

INSPECTION REPORT

Birchfield Community School

Aston

Full

LEA area: Birmingham LEA

Unique reference number: 103321

Headteacher: Miss M .K Foster-Brown

Reporting inspector: Anna Dawson
11608

Dates of inspection: 04 February 2000 - 11 February 2000

Inspection number: 193134

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Trinity Road
Aston
Birmingham
West Midlands

Postcode: B6 6AJ

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. S. Akhtar

Date of previous inspection: January 13th 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Anna Dawson	Registered inspector	Religious education; Art.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (Results and achievements) What should the school do to improve further? How well is the school led and managed?
David Russell	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development) How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
Alan Hardwicke	Team inspector	Information technology; Science; Music.	How well are the pupils taught?
Surdarshan Abrol	Team inspector	History. English as an additional language.	
Susan Macintosh	Team inspector	English; Equal opportunities; English as an additional language.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Daphne Crow	Team inspector	Design and technology; Special educational needs; Under fives.	
Michael Wainwright	Team inspector	Mathematics; Geography; Physical education;	

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33 Kingsway

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a very large primary school for boys and girls from 3 to 11 years old. It has 657 pupils on roll. In the nursery there are 46 pupils who attend full time and 28 attend part time. Pupils' attainment on entry to the nursery is well below average. There are 614 pupils who have English as an additional language and of these 289 are at an early stage of language acquisition. Most pupils transfer to the reception classes but their attainment on entry to school at the end of the reception year remains below average. 25 per cent or 163 pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is above average, but only 6 have a statement of special educational need, which is below average. There are 35 per cent of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, which is also above average. Twenty per cent of pupils have left or joined the school within the past year. The characteristics of the school are poorer than previously reported in terms of the number of pupils who are on the register for special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school, which is very well led and managed and makes very good provision for its ethnically diverse community. Although pupils achieve below average standards in English, mathematics and science standards are rising steadily to achieve agreed targets as the quality of teaching improves. The recently appointed headteacher and the governors and staff are working well together towards improving standards in the school. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve above average standards in art and religious education
- There is good quality teaching for under fives, Key Stage 1 and for pupils with special educational needs and pupils who need additional language support
- There is very good leadership and management of the school. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent.
- There is a strong community spirit involving pupils of all ethnic backgrounds reflected in the very good provision made for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school has very good links with the parents.
- There are very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and very good provision for pupils' personal development.
- Pupils behave very well and are keen to learn. This is reflected in the very good relationships within the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in English are below average.
- Standards in mathematics are below average.
- Standards in science are below average.
- The provision for physical education is unsatisfactory and standards are below average.

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

The school has many strengths. The areas for improvement are outweighed by what the school does well. They will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents, and guardians of pupils at the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the previous report in January 1997, the school has made good improvement in most areas. There has been improvement in the assessment of pupils' work and the arrangements for collective worship. There has been very good improvement in pupils' daily attendance. Standards and the provision of a rich language environment in English and the provision and standards in music have improved. However they remain similar to the last report in physical education.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	All schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	D	E	D	D	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	E	E	E	
Science	D	E	E	E	

The inspection finds an improvement in pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science since last year although attainment is below average. Since the last report the school has undergone a period of rapid change. There was a large turnover of staff and staff absence was high. This had an adverse effect on pupils' learning as many pupils, particularly those in Key Stage 1, had a succession of temporary inexperienced staff. Thus staff training programmes were minimal and difficult to implement. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs has increased since the last inspection. Overall during the past three years the improvement in the school test results has kept pace with the national trend and standards are increasing this year, with improved teaching and coordination of the curriculum. In other subjects there are strengths in art and religious education where pupils achieve above average standards. However, in physical education standards remain below average. Otherwise standards in subjects other than English, mathematics and science are average. The school is meeting the challenging targets set for the improvement of standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to learn and do their best. They are responsive and have good attitudes to work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good both in lessons and in and around school. No poor behaviour was seen during the inspection.
Personal development and relationships	There are very good relationships between pupils and staff. Pupils respect the views of others and spontaneously applaud their achievements.
Attendance	Attendance overall is unsatisfactory due to the long-term absences when pupils take holidays abroad. On a day-to-day basis it is much improved and is at present broadly average.

The positive approach by the school towards encouraging good behaviour and attitudes to work is central to the school's ethos. There is a focus on building pupils' self-esteem and respect for others.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1. Teaching was good in 46 per cent of lessons and very good in 11 per cent. There was one excellent lesson and 2 per cent or 2 lessons were unsatisfactory; in mathematics and history. Forty per cent of the teaching seen was satisfactory, most of which was some of the classes in Years 3,4 and 5. There are strengths in teaching for the under fives and Key Stage 1. In science at Key Stage 1, teaching is good. Throughout the school the good quality teaching in literacy and numeracy is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. However there are limited opportunities for pupils to read, write and speak at length. In art and religious education, teaching is good. In other subjects it is satisfactory overall. Teaching is particularly effective where staff have detailed guidance and good subject knowledge. This is an improvement from the last report.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant. It provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to develop their achievements and interests, although extra-curricular activities are limited
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Planned work to meet their specific targets and the additional support they receive, ensures these pupils make good progress
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is good provision for these pupils. The pupils have effective focussed support. The staff have very good working relationships with the class teachers, and within the class, act as good models of working collaboratively. The targeted pupils make good progress over time.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.	There is very good provision for these aspects. The code of behaviour and the provision for raising pupils' self esteem helps pupils to realise their social and moral responsibilities. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual development and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for monitoring behaviour and personal development. There are excellent procedures for monitoring attendance and monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress.

The school has very good links with parents and they hold positive views of the school. Although there are good quality initiatives in place to involve parents in their children's learning, these have not yet come to fruition and the impact of them on pupils' learning is not yet evident. At present parents are satisfactorily involved in their children's learning. The curriculum is broadly based and representative of the cultural heritage of the school population.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives excellent leadership. Most staff are committed to moving the school forward. However, as yet, the senior management members do not all work as a cohesive unit with the headteacher.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	The governing body provides clear direction for the work of the school and works effectively on a day-to-day basis to improve standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors teaching and learning effectively. The analysis of pupil data provides a sharp focus for future improvement in standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the building, time, staff and the budget for the benefit of the pupils.

There is adequate staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and the learning resources are satisfactory. The accommodation is good overall. There is very good leadership and management of the school, which effectively promote its aims and values. Pupils are keen to learn and achieve above average standards in art and religious education by the time they reach the age of eleven. However standards in English, mathematics, science and physical education are below average. Given that the pupils' attainment on entry is below average and the unit costs are high, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school • The school helps their children to achieve their best • Children are well behaved • Most parents feel they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more regular homework for their children • Some parents would like to know more about the curriculum • Some parents would like more extra-curricular activities

The inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents. More consistent information about the topics their children study and regular homework would put parents in a better position to be able to help their children at home.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievement

1. For pupils aged 11, the results of National Curriculum tests and assessments in 1999 show that pupils' attainment in English was well below the national average for level 4 and below average for the higher level 5. In mathematics and science, pupils' attainment was well below the national average for level 4 and the higher level 5. In comparison to similar schools, pupils' attainment was below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. Pupils did better in English as more pupils reached the higher level 5. In mathematics some of the higher attaining pupils were absent during the national tests, which had an overall adverse impact on the class average result. In science, less curriculum time and staff training has been spent on this subject. Some of the higher attaining pupils found it difficult to read some questions to solve problems. They were hampered by their lack of understanding of the questions and did not attain at the higher levels. For pupils aged 7, the results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests show that pupils achieved very low standards in reading, writing and science. They did better in mathematics although standards were well below average. In comparison to similar schools, pupils achieved very low standards in reading and writing but below average standards in mathematics and science. Attainments at the end of both key stages differ from year to year because of the fluctuating number of pupils with English as an additional language and the number of pupils with special educational needs in each class taking the tests. This has an overall effect on the average attainment of the Year 2 and the Year 6 pupils.

2. The school has analysed the reasons for the very low and below average standards. Most significant are the numbers of pupils who have English as an additional language and those who are on the school register for special educational needs. Pupils who have English as an additional language are assessed by the language development teachers as to their level of competency in English, using the four-stage model. Out of 565 pupils who have English as an additional language, just over half are described as being at an early stage of English language acquisition. In addition this year 28 per cent of pupils are on the register for special educational needs, compared to 12 per cent at the time of the last report. There are other relevant factors such as staff absence and a high rate of staff turnover where 18 staff, many of them experienced, left. Successions of temporary inexperienced staff have had a significant adverse effect on pupils' learning and the progress they make, especially in Key Stage 1. In some areas and subjects, staff knowledge of the subjects they teach is weak. During this period of rapid change in staff from 1998 the staff training programmes have been minimal and staff have not been able to share their expertise. The curriculum lacked co-ordination, missing the expertise of experienced teachers and consistent coordinators such as in English where there have recently been four co-ordinators. However the school now has recruited staff with subject expertise and there is less staff absence.

3. The inspection findings show that standards are rising although by the time pupils are 7 and 11, they achieve standards below the national averages in English and mathematics. Although many pupils are fluent in at least one other language, standards in English in particular are below average as many pupils find difficulty in expressing themselves and speaking and writing at length. However, the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies is helping to raise standards. It has not yet been in place sufficiently long enough to raise attainment to the nationally expected levels. In science, pupils' attainment is average by the time they are seven but below average by the time they are eleven. A small minority of higher attaining 11 year old pupils achieve standards in line with the national averages in these subjects. This shows a much-improved picture from the test results of 1999.

4. Trends over the last three years indicate that the improvement in pupils' national test results broadly keep pace with the national rate. The school has improved its curricular provision and teaching from the last inspection and is clearly moving forward. There is a clear focus on meeting individual needs and setting targets for improvement. The school has set appropriately challenging targets for the future in each year group and class, to raise attainment further. The school is meeting its targets so far.

5. Pupils do better where the school has prioritised curriculum initiatives and there is detailed guidance, such as in literacy and numeracy lessons. Both strategies have detailed guidance for teachers for each year group, which is having a positive impact on teaching and pupils' understanding of reading and their attainments in writing and mental mathematics. However there are limited opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to read, write and speak at length.

6. In English, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. By the age of 11, the higher attaining pupils speak fluently and confidently in discussions, most others are not as confident or fluent. Most read accurately and discuss their favourite authors and preferences in reading. Pupils enjoy writing poetry and stories and punctuation is generally accurate. In English, by the age of 7, pupils are attentive but less confident when speaking to each other and other adults. Most are beginning to read accurately. The few higher attaining pupils read fluently, with expression, using a range of strategies to help them read new words. Pupils enjoy reading and read a wide range of texts. Overall the level of English required in questions about solving problems does hinder pupils' attainment where pupils have difficulty in interpreting the text beyond the literal meaning of the words.

7. In mathematics, pupils make satisfactory progress during both key stages. By the age of 11, they are developing effective mental strategies to double numbers and to add and subtract two and three digits quickly and effectively. They are developing a sound understanding of number operations. By the age of 7, pupils are acquiring effective strategies for mental arithmetic as they work with numbers to 100. They know odd and even numbers and multiples of two, five and ten. The higher attaining pupils are developing a sound understanding of measurement as they investigate the weights of different objects. In mathematics, pupils do better in tests where the questions rely on their knowledge and understanding of number calculations rather than English. This is particularly evident in the results of the 1999 tests for Key Stage 1 where pupils did better in mathematics where many questions are focused on number skills.

