

# INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC JUNIOR  
SCHOOL**

Nuneaton

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125726

Headteacher: Mr R Phillips

Reporting inspector: Mrs A M Coyle  
20603

Dates of inspection: 21 – 24 May 2001

Inspection number: 193339

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Riversley Park Coton Road Nuneaton Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV11 5TY
Telephone number:	024 7638 3807
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Crawford
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2060 3	Mrs A Coyle	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology French English as an additional language Equal opportunities	How high are the standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1432 4	Mr M Hudson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2279 0	Mrs J Pinney	Team inspector	English Art and design Music Design and technology Special educational needs	
3942	Mr K Sanderson	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Joseph's Roman Catholic Junior School is situated close to the centre of Nuneaton, Warwickshire. It serves the surrounding catchment area, which consists of owner-occupied and local authority rented properties. The school is of a similar size to other primary schools and the number of pupils on roll has remained steady over the past few years. There are currently 270 girls and boys in the school. Pupils transfer from the nearby infant school when they are seven years old and attainment on entry is above average overall. Only one per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language and are from ethnic minority backgrounds. The main languages spoken at home, other than English, are Italian, Indian and Arabic. Eight per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is much lower than the national average, but an above average proportion of 27 per cent have been identified on the register of special educational needs. Only eight pupils have statements for their needs.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school in which pupils generally attain above average standards in lessons. The teaching is good overall and pupils make sound progress in their learning. The good leadership of the headteacher, senior managers and governors help to ensure good value for money is achieved.

#### **What the school does well**

- Pupils achieve good standards in lessons in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, history and music.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Relationships between them and their respect for others are outstanding.
- Levels of attendance are very good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, and at times very good indeed.
- The school's provision for promoting pupils' moral and social development is excellent. Spiritual development is very well promoted, and there is good provision for cultural development.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The good curriculum is resourced well, and extended through a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school is led and managed well by the headteacher, senior staff and governors. The very good Catholic ethos provides a warm and welcoming atmosphere.
- There are very good links with local schools and very strong partnerships with parents.

#### **What could be improved**

- Assessment information is not used rigorously enough to guide teachers' planning or track pupils' progress.
- The most capable pupils are not challenged sufficiently to achieve high standards.
- Monitoring and evaluating systems are not fully in place.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in February 1997. Since then, sound improvements have been made. Opportunities for pupils to increase their research and study skills have been improved through the introduction of the literacy hour and the use of the new library area.

The provision for information and communication technology has been improved significantly and standards have risen because computers are now used regularly by pupils from all year groups. The school's medium-term planning has been improved to incorporate the new Curriculum 2000, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and nationally recommended schemes of work for all foundation subjects. Staff have also improved the procedures for assessing pupils' work, although these are not yet used sufficiently well to help teachers plan future work. Overall, the school has made sufficient progress in relation to the key issues identified at the last inspection and it has good capacity to improve further because it is managed well by the senior staff and governors.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	B	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	C	C	E	
Science	C	D	C	D	

The above table shows that standards of attainment have remained fairly steady over the last three years. The most recent results for 2000 show that standards were above the national average in English, and average in mathematics and science. Standards were not as high when compared to those of similar schools because they were below average in English and science, and well below in mathematics. However, the inspection evidence does not agree with these results, but shows that by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above average levels in lessons in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This is because the school has set reasonable targets in these subjects for the current cohort of pupils and they are being promoted effectively. Pupils achieve good standards in art and design, design and technology, history and music. Standards match the nationally expected outcomes in all other subjects of the curriculum by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6.<sup>1</sup>

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very well motivated; they show a high degree of commitment and stay closely focused on their work.
Behaviour, in and out	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and at play.

<sup>1</sup> ON LEVELS:

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who attain Level 5 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels.



of classrooms	
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Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils have mature social skills; relationships between them are excellent and they show outstanding respect for others.
Attendance	Very good. The majority of pupils are eager to come to school.

Pupils are generally enthusiastic, fully attentive and very well motivated. Relationships between them are excellent and levels of attendance are very good indeed.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good, overall. In 100 per cent of lessons, teaching is satisfactory or better; 55 per cent is good, and 16 per cent is very good. The best teaching is in English, science, art and design, history and music. This has a significant effect on the standards achieved by pupils in these subjects. Strengths include teachers' strong subject knowledge, high expectations and skilful use of questioning to check pupils' understanding. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well throughout the school and pupils are actively encouraged to apply their knowledge across other subjects of the curriculum, especially through the good use of computers.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad and well-balanced curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. This aspect is well managed and pupils achieve appropriately, but the practice of withdrawing pupils from lessons is not sufficiently monitored to make sure all pupils have equal entitlement to lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The procedures for supporting these pupils are clear.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Pupils are provided with excellent opportunities for developing their moral and social awareness. Their spiritual development is very good and cultural development is promoted well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school takes good care of its pupils within a safe and secure learning environment.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. The broadly balanced curriculum is enriched well by a good range of extra-curricular activities. The governors regularly check that the arrangements for the health and safety are maintained, and good care is taken to ensure the welfare and child protection of pupils.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides positive leadership to colleagues and clear educational direction. He is supported well by the senior management team, subject co-ordinators and team leaders.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are knowledgeable and keen to be involved with the work of the school. They provide clear strategic management, although their role as 'critical friend' is not developed fully.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school evaluates its work regularly and it has clear procedures for analysing pupils' achievements. However, the monitoring and evaluating of teaching are not yet rigorous enough.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's finances and resources for learning are used well to promote learning.

The good leadership and hard work of the committed members of staff are key factors in the good standards achieved by pupils in lessons. The accommodation and good range of learning resources are maintained carefully. The school applies best value principles well in the purchase and use of resources, and it provides good 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"> <li>Children enjoy school.</li> <li>The teaching is good.</li> <li>Teachers have high expectations of pupils.</li> <li>The school is helping children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A few parents would like their children to have more homework.</li> <li>They would like a wider range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team fully agrees with the positive views of the parents. The quality of teaching is good overall, and teachers expect their pupils to achieve well. Pupils are encouraged to become responsible through the excellent provision for moral and social development.

The inspection evidence does not agree with the negative comments; pupils have a suitable amount of homework for their age, and the range of extra-curricular activities is good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Overall, the school has maintained the standards achieved by pupils since the previous inspection in English, mathematics and science. It has improved the standards achieved by pupils in information and communication technology, and pupils now have opportunities to increase their research and study skills through the use of the new library and Internet facilities.
2. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds, standards in English were above average overall. Over the last five years there has been a steady improvement, which is in line with the national trend. There was a sharp rise in standards last year that resulted in the higher than average standards. Seventy-nine per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 4, and 38 per cent achieved the higher Level 5. However, in comparison with similar schools the performance of pupils was below average, although there was no significant difference in the performance of girls and boys. The inspection findings indicate that the performance of pupils currently in Year 6 is above average in lessons, and literacy skills are developed well across the curriculum. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily, making sound progress from the above average standards of attainment on entry. The school is successful in raising the level of attainment for pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment due to good learning support, but the higher attainers do not always attain as well as they might.
3. In mathematics, the national test results for 2000 show that the numbers of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was in line with national average at 70 per cent, but slightly below the national average for those attaining the higher Level 5 at 21 per cent. However, although in comparison to similar schools these results were well below average, the performance of boys and girls relative to national averages was very similar. Prior to these results for 2000, there had been a trend of steady improvement in results, and these have continued to be above the national averages, which have also risen over time. The inspection evidence shows that the overall level of attainment is above the national average and most pupils achieve appropriate standards in relation to their capabilities, with numeracy skills well developed. However, the potentially highest attaining pupils are not always suitably challenged to reach their full potential.
4. Based upon the 2000 national tests for science, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were above the national average, with 91 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4, and an average 35 per cent achieving the higher Level 5. However, standards were below average when compared with schools in similar contexts. The inspection findings concur with the standardised test results and show that pupils are currently working at levels above those expected by the end of Year 6.

