

INSPECTION REPORT

BARFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103162

Headteacher: Mrs E Carriban

Reporting inspector: Mr N B Jones
20973

Dates of inspection: 17 - 20 September 2001

Inspection number: 193391

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Barford Road
Birmingham

Postcode: B16 0EF

Telephone number: 0121 454 3765

Fax number: 0121 455 8882

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr A Garbutt

Date of previous inspection: 21 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20973	Mr N B Jones	Registered inspector	Mathematics; Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19342	Mr T Heavey	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11472	Mr M Beale	Team Inspector	English; Music	How well are pupils taught?
11831	Mr J Brooke	Team Inspector	Geography; History; Religious education; Equal Opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
21191	Mr K Edwards	Team inspector	Science; Information and communication technology; Art and design; Special Educational Needs; English as an additional language	
22884	Mrs S Sutcliffe	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Design and technology;	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

Barford Primary School is a large primary school catering for pupils aged three to eleven. There are 431 full-time pupils (similar number of boys and girls) on roll including 65 children in the nursery. The school draws most of its pupils from Ladywood which is an area of mixed housing to the south west of Birmingham city centre. Around 40% of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is about twice the national average. The school population is made up of approximately similar numbers of pupils from African-Caribbean, Asian and indigenous white families. Nearly 30% of the pupils have English as an additional language although very few are at an early stage of learning English. Twenty-five per cent of the pupils are on the special educational needs register (about average for schools nationally) including eight pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. Although the pupils starting at the school have a broad range of abilities their attainment, overall, is below that found nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Barford is an effective school which provides good value for money. The leadership and management of the school is strong with a clear focus on raising standards in English, mathematics and science. The good quality of teaching in these subjects has enabled the pupils to make good progress and achieve standards that are comparable with the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science.

What the school does well

- The pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science.
- Teaching is good overall and very good in Year 6.
- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress.
- There are very strong links with parents and the community.
- The pupils' behaviour and attitudes to school are good.
- The school provides a caring and supportive environment. Pupils of differing abilities are offered a high level of support.

What could be improved

- Standards in Key Stage 1 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- There is insufficient structure to the way reading is taught in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Year).
- There is an imbalance to the overall curriculum; some foundation subjects (in particular geography) have limited quality or depth.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the last inspection in 1997 the national tests for 11 year-olds indicated that the pupils' attainment on leaving the school was well below average in English, mathematics and science. Since then, the school has had a clear focus on improving the results in these national tests. The school has been so successful that the current inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the pupils in Year 6 is now average compared with national standards in English and mathematics and is above average in

science. However, the heavy emphasis on English, mathematics and science has led to the overall curriculum not being as balanced as it should be.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The table shows, for example, that while standards in English and mathematics were below average in the 2000 national tests, they were above average compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. These results represent a significant improvement (much greater than the national trend) since the last inspection in 1997 when the tests showed attainment to be well below average in all three subjects. The results of the 2001 national tests (to be published shortly) indicate further substantial improvement in English and science since 2000 and continued improvement in mathematics. These latest results suggest that the pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is likely to be in line with the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The inspection evidence confirms this and concludes that in Key Stage 2 the pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and very good progress in science. The results achieved in 2001 exceeded the school's own target by 18% in English and 2% in mathematics. The targets for 2002 are more ambitious, particularly in English, and they are likely to be met. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy and numeracy.

The 2000 national test results taken at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the pupils' performance in reading, writing and mathematics was well below average but average compared with similar schools. The test results indicate that, although standards have improved since the last inspection, the increase has been slower than the national trend in reading and writing. The 2001 national tests (to be published shortly) suggest an improvement since 2000. Inspection evidence indicates that whilst the pupils make satisfactory progress from a low baseline, by the age of seven their attainment is likely to be below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics, and also in science.

Many children join the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence. In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Year) the children make good progress in personal and social education, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and are likely to attain the early learning goals in these areas of learning by the end of this key stage. Although progress in mathematics is also good they are unlikely to reach the early learning goals. The children make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, and creative development, but are unlikely to attain the early learning goals. The children for whom English is an additional language make good progress in speaking and listening.

In religious education, the pupils make satisfactory progress and by the time they leave the school, their attainment is in line with expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In information and communication technology, the pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve what is expected nationally by the age of eleven. There is insufficient time devoted to the teaching of skills in art, geography and physical education which leads to unsatisfactory progress being made by the pupils in geography in Key Stage 2 and barely sufficient progress being made in art. In all of the other foundation subjects, the pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are appropriate for their age.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they respond well to the school's expectations.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good. However, a small minority of pupils find classroom rules difficult and this occasionally detracts from what is normally a good working environment.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are of a high standard. Pupils willingly take on responsibility. The high quality of racial harmony is a true strength of the school.
Attendance	Attendance has improved since the last inspection but it is still below average.