8. In science, pupils make good progress during Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2. By the age of 11, they understand the properties of materials and how materials are used in everyday life. They learn about the separation of mixtures using a range of equipment and techniques. By the age of 7, pupils learn how heating and cooling changes the state of elements such as water and come to some early understandings of what constitutes a fair test. In science, the national guidance adopted by the school and the specialist expertise of the coordinator and improvements in the quality of teaching is also having a positive effect on pupils' attainment by the end of both key stages, but especially in Key Stage 1. However, pupils are hampered in tests by their lack of understanding of questions which require them to solve problems.

9. In information technology, pupils' attainment is average by the end of both key stages and they make satisfactory progress. By Year 6, pupils use the Internet and CD-ROM programs effectively to research information and help them support other subjects such as writing stories in English. There has been significant improvement in resources and pupils have increased their skills. Standards were similar in the last report. However, the application of information technology across the curriculum in handling data in science and geography for example, is limited.

10. In religious education, pupils' attainment by the end of both key stages is above the expectation of the locally agreed syllabus. By Year 6, pupils are aware of the similarities between the major world faiths and have detailed knowledge and understanding of Islam. They are aware of the importance of beliefs that are not their own and are developing good awareness of other cultural traditions and beliefs within our society. This is an improvement from the last report where standards were in line with the agreed syllabus.

11. In other subjects, the inspection finds that pupils achieve above average standards by the end of both key stages in art, where they benefit from the expertise of the coordinator and it is well established in the school. At the time of the previous report standards were below average in music and physical education. They still remain below average in physical education. There is insufficient time for the development of these skills and the limited provision of extra-curricular sporting activities has a minimal impact on raising standards for a small minority of pupils. Otherwise in other subjects, pupils attain standards normally expected from pupils at ages seven and eleven. From the previous report there has been an improvement in art, standards in design and technology were better and in other subjects they were similar.

12. The standards are higher for under fives and pupils in Key Stage 1. They were also higher in the Year 6 classes where there are greater demands made on pupils to achieve. There was more good teaching seen in all these classes and key stages. Pupils' achievements are lower in some classes in Years 3,4 and 5. Here the teachers do not always place sufficient demands on the pupils to achieve. The quality of teaching in these year groups is good overall but more satisfactory lessons were seen and two unsatisfactory lessons were seen where some staff lack subject knowledge and apply inappropriate methods.

13. From a level where pupils' attainment on entry to school is below average, pupils under five make good progress in all areas of learning. During Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress overall in the core subjects of English and mathematics. In science progress is good by the end of the key stage. Most pupils are challenged appropriately in their learning. Pupils make good progress in art and religious education. In this key stage there are no significant fluctuations between year groups or classes as the quality of teaching is predominantly good. During Key Stage 2, there is a more uneven pattern to pupils' progress. There are variations between classes. The best progress is being made in literacy and numeracy, as teachers have effective and detailed guidance coupled with good resources. This is particularly noticeable in the pupils' improvement in reading and the pupils' mental arithmetic strategies, which are taught from the National Numeracy Strategy. In other subjects, good progress is made in art, where there is effective staff guidance and some help from visiting artists, which has a positive impact on their progress. In religious education, pupils and staff benefit from the coordinator's detailed knowledge and understanding of Islam. In Year 6 pupils make good progress overall because of the consistently good teaching. However in some classes in Years 3, 4 and 5, progress is mainly satisfactory, because the teaching is not consistently challenging. The school is at an early stage in sharing staff expertise and linking topics with other subjects effectively. Progress in design and technology, history, geography, music is satisfactory throughout both key stages. However, there is less time spent on these subjects than previously, apart from music where the teaching time has increased. In physical education, progress is unsatisfactory as there is insufficient provision for the subject and some staff lack subject expertise.

14. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well through effective teaching from both their class teachers and the support staff and make good progress. All the pupils on the school's special educational needs register are set appropriate targets for improvement, which are reviewed regularly. Pupils throughout who have English as an additional language benefit from additional teaching and make good progress towards the targets set for them. The progress pupils make in their subjects and personal and social education prepares them well for their next stage of learning.

15. There is no significant difference in the progress of boys and girls or between ethnic groups. Although both boys and girls achieve equally well, the school has taken care to select resources such as reading and library books that will appeal to both boys and girls.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Overall, the pupils' attitudes to the school are good. Attitudes to learning in both the nursery and the reception classes are good. The children enjoy participating in a wide range of activities and are enthusiastic learners. They like to talk about what they draw or make but sometimes find it difficult to use the right words. During their time in nursery and in the reception classes, the children learn to share equipment and to work and play harmoniously together. They behave well and with consideration for others and they are polite and friendly to visitors.

17. Pupils' attitudes to their work are also good throughout the rest of the school. The welcoming atmosphere at the school encourages the pupils' enthusiasm for getting to the school on time and to learn new things. Pupils enjoy coming to the school. Parents are happy that their children are able to learn about music and art from other cultures.

18. During lessons pupils show positive attitudes towards learning and planned activities. When the pace of lessons is slow, and tasks are insufficiently challenging or badly structured, the pupils' attitudes change. Whilst the majority of pupils work well independently there are enough opportunities for them to work in pairs or in small groups. It was pleasing to see how responsive the pupils in Year 1 classes are when they act as group leaders. They show an interest in what others within the group are doing and ensure the completion of group tasks.

19. In general, the behaviour of pupils in and around the school is very good. No incidences of exclusion have been reported over the last three years. Pupils are courteous and teachers are very good role models in developing social and moral skills of the pupils. However, there are some isolated incidences of inappropriate behaviour in the playground but teachers reinforce school rules at every opportunity and resolve issues at the earliest opportunity. For example, prior to the start of a mathematics lesson in a Year 1 class, four pupils were spoken to about inappropriate behaviour at lunchtime.

20. At the requests of teachers, appointed staff involve themselves in observing the behaviour of specific pupils during lessons so that the teacher can have an evaluation of problem areas. An integrated assistant in a Year 3 class was used to observe a specific pupil's attitude in response to questions asked by the teacher so that the impact on his learning could be assessed.

21. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and there is genuine cultural harmony existing at the school. They have respect for feelings, values and beliefs for each other. There is an awareness of others around them and a full appreciation of when friends have difficulties in speaking English. There is an accepted tolerance of others' shortcomings and the relationships between pupils themselves and between pupils and adults are also very good and most teaching staff are fully committed in achieving success at the school.

22. The opportunities for pupils to take initiatives and personal responsibilities are limited. The school has appointed school prefects in Year 6, but there are few opportunities for others to take on small responsibilities. Pupils respond well to the work of a school council, which is a forum for pupils to suggest improvements in school. There is pupil representation from all year groups. Some good suggestions to improve matters at the school and the immediate environment have been made. For example, there are concerns about the toilets in the junior playground and a requirement for a more varied and lower priced menu for school lunches. The notice board for school council

information and suggestions is well presented. The pupils meet weekly with the headteacher and conscientiously write their agendas and minutes of the meetings. The school council is an improvement from the last report and makes a positive contribution to building pupils' confidence and self esteem.

23. Attendance levels at the school continue to be unsatisfactory. Over the last three years, up to year 1998/99, there has been a slight downward trend in attendance levels with high levels of unauthorised absences. The main contributory factor to these unauthorised absences has been the incidence of extended holidays for families going overseas. The attendance levels for the current academic year show an improvement and since April 1999 these have been averaging about 93%, improving from a low of 85.3% in 1998/99. The school is addressing the problems and is now starting to get the hard earned rewards. Registration procedures are very efficient and meet statutory requirements. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

24. The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school. In 46 per cent of lessons teaching is good. In a further 11 per cent it is very good and there was one excellent lesson observed. Teaching is satisfactory in 40 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in 2 per cent of lessons, evidenced by two observed lessons. This is good improvement from the last report where a greater percentage of lessons were judged unsatisfactory.

25. The quality of teaching of children under five overall is good and sometimes very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teaching is at its best where teachers are fully aware of individual children's needs and respond accordingly. In both the nursery and the reception classes, the work is generally well planned and this enables children to have appropriate experiences in all six areas of learning. Priority is rightly given to personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics. Effective assessment procedures are in place, which enable staff to have a clear understanding of the learning needs of individual children. An assessment of pupils' attainment levels is undertaken when children enter the nursery and levels of attainment are assessed on entry to the reception classes. Staff are kind and caring but firm and consistent in their dealings with children and they have high expectations of children's behaviour. Praise and encouragement are used to good effect which motivate and encourage children to learn.

26. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language and receive additional teaching are supported effectively in the classroom. Learning support assistants, integration assistants, language development teachers and bilingual assistants are well informed and work directly from the teachers' planning.

27. Over the past few years there has been considerable disruption to the teaching received by pupils in all year groups, which has adversely affected pupils' learning and overall progress. This has principally been caused both by changes in teaching staff, and by higher than average rates of staff absence, which have led to the frequent use of temporary teachers. The management of the curriculum and the availability of expertise of well-established members of staff diminished rapidly. For example, Key Stage 1 had no senior or experienced members of staff. As a result, this period has been accompanied by a decline in standards, as indicated by National Curriculum tests in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science for 1999. Since the appointment of the new headteacher and other key members of staff, the quality of teaching and learning has improved and the standards of pupils' work is rising in English, mathematics and science.

28. In general teachers plan their work effectively and set objectives that the pupils understand. They provide pupils with appropriate work, and assess their understanding well. Their teaching of the

basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school. For children under five and in Key Stage 1, teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding. They promote suitably demanding work for all their pupils and are able to present the work clearly and with good use of appropriate language. The use of time, support staff and resources are also good for children under the age of five, and in Key Stage 1.

29. At Key Stage 2, there is more variation in some aspects of teaching. Teachers' subject knowledge, whilst being satisfactory overall, is variable between Years 3,4,and 5. In science, physical education and information technology some teachers lack confidence and expertise in all aspects of the curriculum.

30. There is also a similar variation in the effectiveness of the teaching methods used and in teachers' use of time, support staff and resources. The introduction of the Literacy and Numeracy Hours has dominated in-service training activities over the last few years. This means that recent in-service training in other curriculum areas has been minimal, and consistently coherent staff development has been impossible with many teachers leaving, others absent for varying periods, and new staff arriving.

31. Where methods are less effective and teaching is satisfactory and in 2 lessons unsatisfactory, teachers' expectations of pupils is lower than it should be and work is not well matched to the interests and abilities of the pupils. At times, the choice of class and group organisation inappropriate, and the pace of work are often too slow.

32. These variations in the effectiveness of teaching are at their most noticeable in Years 3 and 4 and one Year 5 class. However, as they approach the end of the key stage the quality and consistency of the teaching improves.

33. The school is fortunate in having many good teachers. In order to address the issues above, the good practice already evident needs to be shared and extended throughout the school. The development of a structured programme of in-service training will do much to raise standards. This programme needs to take account of generic issues of teaching methods and class organisation, as well as addressing individual needs in the areas of subject knowledge.