5. Good standards are achieved in art and design, design and technology, history and music by the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 2. Standards are in line with the nationally expected levels in all other subjects. Progress is good in lessons overall, but the potentially higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged to achieve their full potential in English and mathematics. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress and achieve as well as their peers.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards meeting the targets in their individual education plans. All teachers are aware of these pupils' individual needs and the work set is appropriate and progressive. Learning support assistants are briefed well and they are skilled at giving support to individuals.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

7. Since the last inspection, pupils' attitudes have improved and are now very good and a strength of the school. In several of the lessons observed pupils' attitudes were excellent. This is because the great majority of pupils are very happy to learn, respond eagerly to challenge, sustain interest and enthusiasm, and remain fully attentive in classes. Pupils are very well motivated, show a high degree of commitment and stay closely focused on task. They work very effectively both on their own as in programmed reading, and in paired and group activities such as playing musical instruments to demonstrate rhythms. Pupils take pride in their efforts and are pleased to share the joys of achievement. They offer constructive ideas, listen to what others have to say, and their contributions to discussions are thoughtful and imaginative in art and poetry. Pupils' retrieval and evaluation skills are appropriate for their year groups. Parents confirm their children enjoy school and work hard. Pupils' very positive attitudes substantially enhance their learning.
8. Since the last inspection, pupils' behaviour has continued to be very good and a strong feature of the school. Parents are very content with the standards achieved. Both the behaviour policy and class rules set clear and realistic guidelines that are well understood and properly observed by pupils, and sensitively applied by staff. Pupils have a high level of self-discipline and respond very willingly to what is expected of them. The atmosphere in lessons is calm, orderly and purposeful, and there is minimal fidgeting and background noise. Around the school, pupils are well behaved and they have a marked respect for property, such as wall and tabletop displays. At lunchtimes, they are well mannered and friendly, making it an enjoyable social occasion. Pupils are polite and pleasantly inquisitive with visitors for whom they open doors and offer help. There are no signs of abuse, harassment or aggression. There was only one fixed exclusion in the last school year. Pupils' very good behaviour greatly benefits their attainment and progress.
9. Pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection. It is now very good and another strength of the school. Pupils are quietly self-assured and have high personal esteem. Although there are few opportunities in many lessons for pupils to show initiative and independent action, they enjoy responsibility and carry out class and school tasks such as library and bell duties, with enthusiasm and pride. The house system promotes a spirit of friendly competition and community spirit. Pupils welcome their individual and collective efforts and achievements being recognised in merit awards and at celebratory assemblies. Members of the school council are diligent in representing the views of their classes. Pupils' social awareness is enhanced by discussing important moral and social issues like drug

abuse and conservation. They appreciate the purpose of charities, benefit from visits and local events and their sense of citizenship is very strong. Pupils develop notable maturity as they progress through the school.

10. Relationships have also improved since the last inspection. They are now excellent and a major strength of the school, because pupils are treated with considerable respect and they flourish under the consistent and sensitive approach of the staff. Relationships within peer groups and between older and younger pupils are very friendly and constructive, unsupervised paired reading being a prime example. Pupils from different social backgrounds and of both genders interact very comfortably and playtimes are a pleasure to witness. Pupils are caring, considerate and tolerant and they co-operate very successfully. There are many harmonious and constructive relationships. At lunch, pupils sit very happily together at mixed tables. They have noticeable respect for the values and beliefs of others, and an excellent understanding of peer group feelings. Relationships are enhanced during extra-curricular activities and residential visits. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are fully integrated into the school community.
11. Attendance is very good and a strong feature of the school. Attendance in the last school year was well above the national average and unauthorised absence in the same year was below the national average. Both rates are better than at the time of the last inspection. Punctuality is very good and lessons start on time. Registration is prompt and efficient, pupils answer politely and there is an orderly start to the daily sessions. Pupils' very good attendance and punctuality make a positive impact on their learning.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

12. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and occasionally very good. In 100 per cent of lessons, teaching is satisfactory or better; 55 per cent is good, and 16 per cent is very good. The best teaching is in English, science, art and design, history and music. This has a significant effect on the standards achieved by pupils in these subjects. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school and pupils are actively encouraged to apply their knowledge across other subjects of the curriculum, especially through the good use of computers. This finding shows that the quality of teaching has improved well since the last inspection.
13. Teachers throughout the key stage have good subject knowledge and plan their work effectively. In the majority of lessons, there is a clear focus for what pupils should learn and teachers usually maintain a lively and brisk pace, which ensures that pupils concentrate well and keep up a high level of intellectual and creative effort. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 poetry lesson, where the very good pace and challenge enthused pupils very well, enabling them to increase their skills in analysing Creole verse. Similarly, in a Year 3 science lesson, pupils made good gains in learning about parts of a flowering plant by conducting experiments to find out how carnations absorb water. In both lessons, the skilful questioning and very good management of pupils resulted in pupils' obvious enjoyment and concentration. Teachers' expectations are usually suitably pitched for most pupils, but they are sometimes not high enough for the potentially highest attaining pupils who are capable of tackling more challenging work.

14. The school's resources and support staff are used well to help pupils learn. For example, the quality of teaching in information and communication technology has improved over the last three years and is now sound. This is because computers are used well by all year groups to help them extend their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum, and the support staff provide particularly good guidance to small groups and individuals during lessons.
15. Enthusiasm is a particular characteristic of the staff and, when the teaching is most effective, teachers carry pupils along with their own good humour, energy and enjoyment. This ensures that most pupils strive to achieve well, according to their capabilities. The very positive ways in which the staff manage their large classes is reflected in the very good behaviour noted during the inspection.
16. Teachers collect assessment information carefully and pupils' work is marked regularly and accurately, with good use of encouraging and helpful comments. However, the information gathered is not used sufficiently to guide planning or track pupils' progress, especially for the potentially highest attaining pupils in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, homework is given to pupils regularly and collected in for marking. Reading books are taken home frequently and pupils are sometimes asked to research areas for new class topics at home. A few parents are concerned that the pupils are given too little homework, but the inspection findings show that pupils receive a suitable amount of homework in relation to their age and ability.
17. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good. Teachers plan appropriate work for these pupils based on their individual education plans. Classroom assistants provide good quality support to ensure that pupils have access to the full curriculum and provide well for their particular needs when they are withdrawn from lessons for specific support. Pupils make good progress in their learning, although the patterns of withdrawal are not monitored sufficiently to ensure that pupils do not miss the same parts of lessons.

