progress in Year 1 is very good as a result of very effective teaching by the literacy co-ordinator and many pupils achieve above-average standards for their age.
100. By the end of Year 6, standards in English are above average. Pupils make good progress in their learning, with more able pupils achieving above-average standards. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. However, in those lessons where they receive effective support from learning support assistants they make good progress. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because of the high quality teaching they receive.

101. By the end of Year 2, pupils are confident in speaking and listening. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 took part in a class assembly at which many of their parents were present. Pupils spoke clearly and very confidently and everyone in the audience was able to hear every word. All pupils in the class contributed successfully to sharing with the audience work undertaken on looking at 'Homes' as an area of study. By Year 6, pupils are confident in entering into discussions with their teachers. In lessons they listen attentively but are ready to answer questions and to make suggestions. When discussing their work with inspectors, pupils spoke clearly, confidently and politely. They enjoy talking to an audience; for example, in Year 6 pupils read the poems based on 'The Sea' which they had written during a lesson. The audience listened attentively and broke into spontaneous applause after each reading.
102. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are below average. More able pupils achieve above-average standards, but too high a proportion of pupils are not achieving high enough standards. These pupils receive insufficient support during the 'Guided Reading' session within the Literacy Hour from teachers and learning support assistants to develop their reading skills. More able pupils read fluently and clearly enjoy what they read. They use a good range of methods to read new and unfamiliar words and are confident in predicting what will happen next in a story. Below-average readers are insecure in the use of punctuation when reading and lack fluency and understanding. Most pupils show a good knowledge of letter sounds (phonics).
103. By the end of Year 6, standards in reading are good. Pupils read fluently and with good expression. They talk confidently about the books they read and show good recall of the plot and characters. Pupils express preferences for authors and favourite books. For example, one boy said, 'I like books by J R Tolkien and Philip Pullman. I prefer fiction. I like fantasy books and books with different universes and planets'. Pupils show a good knowledge of how to use the contents, index and glossary in non-fiction books. They know how to find books in the school library, although few know that the numbering system is the 'Dewey System'. In Year 6, pupils enjoy being 'Reading Buddies' with pupils in Year 3. Most pupils use their local public library and many are confident in using the Internet as a source of reference material.
104. By the end of Year 2, standards in writing are below average, although more able pupils achieve good standards. However, too many pupils of below-average ability are underachieving because work is not matched clearly to their learning needs. They are often given work which is too hard for them. More able pupils, when given the opportunity, write imaginatively and show good skills in spelling and punctuation. The spelling of below-average pupils is less secure because they are given the same words as the rest of the class to learn and these are too hard for them at this stage. For all pupils, handwriting is a weakness. Although there is evidence in handwriting exercise books that skills of joining-up are taught and practised, these skills are not applied when pupils write in literacy lessons or in other subjects.
105. By the end of Year 6, standards in writing are good. Spelling is good and most pupils correctly use key punctuation and grammar skills. Most know how to use paragraphs and speech marks and there is accurate use of question and exclamation marks. Pupils show good skills in drafting and redrafting their work. Handwriting is weaker and pupils are inconsistent in the styles they use. Most show that, when expected to do so, they can write in a neat, legible and joined-up style. However, there is a tendency to revert to printing.
106. Pupils are given many good opportunities to write in English and in other subjects. In Year 1, pupils understand and make good attempts to write alliterations, for example 'Oscar Octopus On An Orange'. In geography they write about the differences between

Britain and the countries 'Barnaby Bear' visits on his travels. In Year 2, pupils write their own versions of familiar fairy stories. They use the Internet and reference books to find out about and record information about clothes, food, money and the weather in countries visited by 'Barney Bear'. However, in Year 2, too much writing is based on the filling-in of photocopied worksheets which do not extend pupils' skills in writing.

107. In Year 3, pupils write clear instructions for making a cube out of paper and they write good reviews of a recent visit to a theatre. They use word-processing skills successfully in their rhymes based on 'I like to see windy weather'. In Year 5, pupils research and then write detailed booklets on the 'The Planets'. Many use computer skills effectively, including 'clip-art' and well-labelled diagrams. In religious education they produce informative booklets on the key features of 'Buddhism'. In history, pupils research and make their own historical timelines showing key events that happened in Britain since 1948. In Year 6, pupils understand and use complex sentences; for example, 'As Cinderella was touched by the long magical candy, her tatty rags were changed into a dark, liquorice flavoured nightie, and on her feet appeared florescent bubble gum night slippers'. Pupils write a good range of imaginative poems. For example, following their recent residential visit one pupil wrote the following poem:

'In the Wood

*The crunchy crispy leaves rustling
With hedgehogs hibernating in
Them.
The trickling water running through
The cold stones.
The tall stinging nettles
Waving in the wind
The caterpillar wriggles eating
Leaves.
Grainy soil
The dry dead grass lying on
The damp green living grass.
All the old bricks covered in
Moss.
Home for all the minibeasts
Leaf skeletons covering the floor'.*