34. The use that teachers make of day-to-day assessment in lessons is good overall. Learning is monitored effectively through direct work with groups and individuals and completed work is marked. Most of the time the teachers make useful comments on how the pupils might improve their work and use their assessments effectively to plan for future lessons. However this is sometimes inconsistently done in Key Stage 2 when work is not always closely matched to the attainments of the pupils in the class. The pupils are used to setting their own targets and helping each other to achieve them.

35. Pupils are taught in mixed ability classes throughout the school. Within the literacy and numeracy hour pupils are grouped according to teacher assessments in Key Stage 1, and standard assessment tests, optional test results and teacher assessments in Key Stage 2. School systems are in place for identifying pupils with special educational needs, and they are well supported in the classroom, either by a support assistant or the class teacher. Pupils new to English or underachieving are targeted for support from staff funded under the Ethnic Minority and Travellers' Achievement Grant. There are two teachers and two bilingual assistants employed in the school. These targeted

pupils are also supported effectively in the classroom.

36. At present there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to engage in purposeful discussion across the curriculum, which gives pupils opportunities to speak in specific subject language and extend their skill in using such language in meaningful contexts. Opportunities to read and write at length are limited. Such activities make a valuable contribution to pupils' overall literacy.

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

37. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the statutory requirements. This is good improvement from the previous report and the issues that were identified have been resolved. For example, the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced which is having a positive impact on pupils' attainments. The provision and the pupils' skills have improved in information technology. However additional resources would help to raise pupils' attainments further. There are more opportunities for music and there is now teaching in drama, which is an improvement from the previous report. The school provides good quality acts of collective worship

38. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and meets the requirement to teach the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school is implementing the literacy hour and the numeracy hour effectively, which is having a positive impact on raising standards throughout the school. Overall, 70 to 75 per cent of the timetable is appropriately spent on the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Half of that is spent on English, which includes the literacy hour. The extra time is allocated for the development of pupils' reading and writing skills. For example, pupils have the opportunity to follow up the ideas and methods of writing incorporated in the literacy hour and to improve the quality of their reading through a weekly library session. This develops their reading skills and knowledge about books and how to access information. However insufficient time is allocated for pupils to read, write and speak at length during the day.

39. The curriculum meets the requirements for all pupils on the special educational register. Assessments are appropriately undertaken to identify pupils with special educational needs and to set targets for improvement. In accordance with the Code of Practice for special educational needs, individual educational plans are in place for each pupil on Stage 2 or above. Their progress towards achieving these targets is monitored systematically. Annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational needs are carried out effectively and meet statutory requirements.

40. There is some enrichment of the curriculum through extra-curricular activities. There is a football club once a week after school, and a netball club. A computer club has recently started at lunchtime. There is a homework club on Saturday mornings for pupils in Years 5 and 6. This is run by the teacher in charge of the nursery, voluntarily. The recently constituted school council wants more clubs, such as an art club, and football for girls. The provision helps some of the pupils to develop their physical and intellectual skills, but the range and extent of activities are limited.

41. All pupils have equal access and opportunity to the curriculum. Single sex swimming lessons for pupils in Years 3 and 4 are provided, in response to parents' wishes. Learning support assistants, integration assistants, language development teachers, or bilingual assistants target pupils identified as

having special educational needs or new to English and give them effective support. This support takes place within the classroom as far as possible, so that all pupils have access to the class teaching and remain part of the class. Some pupils receiving additional literacy support in Years 3 and 4 are withdrawn for twenty minutes at a time to follow a detailed structured programme that is part of the National Literacy Strategy. Once they have successfully progressed through the modules, they return to the class and other pupils are targeted for support.

42. Health education, attention to drug misuse and sex education is taught as part of the science curriculum. Sex education is taught in Year 6 in single sex groups.

43. The school is very keen to involve parents more in their children's learning. They are hoping to do this by a set of recent initiatives. One is 'The Magic of Reading', a 21-week course for parents at the Trinity House school building. Another is 'Schoolwise', a project to involve parents with the new non-fiction texts in the school. One such event has already taken place and was very successful, where child and parent together used a writing frame to write a set of instructions on how to make a chapatti, with the English coordinator as the model, following the instructions! The school is involved in a drama project with the local secondary school. This will lead to increased opportunities for pupils to be involved in drama, working with older pupils, at the secondary school, benefiting from their expertise and facilities, and for a teacher to come and work with pupils at Birchfield on a Tuesday afternoon. The school is receiving support from the local education authority as well as the Handsworth Consortium, to provide music tuition in the school, and some pupils in March will be visiting the Symphony Hall in Birmingham, as part of an attendance project. These activities as well as additional visits out of school to support the curriculum subjects make a positive contribution to standards of attainment, to social and cultural development, to the development of the arts and the self-esteem of the pupils who take part. Parents are appreciative of the curriculum that the school provides. There are good links with the school playgroup and the local secondary schools to which the children transfer.

44. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now very good in the school. There is an improvement from the previous report where pupils' spiritual and moral, social and cultural development was good.

45. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. Collective worship takes place in a calm and respectful atmosphere and offers pupils good opportunities to say their own prayers and reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. Religious education makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. In Year 2 pupils understand what is regarded as special to people of different faiths; in Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. In Year 3 pupils show an understanding of how important is the theme of pilgrimage to people in different religions and relate it to their own experience. They understand the significance in Islam of all wearing special clothing on pilgrimage, and treating each other with kindness and respect.

46. The provision for moral development is very good. The pupils are taught how to distinguish right from wrong and their behaviour in and around the school reflects the high standard of moral development promoted. The youngest children in the reception class have a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The school rules are displayed clearly around the school and classes have their own rules and systems. The rules and displays of work such as those reflecting the cultural heritage of pupils promote positive behaviour and are used effectively to promote self-esteem. Members of staff set a good example in their relationships with one another and with the pupils. There is a strong school ethos, supported by all staff, that pupils take responsibility for, and develop an understanding of, the consequences of their own actions. Collective worship promotes pupils' awareness of right and wrong. For example, the theme of telling the truth is introduced through the story of 'The Boy Who Cried Wolf', one Aesop's fables. The importance of honesty is then reinforced during the week. Pupils have a well-developed sense of right and wrong, school and class rules reinforced by staff, and discuss moral issues in circle time.

47. The provision for the pupils' social development is very good. The pupils make a very good contribution to the life of the school. Informally, the pupils effectively help the younger pupils and those who need extra help and support. The pupils with special educational needs make a full and active contribution to the life and work of the school. The very good relationships in the school indicate how well the pupils work together in the school and respect others' feelings and beliefs. The school council meets regularly and the pupils, as part of this group, make a significant contribution to the life and work of the school. The pupils organise and respond to a range of social opportunities given by the school, as for example, by taking part in local drama and dance projects. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the social consequences of important events such as the refugees of Kosovo. They willingly take part in celebrating the cultural diversity of the school population by celebrating the special festivals of Christmas, Eid and Diwali, organised for pupils and parents, which makes a significant contribution to their personal and social development.

48. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. In the school's policy statements, there are positive statements about welcoming linguistic and cultural diversity. This is borne out by the displays in all the common areas of the school, celebrating the different heritages and languages of all the people who make up the school community. Pupils study the local area in geography, and in history learn about the local area in the past. Pupils learn about life in other countries and the Ancient Egyptians for example, in history. A range of artists including Picasso, Cézanne and Constable are studied. The pupils appreciate art in other cultures, for example African art, and look carefully at the patterns and designs. The major world religions are studied in religious education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. This is a very caring school. Effective support and guidance is given by a very committed and hard working staff. The procedures for child protection are very good and suitable training is given to key members of staff. There is satisfactory awareness of child protection matters from other members of staff. Good internal communications ensure that concerns are brought to the attention of the headteacher immediately and acted upon.

50. Regular assessments of risks to the pupils' safety identify areas of concern and there is a clear understanding of the areas of the school that present the greatest risk to pupils and staff. An action plan, drawn up by the Site Supervisor, ensures that the premises remain safe. Fire drills are good and constructive comments of identified weaknesses within these procedures are recorded and actions taken appropriately. For example, the availability of some of the registers during a fire drill was an identified weakness. Changes to procedures rectified this situation.

51. Adequately trained first aiders are available and all accidents are recorded. For a school of this size the level of accidents seems relatively low and most incidences are related to pupils falling down or bumping into each other at playtimes. Good records are kept of pupils' medical history and medication requirements. The school works very closely with the School Nurse.

52. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are very good. There is a systematic approach for evaluating the impact certain actions are having upon pupils' learning and progress. For example, the impact that extended holidays are having upon pupils' achievements in national tests is fully evaluated. Parents are notified of such matters and requested to consider this when deciding upon dates for holidays. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are involved in setting targets to improve academic and personal and social development. Older pupils are encouraged to be on the 'School Council', which is committed to striving for school improvement. Teachers keep records of pupils' attainment and progress through the school, reporting formally to parents at the end of each year. Teachers assess pupils' work on a day-to-day basis and the records are used throughout the school to maximise the pupils' learning. Personal, social and health education is planned and provided by teachers and visiting specialists. The impact of inappropriate behaviour in lessons and monitoring of pupils is sensitively undertaken.

53. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are excellent. The use of computer generated records for attendance allows reports to be raised to allow tracking to take place. The school is working to a well-defined agreement with the Education Social Welfare services on improving attendance.

54. The educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are very good. Teachers know their pupils well and the educational needs of all pupils are readily identified. Support is made available for pupils where needed.

55. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school fully complies with the requirements to administer statutory tests at the end of the key stages. The pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are assessed regularly and recorded systematically. This has an impact upon the quality of teacher assessments and ensures that the pupils' progress is clearly charted and pupils are targeted for improvement. This precise and regular updating of information informs the staff of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The foundation subjects are regularly assessed and evaluated by the teacher. The teachers compile assessed pieces of the pupils' work to provide a clear picture of the progress of each individual. These assessments enable staff to identify trends, and monitor pupils' progress over time. The analysis of test results, such as those of optional national tests and gender issues are systematically carried out. They are evaluated and the results have a positive impact on the curriculum. The school's good assessment procedures of pupils' progress as they get older means that effective records are maintained for individual pupils which are used to plan their work as they move up the school from class-to-class. There is good improvement from the last report.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. Parents have positive views of the school. Most felt that all subjects are taught appropriately and that pupils are able to make progress across the curriculum. The values and attitudes taught at the school are good. Parents know that the school is committed to raising attainment and building pupils' self-esteem.

57. Parents are satisfied with the information provided by the school. A small minority expressed the view that they are not given sufficient notice of curriculum topics so that they may help their children prepare at home. Similarly, the provision of homework was being inconsistently applied across the school. The availability of a homework club organised on Saturday mornings was an acceptable feature but parents would like the provision to be extended.

58. Parents play an important role at the school. There are very good links between the school and parents. The use of Trinity House, an on-site community centre, as a focal point is very effective. There is a well-defined role for the home school liaison teacher who very effectively carries out his role with the two supporting staff. One of the prime objective of the home-school link is to "develop

the partnership between the school, the families whom it serves and the wider community so that the education and development of the children is being improved wherever possible.” Achievement of this objective is evident in a programme entitled 'Schoolwise' that gives parents a direct experience of working in school alongside class teachers. Other initiatives, which are as equally effective, include “The Magic of Reading”; “Inspire”; “The Asian Women, Mothers and Mentors Project” and “Parents as Partners Project”. The benefits of these excellent initiatives are being monitored closely for their contribution in raising pupils’ attainment. This is good improvement from the last report.