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

18. Overall the quality and range of opportunities offered to the pupils are good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and fully reflects the aims of the school. There are strengths within the curriculum especially in English, mathematics, science, music, art and history.
19. In the previous report, areas of concern highlighted were some imbalance within and between subjects, especially in 'topics', insufficient attention being paid to information technology and medium-term planning not focusing sufficiently on what was to be learned during lessons. The school has addressed these issues and made some significant improvements. For example, in information and communication technology, the provision of a range of new computers and software, and opportunities for further training for all staff, has led to an improvement overall and in the standards of work achieved. A decision by the school to concentrate more on subject teaching has led to coverage in greater depth of subjects such as history and geography. Medium-term planning is now based on the nationally recommended guidelines. Teachers identify objectives for lessons and planning is more sharply focused. Pupils are provided with a range of worthwhile opportunities that meet their interests and aptitudes, especially for pupils

with special educational needs. However, on occasions, tasks are not well matched for higher attaining pupils.

20. Even though it has no specific policy for personal, social and health education, good provision is made through the daily life and routines of the school. Pupils learn about healthy lifestyles with good references to exercise and healthy hearts in physical education. Requirements relating to sex education are met and developed through a programme linked to science topics. Opportunities for developing pupils' awareness of the misuse of drugs are developed through such initiatives as the, 'Life Education Caravan'. Outside agencies, such as the School Nursing Service and the police, make valuable contributions.
21. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and is in line with the current national Code of Practice. Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are thorough. Appropriately detailed individual education plans are provided for identified pupils. The better examples, which are mostly those for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need, include well-defined and realistic targets for improvement, together with action to be followed for the next steps in learning. However, in many cases the targets are for groups of pupils and the targets are not specific enough for individual needs. Pupils with statements have appropriate support that is reviewed appropriately.
22. Pupils have equal access and opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in all areas of the curriculum and in the good range of extra-curricular activities that are open to boys and girls. Pupils are able to participate in a variety of sporting activities including netball, football, cross-country, hockey, rounders and cricket. Other provision includes gardening, a computer group, orchestra, chess and activities linked with Mass, and the concerts the school produces. Despite many pupils having to catch buses home immediately after school, these activities are enthusiastically supported.
23. Strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are both good. Daily, well-organised literacy sessions, which adhere closely to the national framework, are taught in each class. However, opportunities for pupils to write at length in other subjects are underdeveloped. There is an appropriate emphasis being placed on numeracy. A strength is the emphasis placed on mental arithmetic. The school is now beginning to develop more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical knowledge in practical, everyday situations.
24. Community links are good overall. The school has strong links with the local Catholic church, and very good relationships with the local infant and secondary schools that help to ensure a smooth transition as pupils move from one phase of their education to the next.
25. Overall, the provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral social and cultural development is very good and is a strength of the school. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. Provision for spiritual development is very good. The school's Christian ethos underpins life at school with prayers and thanksgiving at the beginning and end of each day. In areas such as English, history, science, music and art, pupils are made aware of values and feelings common to all, and varieties of beliefs. Pupils' ideas are valued, and feelings are consistently respected by adults.



26. Excellent provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school places a high priority on working, in partnership with parents, to equip pupils with a clear set of moral values, and successfully teaches the principles which help pupils distinguish right from wrong. This is reinforced by adults being good role models, and supported by a very positive behaviour policy, which is implemented very effectively in lessons. Its impact is also evident in pupils' behaviour around school and in the playground. Staff in the school successfully foster values such as truth, fairness and respect for others. All pupils are encouraged to consider the effect of their actions on themselves and others.
27. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent. Adults throughout the school demonstrate considerable respect for pupils, raising their confidence and self-esteem in all aspects of school life. School routines and opportunities to work and play collaboratively support pupils' social skills development very well. Responsibility is fostered very well through the appointment of classroom monitors, membership of 'houses', participation in the School Council and opportunities for older pupils to help younger ones, as in paired reading. A good range of educational visits, involvement in sports competitions and opportunities to receive visitors helps pupils develop understanding of the responsibility involved in representing the school. Involvement in community activities and support for a number of charities fosters the understanding of citizenship.
28. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils learn about their own culture and traditions through visits to Nuneaton Art Gallery, The Old Rep Theatre in Birmingham and have the chance to take part in theatre workshops. There are good examples of pupils' work, around school, based on other cultures, such as the work based on Indian and Aborigine art. The work undertaken in French, including a visit to France for the oldest pupils, makes a good contribution to pupils' awareness of the European community. There are good links established with another local primary school from which pupils of different faiths and cultures visit St Joseph's to share experiences and friendship.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

29. Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are good overall, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The school has a strong Catholic ethos, staff know pupils very well and pastoral care has a high priority. Pupils feel safe and secure. Procedures for accidents, illnesses and medicines are good and sufficient staff have up-to-date first aid qualifications. The school has no specific child protection policy, but it uses local authority procedures. The designated child protection officer is trained and good links are established with the requisite agencies.
30. The responsibilities for health and safety are suitably co-ordinated and procedures are good. The health and safety policy is clear and well structured and staff have good health and safety awareness. Police and fire officers visit the school to talk about personal, road and fire safety. Risk inspections are carried out regularly and remedial action is taken. Cleanliness and hygiene are good, hazardous substances are well managed and equipment inspections are in-date. The school has no automatic fire alarm. Emergency evacuations of the school are practised and security is frequently reviewed.

31. The school's procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Pupils receive good support and guidance in core subjects, but not across the wider curriculum. There is target setting in numeracy, literacy and science, and individual reading records are kept, however the procedures relating to foundation subjects have little co-ordination or consistency. The monitoring of pupils' on-going academic performance as they move through the school is satisfactory. The differentiation of high average and above average attainers lacks rigour and their abilities are often insufficiently challenged. The support for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good.
32. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good and a strength of the school. The teaching of personal, social and health education, drug abuse and sex education is sensitive and well conceived. To help pupils develop self-assurance and maturity, and to play a meaningful role in school life, they are given a progressive range of responsibilities as they move through the school. Younger pupils have tasks such as taking registers to the office and tidying cloakrooms and libraries, while older pupils undertake bell duties, assist at assemblies and monitor resource rooms. There is paired reading between younger and older pupils. The school runs a house system in which Year 6 pupils hold key appointments. Every class has an elected representative on the school council. Pupils enjoy educational and residential visits, learn about charities and take part in community events. The school strongly encourages pupils to be involved in sport. Pupils' individual and collective efforts and achievements are recognised in merit awards and at celebratory assemblies.
33. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is satisfactory. However, apart from school reports, much of the information in pupils' Records of Achievement folders is from the infant school. There is minimal additional information about pupils' achievements in their 'blue folders'. The procedures for matching teaching and learning to individual pupils' needs is not fully developed and assessment is not directly related to curricular planning. Teaching units are linked to appropriate year groups, but the school is not tracking what pupils know, understand and can do in sufficient detail to inform and modify planning. Some pupils carry out satisfactory self-assessment in core subjects. The school marking policy is good.
34. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance have improved since the last inspection and are very good. The attendance policy, which is outlined in the prospectus, clearly states the absence procedure to be followed by parents and the importance of pupils being punctual. Applications for holidays in term time are closely monitored. Most parents observe the absence and holiday procedures and ensure their children are punctual. Attendance registers meet statutory requirements and absence rates are published in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour have also improved since the last inspection and are very good. The behaviour policy, which complies with statutory requirements, suitably defines standards and expectations. It includes a balanced range of rewards and sanctions that are implemented by staff with consistency and common sense. Courtesy and respect towards peers, staff and visitors are strongly promoted. The policy is supplemented by class rules which are displayed in classrooms and resource areas. The rules, to which pupils have input, reinforce the importance of good behaviour. Supervision at lunch and playtimes, including wet playtimes, is very good. The school's procedures for monitoring and

eliminating oppressive behaviour are also very good and no groups or individuals are unfairly treated or disadvantaged. The bullying policy is very good and the equal opportunities statement is good and meets statutory requirements. Pupils are fully aware that any signs of abuse, harassment or aggression will be dealt with firmly.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