108. When given the opportunity, pupils apply their word-processing skills successfully in presenting their work. For example, pupils in Year 6 made good use of 'clip-art' to improve the quality of presentation of their poems on 'The Sea'. However, in many literacy lessons teachers make insufficient use of classroom-based computers to support pupils' learning and opportunities are missed for pupils to draft and edit their writing.
109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with a high proportion which is good or very good. However, there are significant variations across the school and this contributes to variations in the standards achieved at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In Year 1, teaching is very good and makes a strong contribution to the very good progress pupils make. In Year 2, judging from all inspection evidence, teaching is unsatisfactory. While teaching is successful in meeting the needs of more able pupils, it is not meeting the specific needs of pupils with below-average ability. The main weaknesses are:
- the overuse of commercially produced photocopied worksheets, many of which are undated, unmarked and incomplete;
 - planning which does not set clear learning objectives for below-average pupils, with the result that work is often too hard for them;
 - weaknesses in the management of lessons, particularly in group work where pupils find it hard to work independently;
 - insufficient allocation of and/or use of learning support assistants;

- ‘Guided Reading’ sessions are not used effectively to develop key reading skills.
110. In Years 3 to 6, teaching is more consistent, with a high proportion of good and very good teaching in Years 5 and 6, which contributes to the good standards achieved. In the best lessons:
- teachers share the learning objective with pupils; for example, in a Year 6 lesson the objective was ‘to be able to write a conversation poem based on the theme of ‘The Sea’’;
 - teachers share the key questions for pupils to think about; for example, in a Year 5 lesson on writing letters of complaint the one question was ‘What is the letter in response to?’
 - teachers’ planning successfully meets the different learning needs of pupils, with the result that all make good progress within lessons;
 - learning support assistants are used effectively throughout the lesson, including the introduction and final (plenary) session to support pupils’ learning;
 - teachers remind pupils to think about handwriting and presentation and to use dictionaries and a thesaurus.
111. The subject is effectively led and managed by the co-ordinator, who took up responsibility for leading and managing the subject across the school in January 2002. Since then she has identified the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has drawn up a detailed action plan to secure improvements. She has completely updated termly planning for literacy lessons as her main initial focus and this is now of good quality. She recognises the need to spend more time monitoring teaching and learning to ensure greater consistency in teaching and learning. Good assessment procedures are in the process of development, although there is insufficient analysis of pupils’ strengths and weaknesses in reading, which contributes to below-average standards at the end of Year 2. The co-ordinator recognises the need to develop more effective links with the co-ordinator for special educational needs and the assessment co-ordinator in order to plan for pupils’ future learning, particularly for pupils of below-average ability.
112. The school has two libraries which contain a satisfactory range of books. Pupils use the library on a regular basis, with each class timetabled for a weekly session. In many classrooms there is a good focus on sharing pupils’ writing, particularly in displays. However, there is insufficient emphasis placed on promoting a love for reading through providing stimulating books and/or reading areas.

MATHEMATICS

113. By the end of Year 2, standards in mathematics are average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. More able pupils make good progress and achieve above-average standards. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
114. By the end of Year 6, standards are average. Standards are not as high as they have been due to the significant disruption to one of the Year 6 classes caused by them having four teachers since the start of the current school year. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. More able pupils make good progress and achieve above-average standards. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are taught in sets (ability groups), which is effective and contributes to the above-average standards achieved by more able pupils.
115. Pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of mathematics. However, they are given few opportunities to use and apply their knowledge and understanding of mathematics in problem-solving and investigations. This aspect of mathematics was

identified as an area for improvement at the time of the last inspection. By the age of 7, pupils use number facts to 10 to solve basic number problems. They know number bonds in the two, five and ten times tables and identify the patterns on a grid. More-able pupils plot the three, four, six and eight times tables and begin to recognise simple common multiples. They know the properties of common shapes and identify accurately two- and three-dimensional shapes. They make accurate models of three-dimensional shapes from nets. They solve simple problems involving money and begin to understand the use of standardised measures. By the age of 11, pupils use standard notation correctly. They have a secure understanding of place value and work accurately to three decimal places. They work accurately with fractions, recall equivalent fractions, decimal fractions and percentages, and recognise rotations around a fixed point, working accurately to scale. More-able pupils understand and use co-ordinates in four quadrants. Handling data is secure, with effective links made to its application in science, for example in recording the results of experiments in graph form.

116. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Half of the lessons were judged good or better and included an example of very good teaching. Where the teaching is good or very good, it is characterised by the effective use of clear instructions, focused questions and effective demonstration by the teacher. For example, in Year 1 a teacher demonstrated clearly what she wanted the pupils to do and then ensured that they understood by skilful questioning. As a result, all pupils made good progress in their learning. In Year 4 a teacher used the available time well by injecting pace into the learning and ensuring that pupils remained focused on the learning. In Year 5, a teacher showed great confidence in her knowledge of the subject and expertise in the teaching it. She used questions appropriate for each of the groups, set tasks that were interesting and challenging and ensured that pupils had secured their learning at the end of the lesson by asking them to explain what they had done and how they had done it. In lessons that contain a degree of challenge and pace, the pupils make good progress and develop positive attitudes to mathematics. The National Numeracy Strategy gives teachers an effective framework that informs their planning. Teachers make good use of the oral and mental activities and pupils respond well. Learning objectives for lessons are made explicit to the pupils, although too often teachers do not refer to them at the end of the lesson which means pupils are not fully aware of the progress they have made.
117. Where teaching is satisfactory, it does not have the rigour that is required. Furthermore, some teachers rely heavily on the use of worksheets and there are limited opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. There are times when teachers do not feel confident in developing the answers they receive and opportunities to extend or enrich pupils' learning are lost. For example, in Year 4 a teacher used a swivel chair to illustrate how to make turns of 90, 180 and 270 degrees and this was effective. A pupil told the teacher: 'I can do a '540' on my skateboard'. The teacher asked the pupil to explain this, which he did accurately, but the opportunity was not exploited to its full potential and the chance this would have given to engage all the pupils in a real example of the use of mathematics in everyday life was lost. Although planning identifies that there are pupils of differing abilities in the class, the activities do not always reflect this and insufficient use is made of assessment of what pupils achieve when planning for future work. Teachers spend a lot of time developing pupils' skills in understanding numbers and the number system. Most pupils recall number facts quickly and demonstrate their knowledge by using white boards when mental methods are being taught or revised. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of the basic number operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) and apply this in more demanding mathematics.
118. Teachers make effective use of the support staff in the classroom. Pupils with special educational needs are included in the learning activities of the class. Where this support is used well, support staff have a clear understanding of the work and ensure that individuals or groups of pupils are able to complete the tasks required. An excellent