59. Partnership with parents particularly in the nursery is very good. There are daily opportunities for parents to speak informally with staff at the beginning and end of sessions. Parents are given useful written information about the Early Years and how best they can help their children at home. They are made very welcome and increasing opportunities are given for them to come in and help with activities. Homework activities are set regularly so that parents can become effective partners in their child’s learning. Liaison between the schools playgroup and the nursery is very good.

60. The special educational needs co-ordinator meets regularly with parents and other agencies to ensure their wishes are taken into account at all times.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

61. There is very effective leadership and management of the school. The strength in the leadership is evident in the importance the school places on raising standards and developing the confidence and achievements of individual pupils. The leadership of the headteacher who took up post in April 1999 is excellent. She provides strong but caring leadership and is committed to moving the school forward. The parents are pleased with the way these aims are reflected in pupils’ achievements and want to be involved by helping their children at home. Most pupils are encouraged to make good progress especially at the end of the key stages and work as hard as they can to achieve well by the time they leave school. The leadership and management of the school have identified the major strengths and weaknesses of the school and set appropriate and challenging targets for improvement.

62. Most staff work together effectively with a common purpose and are good role models for the values and attitudes that the school promotes. The school is now successfully moving forward and beginning to meet its aims of raising pupils’ academic achievements and building pupils’ self esteem.

63. Governors work well with the school on a day-to-day basis to achieve the aims of the school. Many are either regular visitors to the school or work on the premises and are thus in a good position to monitor curriculum developments. The governing body represents effectively the views of the parents, community, the local education authority and the staff. New initiatives are carefully costed and prioritised and best value for money is sought before the governors commit to expenditure. The school development plan is regularly reviewed and evaluated and set for the next three years. It is a detailed and an effective tool upon which the governors make informed decisions for future development. Statutory requirements are met.

64. The headteacher ensures that there is equality of opportunities for pupils with special educational needs. There is a named governor with responsibility for pupils’ special needs who is very well informed. He works within the school, as a special needs assistant. The policy for pupils with special educational needs is in line with the Code of Practice. The special educational need co-

ordinator has appropriate responsibility for co-ordinating the provision of special educational needs. Pupils with statements of special educational need receive additional support by experienced support assistants. The specific grants the school receives to support pupils with special educational needs are used effectively and for the designated purpose.

65. Within the past few years there has been a large turnover of staff which has had a negative impact of pupils' attainment and their learning, particularly on Key Stage 1 pupils where in 1998 there were no senior members of staff and there was a succession of temporary staff. Most of the staff have changed since the previous inspection. However, there is a good blend of recently qualified teachers with some experienced staff in the school with energy and enthusiasm to move the curriculum forward. Most teachers have at least one area of subject responsibility. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and other classroom staff match the demands of the curriculum for children under five and Key Stages 1 and 2. Staff who work with pupils under five have a secure knowledge of the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all six areas and they plan accordingly.

66. The headteacher takes the leading role in day-to-day management and works closely with the senior management team. Most of the team have key roles in the school. The co-ordination of English and the home-school liaison team-work is particularly effective. However, some of the senior managers do not yet work together as a cohesive unit, which does not set a good example to other staff and hinders progress.

67. The Early Years provision is very good. The co-ordinator is well informed and has a clear understanding of her role and how best young children learn, She monitors and evaluates the planning, assessment and resources in the Early Years and meets regularly with staff. All the staff work well together as a team.

68. Staff plan together effectively in year groups, informally share their expertise but do not often maximise the quality of teaching by exchanging classes so they may teach to their strengths. The teachers are given responsibilities for selecting and purchasing their own stock. They are encouraged to act as individuals within the whole staff setting. The strength of this system is that teachers feel valued for the contributions they make to the school. The weakness is that, although staff are clear about their curriculum responsibilities, not all of them carry out their role in Key Stage 2 with equal commitment. This weakens the curriculum for some areas such as physical education, mathematics and history where teaching and learning is weaker. The co-ordinators have audited and monitored their subjects and gathered sufficient information about the strengths and weakness in their subjects across the school and have developed action plans for the next three years, which forms part of the school development plan. The school has detailed analyses of its data on pupils' performance to identify strengths and weakness within subject areas and the progress of pupils through the school. A sharp focus is set for improvement as each class has set targets for improving pupils' achievements and is meeting them so far or exceeding them.

69. Since the previous inspection, teachers have improved their expertise particularly in English, mathematics and in information technology. The hard work of the subject co-ordinators and the determination of the staff have been amply rewarded by raised levels of pupil attainment. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have had a major impact on teaching techniques contributed to pupils' learning.

70. The accommodation is good. It allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The building allows wheel-chair access on the ground floor but the steps are difficult to negotiate for pupils with physical disabilities. Outdoor facilities are appropriate. There are large hard surfaced areas for pupils, which have been enhanced with seating, chairs and a small wildlife garden which is used as a natural resource with a spacious grassed area and playground and a refurbished wildlife area. Although there is no playing field this does not restrict the development of physical education. The accommodation for under fives is adequate overall, both indoors and outdoors. There is sufficient

space for practical work and, in the nursery; there is sufficient space for larger equipment. There is a securely fenced outside play area for the children in the nursery. The accommodation is excellently maintained by the caretaker and premises staff who not only maintain the school but also significantly contribute to its positive ethos.

71. Learning resources overall are satisfactory, both in quantity and quality. They are good in English, religious education, art and history, in other subjects they are satisfactory. Resources are satisfactory in both the nursery and the reception classes and for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

72. The efficiency of the school is good. Financial planning and control are good. The local authority budgetary officer, together with the headteacher, school secretary and the finance committee from the governing body take responsibility for and monitor the school's budget. The budget is set with the advice and support of the local education authority. It is approved by the finance committee and then is taken to the full governing body. The school development plan is costed to develop the educational priorities of the school such as the development of literacy, numeracy and the provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is at present a significant clawback of finances due to changes in pupil numbers as well as large amounts of money in the past spent on temporary staff to cover for teaching staff on sick leave. The school has made savings on staffing and is on course to resolve these issues. The school spends money allocated for the support of pupils with special educational needs in an appropriate manner. Every opportunity is taken by the school to bid for new initiatives, which will benefit the pupils and the community.

73. The day-to-day administration of the school is very good. The office systems are now computerised and the school administrative staff have a good understanding of both the school and the local authority systems. A three star bursary service from the local education authority ensures that the school finances are secure and that information is immediately accessible for the governing body. The school has addressed all the points raised in the latest audit report.

74. Good use is made of all staff, and the number of recent staff absences is now decreasing. Staff for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are deployed well, and provide good support for the pupils.

75. The leadership and management of the school are very good and the governors are effective in carrying out their duties. The standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are below average for the majority of the pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress in their learning. Most pupils make satisfactory progress. The school has a high level of income but effective management results in the school providing satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

76.

- (1) Raise attainment in English by:
 - a. improving teaching of speaking, reading and writing skills by planning further opportunities for pupils to practise and improve these skills at length across the curriculum;
 - b. extending in-service training for staff where teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2.
(paragraphs 5,6,13,29,30,38,85,87,89,90,92,94)

- (2) Raise attainment in mathematics by:
 - a. improving the teaching of mathematics by extending opportunities for pupils to explain their work;

- b. providing a wider range of opportunities for pupils to improve their data handling skills, particularly in upper Key Stage 2.
(paragraphs 7,13,29,38, 102,104)
- (3) Raise attainment in science by:
- a. improving the teaching and management of investigational work;
 - b. providing in-service training for staff where subject knowledge is weak;
 - c. developing strategies for pupils to use correct scientific vocabulary and providing opportunities for them to talk at length about their work.
(paragraphs,8,29,30,31,38, 108,117)
- (4) Raise attainment in physical education by:
- a. ensuring pupils have more opportunities for participation;
 - b. raising standards in swimming;
 - c. providing in-service training for staff in areas where they lack expertise.
(paragraphs 11, 29,152,154,156)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	113
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	11	46	40	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	657
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	232

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YN – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		163

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	614

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	76
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	55

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	11.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	52	36	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	21	41
	Girls	19	18	28
	Total	48	39	69
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	55 (75)	44 (72)	78 (83)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	86 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	38	29
	Girls	15	24	20
	Total	37	62	49
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	42 (80)	70 (86)	56 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	43	39	82

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	19
	Girls	27	16	26
	Total	47	36	45
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	57 (64)	44 (58)	55 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	20	18
	Girls	23	16	24
	Total	37	36	42
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	45 (64)	44 (64)	51 (70)
	National	67 (N/A)	69 (N/A)	76 (N/A)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	0
Indian	204
Pakistani	276
Ba0ngladeshi	89
Chinese	0
White	7
Any other minority ethnic group	65

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YN – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	27
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YN – Y6

Total number of education support staff	22
Total aggregate hours worked per week	514

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	98/99
	£
Total income	1,202,366
Total expenditure	1,188,449
Expenditure per pupil	1,751
Balance brought forward from previous year	4,802
Balance carried forward to next year	18,719

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	366
Number of questionnaires returned	270

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	26	2	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	45	44	6	3	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	36	3	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	43	13	5	2
The teaching is good.	57	35	3	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	42	9	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	36	4	2	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	31	3	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	42	42	8	2	6
The school is well led and managed.	47	39	3	2	9
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	33	6	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	33	13	6	18

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

77. The school has a playgroup which admits children from the age of two and a half. Most attend the nursery from the age of three and transfer to one of the three reception classes in the September of the academic year in which they turn five. At the time of the inspection 111 children were under five. Children attend the nursery on a part-time or a full-time basis and most of the reception children have attended the nursery. There are pupils under five both in the nursery and the reception classes.

78. The attainment of most children on entry to the nursery is well below average. In particular, the children's English language skills are well below average. The majority of the children use English as an additional language and are at the early stages of acquiring fluency in it. The quality of teaching is good in both the reception and nursery classes and children make good progress in all areas of learning. On entry to Key Stage 1, most children achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes in personal and social development, creative and physical development. However, despite making good progress in language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world, the attainment of many of the children, at the age of five is still below that expected for their age. The progress of children with special educational needs is also good.

79. Personal and social development

The majority of children make good progress and achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning by the time they are of compulsory school age. The children's confidence and self-respect develop well and they become aware of what is right and what is wrong. In both the nursery and the reception classes, they successfully make choices from the range of activities on offer and they usually share and play well together. For example, in the outside area in the nursery, they take turns on the bikes and other equipment. They handle books and equipment with care and respect and are usually kind to each other. They show interest and concentrate well on tasks. Through celebrations, such as Holi, Eid and Christmas, children are beginning to gain an understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Children are able to show a range of feelings, for example, 'awe' and 'wonder' at a baby lamb that had been brought into the nursery. The personal and social development of children is given a high priority by all staff both in the nursery and the reception classes and the quality of teaching is good. Relationships between the staff and the children are good and the children respond well to the high standards set for them.