36. Parents' views of the school are very good. The parents' meeting was very well attended and there was a very good response to the parents' questionnaire. Opinions expressed at the meeting and through the questionnaires indicate that parents strongly support the school's provision for their children. Parents say that the school is well led and managed, teaching is good, and their children work hard and make good progress. Parents confirm their children enjoy school; they are becoming more responsible and mature and their behaviour is good. Parents also expressed the view that the school works closely with them; they find it easy to approach staff with questions and problems and they are kept well informed about their children's progress. Evidence gained during the inspection supports these views.
37. A few parents are unhappy about the amount of homework their children receive and the range of extra-curricular activities the school provides. However, the inspection evidence does not support these views, but finds that the school homework policy is appropriate and implemented satisfactorily, and the provision of extra-curricular activities is good.
38. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents has improved since the last inspection and is now very good and a strength of the school. Pupils' attainment and learning benefit accordingly. The quality of information provided for parents, including that on pupils' progress, is also very good. Parents welcome the opportunities they have to talk to staff at the end of the school day and see their children's work. Regular notices and newsletters keep parents up to date with school activities and events. School reports are good. They provide a clear commentary on pupils' progress, set targets for improvement in core subjects and invite parents to comment. Pupils' progress is also discussed at the termly parents' evenings when targets for improvement are set. The prospectus is well presented and imparts useful information. The governors' annual report is not clearly structured and more information is required about special educational needs. Both documents meet statutory requirements in all major respects. The school's complaint procedure is good and known to parents. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good, with parents being kept fully informed of their child's progress and offered appropriate consultation and advice. Reviews are carried out in accordance with regulations.
39. The impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is good. The school values the part parents play in pupils' education and welcomes their interest in all aspects of school life. Some parents help with classes and activities and accompany educational visits. There is no parent-teacher association, however fund-raising events organised by the governors and the church attract good parental support, the school fete being an example. School religious services such as masses and liturgies are well attended by parents. Home-school and homework diaries are well used, the home-school diary especially so. Parents of pupils with special educational needs work closely with staff in drawing up and implementing

their individual plans. The home-school agreement is satisfactory, but has no pupil input. Most parents comply with their undertakings about attendance, punctuality and holidays taken in term time. Parents' support for their children's education is good and the contribution they make suitably assists pupils' learning.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

40. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and senior staff are good. The headteacher gives a clear educational direction to the school. He applies good management through the senior management team and through detailed planning and procedural documentation. The school development plan is good; it is drawn up in consultation and discussion with parents, governors and staff, establishes clear and appropriate priorities for the improvement of the school and sets out in summary, and in detail, the work to be carried out and the rationale for it. The aims of the school set out in its mission statement are successfully met.
41. The headteacher has created a good senior management team. Subject co-ordinators make good contributions to the school's management and development. They lead on planning and advise and support their colleagues well. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language is managed well. The co-ordinators work closely with all staff to provide consistent and useful records. The school's rigorous and sensitive support for pupils with special educational needs is demonstrated through the regular monitoring undertaken by the co-ordinator and regular meetings with parents and other agencies, held to consider how pupils are getting on and to review provision.
42. The school evaluates its work regularly and it has clear procedures for analysing pupils' achievements. However, the monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators are not yet rigorous enough. This is recognised by the school as an area for further improvement.
43. The governing body is highly committed and energetic in supporting the school. It is well organised and meets very regularly to carry out its business efficiently. It carries out all its statutory responsibilities conscientiously and effectively, and provides clear strategic management. Individual governors are knowledgeable and keen to be involved with the work of the school. They have a sound view of its strengths and weaknesses, drawn from management reports, governor visits and contacts with parents and the wider community. However, their role as 'critical friend' is not yet developed fully.
44. The school has a stable staff who are suitably qualified and experienced. There is a good number of support staff who meet regularly with teachers, are briefed well and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly those with special educational needs. Across the school, all staff are committed and hard working. They are fully involved in the decision making process and work together effectively as a team to the benefit of the pupils. All staff are clear about their roles and are in receipt of up-to-date job descriptions that are regularly reviewed. The school meets the requirements for the establishment of performance management and staff receive full opportunity for professional development and training to help them increase their skills. The administrative team is very efficient and supports the school very well by working closely with all staff to aid its smooth running.

45. There has been a general improvement of the school environment since the previous inspection. Library facilities have been much improved and several classrooms have been closed in. These measures have been conducive to improved learning. Although many classrooms are crowded because of the large numbers of pupils in each class, and can become very hot, they are organised well with appropriate working areas and effective displays. The accommodation is clean and well maintained. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection and are now good overall, particularly for information and communication technology. They are well organised and easily accessible.
  
46. The school's financial resources are managed well. All available funding, including specific grants, is appropriately targeted towards raising standards of achievement and meeting other identified priorities. Spending is accounted for appropriately. The budget is regularly scrutinised by governors and the best value principles of challenge, competition and comparison are applied. The last auditor's report commented on the satisfactory systems of financial management, and the minor recommendations have been acted upon. Although the school's financial accounts are not computerised, the smooth and effective day-to-day management of the school's finances by the very efficient office staff supports teachers well, and is carried out with minimum disruption to teaching. Expenditure per pupil is slightly below the national average. Taking into account the good standards achieved in lessons, and the many strengths in provision, the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

47. The headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) make better use of assessment information to help teachers plan future work and track pupils' progress, particularly so that the higher attaining pupils are more sufficiently challenged; (*paragraphs 16, 19, 33, 54, 60, 61, 67 and 69*)
- (2) monitor the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously than at present. (*paragraphs 42 and 69*)

In addition, there are a few minor areas for improvement. These are indicated in paragraphs 17, 21, 38, 43 and 63. They refer to monitoring the withdrawal of pupils from lessons, providing more information to parents in the governors' annual report, and improving the role of the governing body as a critical friend.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
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
0	16	55	29	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	270
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22

#### Special educational needs

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	73

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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





## Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	34	32	66

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	24	29
	Girls	29	22	31
	Total	51	46	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	77 (72)	70 (74)	91 (78)
	National	75 (70)	72 (68)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	24	27
	Girls	29	27	29
	Total	52	51	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	79 (74)	77 (72)	85 (83)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	267
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

## 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	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Average class size	34

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	90

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	431,957
Total expenditure	426,824
Expenditure per pupil	1,552
Balance brought forward from previous year	8,795
Balance carried forward to next year	13,928

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	270
Number of questionnaires returned	124

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	34	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	43	3	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	44	21	3	2
The teaching is good.	60	34	3	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	48	10	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	34	3	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	32	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	36	52	10	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	58	39	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	3	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	22	52	16	3	7

### Other issues raised by parents

Forty-eight parents attended a meeting held at the school, and eight wrote to the registered inspector. The majority of comments were positive and parents expressed their satisfaction with the quality of education provided by the school. A few parents would like their children to have more homework and more extra-curricular activities.