example was in a Year 4 class where the teacher prepared special whiteboards that gave pupils additional visual information and prompts, such as number squares and facts, so that they could respond with the rest of the class.

119. Two teachers share responsibility for the co-ordination of mathematics in the school, but both have only recently taken on this responsibility. However, both are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and are putting useful plans in place to address them. The subject is adequately resourced, but the teachers want to give mathematics a higher profile in the school. They have begun to analyse test results to ascertain which aspects pupils do not understand. They want to develop their monitoring and evaluation skills so that they can support teachers in raising standards.

SCIENCE

120. Since the last inspection standards have improved for pupils by the end of Year 6 and they are now above average. In 2001, standards were well above average. The reason for the decline in standards has been the recent admission of a number of pupils with an increasing complexity of special educational needs, the high number of pupils leaving and joining the school and the severe staffing difficulties faced by one Year 6 class.. By the end of Year 2, standards are average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Across the school, pupils achieve well in science, supported by the overall good quality of teaching.
121. There are no marked differences between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Those with English as an additional language make good progress.
122. Pupils in Year 2 have an early understanding of what makes a fair test. This was seen in both of the Year 2 classes. Here, the pupils successfully set up an experiment to test the speed of objects rolling down a ramp. Good standards were achieved in the lesson as the result of good planning and the use of carefully structured resources. This enables pupils to discuss and predict what would happen and to record their results. There is a good application of the pupils' literacy skills, with them being given a good range of opportunities to write up their findings. Numeracy skills are used successfully when pupils construct graphs to illustrate the results of their experiments.
123. In one lesson a Year 1 class reached well above average standards because of excellent teaching. Pupils discussed and predicted with their teacher what materials would make an umbrella waterproof. Pupils tested a range of materials by putting drops of water on them with a pipette to see whether they stop the water going through or absorb the water. They showed very high levels of interest, motivation and understanding and successfully and accurately recorded their results. Many are already developing the concept of fair testing. For example, when shown two unequal amounts of water in two jugs, they said that the amounts of water should be the same to make the test fair. Many very carefully make sure they put the same number of drops of water, when using the pipette, on the four different materials being tested. Very good opportunities are given for them to record their results.
124. Due to the overall good levels of teaching and good planning related to the use of the scheme of work, standards are consistently above average levels from the end of Year 2 up to the end of Year 6. There is good coverage of all aspects of the science curriculum, including a strong emphasis on scientific enquiry. For example, in Year 4, pupils successfully investigate with live insects how invertebrates support themselves. In Year 5, pupils successfully describe and explain the physical phenomena of the moon taking about 28 days to orbit the earth and how and why it looks different during the course of the month. In Year 6, pupils conduct first-hand investigations by measuring the changes

in heart rate, pulse and temperature as a result of exercise on the body. They explain the essential nature and function of the main organs of the body and the heart's role as a pump and a muscle to circulate blood around the lungs and body through veins. They work together very well collaboratively, discussing their findings and recording their results.

125. Samples of previous work across the school do not always produce evidence of work of such a high standard. Pupils are usually given the same tasks and some work is incomplete and not finished. The use of marking and homework is inconsistent. Sometimes there is an over-reliance on the use of photocopied worksheets. Assessment is rarely used to provide the pupils with tasks matched to their individual needs. There is a good range of displays across the school celebrating pupils' finished work. A 'Science Week' produces evidence of a wide range of work of a usually high standard. However, the use of display, as part of the ongoing work and investigations by the pupils, such as the growing of plants and seeds, and pupils adding to displays themselves as their work progresses, is under-represented.
126. The quality of teaching is good overall. There are many strengths which account for the good achievements made by the pupils.
- Teachers plan and resource their work thoroughly with a good awareness of the subject and interpretation of the adopted scheme of work. Good planning contributes successfully to pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding as they move up through the school.
 - Lessons proceed at a good pace, aiding the productivity and pace of working of the pupils.
 - Teachers use a wide range of resources and hold the pupils' interest. Throughout the school, pupils respond to the good quality and range of learning opportunities and show good and sometimes very good, or even excellent, attitudes.
127. The assessment of pupils' skills is developing, supported by the good procedures recently put in place for assessment. The use of assessment to provide information on what the pupils have learnt from each lesson and what should be taught next is underdeveloped. The management and co-ordination of the subject are good. The monitoring of teaching and delivery of the subject, although not fully developed across the school, is having a good effect on standards. There is a good level of resources to support the subject, but the use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped.