80. Language and literacy

Children make good progress but many children are still working towards the Desirable Learning outcomes for language and literacy by the time they enter Key Stage 1, the term after they are five. Appropriate priority is placed on developing children's English language skills. The quality of teaching in both the nursery and reception classes is good and staff encourage children to use the correct language and to extend their vocabulary, for example, during story time and throughout activity time. However, the children often have great difficulty expressing their thoughts and talking about their experiences. In the nursery, they enjoy role-play in the home corner but much of the language associated with their play is restricted or in their first language. Virtually all the children enjoy stories. In the reception class, they handle books correctly and know that words and pictures carry meaning. Most of the children can recognise their name. Some children can recognise a number of familiar words and a few higher attaining children can read a simple repetitive book. In the nursery, when 'writing' in the writing corner, they make marks on the paper

to represent words. In the reception classes, most children hold their pencil correctly and some children can write their own name with appropriate use of upper and lower case letters. They can copy over the teacher's writing and some children make reasonable attempts to copy underneath. Higher attaining children make good attempts, with help, at writing a simple sentence. Many children know the sounds of some of the letters. For example they could say 'apple' begins with an 'a'. Higher attaining children know many letter sounds. Most children are able to recite a number of rhymes fairly competently such as 'Baa, Baa, Black Sheep'.

81. Mathematics

Despite the good progress they make, many children are still working towards the Desirable Outcomes for Learning in this area by the time they are five. Appropriate everyday opportunities, such as counting the number of children in the class, are taken by staff to develop children's understanding of number. They are familiar with a range of number songs and rhymes, such as 'Five Current Buns' and through these rhymes; children develop an early awareness of number operations, such as, 'one more' and 'one less'. In the reception classes, most children can count to five using everyday objects and some children can count to ten and match the correct number to a group of objects. Higher attaining children can count to twenty and beyond and know, for example, that one more than eleven is twelve. In the nursery, children are able to complete simple jigsaws and match appropriate sizes and shapes into the correct places. Most children in the reception classes know the names of simple two- dimensional shapes, such as circles, triangles and squares. With help they can construct a simple block graph, for example, depicting which are their favourite animals. The quality of teaching is good and regular opportunities are provided by staff both in the nursery and the reception classes for children to sort, match and order objects. However many children have a problem explaining what they are doing because of their language difficulties.

82. Knowledge and understanding of the world

The majority of children are still working towards the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five. Staff plan a good variety of well thought-out topics, such as 'People Who Help Us' and 'Materials', to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world. In the nursery, they explore freely with materials, such as sand and water, and they can use a wide variety of construction materials competently to build models. They participate in cooking, such as making a banana loaf, and other planned activities give them opportunities to investigate the changes that take place in some food, such as chocolate, when it is heated and when it is cooled. Many children know the names of some parts of the body, for example, eyes, nose, arms and legs. In the reception classes, a good range of activities is provided for children to find out about the five senses. For example, they investigated a range of different smells but although they could identify some of them, they had difficulty trying to describe them. Children are beginning to gain an understanding of the passage and developments that take place over time; such as in the way a postman works now and how they worked a long time ago. In both the nursery and the reception classes, children have regular access to information technology and their computer skills, such as controlling the 'mouse', are developing well. The quality of the teaching is good in both the nursery and reception classes and staff make good use of outside visitors to extend children's learning and to give them first hand experiences. For example, during the time of the inspection, there was a visit from a farmer with a baby lamb to the nursery and one of the children's mothers brought in a baby for the children to see being bathed and looked after.

83. Physical development

Most children make good progress and achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the time they are five. In the nursery, in the outside play area, they are able to run about confidently without bumping into one another and are able to pedal tricycles with good control. They can use large apparatus, competently to climb and slide and balance. Throughout the nursery and the reception classes, children's manipulative skills are developing well. They use scissors, pencils, crayons and

paintbrushes with increasing precision and control. Staff in both the nursery and reception classes appropriately encourage the children to extend their physical and manipulative skills.

84. Creative development

Most children make good progress and achieve the Desirable Learning Outcomes by the age of five. Staff in both the nursery and reception classes provide many worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their creative abilities. They enjoy experimenting with the effects of paint and colour. For example, in the nursery, they delight at participating in printing with rollers. They make models and pictures using a variety of materials confidently, including for example, paint, pencils, crayons, dough and collage materials. They learn about the work of other artists. For example, in one reception class, children were studying the work of Beryl Cooke and making good attempts at creating pictures in her style. There is a good range of simple musical instruments with which children enjoy exploring the sounds they make and in the reception classes, they develop an understanding of maintaining the 'beat'. The quality of teaching is good and children have frequent opportunities to sing and they know a number of songs. There is a good range of dressing up clothes with which children participate freely in imaginative play.

ENGLISH

85. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests and assessments at Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment was well below the national average for level 4. The percentage of pupils reaching level 5 was below average. Overall pupils' attainment in comparison with pupils' performance from similar backgrounds was below average. There were no significant differences in attainment between the girls and the boys or ethnic groups. Differences in National Curriculum tests and assessments are broadly in the differing sizes of the cohorts of pupils and their differing attainments. The 1999 tests and assessments at Key Stage 1 show that pupils' attainment was very low in reading for level 2. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3, which is above average for pupils of this age, was well below the national average. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching level 2 was very low and the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3 was below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' attainment was very low in reading and writing. The attainment of the boys was generally higher than that of the girls in writing.

86. Results over the last three years have kept pace with the national trend. Although there was a fall in standards from 1997, standards are now rising this year. The full impact of the National Literacy Strategy is yet to be seen in pupils' results. At present the quality of teaching is improved and pupils make good progress in most lessons observed. However, in assessing the overall impact of teaching across the school, pupils make satisfactory progress over time and they can achieve better standards by the time they leave school. The high staff absence and turnover have had an adverse effect on standards within the last 2 years. Although pupils speak other languages fluently, their understanding of English does impede their progress when they do not fully understand questions or texts. There are limited opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to extend their skills by speaking, reading and writing at length. When pupils practise these skills frequently and in depth their progress accelerates.

87. Overall, attainment is below national expectations at the end of both key stages although pupils make satisfactory progress, except those with special educational needs and those who receive additional language support, who make good progress. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for the end of Key Stage 2 show that 57 per cent of pupils achieved the expected levels or better. This was above the school's agreed target of 50 per cent for 1999. The agreed targets for this year's National Curriculum tests for the present pupils in Year 6 are the same as the 1999 targets. This is to take into account the variation in the attainments of these cohorts of pupils. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys or between

ethnic groups.

88. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' standards in speaking are below average but broadly average for listening skills and they make satisfactory progress. Most pupils in Year 6 listen attentively to the teacher and to each other. When planning mime, they discuss in groups before performing in front of the class. Many show some awareness of their audience and gain confidence from such activities. Higher attaining pupils prepare and act out to the class, role-playing as different characters in the story they have been studying. In a plenary session, some higher attaining pupils explain and share with the class information they have retrieved. These pupils are confident speakers and learners. They speak clearly with appropriate expression and vocabulary. Some lower attainers are less confident talking to adults and express themselves with less clarity and a less varied vocabulary.

89. Most pupils targeted for extra support, either for special educational needs or those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make good progress over the key stage. In Year 3 pupils enjoy suggesting ways of expanding the story to the teacher in shared writing.

90. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are below national expectations for speaking skills but average for listening skills. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 2 listen carefully to their teacher and many respond with interest to the teachers' questions. Higher attaining pupils read the text out loud to their class with expression and confidence. In Year 1 pupils are responsive. They identify the difference between long and short words. They are keen to answer the teachers' questions about the story, but many give one-word answers and have difficulty expanding them. In groups they retell the story with appropriate actions. Most pupils make satisfactory progress during the key stage. Pupils targeted for extra support, either for special educational needs or those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make good progress over the key stage

91. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are below national expectations although pupils make satisfactory progress. In Year 6 pupils read a wide range of different kinds of books including biography, plays, poems. They enjoy reading. Many pupils have their favourite authors and stories. They read at home. They recount stories and predict their outcome. Most pupils read their group reading book with accuracy and appropriate expression, taking due note of the punctuation. They know to break a word down into parts if they cannot read it. However pupils need additional support to understand the meaning of the words in context. This is particularly so for many of the pupils at the school who are learning English as an additional language, who find difficulty in making inferences beyond the literal meaning of a text. Pupils understand how to locate a non-fiction book in the school library and most can locate the information they need in the book. Some pupils use a CD-ROM successfully for a similar purpose. By the end of the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils targeted for extra support, either for special educational needs or those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make good progress over the key stage, as do pupils in Years 3 and 4 receiving additional literacy support.

92. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are below average in reading although pupils make satisfactory progress. In Year 2 pupils 'sound out' unfamiliar words or break them up into parts, and use the pictures to help them. They know how to look in a dictionary. Most pupils read their book accurately and with expression and fluency. A lower attaining pupil knows the book title 'Grumpyguts' is alliterative, and that the word 'arrest' means 'put in jail'. In Year 1 pupils develop their understanding of high frequency words and how to read them on sight. They know the difference between a fiction and a non-fiction book. By the end of the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils targeted for extra support, either for special educational needs or those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make good progress over

the key stage.

93. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below average in writing although pupils make satisfactory progress. Fewer pupils are reaching the expected level. Pupils in Year 6 write letters, plays, make posters, change autobiographies to biographies. They write from a particular point of view, such as the stepmother in 'Snow White'. They write a letter as if they were a servant in 1899, describing their hard life. They write a letter to an illustrator of children's books in Zimbabwe, and receive a reply. In their descriptive writing, they develop their ability to set the scene, create an atmosphere, and how to plan a story with beginning, middle and conclusion. Higher attaining pupils use a more complex sentence structure and a wider vocabulary, which adds to the meaning and sustains interest for the reader. They use also a variety of strategies to create dramatic tension and humour in their writing, such as capital letters, exclamation marks, parentheses. The range of writing overall is similar for the full range of abilities in the year. Pupils of average attainment use mainly short sentences and confuse past and present tense in their writing. Lower attainers' writing is often much shorter, and not as accurately punctuated. By the end of the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils targeted for extra support, either for special educational needs or those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make good progress over the key stage. Most pupils use basic punctuation and speech marks accurately and handwriting is joined and neat by the end of the key stage.

94. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are below national expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 2 write stories using a writing frame to help them sequence and structure their story. For the higher attainers, basic punctuation is in place in their writing, and some use of speech marks. They spell common words accurately. They rewrite well-known stories using the right sequence and write for a range of purposes and audience such as writing instructions for a healthy sandwich. They are beginning to join their handwriting. They show progress in their control of the structure of their writing, in increasingly accurate use of punctuation, spelling and handwriting over the year so far. Pupils of average attainment cover a similar range of writing. They have made progress in their handwriting over the year and their story structure is improving. Some lower attaining pupils have difficulties with remembering correct spellings. By the end of the key stage, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils targeted for extra support, either for special educational needs or those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make good progress over the key stage.