Respect for the feelings and beliefs of others is well developed. Pupils from all classes from Year 2 upwards are elected on to the school council that meets with a member of staff to discuss issues related to aspects of school life.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	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. This has a positive impact on the progress that the pupils make. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Year) and Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The particularly high standard of teaching in Year 6 results in the pupils in this year group making very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are very well supported and make good progress.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Planning is well organised so that experiences are meaningful and varied. Assessment of the children's attainment and progress is generally thorough but the recording of progression in the development of reading skills is not detailed enough to support teachers in their planning. Consequently some work is repetitious and does not move pupils on fast enough.

There are many good features in the teaching of English that enable the pupils to make good progress overall. The meticulous and consistent planning which has been introduced, together with good marking and regular assessment is having a good impact on the pupils' achievement. In the best lessons, learning objectives are made clear to pupils at the start and returned to in the plenary session at the end. However, the style of the pupils' handwriting is underdeveloped with only about half of them writing in a neat, joined script by Year 6.

The teaching of mathematics is good overall with excellent teaching in Year 6. In Year 6 the teachers ensure learning is carried out at a brisk pace and offer constant challenge to the pupils. There is a brisk quick-fire mental arithmetic session, followed by group work at a challenging level and concluding with a class session to sort out any problems and consolidate and assess the progress made. On occasions, in other year groups, the lessons are less stimulating. Sometimes the pace of the mental arithmetic start to lessons is much too slow and too few pupils are drawn into answering questions.

The overall quality of teaching in science is good and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. Although teaching across all other subjects is generally satisfactory there are weaknesses in the teaching of geography. Expectations are too low and the pupils have little opportunity for original written work. Overall, the subject is not taught in sufficient depth. The same applies, but to a lesser extent, to the teaching of art.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad with a particular emphasis on literacy and numeracy. However, some foundation subjects (particularly geography) are not taught in sufficient depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school has effective procedures for identifying, supporting and assessing the pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The pupils are well supported and make good progress, particularly in the acquisition of literacy skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for moral development is very good. Citizenship lessons play an important part in giving pupils the chance to explore issues related to the wider community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides good support, guidance and welfare for all of its pupils.

The very effective links that the school has established with parents greatly aids their children's learning. The very good flow of information from the school to parents not only keeps them up-to-date with their children's progress, but also describes how they can help them to improve their work both at school and at home. Strong links have also been established with the local community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. Subject co-ordinators play an active part in improving standards through their development planning and monitoring of classroom practice. The senior management team, which plays a major role in determining developments, is made up of a good representation of the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school is clearly focused on raising standards. The governors are actively involved in this process through their participation in various committees including finance, management and buildings.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school uses information from the national and other tests very effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses and to set targets for the pupils.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of resources and accommodation and very good use of staff.

Staffing levels are very good and both teaching and non-teaching staff are well deployed. Support staff are well trained and many are highly skilled in supporting individuals or groups of pupils. The school has appropriate educational targets linked to the budget and there is careful monitoring of the effectiveness of expenditure on standards achieved and progress made. The school's planning for improvement gives a comprehensive overview for the school's development over the next few years. However, it lacks detail in terms of timescale to be used as a working document for governors to monitor whether planned developments have been successfully achieved. The governors are successful in fulfilling their statutory duties.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils of differing abilities make good progress. • The children like school and have a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of stimulating reading material in the classrooms. • Some children do not get the right

<p>positive attitude to their work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupils behave well and are expected to work hard. • Parents are well informed and are made to feel welcome in school. • The school is well led and managed. 	<p>amount of homework.</p>
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Inspectors' judgements support the parents' positive views. Regarding the areas that parents would like to see improved:

- The school has recently purchased a large quantity of stimulating reading resources.
- The homework provided follows the school policy and is appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The 2000 national tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that their attainment was below average in English and mathematics but was above average when compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In science, the pupils' attainment was average but well above average when compared with similar schools. Significant improvement (much greater than the national trend) has been achieved since the last inspection in 1997 when national tests indicated that standards were well below average in all three subjects. The results of the 2001 national tests (to be published shortly) indicate further substantial improvement in English and science since 2000 and continued improvement in mathematics. These latest results suggest that the pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is likely to be in line with the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. The inspection evidence confirms this and concludes that in Key Stage 2 the pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and very good progress in science. The results achieved in 2001 exceeded the school's own target by 18% in English and 2% in mathematics. The targets for 2002 are more ambitious (and much more so in English) and they are likely to be met.
2. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy and numeracy. The pupils who are learning English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress, particularly in the acquisition of literacy skills.
3. The national tests taken by seven year-olds in 2000 indicate that, by the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well below average but average compared with similar schools. The test results indicate that, although standards have improved since the last inspection, the increase has been slower than the national trend in reading and writing. The 2001 national tests (to be published shortly) suggest an improvement since 2000. Inspection evidence indicates that whilst the pupils make satisfactory progress, from a low baseline, by the age of seven their attainment is likely to be below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.

4. Although the children entering the school have a broad range of abilities their attainment, overall, is below average. Many children join the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence. In the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Year) the children make good progress in personal and social education, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world and are likely to attain the early learning goals in these areas of learning by the end of this key stage. Although progress in mathematics is also good they are unlikely to reach the early learning goals. The children make satisfactory progress in communication, language and literacy, and creative development, but are unlikely to attain the early learning goals.
5. Inspection evidence reveals that in Key Stage 1, the pupils make satisfactory progress in reading, writing and mathematics but that their attainment is below average by the age of seven. The more able pupils read accurately but their understanding is often affected by a limited vocabulary. Less able pupils recognise a few words and letters but many rely too much on adult support. A few pupils produce clear imaginative writing that is appropriately punctuated, but for many, their spelling is unsatisfactory and the content of stories is distinguished by limited vocabulary. In mathematics, some pupils have a good understanding of number and can use addition and subtraction appropriately in their work. However, a significant number of them have difficulty recalling simple number facts to 10.
6. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and by the time they are eleven their attainment is comparable with the national average. Many pupils read fluently and have good library and research skills. They produce sustained pieces of writing with clear sentence structure, appropriate punctuation and reasonable spelling. However, the style of handwriting is often underdeveloped with only about half of the Year 6 pupils writing in a neat, joined script. The pupils make rapid improvement in their mathematics in Year 6. They have good all round skills with particularly impressive mental ability using a wide range of number facts.
7. In science, the pupils make satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and their attainment is below average by the age of seven. Although the pupils engage in a suitable range of activities their progress is limited by their lack of literacy skills. In Key Stage 2, the pupils make very good progress, particularly so in Year 6, where they are given considerable autonomy in organising their experiments. As a result, by the age of 11, the pupils' attainment is above average.
8. In religious education, the pupils build progressively on their knowledge and understanding of the major faiths and, overall, they make satisfactory progress. By the time they leave the school, their attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The new computer suite has enhanced the school's capacity to teach information and communication technology and the pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve what is expected nationally by the age of 11. There is insufficient time devoted to the teaching of skills in art, geography and physical education which leads to unsatisfactory progress being made by the pupils in geography in Key Stage 2 and barely sufficient progress being made in art. The attainment of pupils in Year 6 is below average in geography and close to average in art. In all of the other foundation subjects, the pupils make satisfactory progress and reach standards that are appropriate for their age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good and they respond favourably to the school's expectations. They show a positive interest in their work when supported by imaginative teaching, suitably challenging tasks and firm control. The pupils work well together and the vast majority of them listen carefully to each other and to the teacher. They treat the school buildings and property with respect. In conversation with inspectors the pupils confirmed the views expressed by parents that they enjoy coming to school.
10. Behaviour in the playground and around school is good. This judgement is supported overwhelmingly by the parents. Pupils have a clear idea about what they should and should not do and follow the school's guidelines. They enter and leave the classrooms and the building, at break times and at the beginning and end of the day, in a most orderly manner. They play well together in the playground and often collaborate in a range of traditional games such as crocodiles, hop-scotch and snakes and ladders. The high quality of racial harmony is a true strength of the school and pupils are interested in, and show concern for, each other. Respect for the feelings and beliefs of others is well developed. No incidents of bullying were observed during the inspection. Behaviour in the dining room is good and pupils welcome the opportunity to converse with friends. During the inspection some examples of challenging behaviour were observed amongst a small minority of pupils who find classroom rules difficult. This evidence is reflected in the 22 fixed term exclusions, involving 17 pupils, during the past school year.
11. The pupils' personal development is good. They are courteous, friendly and helpful and enjoy good relationships with the adults in school. They are particularly keen to welcome visitors into school, and to direct them to the appropriate person, office or classroom. The welcome occasionally extends to a handshake! Pupils have the opportunity to be involved in a number of responsibilities around school and in Year 6 they act as school monitors in a most mature and responsible manner. Pupils from all classes from Year 2 upwards are elected on to the school council that meets on a regular basis, with a member of staff, to discuss issues related to aspects of school life. An agenda is drawn up for each meeting and minutes are produced and circulated. Pupils in Year 6 are shortly to assume responsibility for both the agenda and the chairing of the meetings. Targets for the year are set and these currently include 'tidy the toilets' and 'pick up a coat'. One member of the school council has been elected to serve on the Birmingham Young People's Parliament. In addition to voting for their class representatives, pupils enjoy nominating their classmates for awards such as the most sensitive pupil or the 'best giggler'!
12. The pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take part in all school activities and are fully included across the curriculum. In one-to-one situations, small groups and in whole class situations they make good contributions.
13. The attendance rate of 93.7% for the last full reporting year falls below the national average of 94.4% and therefore remains unsatisfactory, as it was in the previous Inspection. However, the last three years have seen a year-on-year improvement, reflecting the school's concerted effort to raise standards with the support of the Education Welfare Service. The registration process at both morning and afternoon sessions is conducted briskly and efficiently. Punctuality is good, ensuring that pupils gain full access to the curriculum.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory but is good overall. This has a positive impact on the progress that the pupils make. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Year) and Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The particularly high standard of teaching in Year 6 results in the pupils in this year group making very good progress. The school's effective monitoring of teaching and learning has been successful in maintaining teaching standards at the good level found at the last inspection.
15. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Teachers and support staff show a good understanding of the children's needs and communicate well with them. Planning is well organised so that experiences are meaningful and varied. Staff in the Nursery and Reception Year work well together as teams within the classes. Relationships with the children are very caring and the management of their behaviour is very good. Assessment of the children's attainment and progress is generally thorough but the recording of progression in the development of reading skills is not detailed enough to support teachers in their planning. This limits the teachers' ability to match work closely enough to pupils' needs. Consequently some work is repetitious and does not move the pupils on fast enough.
16. The quality of teaching in English is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. There are many good features to the teaching that enable the pupils to make good progress overall. Adults are expert at reading and telling stories and are appropriate models for the expressive reading of poetry. The meticulous and consistent planning which has been introduced, together with good marking and regular assessment is having a good impact on pupils achievement. Assessment is built into the very good planning and this is effective in providing new targets for the pupils. In the best lessons, learning objectives are made clear to pupils at the start and returned to in the plenary session at the end. However, this does not always happen and in some lessons the final session is merely a brief sharing of independent tasks. Sometimes teachers do not allow sufficient time for the pupils to think about their answers before they reply in discussion sessions.
17. In mathematics, the quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Excellent teaching was observed in Year 6 where the teachers show great enthusiasm, ensure learning is carried out at a brisk pace and constant challenge is offered to the pupils. The lessons include a brisk quick-fire mental arithmetic session, followed by group work at a challenging level and concluding with a class session to sort out any problems and consolidate and assess the progress made. On occasions, in other year groups, the lessons are less stimulating. Sometimes the pace of the mental arithmetic start to lessons is much too slow and too few pupils are drawn into answering questions. This leads to some of the pupils losing interest and becoming restless. Although the best teaching includes high expectations and the setting of time targets to ensure a good pace to the lessons, this approach is not used in the less successful lessons.
18. The planning for the national literacy and numeracy strategies is consistently good across the school and many pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress in most aspects of both English and mathematics. Some teachers are very skilled at providing opportunities for their pupils to practise and use their basic skills of literacy and numeracy in different lessons. Teachers plan together in year groups to ensure similar coverage of the curriculum as well as being able to share ideas and expertise. The setting of pupils into teaching groups of similar ability for English, mathematics and science has helped raise standards.