ART AND DESIGN

128. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards meet national expectations and are similar to those found at the time the school was last inspected. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress. Some, but not all, of the weaknesses identified during the previous inspection have been remedied. The school has succeeded in improving pupils' awareness of artists from other cultures and traditions. It has been less successful in increasing spirituality through the arts or in ensuring that pupils reach the standards of which they are capable. Sketchbooks are still not used with any consistency throughout the school and there is wide variation in the quality of display between classes and year groups. Some classrooms exude warmth and vitality in their display; they celebrate a richness of work across the full curriculum. Others do not display pupils' work to best effect. There is great inconsistency in the way work is mounted and in one infant classroom the quality of display does not do adequate justice to pupils' work.
129. The new policy for art includes helpful guidance for class teachers and suggested activities planned to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic way as they move up through the school.. Pupils study three topics per year and there is evidence of well balanced coverage across all aspects of the art curriculum. Planning

ensures that pupils in the same year group are given the same experiences. There are strong links with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 linked artwork on Picasso well to representing his work using a graphics program on the computer. The recent visit by pupils in Year 6 to Bell Heath produced an interesting range of observational drawings to support writing. Opportunities to use information and communication technology are identified at the planning stage, but they do not make a sufficiently strong contribution to pupils' learning.

130. Younger pupils show good attention to detail in their observational drawings. They paint recognisable self-portraits, create symmetrical patterns and explore the texture of clay as they make tiles for their class mural. In Years 3 to 6, older pupils become more ambitious in their work and display increasing confidence with the subject. In Year 4, pupils produce World War II posters and explore with textiles. They experiment with string pictures and develop weaving techniques. They have greater experience of working in the style of artists such as Van Gogh or Picasso. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 6 they are confident enough to try more advanced techniques such as producing good quality flour and water batik banners on display in the hall. There is great enthusiasm for the subject among staff and pupils. The potential for further improvement is good.
131. The quality of teaching observed was always at least satisfactory and on one occasion was very good. A particular strength of the best teaching was the teacher's very good use of the correct terminology and the richness of discussion. Pupils responded in a mature way. Many teachers use support staff particularly well in art lessons and enable pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language to make as much progress as others. On other occasions, however, teachers provide a good variety of media but do not always allow pupils to experiment, choose or explore for themselves sufficiently. There is also an inconsistent approach towards establishing good working practices. Some pupils wear painting overalls, but others do not. Some use palettes to mix paints; others use old pieces of newspaper. In one class, clearing away at the end of the lesson was chaotic because the teacher had no clear procedures.
132. Pupils enjoy art and for many it is their favourite subject. They collaborate well and, in lessons where class control is good, are willing to work with anyone. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher deliberately planned work in mixed-ability pairings, thus ensuring that all pupils achieved equally well. Boys worked amicably with girls and they all helped each other. The lesson was a good social occasion where standards were high and pupils made swift progress.
133. The co-ordinator is well informed and has a clear sense of direction for the subject. Priorities for development are clear and include increasing the number of visits to art galleries and museums, creating a portfolio to show skills' development and observing lessons. Currently, the co-ordinator does not have sufficient time to monitor teaching or the quality of pupils' work. In consequence, there is no clear overview of standards and the variation in quality of pupils' work across the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

134. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were judged to be 'average at the end of both key stages'. Coverage of the National Curriculum was 'sound', but the school needed to 'give more attention to investigating and evaluating.'
135. Despite a period of instability, standards have been maintained. Currently, pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress and reach standards which meet expectations for 7 and 11-year-olds. Design and technology has not been a high profile subject in recent

years but, since the appointment of a new co-ordinator, it is moving in the right direction. Recommendations from the previous inspection, relating to the development of skills and the evaluation of work, have started to be addressed and more secure links with other subjects are being established.

136. The school has maintained satisfactory standards, despite a reduction in teaching time, because design and technology has become an integral part of topics. Skills are successfully incorporated into a variety of activities and planned work ensures a steady increase in pupils' knowledge and understanding. Literacy skills are developed well as pupils plan and discuss designs. Numeracy skills are promoted equally well, as pupils measure and construct with increasing accuracy. In science work, younger pupils decide which materials are waterproof as they make their umbrellas. In Year 2, pupils impressively apply their skills to making vehicles that move. With support, they adapt their first attempts and add wheels, axles, generators and simple circuits. Although at various stages of development, even pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they know that their teacher has very secure subject knowledge. In Year 4, pupils display a reasonable degree of skill in cutting and making wheels for their moving toys. By Year 6, pupils create attractive kimono designs and hats for a variety of characters. These are of good quality and show creativity and inventiveness.
137. However, although much work is imaginative, finished products sometimes lack refinement. In Years 3 to 6, the evaluation and adjustment of designs do not take on a strong enough significance. The school is aware that this aspect of the subject is still weak. New initiatives to remedy the problem have only recently been implemented and it is too early to assess their effect upon standards.
138. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use the wide range of tools available. The co-ordinator has started to encourage greater confidence amongst staff and pupils by providing each year group with a toolbox and guidelines for safe use, but teachers need further training in order to acquire further expertise. Currently, information and communication technology does not make a strong contribution towards pupils' work in design and technology.
139. No lessons took place during the week of the inspection and no judgement was made on the quality of teaching. Evidence taken from pupils' past and present work on display, together with discussion, supports the inspection findings in relation to standards achieved. Teachers' planning indicates that work is well prepared and organised and that teachers pay appropriate attention to safety procedures in their lessons.
140. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has a clear direction for design and technology work in the future. He has successfully incorporated new curriculum initiatives into current practice and links between art and design are particularly effective. Resources are well organised, effectively stored and easily accessible to staff. However, much work remains to be done. Teachers are not aware of the standards pupils can achieve and do not always build on pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. Currently, the co-ordinator is given insufficient time to monitor standards. This lack of regular monitoring results in some inconsistencies in the standard of work produced by different age groups.