95. The quality of teaching is good overall. Sixty seven per cent of teaching is good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. In all lessons of the National Literacy Strategy, planning is good. Staff are still in the process of training for the National Literacy Strategy and the full impact of it is yet to be seen. While pupils make good progress in the lessons observed over time progress remains satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers maintain the structure of the literacy hour. Lessons have a good balance of whole class teaching and group work. In the whole class sessions, teachers work hard to ensure pupils' learning. They use effective questioning techniques to establish understanding and promote pupils' thinking of the text the class is reading. They make the language of poetry accessible to pupils by providing alternative examples to the descriptions in the poems. Some teachers use model writing effectively, to show pupils how to improve their work, or provide a structure for them to work with. Pupils respond well to the teachers. They are enthusiastic learners, keen to contribute, make suggestions, answer questions. The lessons and resources are well prepared and organised. Teachers and support staff plan and work well together. The language development teachers, funded by the Ethnic Minority and Travellers' Achievement Grant, target some of the pupils with English as an additional language who are at risk of underachieving or new to English. In Key Stage 2 the language development teacher co-presents the whole class session with the class teacher, then works with the targeted pupils, using books the pupils are already familiar with to reinforce the learning objectives of the lesson. The pupils can

explain what they have been doing, justify their selection of words, and read and understand them all. Pupils learn well in this focussed activity. Learning support assistants work effectively with pupils with special educational needs to meet the targets set in their individual education plans, within the classroom. Encouraged by teachers and support staff, pupils in targeted groups report back successfully to the class what they have achieved their objectives. The bilingual support is effective as for example, where a bilingual class teacher checks and explains in first language whether a boy new to the country understands what they are describing, looking at the picture in a guided reading session. In a majority of lessons, teachers explain the group activities clearly to the pupils; the activities are matched well to individual and group needs with a clear focus for development and are connected to the first part of the lesson. Where pupils understand what they have to do, they settle quickly to their group tasks. The pace of the lesson and the learning is maintained. Pupils share what they have learnt in the plenary activity at the end of the lesson, which gives them a further opportunity to talk to the class. Teachers reinforce effectively the learning that has taken place. In some instances, where pupils are not clear about their group tasks, or the task is too easy or too difficult, the pace of the lesson slows down and opportunities for learning are lost. In many group activities pupils work individually rather than in pairs or as a group. In this way opportunities are missed for pupils to discuss and check out their thinking with each other which would improve their speaking and listening and their rate of learning.

96. The subject co-ordinator has very effectively managed well the introduction and implementation of the National Literacy Strategy throughout the school. Most of the school-based training was delivered relatively recently, with one module still to be delivered. The coordinator is monitoring the various elements of the literacy hour and feeding back to the teachers and senior management to make improvements. He has also introduced a commercial scheme for teachers to assess each child's progress in reading and writing, and to use that to inform their planning, within the framework of the National Literacy Strategy. There are class portfolios of moderated work. Teachers collect and moderate work regularly. The coordinator is involved in 'School wise', one of the initiatives to increase parental involvement in children's learning. £7000 has been spent altogether on purchasing new resources, mainly reading materials. Particularly, books were bought to appeal to boys, mainly non-fiction, and books with the same cultural heritage as the pupils. Teachers share targets for pupils' learning with parents and pupils at consultation meetings. Classes are timetabled to visit the school library, which provides a pleasant learning environment, with wall displays of pupils' work, sitting areas, and a good selection of books, particularly non-fiction. There are big books, tapes for listening skills, dual language books and books from a range of cultures. They learn about the cataloguing system, how to locate information in non-fiction books, have time to look at books and choose one to take home. The library is seen as an important contribution to raising standards in English. Most pupils take their group reader, a class library book and a school library book home, and many pupils read to a parent or sibling at home, but there is no consistent application of reading homework across the school. Outside the literacy hour, provision is made on timetables for extended writing and library, which is well utilised. However, there is no formal provision outside that time for reading in groups in the classroom. The school governor with responsibility for literacy has attended the initial two-day training, and is in regular contact with the subject coordinator.

MATHEMATICS

97. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests, at the end of Key Stage 2, indicate that the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected level 4, and higher level 5 was well below the national average. Pupils' performance was well below average in comparison with pupils from similar backgrounds. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the percentage of Year 2 pupils reaching the expected level 2 was well below average and higher level 3 was just below average. Pupils' performance was below average in

comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The attainment of the boys was generally higher than the girls at both key stages.

98. Pupils did not do as well in the tests as the school hoped for in 1999. The absence of some higher attaining pupils at the time of the tests in Key Stage 2, adversely affected the average results for this cohort of pupils.

99. Trends over the past three years for Key Stage 2 indicate standards well below the national average. At Key Stage 1, standards are close to the national average. The trend for improvement has broadly kept pace with the national trend. Pupils generally do better in questions of number in tests as they do not have to understand the text to be able to work out the answers which has a positive impact on results for those pupils who have little knowledge of English, particularly in Key Stage 1, where they are at the early stages of learning English. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' mental arithmetic.

100. The school has recently undergone a period of change in staff. The high turnover of 18 staff and the constant replacement of inexperienced temporary staff adversely affected the pupils' progress and results fell. Staff training and the co-ordination of the curriculum were not secured in this period of change, negatively impacting on curriculum development across the school.

101. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are beginning to rise and the proportion of pupils attaining average standards is now below average at both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on pupils' mental calculations and standards are beginning to rise. This position is consistent with the current teacher assessments. The numbers in each year group are very varied and do not provide a consistent pattern of attainment. There are no significant differences between boys and girls or ethnic groups.

102. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are progressing satisfactorily in the different aspects of the subject. Their understanding of number and ability to calculate is developing well through some lively and stimulating mental activities. Pupils count to and from 100 in tens, and in fives to 50. They identify the digits in three-figure numbers. Higher-attaining pupils insert the missing numbers in simple problems and most pupils divide squares and circles into halves. The majority of pupils also measure and draw accurately using centimetres. Less-able pupils are confident only when using single-digit numbers and have little success when faced with written problems. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils divide three-figure numbers by one or two-digit numbers mentally. They convert decimals into percentages and most reduce fractions to their lowest terms. Pupils find areas of shapes by counting the squares. Higher attainers understand and use formulae. Less-able pupils apply competence in number to the four rules but some of them lack confidence and have not yet mastered multiplication tables.

103. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall during both key stages, apart from those pupils with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language who make good progress. When teachers provide them with challenging tasks they respond well and apply themselves with enthusiasm. They welcome interesting mental activities. During Key Stage 2, Year 5 pupils reinforce their knowledge of multiplication and division when they play the 'loop game'. They concentrate and co-operate well in order to improve on their best previous performance as a class team. Pupils show growing confidence in applying their grasp of number to problems. Pupils develop knowledge of mathematical vocabulary related to each aspect of their learning. They name correctly three-dimensional shapes, different types of angles and know the vocabulary applicable to reflective symmetry. Many pupils, however, have difficulty putting the words into context to reflect their understanding. This slows their progress in areas of the subject such as shape, space and measures, and in using and applying mathematics. Satisfactory progress

is made in data handling except in upper Key Stage 2, where pupils' experience is limited. They are able to represent some information in tables and graphs, using this skill in science and geography. Year 4 pupils construct line graphs to compare temperatures in various cities of the world. Higher attainers in Year 2 calculate how many hours there are in two days. Most of them also identify correctly the properties of simple three-dimensional shapes. Less-able pupils cannot do so. During Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of number and shape. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 calculate how many hours there are in two days. Most of them also identify correctly the properties of simple three-dimensional shapes. Less-able pupils cannot do so. However during both key stages, pupils have insufficient opportunities to record and interpret information in different forms. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make similar progress. There is an awareness of their needs and they are well supported by all adults.

104. The majority of pupils show a positive attitude to the subject at both key stages. They listen well and are keen to join in oral work, sometimes having to be calmed. They usually behave well, co-operating in groups and collaborating effectively with partners. When moving from whole-class to group situations they organise themselves and share resources fairly.

105. Teaching is good overall at both key stages. It is particularly effective at upper Key Stage 2, with some prime examples of lessons having pace and challenge. Two very good lessons in Year 6 were based on very good class management stemming from good relationships, subject knowledge and high expectations. Year 6 pupils also face frequent challenges that involve predicting outcomes before investigating and testing hypotheses. Planning is good overall and for individual lessons, with clear progression for learning indicated. A good feature of many lessons is the awareness of assessment of individual pupils' learning. In a Year 3 lesson the teacher noted a pupil's quick understanding of reflective symmetry using one axis and set a task involving two axes. In one unsatisfactory lesson observed in Year 5, the pace of the lesson was slow and pupils were insufficiently challenged in their work. Emphasis is given in all lessons to the relevant specific language and key words are noted in planning and displayed in classrooms. Pupils are questioned and show that they know the words but too often the questioning does not require a clear explanation of them. In the best lessons teachers ask pupils to explain how they arrive at their answers and give opportunities to explain other strategies, as in a Year 4 lesson involving mental subtraction of two-digit numbers with carrying. In lessons where two adults work with the class, teamwork is very good with both teachers playing a full part. In a Year 2 lesson oral work was shared most effectively. Marking of work varies greatly. In a few classes, in the lower Key Stage 2 classes, teachers pose questions asking pupils to explain further or to re-think but few responses are seen. A number of teachers in Key Stage 2 are not yet using the plenary sessions to review and reinforce learning sufficiently effectively. In these instances pupils are not expected or encouraged to give full explanations of how they have carried out their tasks and what they have learned. Staff generally use assessments well in lessons to inform their planning of future work. Targets are set in each class for improvement and pupils have their own personal targets for improvement.

106. The school has responded positively to the disappointing test results from last year and the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully. Teachers use the basic lesson structure, amending it if appropriate. All lessons commence with mental activities, which in the majority of lessons are sharp and purposeful. Tasks are matched suitably to pupils' ability and there are good overall procedures for the assessment of pupils' work.

SCIENCE

107. In the 1999 national tests for Key Stage 2, the number of pupils attaining the nationally

expected level 4 was well below the national average. The number of pupils attaining level 5, which is above average for pupils of this age, was well below the national average. In comparison to pupils from similar schools, pupils' performance was well below average. In the 1999 teacher assessments for Key Stage 1, the number of pupils attaining level 2 was very low, but the number of pupils attaining the higher level 3, which is above average for pupils of this age, was below the national average. The pupils' results were very low in comparison to similar schools.

108. Trends over the last three years indicate that pupils' performance is well below the national average at Key Stage 2. However, the trend for improvement since 1996 has kept pace with the national trend. Differences in the attainments of pupils from one year to the next reflect the differing attainments and number of pupils in individual cohorts.

109. The school has identified weaknesses in the curriculum and in teachers' methods for improvement. Pupils make good progress during Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2. While there is consistent good progress in Key Stage 1, there is unevenness in the quality of teaching and learning between classes in Key Stage 2, but particularly in Years 3,4,5. The most significant factor having an impact on results is the large number of pupils with English as an additional language who find it difficult to express their thoughts and freely hypothesise particularly in questions of physical processes such as forces that require a high level of problem-solving. There are a considerable number of pupils who are on the register for special educational needs in Years 2 and 6, which has a negative impact on the overall attainments of the year groups. During recent years there has been a large turnover of staff and little professional development for teachers and support staff. There was also a period of high staff absence, which caused considerable disruption to the pupils' learning, particularly in Key Stage 1. Some teachers in Year groups 3,4,5 lack confidence in subject knowledge and the correct subject vocabulary is always taught. Others have a low expectation of pupils' achievement and place insufficient demands on pupils for improvement. Other staff are not successful in teaching investigational work, employing methods that are unsuitable. Most teachers question pupils well to find out their level of understanding but do not allow them sufficient time to speak at length which inhibits their language development.