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

### ENGLISH

48. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds, standards in English were above average. In comparison with similar schools the performance of pupils was below average. There was no significant difference in performance between girls and boys. Over the last five years there has been a steady improvement in line with the national trend. There was a sharp rise in standards last year that resulted in the higher than average standards. Inspection findings indicate that the performance of pupils currently in Year 6 is above average. The majority of pupils achieve satisfactorily, making sound progress from the above average standards of attainment on entry. The school is successful in promoting the achievement of pupils with special educational needs and these pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.
49. By the time they are 11, pupils' standards in speaking and listening are above average. They develop good listening habits and acquire a wide vocabulary. They respond to questions with increasing detail and read aloud with confidence and awareness of audience. This was well illustrated when pupils in Year 5 performed poems they had written in a 'Rap' style to the rest of the class, speaking clearly and rhythmically in unison and individually. By the end of the key stage, pupils show good understanding of the conventions associated with Standard English and when it is appropriate to use them. The sound development of pupils' speaking and listening skills owes much to the value that teachers consistently place on pupils' oral contributions and listening skills and for the frequent planned opportunities that are provided for the development of these skills throughout the curriculum. For example, in a history lesson, pupils demonstrated great empathy as they graphically described how they would have felt if their village had been attacked by the Vikings. The literacy hour provides many opportunities for pupils to listen carefully and older pupils are keenly interested in discussions and strive to use an imaginative vocabulary. This was amply illustrated when a pupil in Year 6 recalled waiting to begin Year 3 as, *'like being a worm waiting to be eaten'*.
50. Reading standards for pupils at the age of 11 are currently above average. The school gives high priority to the teaching and practice of reading and pupils achieve well. Most average and higher attaining pupils read competently, with fluency and understanding. They have developed a range of strategies to help them decipher unfamiliar words, although lower attaining pupils are not always aware of when they read a word incorrectly. Most pupils enjoy talking about books. Older pupils show an understanding of the themes and the nature of characters in fiction and are able to explain their preferences for particular authors. In literacy lessons, with guidance from their teachers, pupils recognise the way language and style are used to inform the reader. Pupils are encouraged to take books home to practise their reading skills and the home-school reading record successfully encourages the reading of books from a wide variety of genres. Reading records have been improved since the previous inspection to ensure that progress is recorded as pupils move through the school. The practice of pairing older with younger pupils to assist with reading motivates pupils well and successfully enhances learning.
51. Since the previous inspection, a new library area has been established and a greater range of books is available, which effectively enhances learning. As a

result, pupils research skills have improved. They refer to glossaries, index and contents pages confidently. They are able to explain the classification system and use both books and computers effectively to access information. Pupils apply their research skills effectively to other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 access the Internet confidently to find out about foot-and-mouth disease. However, there remain limited opportunities for pupils to use the library to further improve their research skills, through independent research. For example, pupils in Year 6 report that they rarely go into the library, and there are no specific library periods on the school timetable.

52. Attainment in writing is above average. Attainment in handwriting has improved since the previous inspection, due to the implementation of a whole-school handwriting programme, and is now good. By the age of 11, the use of fluent joins and consistent letter size is now a feature of the majority of pupils' writing, which is in pen, legible and well presented. Throughout the key stage, grammar, punctuation and spelling are taught systematically and pupils extend their range of formal and informal writing. As they go through the school pupils effectively develop the use of a wide and engaging vocabulary to add meaning to their work. A strength of writing throughout the school is the high quality poetry. For example, a pupil in Year 5 described a magic box as 'fashioned from golden leaves', and a Year 6 pupil personified night as, '*a gloomy widower*'. Pupils demonstrate the ability to draft their work to improve content, punctuation and style and confidently refer to dictionaries to improve their spelling. Through direct teaching, pupils become increasingly aware of how writers use words to hold the reader's attention. Information technology is used effectively to enhance learning, as when Year 3 pupils enthusiastically sent emails to the infant school describing life in the juniors.
53. The school has identified the further improvement of writing skills as a priority for development and some strategies for achieving this have already been implemented which are having a beneficial impact on learning. For example, additional literacy support has been provided for less able pupils, in spite of the school not qualifying for extra financial support for this provision. As a result of the extra support they receive, less able pupils are making good progress in their writing skills. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their individual education plans. Provision for these pupils is good and their progress is enhanced by the effective work of able and committed support staff.
54. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some teaching being very good. All teachers demonstrate a secure knowledge of the National Curriculum and successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. This enables teachers to make good use of questioning to develop pupils' understanding and extend their learning. Most lessons are lively, efficiently planned and organised and conducted at a brisk pace which maintains interest. Learning intentions are made clear so that pupils know what is expected of them and can judge for themselves whether they have achieved the objective by the end of the lesson. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the very good pupil management and positive relationships between adults and pupils. Generally, pupils are treated with great respect and their opinions are valued. As a result, self-esteem is high and pupils are not afraid to make mistakes. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate an evident enthusiasm for the subject and lessons are presented in an innovative manner, which has a positive effect on pupil confidence and interest. In these lessons, teachers demonstrate high expectations and use praise well to encourage pupils to work hard. Marking is mostly used well to improve writing skills through the use of

constructive comments. The good teaching is having a positive effect on learning and attitudes as pupils clearly think of themselves as writers. Most pupils work with evident enthusiasm, concentrating very well and taking pride in their finished work. Pupils work very well collaboratively. This was evident when Year 5 pupils worked enthusiastically, yet sensibly, in pairs to compose a poem in a rap style and perform it to the rest of the class. Where teaching is very good, pupils of different abilities are well challenged. However, a general weakness in most of the English lessons seen is the provision of the same tasks for pupils of all abilities. While staff do allow for differing abilities in the level of support provided they do not always plan different tasks. On occasion, this limits the progress possible during the part of the lesson where pupils are working independently as at this point the progress for the more able pupils is only satisfactory. Appropriate procedures are in place, and analysis of periodic, standard and national tests is used to inform planning and focus support through the additional literacy scheme. However, assessments are insufficiently used to plan tasks that are challenging for pupils of varying abilities or to track the progress of individual pupils as they move through the school. The school has begun to set individual targets for improvement and is aware that, at present there is insufficient reference to the specific skills necessary to improve individual attainment.

55. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator has worked effectively to promote literacy and improve standards. She monitors teachers' planning regularly and correctly identifies areas for development. The subject policies are comprehensive, offering useful guidance to teachers. The school has set realistic targets for the national tests for 2001, based on sound evidence of prior attainment. Resources are good, with a wide variety of reading materials to stimulate pupils' interests and meet their needs in all subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

56. The national test results for 2000 show that the numbers of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was in line with national averages, and was slightly below the national average for those attaining the higher Level 5. However, although in comparison to similar schools these results were well below average, the performance of boys and girls relative to national averages was very similar. Prior to these results for 2000, there has been a trend of steady improvement in results, and these have continued to be above the national averages, which have also risen over time. Inspection evidence shows that the overall level of attainment is above the national average. In lessons observed and in work scrutinised a good number of pupils are achieving standards that are above national expectations. Pupils are grouped into three 'sets' for some mathematics lessons according to prior attainment in Years 4, 5 and 6. Attainment in lessons was judged to be good for those in the higher set, and for a significant proportion of pupils in the middle set.
57. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced. This has contributed to the positive attitudes teachers and pupils have towards the subject and enabled many pupils to develop more 'fluency' in mentally calculating, raising their understanding of number. There is now more even coverage of mathematics and this is shown with pupils having a more developed understanding of shape, space and measure and of handling data. Sometimes, the latter is linked with productive use of information and communication technology.

58. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils make good progress according to their individual abilities and in relation to prior learning. This is due, in no small measure, to the provision of appropriate tasks and well targeted, close extra support.

59. By the age of 11, pupils' overall attainment in mathematics is above that expected nationally, and pupils make satisfactory progress over time. The effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact, both on pupils' computational skills and on pupils' abilities to mentally calculate both swiftly and accurately. Most pupils work accurately with a range of metric measures, and can successfully interchange vulgar, decimal and percentage fractions. Pupils measure angles accurately including right, acute, obtuse and reflex, and describe their properties. Higher attaining pupils understand the properties of numbers such as multiples, squares, square roots and factors. Pupils understand how to measure the area and perimeter of shape and they learn to handle data well, creating graphs to show profit from a tuck shop for example. However, analysis and evaluation of data is less well developed.
60. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons is good overall. This is a similar position to that at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers show good subject knowledge. Relationships are excellent and this allows teachers to manage pupils well in a pleasant and happy learning environment. This was well illustrated in a lesson with some of the oldest pupils. Challenging tasks, enthusiastically set up by the class teacher, clearly enthused the pupils and a lively session ensued. Pupils had the confidence to offer up their own solutions to problems involving squares and square roots, and the teacher had enough confidence in the pupils' attitudes to be able to digress when she felt that a pupil had suggested a method worthy of further exploration. Good learning took place. Teachers' planning is identifying learning opportunities more clearly than at the last inspection, and teachers are working hard to develop opportunities for pupils to use mathematical skills. However planning does not consistently provide enough tasks that will extend all groups of pupils, especially the higher attainers.
61. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management for mathematics. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and staff have been on a range of in-service training courses to support this initiative. The co-ordinator monitors and supports teachers in their planning, and she is able to regularly review the work the pupils are doing. Pupils are assessed at the end of each term on the work they have done, and in addition to national tests completed at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 undertake optional tests. There has been increasing analysis of these test results. For example, after the national tests for 2000, the school decided that pupils needed more opportunities to use and apply their mathematical skills, and this initiative is developing. However, analysis of assessment information does not yet fully influence planning. Consequently, whilst pupils with special educational needs are supported well, pupils capable of higher attainment are not consistently challenged. Resources are generally well used. Mathematical skills are used effectively in other areas of the curriculum. For example, in history, pupils develop time-lines to chronicle events. Information and communication technology skills are used well to construct databases and spreadsheets, and to print graphs, and the school is committed to the development of this work.

## **SCIENCE**

62. The results of the national tests in 2000 taken by Year 6 pupils were above the national average and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. However, standards were below average when compared with schools in similar contexts. The inspection findings concur with the test results and show



that pupils are currently working at levels above those expected by the end of Year 6. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 can discuss reversible and irreversible changes involving candles, butter, eggs and paper. They understand well the life cycles of plants and small animals, and they are knowledgeable about food chains. They talk about the major organs of the human body with confidence, and understand the effects of a healthy diet and regular exercise. They investigate the ability of mirrors to create new symmetrical shapes and can produce diagrams showing the path of light bent by mirrors. They use appropriate terminology, such as opaque, translucent and transparent. Pupils develop sophisticated investigations as they move through the school and have a growing understanding of what constitutes a fair test. The presentation of their work is of high quality, very neat and attractive. Experiments involving magnetic forces, sound and shadows are documented well. Younger pupils within the key stage explore, sort and categorise organisms confidently, using keys, in preparation for research work. They know about the permeability of various rocks and they are able to classify igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks correctly. They can make intelligent predictions and offer imaginative and practical suggestions for setting up their experiments when setting up their own investigations. Pupils with special educational needs are taken into account in teachers' planning and they make good progress, due to close support given by classroom assistants and others. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils. Higher attaining pupils achieve appropriately where the lesson content gives them sufficient challenge or scope for extended work.

63. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good, and occasionally very good. Strengths include good organisation and good use of resources and time, well-judged activities that matched pupils' abilities effectively and a good emphasis on using correct terminology and on recording accurately and neatly. Teachers are enthusiastic and lessons proceed at a brisk pace in most cases. Support staff are used well to support pupils who have difficulty in reading or writing. Teachers use imaginative approaches that maintain pupils' interest and contribute to good learning. For example, exciting opportunities are given for pupils to discover how carnations and celery plants absorb water, and the preferred habitat of woodlice. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy practical investigations. They work well together and individually, throughout the school. They handle resources sensibly, take care with their presentation of work and persevere with problems. Pupils discuss their tasks thoughtfully with each other and with the teacher and offer ideas and comments willingly. Teaching is less successful when lesson plans are not modified to suit individual needs and where teachers are too directive and controlling of pupils. The latter does not enable pupils sufficient freedom to learn to handle apparatus competently and confidently. Occasionally, pupils with special educational needs miss large parts of lessons when they are withdrawn for literacy or numeracy work, and this affects their rate of progress adversely.
64. Overall, the subject is led and managed well by a co-ordinator, who monitors pupils' work effectively and advises and supports staff. Learning resources are good. They are maintained well and easily accessible for teachers. The school has a clear policy statement for the subject and an appropriate scheme of work and assessment scheme. All aspects of the National Curriculum are taught. Science makes good contributions to literacy and numeracy in the school.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

65. Pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 are above national expectations. Across the school, pupils make good progress. The good standards noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. By the end of the key stage, pupils in Year 6 are knowledgeable about the work of a range of famous artists and the techniques they use. They show good techniques in mixing and blending colours and in the composition of their drawings and paintings. Most pupils' observational drawings are detailed and demonstrate a developing use of perspective to add depth to their work. Pupils work with clay to make pots and animals, showing the good attention to detail and the effective use of different tools and techniques. Pupils make good progress as they learn to emulate the work of famous artists, such as Monet and Van Gogh. Pupils learn to use a range of media; for example, pastels, paint and crayons are used well to create good paintings and drawings. As they progress through the school, their use of colour becomes more subtle and complex as pupils in Year 4 copy the vibrant colours of Eric Ravilious's landscapes and pupils in Year 5 study the more restricted palette of Lowry. Pupils become adept at using a range of materials in three-dimensional work. For example, pupils in Year 3 use natural objects extremely imaginatively in sculptures in the style of Andy Goldsworthy. In a Year 6 lesson observed during the inspection, pupils made good progress in the use of techniques as they mixed and blended pastels to produce different colours and linked colour with perspective. The use of art books gives good opportunity for pupils to develop and refine their techniques as they go through the school.
66. The quality of teaching and learning is mostly good and frequently very good. Where teaching is very good, learning is considerably enhanced by the teacher's obvious enthusiasm for the subject. For example, pupils are very well motivated when producing a story on fabric using a variety of techniques in the style of Lowry. Through very good organisation teachers create stimulating environments of purposeful learning in which pupils are totally involved in their work and make very good progress as a result. The very good provision of a wide variety of materials and media further enhances learning and, as when the pupils worked to the accompaniment of appropriately chosen music they were thoroughly enjoying the lesson and striving to give of their best. In most lessons, teachers know what pupils are to achieve by the end of the lesson and they make good use of questioning and demonstrations to enable them to achieve these objectives. Good use is made of praise and encouragement and pupils feel their work is valued. In a minority of lessons, the teacher spends too long in the demonstration of techniques. This leaves insufficient time for pupils to investigate the use of different media and techniques for themselves.
67. The subject is managed well by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work. The school has recently adopted a national scheme of work and she is in the process of usefully adapting this scheme to meet the particular needs of the school. There remains a lack of detailed assessment criteria, which was highlighted as an area for development in the previous inspection, although the co-ordinator is in the process of addressing this issue. Around the school, pupils' artwork is displayed well.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

68. Standards are good and there is good progress as pupils move through the school. The high standards reported at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils are offered a good range of tasks that enable them to make

good use of the plan do and review sequence that forms the basis for these activities. They use a variety of tools safely and with accuracy. Lessons include building and making using a range of craft materials and construction kits. Pupils develop well the skills of designing and making as they go through the school. For example, pupils in Year 4 produce cards with a pivoting mechanism, while in Year 5, pupils employ the principles of a crank to make mini-beasts move. As noted in the previous inspection, there are good links with other areas of the curriculum such as mathematics, as when Year 5 pupils investigate the technique of triangulation to provide strength to structures. Pupils also have the opportunity to sew and cook. They clearly take pride in their work.

69. No judgements can be made on the quality of teaching and learning in the subject, because it was not taught during the inspection. However, on the basis of displays, discussions with pupils and photographic records, it is clear that pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management, and is committed to maintaining the high standards. A national scheme of work has recently been successfully linked to the school's own scheme of work to give improved guidance to teachers. The co-ordinator is aware of the lack of formalised monitoring and assessment procedures and these have been targeted as an area for future development. The range of materials has been extended since the previous inspection and resources are now good.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

70. By the age of 11, standards match the levels expected for pupils of this age. Progress is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are set equal challenges and also make sound progress.
71. At the beginning of the key stage, pupils make sound progress in developing technical vocabulary and mapping skills. Looking at hot and cold places in the world pupils are able to identify such areas as *'equatorial'*, *'tropical'*, *'polar'* and *'continental'*. In correctly identifying Great Britain's climate as *'coastal'* one pupil humorously remarked that, *'mild and wet all year—that's us!'* Pupils are beginning to realise that climate affects the way people live. They share their observations on similarities and differences between ways of life in the Indian village of Chembakolli and the United Kingdom. They compare and contrast life in Nuneaton to that in Moreton Morell a village in Warwicks. From fieldwork visits to the local River Anker, pupils develop greater understanding of some of the features of a river. Pupils study mountain environments, learn of the metamorphic, igneous and sedimentary rocks that make up various mountain ranges, and discuss the problems of protecting these specialised, often fragile, environments and the habitats they create. Progress is sound. Pupils build up their knowledge of geographical vocabulary, develop their map reading skills and increase their knowledge of environmental issues as they move through school.
72. The quality of teaching and learning is sound. Teachers plan carefully with a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn. Very good relationships establish a pleasant atmosphere and teachers use questioning techniques well to involve all pupils and extend their understanding. Consequently pupils respond well. They show interest and enthusiasm in lessons and have a clear understanding of what they are learning and why.

73. The school has re-organised its provision for the subject since the last inspection, and it is currently using the nationally recommended guidelines as a planning framework, to help provide shorter, but more regular focused, lessons. This is proving beneficial in helping pupils retain more and is fostering greater interest. The co-ordinator has no opportunity at present to monitor teaching, but each class teacher evaluates their own teaching, identifying what went well and what needed adapting in lessons. This self-evaluation is proving useful in the development of the subject. The school, after establishing e-mail links with a contact in Canada, has plans to further develop this work.

## **HISTORY**

74. At the end of the key stage, standards are generally above those expected and pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. Through the key stage pupils develop their understanding of chronology, and increasingly recognise that the past can be divided into periods that they study such as Greek, Roman, Viking, Tudor and Victorian. They learn about significant events in these periods and of the lifestyle that groups of people experienced. For example, they know about the Romans and Vikings; why they came, and why they succeeded in their invasion of this country. When encouraged to write about life in the monasteries at the time of a Viking invasion, some of the youngest pupils demonstrate an increasing degree of historical imagination and empathy. For example, *'I wanted to fight back but had been taught that it was wrong to fight'*, said one pupil imagining the thoughts and feelings of a monk at the time. Through visits, use of artefacts, old photographs, old census forms and evidence from books of the time, pupils are beginning to appreciate the importance of primary sources of evidence. Pupils studying life during Tudor times take part in Tudor dancing, wearing the costumes of the time. Older pupils visit a local Victorian school and experience a day as a pupil in school in Victorian times. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a greater understanding of chronology, and are able to link information from various sources in order to reach judgements about how people used to live. They are beginning to be aware that there may be different versions of the same story. They are encouraged to read for information and write at length. Good progress is achieved as a result of enthusiastic presentation, varied, well planned activities and good access to artefacts and primary evidence.
75. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers make good use of resources, use teaching methods that gain the attention of pupils and conduct lessons that effectively build on what the pupils already know. As a result, pupils are interested in, and enthusiastic about, their work. Their responses in lessons, and the care they show with their written work demonstrate this. They enjoy, and gain valuable experience from, visits to places such as the Roman 'Lunt Fort', Harvington Hall depicting Tudor times and the Victorian 'Chilvers Coton Free School'.
76. Since the previous inspection, the school has decided to teach history as a separate subject, rather than as a part of a topic. Using the nationally recommended guidelines as a planning framework, this approach is enabling the teachers to visit the subject regularly and to cover it in greater depth. Allied to the obvious enthusiasm for the subject, both on the part of adults and pupils, these are major contributory factors in the improvement of standards since the time of the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