GEOGRAPHY

141. By the age of 7, pupils achieve standards in geography that exceed expectations for 7-year-olds. By the age of 11, pupils achieve standards which meet expectations for 11-year-olds. The enthusiasm for teaching geography in Years 1 and 2 has a positive impact on the good standards achieved by 7-year-olds. Progress for pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is good in Years 1 and 2, but satisfactory in Years 3 to 6.

142. In Years 1 and 2, the teachers have developed and implemented a scheme of work that captures the imagination of the pupils and both teachers work simultaneously with identical resources. The teachers in Year 1 capture pupils' interest by using 'Barnaby Bear', a soft toy who travels the world with his clothes in a suitcase. Each week he travels to another country and sends the pupils a postcard with a photograph showing him in the country. The teachers use this to encourage pupils to discuss the geographical features of the country, including weather, climate, physical features and resorts.
143. At the start of one lesson observed, the teachers asked the pupils whether they could recall where 'Barnaby' had been last week and most knew it was Norway. They knew it was cold and were amused to see the picture of him on skis, wearing the warm clothes from his suitcase. The pupils could describe accurately some of the features of Norway. The teacher then told the pupils that he was travelling again, showing them a poster. The pupils could read that this time he was going to Spain and could understand the contrasting locality immediately from the picture. The pupils talked confidently about why the clothes he took to Norway were unsuitable for Spain and gave good reasons why he should take summer clothes. They knew why sun cream and a sun hat are important in hot places, demonstrating good links with their work in health education. The pupils then drew and labelled the contents of his suitcase and drew a picture of what he might do on his holiday, showing a good understanding of localities abroad. The lesson was clearly focused on developing the pupils' skills in geography and had pace and rigour along with subject matter that enthused the pupils. In Year 2, pupils take this further with investigating 'Barney Bear'. They research and record information about contrasting environments using holiday visits or information from other resources.
144. In Year 4, pupils study the village of Chembakoli in India as a contrasting locality in a less economically developed country. The pupils have an accurate understanding and explain similarities and differences between the village and Northfield. In Year 5, pupils consider the impact of the pedestrianisation of high streets, using the fictional closure of the main road near the school. The pupils discuss the advantages and disadvantages with accuracy and show a good understanding of the impact upon different groups of citizens. Insufficient use was made of role-play to provide opportunities for pupils to debate this issue. The school has satisfactory resources and the curriculum co-ordinator is clear about the way she wants the subject to develop in the future. Areas identified for improvement by the co-ordinator include:
- how the enthusiasm for the subject generated in Years 1 and 2 can be built upon;
 - how the geography curriculum can support pupils' work in other subjects;
 - how the use of information and communication technology, including the Internet, could be used to enrich the teaching and learning.

HISTORY

145. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were judged to be 'average at the end of both key stages'. Pupils' progress was 'sound' and the quality of teaching was 'always at least satisfactory'.
146. Current standards are not as high. By the end of Year 2, standards meet the expectations for 7-year-olds. By the end of Year 6, standards are below expectations for 11-year-olds. Pupils display superficial knowledge and lack understanding. Problems with high staff turnover have contributed to the low standards achieved and have made curriculum co-ordination difficult. The school has no clear overview of the standards that pupils achieve. In addition, pupils in Year 6 do not study any history during the spring term. As a consequence, many of these pupils have found it difficult to retain knowledge or build on previous skills when there have been such long gaps between topics. In discussion, a Year 6 pupil summed up the problem very accurately when he commented that he preferred geography because he did not do history often enough and was not familiar with it when he studied it again.
147. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2. Judgements on standards and teaching are based on further evidence taken from samples of past and present work, display, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils and teachers.
148. Pupils in Year 1 have an appropriate understanding of 'then' and 'now'. They display a sound basic knowledge of inventors such as George Stephenson and their work shows good development of writing skills. In Year 2, pupils' work illustrates an increasing understanding of chronology. Pupils develop a simple understanding of the family tree that stretches from Queen Victoria to Queen Elizabeth II. They understand the contrasts in lifestyle between the rich and poor in Victorian Britain. During the week of the inspection a 'Victorian Day' supported class work very effectively and fired pupils' imaginations and interest. However, there is inadequate evidence of historical enquiry being developed from an early age and no evidence of information and communication technology being used to support learning. The volume of work varies between the two Year 2 classes and the quality of presentation does not always reflect pupils' ability.
149. The sample of Year 3 work indicates that pupils develop an adequate understanding of life in Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Viking Britain. They record their findings in a variety of ways and display appropriate knowledge about housing and lifestyles. Teachers develop literacy skills well in this year group through interesting tasks such as writing from an archaeologist's viewpoint. In the current Year 4 classes, the picture is very mixed. The least disrupted class enjoys the subject and is justly proud of its high quality display of Ancient Egypt work. Pupils are interested and inquisitive. In contrast, pupils in the other class have very little factual recall and show little enthusiasm and a superficial level of knowledge. In Year 5, pupils develop research skills well as they find information about Britain since 1948. The sample of Year 6 work for the current academic year reflects a troubled year for those pupils in the class who have had four teachers this year. Pupils of all abilities complete the same work. Some find it too easy, others too hard. There is little evidence of historical enquiry and much of the work lacks structure and maturity.
150. In the small sample of lessons observed, teaching was good in two lessons and poor in one. A common feature of good lessons was the teachers' skilful use of questioning, with careful attention given to providing for the needs of all abilities. Good use of books, posters and artefacts created interest and the session at the end of these lessons was used very effectively to assess how much pupils had achieved. In Year 5, pupils acquired a substantial amount of new information at the end of their lesson on Britain since 1948, as they listened to pupils reporting back on their research. Homework was purposeful and supported class work well. Poor teaching was characterised by very weak class