110. The previous inspection report showed that standards in science were satisfactory at the ends of both key stages. Pupils with Special Educational Needs made satisfactory progress, and overall progress was also satisfactory. Teaching was good at both key stages. Pupils were not given enough opportunities for independent learning.

111. The evidence from the inspection suggests that standards are beginning to improve from the 1999 results. Although the situation has begun to improve over the last 18 months, there has not yet been time in Key Stage 2 for improvements to affect test results. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is, on the basis of the inspection evidence, below the national average. There are no significant differences between boys and girls or ethnic groups.

112. At Key Stage 1, however, where end of key stage teacher assessments come after two years, the effects of greater stability and more consistent teaching are already becoming evident and standards are once again in line with the national average. At Key Stage 1, most pupils learn well in all areas of science and make good progress. At Key Stage 2, progress is satisfactory overall, but varies according to the quality of teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and those who have additional support for language make good progress. There is greater variation in the quality of learning in Key Stage 2 and pupils' progress varies from satisfactory to good in some classes in Years 3,4 and 5. However, in Year 6 it improves where it is good and sometimes very good.

113. All aspects of science are well covered, and the teaching of Experimental and Investigative science is becoming better integrated with the other areas of the curriculum. The previous report commented on the need to develop pupils' ability to work independently in their investigations. The school has addressed this, and there has been a significant improvement. Opportunities are also taken within the science curriculum to deal with issues of health and drugs awareness. Most lessons seen during the inspection were based on practical investigative work by the pupils, which were, for the most part, well matched to their abilities and interests. There are good procedures in place for assessing pupils' work. Each class has targets to aspire to for all pupils and pupils have individual targets for improvement in their behaviour and work.

114. The pupils generally show a positive response to their work in science at all stages. In the best-taught lessons there is a sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm, with pupils working well together, taking turns and sharing well. In a year 6 lesson on how solids dissolve in water, for example, pupils pay careful attention to everything the teacher says. They are eager to answer questions, and think carefully about the words they use. This work also makes a valuable contribution to pupils' language development. Working relationships, both between teachers and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves, are often very good, and this contributes significantly to the quality of learning. Behaviour is almost always good, with pupils showing sensible, co-operative and caring attitudes as they work. Practical activities contribute positively to pupils' social development.

115. The teaching of science is good in Key Stage 1, and satisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. In the best-taught lessons teachers plan carefully, provide interesting, practical activities, which are well matched to the whole range of pupils' abilities. They integrate the teaching of Experimental and Investigative science effectively. They manage their pupils well, and assess their understanding, so as to guide them in their next steps in learning. In a year 2 lesson, for example, pupils are learning about melting ice-cubes. Teaching strategies are effective, and the different activities provided for pupils of different abilities, enable them all to learn well. The pupils enjoy watching the ice cubes melt, and the teacher asks them questions, which extend their learning, and also require them to answer using appropriate scientific language. This work also contributes well to the development of pupils' basic literacy skills.

116. Teaching is weaker where there is less emphasis focussed on continuing to develop the integration of experimental and investigative science, and on effective strategies for teaching practical investigations. There is some inconsistency in Key Stage 2 in teacher's effective use of questioning skills and use of correct scientific language, so as to encourage and promote the development of pupils' language skills.

117. The subject is effectively managed and co-ordinated. The school has sufficient resources, which are mostly of satisfactory quality, although some are rather old. Despite its urban location the school has developed good facilities for environmental science work in the playground and courtyard.

ART

118. Pupils' attainment in art is above that expected for pupils of their age at seven and eleven and they make good progress. This is an improvement from the last report where standards were above average by the time pupils were seven, but below average by the time they were 11.

119. The Year 6 pupils study natural pattern in shells, landscapes, trees, leaves and animals. They draw their own pattern drawing inspiration from nature and the work of William Morris to a high standard. In lessons observed on printing, the pupils effectively designed printing blocks from

polystyrene tiles. They build increasingly complex layers of colour and patterns as they press printed their designs onto paper. All pupils build on their previous knowledge of design and using tools to good effect. The high quality of work in Year 6 is due to the excellent subject knowledge and teaching of the co-ordinator who motivates and extends pupils as they work. All pupils including those with special educational needs make good progress, are thoroughly absorbed in their work and are proud of their results, spontaneously applauding the work of others at the end of the lessons. Their reflection on how they could improve their work makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Throughout the key stage the pupils build upon the skills and techniques that they have learnt earlier. In Key Stage 1, pupils explore materials and work confidently with paint to create self-portraits. They mix their own paints to create many shades of colour, which they then use to make patterns. They learn to control their brushes and use the paint to print and paint pictures such as their winter landscapes. Pupils consistently build their skills, knowledge and understanding as they use a wide range of materials and work in two and three dimensions to support other subjects. By the time they reach Key Stage 2, pupils use their skills well to weave and stitch patterns, make models and paint using shades of colours carefully.

120. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. The staff plan art work effectively around their topics and incorporate the study of well-known artists. For example, pupils in Year 5 study the work of Holbein as they create their own artistic portraits of Henry V111, noting and refining their skills as they draw the important features. Some recreate Egyptian masks as they study Egyptology. The work of famous artists from a variety of backgrounds and cultures is represented in the attractively presented displays around school representing both key stages. There are landscapes in the style of Constable, still life pastel drawings of fruit in the style of Cézanne, weavings and batik inspired by African and Islamic art and portraits inspired by Picasso. This effective support of other areas of the curriculum provides good consolidation of learning in these areas as well as the opportunity to understand the work of other artists and develop painting, drawing and modelling techniques. The staff have good subject knowledge and effective guidance from their scheme of work. The coordinator is an enthusiastic art specialist and she provides excellent advice to the staff. She is a good role model demonstrating techniques and methods effectively for the pupils encouraging them and showing them how they might improve their work. There is an enthusiasm for art in the school and the subject is well established. As a result pupils are keen to learn and the co-ordinator's enthusiasm for the subject motivates them to produce work of good quality. Staff encourage pupils to work co-operatively in small groups, which makes a positive contribution to their personal and social development. The coordinator monitors work on display informally and there are good procedures in place for the assessment of pupils' work.

121. There is good management of the subject. The resources for art are good, of good quality and stored for easy access for both the staff and the pupils. There is a good management plan and targets set for the next three years.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Only one class lesson was observed in design and technology during the inspection week which was satisfactory. However, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils suggest that standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are average. Pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning. In the last report standards were above what is normally expected for pupils aged 7 but average for pupils aged 11. However more curriculum time was allocated to the subject at the time of the last report.

123. In Year 6, pupils are able to describe how they plan their work with reference to its purpose and outline the tools, materials and processes needed. They understand the importance of the need to evaluate their work and undertake any improvements. The work they had undertaken on

cogs and wheels shows that they are able to measure, mark and cut accurately and identify what makes their models work well. In Year 2, pupils are able to design a simple puppet and make it out of card, using split pins in order to make its joints move. They have some ideas of how they can improve their work, for example, by making the head bigger.

124. Evidence produced from scrutiny of work suggests that the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages. Work in design and technology is often appropriately linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, Year 4 pupils designed and made three-dimensional masks of the gods and goddesses related to their work on Ancient Greeks. These masks were well constructed and effectively reflected their purpose.

125. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils respond well to suggestions put forward by the teacher when practising measuring and cutting skills and persevere with their work. Their behaviour is good overall. In discussion with other pupils, they demonstrate good attitudes to the subject. They respond to questions with interest and enthusiasm.

126. There is a satisfactory policy and scheme of work in place. Assessments undertaken are informal, through teachers' observations. There is currently no design and technology co-ordinator. Resources for design and technology overall are adequate, although there has been no recent audit undertaken.

GEOGRAPHY

127. Standards in geography are similar to those seen in the majority of schools and pupils' attainment is average by the ages of seven and eleven. They make satisfactory progress. Only a few lessons were seen during the inspection and the quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Judgements were made by talking to staff and pupils and looking at pupils past work. Pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in their learning. Standards and pupils' progress was similar to the last report.

128. By Year 6, pupils have a limited knowledge of Ordnance Survey maps. They do, however, have a rounded knowledge of the world generally. A number of pupils have travelled, to both Africa and Asia and make sensible comparisons with England. They discuss the interaction of people and places, and have firm views about caring for the environment. Pupils consider the advantages and disadvantages of private and public transport. They discuss the topic sensibly and produce a range of relevant points, with an awareness of pollution and conservation. Few lessons were seen, but a discussion with some Year 6 pupils showed good knowledge of Egypt and an understanding of the importance of the River Nile. They also know how climate and physical characteristics dictate how people live. Pupils' awareness of the world is heightened by the many displays throughout the school relating to other countries and people familiar to them. Advantage is taken of the variety of backgrounds and experiences of adults in school so that learning is realistic. Pupils are surrounded by maps, photographs and information, and this raises the profile of the subject. In Year 2 most pupils understand that there are different views of maps according to the vantage point as they draw plans of the playground. They then use the maps to locate specific points.

129. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory throughout the school. In the lessons observed the teachers' planning and the pace of lessons was good. Tasks presented were both interesting and challenging. Pupils are keen to find out about geography and because of the good

subject knowledge of the staff and the pace of the work, pupils behaved well and learning was good in the best lessons observed. On occasions, as in a lesson where pupils were identifying the countries of the United Kingdom, as a class activity, the pace dropped and too many pupils were not actively involved. Teachers' questioning of pupils to further their understanding is usually effective, particularly with the oldest pupils, although in one lesson observed there was some lack of clarity in keeping to the objective of the lesson.

130. The pupils' attitude and behaviour is satisfactory overall. It is better when the teacher sets a brisk pace, as in the observed Year 2 lesson. Pupils generally share ideas well and enjoy working in partnership. Year 6 pupils discuss the subject with enthusiasm. Pupils' experiences include practical work in the school grounds and in the local area, which is used effectively to focus their attention on the environment. However, this is not sufficiently supplemented by visits to other localities.

131. The management of the subject is satisfactory with a scheme of work and policy three-year plan set for future development to guide the staff. There are appropriate assessment procedures in place. Resources are satisfactory overall. They are accessible and stored appropriately, although there is a shortage of maps.

HISTORY

132. Overall standards in history are average for pupils aged 7 and 11. Pupils including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress in their learning, which was the case in the last report. Only a limited number of lessons were available to be seen during the inspection week. Judgements are made from discussions with the co-ordinator, talking to pupils, the scrutiny of work completed in the last term and displays across the school.

133. By the time they are 11, pupils have studied all the required units of history curriculum and have a wide breadth of experiences about the past historical events. They have a good awareness of Victorian life styles for the rich and the poor and understand the reasons for slavery and the extension of British Empire. Older pupils' interest in Victorian times and their present opportunities of education, health and recreational activities, with special reference to the invention of television, contribute to their personal and social development. They recall and respond well to questions. They are interested in the past and discuss well to extend their learning.