77. The previous inspection report criticised the provision for information and communication technology because there was insufficient time allocated to the subject, standards were below expectations and pupils made slow progress. The school has worked hard to put this right and it now has sound provision and teaching that is always at least satisfactory and occasionally, good. This has resulted in better attainment. Pupils now attain standards that are in line with nationally expected level by the end of Key Stage 2. Most pupils can download and close programs, scroll up, down and across an item and show good fine motor control in clicking and dragging images from place to place. They know how to change font, script size and colour and can move text and use a simple drawing programme, saving their work. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils draw up a simple spreadsheet, inserting text and formulae and can change items to test options. They also know how to construct bar and pie charts to illustrate surveys of their class colleagues' preferences and have produced good work on the historical topic of Aztecs, using desktop publishing software and the Internet to research their chosen field of study. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress when they are given sufficient, planned support, and pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve as well as other pupils.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is sound. Teachers are confident with many aspects of the subject and are working hard to raise their skills and knowledge further. They make good use of the learning support staff to demonstrate skills, guide and support pupils. They circulate and give sufficient help to pupils where needed, whilst encouraging independence. In the most successful examples, well-prepared instructions at the beginning of the lesson results in pupils being able to work independently and confidently. Whole-class discussions and celebrations of small group successes at the end of lessons help to consolidate a few key learning points very effectively and motivate the learning of others. As a result, pupils enjoy their work and respond well. They settle quickly, work hard and concentrate well. They work well in pairs or alone, treat the computers with respect and most persevere with problems. They are usually attentive to the teacher and can talk knowledgeably about their work.
79. The full National Curriculum is taught and there is good use of information and communication technology to support literacy, numeracy and other subjects. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The co-ordinator has worked hard and enthusiastically to develop the facilities and the curriculum to a sound level.

## **FRENCH**

80. Pupils make good progress in the subject. Their skills in speaking and listening are often good and they achieve the expected levels in writing and reading French. There has been a sound level of improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be good. Pupils enjoy the well-paced routines of saying the days of the week and months of the year with which the teacher starts the lesson. These are organised in a lively and informal way, which creates a positive and relaxed atmosphere. Pupils speak to each other with considerable confidence and are good at identifying the key words in questions. They answer well when asked about their age and where they live. They talk about their families and their homes using a good range of vocabulary and communicate information well by combining learnt phrases with accuracy. Most pupils have good accents and listen

to their teacher carefully during conversations. The amount of written French which pupils attempt is appropriate at their early stage of learning. They copy phrases as directed and have started to build their own simple sentences using the verb 'avoir' and vocabulary connected with their homes and classroom. Pupils copy accurately and understand the use of accents, and the presentation of their work is usually neat.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the school is building up resources to a good level. Teachers' command of spoken French is satisfactory. Marking is up to date and offers a few helpful comments to pupils. Good displays around the classrooms help pupils to develop their reading skills and teachers makes good use of cards with key words and phrases to reinforce pupils' understanding of spoken and written vocabulary. The topics covered are planned well and develop pupils' knowledge of vocabulary and forms of speech in linked stages, which ensure pupils develop confidence and skills at an appropriate pace. The teacher shares lesson objectives with the class and, together, they review their learning at the end of sessions. This provides useful guidance on how pupils are progressing. The subject is sufficiently resourced and staff provide pupils with lively opportunities to use their language skills during the annual French Day festivities and the Year 6 overseas trip. This helps pupils to acclimatise to the intonation and speed of the spoken language of native speakers in real life.

## MUSIC

82. Standards are above those expected for pupils of this age. The high standards reported in the last inspection have been maintained. All pupils sing well, showing good pitch, duration and dynamics as they learn to control their voices and breathing. This is evident in the weekly hymn practice, taken by the music co-ordinator, who offers direct teaching points during the practice, such as ensuring good posture, This has a positive impact on standards and pupils make good progress. During the practice, as pupils rehearsed for a church performance by singing, '*Rejoice in the Lord*' as a three-part round the quality of the singing was outstanding. Pupils in Year 3 confidently use a wide range of percussion instruments to explore and produce a two-part rhythm, demonstrating that they understand the difference between pulse and rhythm. In Year 4, pupils develop their interest in vocal sounds as they compose a rhythm in accompaniment to the poem by Robert Louis Stephenson, '*From a Railway Carriage*'. With their hands they create repeated rhythmic patterns and as a class combine several rhythms, showing an awareness of the combined effect. The majority of pupils are able to suggest ways to improve their improvisations. As they perform, pupils are able to maintain their own part while remaining aware of how the other parts fit for overall effect. Pupils make good progress in music, so that by the time they are in Year 5 they are able to use percussion instruments most effectively as they collaborate in groups to perform a composition of layered sounds to add texture to their compositions. Regular music lessons ensure that most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the school. A nationally recommended scheme of work has been introduced recently and is providing useful guidance in the consistent development of knowledge and understanding.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Good use is made of musical resources and lessons are well planned to take previous learning into account and include structured practical experience. Staff have a secure understanding of the subject and lessons are innovative, so that pupils work with enthusiasm and

concentration as a result. Pupils make good gains in their learning because teachers have established good relationships with the pupils and in many cases their management of pupils is excellent. Learning is greatly enhanced by the high quality support from visiting peripatetic music teachers. Over 90 pupils take lessons from these teachers in brass, woodwind and stringed instruments and achieve very high standards. Most of these pupils read standard notation confidently and handle instruments very well. Learning is further enhanced by the good opportunities provided for public performance. For example, pupils recently participated in a choral recital at the Royal Albert Hall.

84. The subject is managed well by an enthusiastic and committed co-ordinator, who provides good support to colleagues. Local authority support has been used well to further develop teaching expertise. The school is aware of the need to establish effective procedures for assessing pupils' progress in music. Learning resources have been improved since the previous inspection to include more instruments from non-Western cultures and resources are now good.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

85. During the time of the inspection it was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education programme. Therefore no overall judgement of standards or the progress of pupils can be made. Examination of the school's planning indicates that an appropriate curriculum is followed. Other evidence is drawn from discussions, and from observations of lessons in games and athletics. At the end of the key stage, standards in these elements of the programme are broadly what would be expected of pupils of that age. This is a similar position to that at the time of the previous inspection.
86. Pupils understand the importance of warm-up activities. In games, pupils move with increasing control and demonstrate a range of passing and catching skills. Pupils show appropriate skill when using a racquet or bat, and hitting a ball away, some demonstrating good grip and technique. They use shared space well. In athletics, pupils show sound control when working hard to improve the length of their jumping and their ability to turn quickly when running. The school supports a swimming programme, but only for pupils in Year 3. By the end of Year 3, between 60 and 70 per cent of pupils can swim the required distance, and some go on to take part in water safety training programmes. However, it is not possible to make a judgement regarding the progress in swimming by the time pupils leave school.
87. Of the lessons seen, all of the teaching was at least satisfactory, and on several occasions, it was good. Features of the lessons having the biggest impact on standards were clear planning to ensure a good balance between instruction and pupil activity, clear explanations and questioning and high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. As a result, pupils work with enjoyment and enthusiasm and these good attitudes enhance their learning. They work well co-operatively and make good use of opportunities to practise skills. They take the trouble to change into appropriate clothing and are encouraged by the good example set by teachers. All pupils have equal access to the subject and pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
88. The subject is led and managed well. The work in lessons is enhanced by good provision for extra-curricular sports activities including netball, football, hockey, cross-country, rounders, cricket and rugby. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in after-school coaching sessions given by representatives of Coventry City Football Club, Nuneaton Borough Football Club and Nuneaton Rugby Club. Attainment in many of these sports is good and the school takes part in local and district competitions with a good deal of success. This is despite the school not having a field of its own, although it has access to a nearby field. Other resources for the subject are satisfactory.