control. The teacher did not have adequate strategies to contain the behaviour of a small group of boys who made it impossible for the rest of the class to learn.

151. There is an adequate range of good quality artefacts and books to support learning. The school makes effective use of educational visits to enhance learning. Pupils visit places of historical interest, such as Aston Hall and Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.
152. Each teacher assesses pupils' levels of understanding at the end of a topic, but the information does not identify the gaps in the development of weak areas, such as historical enquiry. The co-ordinator is a dedicated teacher who has a very clear understanding of the shortcomings in current provision. She recognises the difficulties that have contributed to the underachievement of some Year 6 pupils. She is well informed, but is not currently involved in monitoring what pupils know and understand from their work. Consequently, the school does not have a clear enough idea of standards in history throughout the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

153. Pupils achieve standards in information and communications technology that meet national expectations by the ages of 7 and 11 years. The school has maintained standards in this subject since the last inspection despite the recent difficulties in staffing and resources. The school has made satisfactory progress in providing a computer suite where the majority of the teaching in the subject takes place. All pupils take part in these lessons and make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
154. Teachers' confidence and expertise in teaching information and communications technology have increased since the last inspection as most have received training under the New Opportunities Funding (NOF). They generate enthusiasm for the subject and teach successfully the necessary key skills to pupils.
155. Pupils show confidence when working at the computer.. In Year 1, pupils successfully use a 'logo' program to design geometric pictures with coloured shapes. The resulting picture shows imagination as well as satisfactory computer skills. In a previous term these pupils have successfully entered instructions into a programmable toy in order for it to follow a set course on the floor.
156. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils successfully used graphics and 'logo' programs to make repeating patterns before colouring them in. The enthusiastic teacher made good use of an instruction sheet for the pupils to follow and ensured that they knew what to do before embarking upon their tasks. However, despite clear instructions from the teacher, pupils repeatedly found problems because they are not good at following the written instructions.
157. Through effective use of word-processing and 'clip-art', pupils in Year 3 write up their reports for a science investigation. They change and use a variety of fonts. The variety of computer skills shown in this display of pupils' work clearly indicates that they can arrange text and drawings. However, some of the fonts chosen are not always suitable for easy reading of reports in science.
158. In Year 4, pupils word-process an event in history, assuming that they are reporters at the time of the event. They report on the death of Henry VII at the start of the Tudor period. They show they can change fonts and make columns when writing their newspaper articles. They also demonstrate satisfactory literacy skills when compiling the report. In the one poor lesson seen, Year 4 pupils attempted to fill in a database from a previously collected survey. Some pupils then produced a graph of the results of the survey.

Behaviour and the attitude to work in this class were poor due to the poor management by the teacher. As a result, pupils made unsatisfactory progress in the lesson and standards were not high enough.