134. By the time they are 7, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding about the passing of time. They learn about their own families and their inheritance. Autobiographies of friends, teachers, parents and grandparents give them the understanding of their backgrounds and of others.

135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils learn a lot about historical facts. In some lessons where pupils' learning slows, lessons inhibit pupils finding out about the past for themselves by looking at evidence such as artefacts and photographs. Where investigational skills are not taught pupils are not encouraged to think and solve problems from their enquiry. In one unsatisfactory lesson observed in Year 4, pupils were investigating the Romans using reference books and CD-ROM. Their learning was insufficiently focused and the pace of the lesson was slow. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had made insufficient progress. On the other hand pupils learn faster where discussion and planning encourages them to think and draw their own conclusions. Pupils enjoy history but opportunities for them to use information technology or books for research are limited in some classes. Literacy, art and design and technology are promoted through history curriculum.

136. School displays are informative and interesting. The work is often linked to studies of famous people of differing ethnic backgrounds such as Nelson Mandela, making a positive contribution to pupil's cultural development. Since the last inspection, the reviewed policy is in place and a curriculum document is in draft form. Resources are satisfactory and good use is made of the local library loans to support pupils' learning. However, resources are still not organised under topic headings as identified by the previous inspection.

137. The co-ordinator who has now taken responsibility since the last inspection has a positive overview of the subject. There is an appropriate three-year plan to take the subject forward and address staff training where it is needed. There are appropriate procedures in place for the assessment of pupils' work.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

138. The school's previous report found that standards in information technology were average for pupils aged 7 and 11 and that pupils made satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well and make good progress. The standards were similar in the previous report.

139. Pupils in Year 6 have experienced a wider range of information technology activities, including the use of CD-ROM reference materials. They understand how to change their work by the use of different fonts, and how to edit, and use a spell-checker. They are made aware of the limitations of the spell-checker. Techniques such as the use of all fingers when typing on the computer keyboard, are also introduced. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use the computer for a variety of purposes, such as word processing and graphics work. They can retrieve and store their work with help. They have had experience of controlling devices such as the Roamer, using simple Logo programming. In the early years pupils have opportunities to use appropriate software such as the 'Dressing Teddy' programme, so that they are introduced to basic computer control with the mouse and keyboard from the earliest stages.

140. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. The staff have an appropriate level of expertise and subject knowledge overall and this is reflected in their work with the pupils. However there are still a few members of staff who lack confidence and subject expertise. Planning generally ensures that the pupils are engaged in purposeful and interesting tasks. Members of staff plan challenging opportunities to assist learning in literacy and numeracy and also a range of cross-curricular activities. The teachers use expert inputs from the technician well to support the work that is done in the classroom. The confidence that members of staff have with the computers and the good behaviour and the very good relationships in the classes promote the enjoyment and the involvement of the pupils. The staff make very good use of assessment when teaching to tell pupils how to improve their work. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils are taught about editing text. This is done in a stimulating way, in the context of pupils' ideas for improving playtimes. They learn how to change fonts, edit text and use the spell checker. These skills are taught through a good mix of whole-class teaching, group work and individual and paired work at the computer. Pupils generally enjoy working together and most are able to take turns and share. Occasionally a minority dominate the keyboard and find it hard to wait for others to complete their tasks.

141. The school's technician gives valuable informal training for new hardware. There has also been some further training for staff associated with the Birmingham Grid for Learning. The introduction of the school's new information technology suite, connection to the Internet, and the gradual replacement of older computers give pupils better access as a class to learning, resulting in

learning at a faster pace. The school's action plan for information technology gives a clear picture for future progress and includes training needs for staff.

142. The curriculum provided in the school is broad and balanced. As they move through the school pupils are given experiences which build Information Technology skills and understanding, and which often link to other subjects. The evidence of pupils' previous work seen shows that, although all areas of the Information Technology curriculum are covered, the Controlling, Monitoring and Modelling aspect needs further development. Staff use assessments' of pupils' work effectively to plan their future work

143. The subject is effectively managed by the co-ordinator who has been in post for 14 months. The new information technology suite has enabled teachers to begin to use e-mail and the Internet and the development of these aspects of information technology are being carefully monitored by the co-ordinator. Links are being established with schools in other parts of the country, and abroad.

144. The school has sufficient resources, although many computers are old and unsuitable for some aspects of the curriculum. Appropriate procedures are in place for the assessment of pupils' work. The new information technology suite needs to be brought into full operation as soon as possible, so that the substantial investment, which the school has made in this facility, will be of maximum benefit to all its pupils.

MUSIC

145. Pupils aged 7 and 11 attain average standards. Pupils including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in their learning. This is a major improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory and there was a need to raise standards and increase opportunities for performance and appreciation of music.

146. The school has addressed these issues, and, steps have been taken to raise the profile of music in the school. A new co-ordinator was appointed just over a year ago and he has made efforts to involve all staff in music and to make music more evident in the day-to-day life of the school. New hi-fi systems have been installed in both halls, so that music can be heard clearly. Teachers now attend singing lessons taken by the music co-ordinator and take turns in teaching alongside him.

147. At Key Stage 2, singing lessons are conducted with all Y3 and 4 classes together, and then all Y5 and 6. Although these lessons ensure that the expertise of the music co-ordinator is made available to all pupils, and that all teachers can see the methods used, their timing presents problems. As the lessons take place at the end of the afternoon some pupils find it difficult to concentrate and read the words of songs displayed on a screen. There is an unsettled and restless atmosphere, and, while the majority of the pupils join in quite well, it is difficult to communicate the subtleties of listening and appraising aspects such as mood or musical structure. By the age of seven, pupils learn to sing together and to play instruments. In a year 1 lesson they learn to listen to music, and to suggest which instruments might be used to represent different animals. They are beginning to control pitch, dynamics and breathing. The teacher provides a role model for pupils, encouraging them to join in with enthusiasm. The work is appropriate and accessible to pupils of all abilities including those with Special Educational Needs.

148. The teaching of music is satisfactory overall throughout the school. Teachers who lack subject knowledge and confidence are supported through the joint singing lessons. The work is clearly planned, and pupils are well managed. Behaviour is generally good, even when large

numbers of pupils are together. A good pace of work is maintained, and pupils are given opportunities to play instruments. The range of music chosen, for singing, playing and listening, represents a wide range of cultures, and reflects the cultural backgrounds of all the school's pupils.

149. The co-ordinator has made a start to raising standards. Music is now more evident in the life of the school and makes a significant contribution to the life of the school. The school's resources for music are just sufficient, and are representative of different cultures. They are insufficiently organised so as to be easily accessible to all pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. Pupils' attain standards below what is normally expected by the ages of 7 and 11 and make unsatisfactory progress. Standards in physical education attained by the time the pupils leave the school are below what is expected of pupils of this age. The quality of provision is below that which is seen in the majority of schools. Insufficient time is allocated for some pupils to receive a worthwhile experience and there are few opportunities additional to class lessons. The subject has a low priority in the school. A key issue in the previous inspection report was to raise standards in the subject. Some staff training has taken place but since then there have been many changes in staffing. The Action Plan prepared has not been implemented. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory

151. Pupils learn swimming in Years 3 and 4. The lesson observed was planned sensibly and teaching was satisfactory. However, records show that only around 10 per cent of pupils achieve the basic level required by the National Curriculum at the end of Key Stage 2. This is well below what is normally expected.

152. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory in lessons observed. Two lessons of dance were observed, in Years 1 and 3. Teaching was good and very good, with lessons containing the necessary elements for a successful physical education lesson. Warm-ups were lively and purposeful, and teachers established firm control from the outset. The strong teamwork of the Year 1 teachers was instrumental in promoting good learning. Pupils used space sensibly and worked well with partners. In the Year 3 lesson pupils made clear improvement as a result of teacher assessment and intervention. Pupils were involved in observing and suggesting improvements. In both lessons there was an awareness of the need for quality and control of movement. Games lesson vary. Planning is good and some lessons are carried out very effectively. A Year 5 lesson on rugby skills was a prime example of how to develop skills based initially on individual ball control and applied ultimately to small-sided games. There was good pace and progression to the lesson. Despite the cold weather Year 5 pupils responded very well in rugby and hockey lessons, applying themselves enthusiastically to practising hard. They showed a sense of teamwork and fair play. These lessons promoted personal development very well and pupils enjoyed them. Only one lesson of gymnastics was seen, in Key Stage 1. It was planned satisfactorily, pupils were managed well and there was an awareness of safety. Games skills lessons indoors and co-operative games for Year 6 do not promote high standards as there is insufficient lesson time available to develop sufficiently pupils' skills. Teaching is satisfactory in the important elements of planning, pupil management, and safety awareness and, usually, the use of warm-up activities. There is, however, insufficient awareness of the higher levels of which the pupils are capable and how to guide them to achieve better.

153. Pupils enjoy lessons and try hard. In one lesson where the teacher lacked expertise, the pupils' behaviour became less controlled and time was wasted. In other lessons they behaved well and showed good co-operative attitudes to each other and to the staff.

154. The management and co-ordination is at present unsatisfactory. The subject has had a low profile in the recent months where the focus for curriculum development was literacy and numeracy. The school has recognised the need for improvement in this subject and planning is in place for future development and training for the staff. Resources overall are satisfactory. They are appropriately stored and of satisfactory quality.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. Pupils' attainment by the ages of seven and eleven are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language are supported well in class and make good progress. This is an improvement from the last report where standards were satisfactory.

156. By the age of eleven, pupils have a clear understanding that different faiths have similar features and that faith is a very personal issue. Pupils' spiritual development and understanding of their own Islamic faith is well developed. For example Year 6 pupils explore the similarities in the traditions of the birth of a child relating them to their own beliefs. There are good links with the local church and mosque and pupils know the important features of both. Attainment in religious education is improved by visits to the local mosque and church and visitors into school to speak about other faiths and traditions. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to appreciate and respect the traditions and beliefs of others as they celebrate the festivals of Eid, Christmas and Diwali.

157. Pupils' response, personal development and behaviour are good. They listen carefully and want to know more, showing interest and respect for what others say. The teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilled in discussion promoting skills of empathy and reflection. As a result, pupils respond very well to the quiet times for reflection in lessons and are willing to put forward their own ideas and suggestions. For example in a discussion about the story of others, pupils in Year 5, discuss the meaning of persecution understanding that it is wrong that Jews were persecuted for their cultural beliefs in the last world war. As a result of these positive attitudes, pupils including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They have a good awareness of their own feelings and beliefs and those of others and show interest in new learning. They are sensitive to the needs of others, which is evident in their everyday relationships apart from lessons in religious education. They understand some important similarities and differences between the major world religions.

158. The teaching of religious education is good. All staff have good subject knowledge and prepare their lessons well. They make good use of resources such as videotape to illustrate other religious traditions for example. Questioning is effective in promoting discussion and giving pupils the opportunity to speak at length about their feelings and beliefs. This makes an effective contribution to their personal development and their speaking skills. Pupils know they can express their feelings openly as both staff and other pupils respect the views of others.

159. The co-ordinator is very experienced and has very good subject knowledge of Islam in particular. He is a good role model for the staff and the pupils and willingly helps others in their work. Religious education is well established in the school. There are good resources to support the subject, which are easily accessible and of good quality.