159. In a lesson observed, one class of Year 5 pupils was set a task using a graphics program to re-design the arrangement of furniture in their classroom. They showed initiative by using round tables instead of oblong ones because they can get more pupils around them. From the analysis of work in this class, pupils successfully use data-handling programs, for example in creating graphs on the computer to show the number of goals scored during the season by some of the football premierships. This class, when planning a party, made good use of a spreadsheet to show how much food can be bought for £30. They managed to produce the spreadsheet and then analysed it successfully to show best value for money.
160. In another lesson, a group of Year 5 pupils were set the task to develop the school site, including the playgrounds and grassed areas. The pupils worked to approximate scale, although they did not use accurate measurements. These pupils worked in pairs, with a confident pupil working with one who was less confident. Such pairings are used effectively for pupils to support each other in their learning. Some pupils in this class showed quite challenging behaviour and it was only through the good management of the teacher that they persevered and produced satisfactory results. A display shows that they have satisfactory skills to access the Internet to download and research information on the River Nile for their geography project.
161. Following a residential trip to Bell Heath last term, pupils in Year 6 are compiling a multimedia presentation of their experiences to show at a parents' evening. The presentation of a series of slides and accompanying text shows what they learn in other subjects. They apply their satisfactory computer skills to their presentation. They successfully use a multi-media program and most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are able to open and operate the programs. By the end of the lesson observed, some groups managed to produce a satisfactory presentation on which they can build in the next lesson. These pupils satisfactorily use the Internet for revision before taking their National Curriculum assessments. In Year 6, pupils looked at a website on the Internet and reviewed it. However, they missed the opportunity to word-process the review. In a science lesson on healthy exercise, pupils satisfactorily used a sensor to monitor the heart during and after exercise. This opportunity meant that pupils made satisfactory gains in their understanding of how sensors are used.
162. There is a good 18 unit programme covering the six years that pupils are in school. Teachers plan work in more detail from this programme to ensure that computer skills are progressively developed and cover all the strands of the curriculum for information and communications technology. A satisfactory variety of curriculum subjects is used for teaching computer skills. However, teachers do not always make it clear to the pupils that the computer skills can be used across the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 2 are not made aware of the mathematics or art links when they form their repeating patterns and colour them in. When Year 5 pupils re-design the classroom or outside areas, the links with geography or design technology are not made.
163. Too many computers require repair in both the suite and the classrooms. This impedes the progress that pupils make. The co-ordination of the subject has been neglected because of staff absence. However, a recently appointed co-ordinator is now beginning to provide good leadership for the subject. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, who has expertise in information and communications technology. In addition, the work-experience technician has made an invaluable contribution in keeping

the computer suite up and running which contributes successfully to the satisfactory progress made.

MUSIC

164. During the period of inspection it was only possible to see one taught lesson in a Year 1 class, together with one lesson in Year 3. No samples of previous work were available. There was not enough evidence to make judgements on standards of work across the school and on the quality of the teaching. Insufficient work was seen to compare standards with those made during the last inspection.
165. In a Year 1 lesson, pupils successfully followed the lead of the teacher, who beat out a range of rhythms of increasing complexity on a drum. When requested, the pupils tap out the rhythm appropriately on a tambourine, showing a good awareness of beat, rhythm, tempo and pulse. When asked to sing, the pupils do so with confidence, good intonation and phrasing. She developed the lesson well with good content, challenging pupils to copy rhythmic patterns and sing songs of increasing complexity. The pupils responded with good levels of motivation and enthusiasm.
166. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils examined the expressive use of music and how it linked to emotions. Responding with good levels of interest, the pupils recognised and explored ways sounds can be arranged in combination and expressively used. They showed a satisfactory perception of what the music reminds them of by commenting on its pace. They understood its mood and effect. Satisfactory teaching helps the pupils to learn how music generates emotions and moods.
167. The only other music seen was when pupils sang in assembly, in a hymn practice and when the choir sang after school. Twenty-four pupils attended the choir, from Years 3 to 6, and they sang satisfactorily. Some good standards are seen in the hymn practice and assemblies. Here, pupils sing with a good degree of control and intonation. They enjoy clapping to their songs and making hand and body movements to express their feelings.
168. The subject is under-represented across the school and in many cases is not frequently taught. Due to frequent staff changes, music has not been effectively led and managed. The present co-ordinator has been in post for only six weeks. The school uses the QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) scheme. However, its implementation has not been monitored and evaluated and the present co-ordinator has not examined the effectiveness and delivery of the teachers' plans. Teachers show uncertainty about the development of the subject and its delivery. Satisfactory procedures for assessment have very recently been put in place, but they are not understood or used by most teachers. Music is not fully developed to support the present National Curriculum requirements. There is no evidence of pupils being given opportunities to apply their literacy skills to the subject. Information and communication technology is not used as recommended in the National Curriculum guidance. Older pupils are given few opportunities to appraise and compose music or to express it through dance and movement in physical education. The opportunities for pupils to perform are usually limited to singing.
169. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to study musical instruments, including string, woodwind and brass. Visiting peripatetic teachers provide these good opportunities. However, the times when pupils have their instrumental tuition are insufficiently co-ordinated and pupils frequently miss parts of lessons. This has a detrimental effect on their attainment and progress in the lessons missed. At present, the school does not use the pupils' developing talents on these instruments to play and make music together. Performances are limited to individual, and more rarely small groups,

playing in occasional assemblies. However, a Year 3 beginners' recorder club meets during lunchtimes.

170. Occasional visitors attend the school to play in front of the pupils, for example members of the 'Irish Duo', and it is planned to have an Asian music event. The subject is adequately resourced, but the co-ordinator has not conducted an audit of resources and does not know what funds are available for further purchases.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

171. By the end of Year 2, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards at the end of Year 6 as no lessons in Years 5 or 6 were timetabled during the period of the inspection. However, planning shows that, over the school year, pupils receive their full entitlement to all aspects of the subject. By the end of Year 6, 63 per cent of pupils meet the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres unaided.
172. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the importance of regular exercise in keeping fit and healthy. They know why lessons begin with a warm-up and end with a cool-down. In Year 1, pupils show good skills in country dancing. In the warm-up they show a good awareness of space. Pupils perform the dance 'Rig-a-jig-jig' to a good standard and this reflects previous good teaching. During a lesson observed, pupils made good progress in learning the steps of the 'Mexican Hat Dance' and benefited from the 'modelling' of the dance from the enthusiastic joint demonstration of the dance by the teacher and her learning support assistant. Pupils enjoyed performing and at the end of the dance there was lots of 'huffing and puffing' as the result of good and sustained physical activity. In Year 2, pupils show satisfactory skills in throwing, catching and aiming at a target. They show accurate skills in passing a ball to a partner by bouncing it in a hoop and respond well when the diameter of the hoop is reduced. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their speaking and listening skills when they evaluate the performance of each other.
173. In Year 3, pupils successfully apply their numeracy skills when they record times of 'shuttle runs' and measure distances of 'standing long jumps' as part of their involvement in an athletics awards scheme. Pupils respond well to challenging themselves and to improving their own personal performances. In the lesson observed, a significant feature was the encouragement and support pupils were giving to each other. In Year 4, pupils show satisfactory techniques in their striking and fielding skills. In a lesson observed, they made good progress in batting, bowling and fielding skills as part of preparation for playing 'Kwik Cricket'.
174. Teaching is good. The best lessons begin with a rigorous warm up which is led by the teacher. Teachers show good subject knowledge and use demonstration effectively to teach new skills and techniques. In lessons, they move around the hall or playground encouraging and supporting individuals, with a strong emphasis on improving individual skills. Pupils are encouraged with comments, such as 'Come on! Faster passes, please!' and 'I want to see that ball moving more quickly and I want to see you trying to get people out'. Pupils enjoy lessons and work successfully in pairs and small teams, with boys and girls and pupils from of all abilities and ethnic backgrounds, working co-operatively together.
175. Pupils benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities. The dance club is popular and members have used their literacy skills successfully in writing poems on the theme of 'Dance'. In addition, there are football, netball, cricket, rounders and cross-country running clubs. Pupils take part in competitive matches in those sports.

176. The subject is currently managed effectively by the headteacher, with the support of a newly qualified teacher. The school has recently wisely invested £2,000 in upgrading its gymnastics equipment. There is a detailed scheme of work in place which covers the knowledge, skills and understanding to be taught as pupils move up through the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

177. Only a small number of lessons were seen in religious education. From the analysis of written work in books and talking to pupils in the infant classes, standards are judged to meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
178. Pupils' progress is strongest in their acquisition of factual knowledge. Most pupils develop a growing understanding of the importance of religion in some people's lives. In Year 1, pupils begin to recognise that symbols often have deep meanings. They learn stories from the Old Testament, such as 'Noah, the Ark and the Flood'. In a good follow-up lesson on God's promise and the rainbow, the teacher skilfully asked questions suited to the wide range of abilities in the class, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. In this way, pupils learn about Bible stories that are significant for Christians. The teacher made good use of the story to emphasise listening skills. As a result, pupils promised to listen while others answered questions.
179. Pupils in a Year 2 class, after researching different religions from a book, worked in groups to discuss the similarities and differences between the Christian, Hindu and Muslim faiths. The class teacher made good use of pupils who have faiths other than Christianity to highlight the similarities and differences. Little written work is carried out in the subject and there is little work on display. However, some pupils from Year 2, in discussion, remembered many of the religious education topics they have studied at school. They understand that Christmas is the time of the birth of Jesus. They know that Jesus died at Easter and that he came alive again, but are not sure when. These same pupils know that the festival of Diwali is connected with candles and lights. They know who Rama and Sita are, although they are unsure of the story.
180. In a satisfactory lesson about the 'Lord's Prayer', pupils in Year 3 pupils listened intently to a reading of the prayer from the Children's Bible. They knew that a disciple is a follower and that Jesus taught the disciples to pray. The teacher asked good questions suited to the needs of the ability range of the class. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, readily responded. In another Year 3 class the teacher asked clear questions to elicit pupils' knowledge of the holy books. Most pupils knew that the Bible is the holy book for Christians and that the Qur'an is the holy book of the Muslim faith.
181. In Year 6, there are good links with literacy when pupils write about the birth of Jesus as if they were journalists writing a newspaper article. These pupils also explore Sikhism as a religious faith when they study Guru Nanak. They make good comparisons between him and Jesus. Pupils successfully apply their literacy skills when they write about Jewish festivals and make clear comparisons with the Christian faith. By this age, most pupils develop an understanding that the major world religions share common practices.
182. Teaching is satisfactory. However, lesson planning does not incorporate sufficient use of computers either to word-process topics or to research aspects of religious education on the Internet. There is insufficient recording of gains pupils make in their knowledge and understanding, particularly in Years 1 and 2. This makes it difficult for teachers to monitor attainment and progress.

183. Religious education is taught successfully in accordance with the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus. The useful current scheme and assessment procedures are being reviewed and will be implemented from September. The new co-ordinator monitors lesson planning and ensures that new developments in the revised scheme can be resourced adequately.
184. While lessons in religious education and personal, social and health education do overlap in their content, teachers make effective links with other subjects. For example, during a residential visit a Year 6 pupil, while sitting in woodland setting, wrote a very moving poem showing sensitivity and feeling towards her 'perfect world'. The poem shows not only good literary skills but also mature thought and sensitivity.