19. The overall quality of teaching in science is good and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. It is more effective in Key Stage 2 where lessons consistently have good pace and are characterised by high expectations; higher than found in Key Stage 1. The teachers have good subject knowledge and explain the purpose of each lesson clearly. The teachers maintain the pupils' interest through lively discussion and the good use of questions. They organise their resources well and in almost all classes maintain good standards of discipline. However, the element of asking the pupils to predict likely outcomes from their investigations is too often lacking. The pupils' work is marked regularly but there are too few comments that encourage pupils to achieve higher standards of presentation or increase their rate of working.
20. Although teaching across all other subjects is generally satisfactory there are weaknesses in the teaching of geography. There is evidence of low expectations and much of the written work involves merely filling in worksheets with little opportunity for any original written work. Insufficient time is devoted to the teaching of skills and the subject is not taught in sufficient depth. The same applies, but to a lesser extent, to the teaching of art.
21. A significant strength of the teaching observed is the teachers' good management of pupils. This results in an overall productive and industrious learning environment. In all lessons judged to be satisfactory or better, teachers exercise their authority clearly and fairly. They ensure pupils concentrate and complete tasks in an appropriate amount of time. Pupils are given clear information about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. The good use of praise raises the pupils' self esteem so that they want to do better. The teachers' subject knowledge is generally good. This was well demonstrated in a Year 1 music lesson where the teacher's excellent subject knowledge of musical symbols and scores was used to enthuse and motivate pupils. This led to them performing a composition extremely well, with great enjoyment and obvious pride in their efforts.
22. Four lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. This is largely due to behaviour management and the lack of well-planned activities. The pupils start to lose interest when the work they are expected to do is not at a suitable level for their ability or they are kept inactive for extended periods. This situation is compounded when the teacher fails to gain the full attention of the class before outlining the expectations for the lesson. This results in a constant flow of interruptions and reprimands, and leads to unsatisfactory progress for many of the pupils.
23. Support staff are knowledgeable and enthusiastic in their support of pupils in lessons. In the best lessons they often teach groups directly or are deployed effectively to support the learning of small groups of pupils. With younger pupils they frequently have responsibility for full class groups. They work closely with the teachers to achieve the learning objectives and develop basic skills, especially with less able pupils and with those who find concentrating for long periods of time difficult. They are very effective in their work, make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching and learning, and are clearly a strength of the school.
24. Most of the homework given is appropriate and supports pupils' learning. A variety of homework is sent home including reading, spelling, mathematics and science. This impacts positively on the pupils' work in class.

25. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that some teachers do not have high enough expectations of the presentation of the pupils' work. A particular weakness apparent in some teaching across the school is that it does not always do enough to develop the skills of independent learning with the pupils denied the opportunity to research issues for themselves.
26. The class teachers take care to ensure that the needs of those pupils on the special educational needs register are well met, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The work is carefully matched to pupils' needs and identifies the small steps needed for them to progress. The pupils' individual education plans are carried out with close liaison between the class teachers and the support staff with clear gains towards targets being regularly recorded. The good teaching of the pupils with special educational needs has a significant impact on their learning and enables them to make good progress in achieving the goals set in their individual education plans.
27. The pupils who are learning English as an additional are identified at an early stage and a detailed profile is maintained on each pupil. Learning targets are set for the pupils on an individual basis and their progress is carefully monitored. There is a very good level of adult support in the classrooms and this promotes learning across the curriculum. The school's community officers provide a valuable link with local families, particularly those where English is not their first language.

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

28. The schools curricular provision in the Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception Year) is satisfactory and provides a broad and balanced introduction to the national curriculum. All areas of the early learning goals are covered and there are many stimulating learning activities and opportunities for children to learn through play.
29. In both key stages the school meets all statutory requirements in its delivery of the national curriculum and religious education. There is particular emphasis on the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science which has helped raise standards of attainment in these subjects. There is, however, insufficient time allocated to foundation subjects such as geography, art and physical education. This results in a lack of range, depth and richness of learning, particularly in geography. There are policies in place for health and sex education and drugs awareness where good use is made of local advisers and agencies to contribute specialist knowledge and resources. Personal and social education permeates all the work of the school.
30. Pupils have equal access to the curriculum including those with special educational needs. The school tracks the progress and performance of different groups of pupils to ensure the needs of all children are met. Homework is set regularly and most is completed.
31. Teachers plan within their year groups and these plans are monitored weekly by the head teacher. There are policies and schemes of work for all subjects including citizenship. Subject co-ordinators manage their own budgets and have allotted time to monitor and evaluate the planning and delivery of their subject from which action plans for improvement are evolved. Good use is made of qualified assistant staff in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to support teaching and assessment with designated groups of pupils.

32. There is a good range of extra curricular activities provided including sports, Punjabi and French. All pupils in Years 5 and 6 will either go on a residential trip to Bockleton near Leominster, or take part in an environmental week which includes exploring the local canal and studying Victorian Birmingham.
33. The pupils with special educational needs are taught in a mixture of situations including small groups, individually and supported within the classes. Their individual education plans are reviewed regularly and targets set. The targets identify clear learning objectives, particularly in literacy. The school has carefully planned programmes in place to support pupils with emotional and behavioural problems. However, too little time is spent on the broader curriculum and this limits the opportunity for the pupils to develop their skills and self esteem through subjects such as the arts and physical education.
34. The strong links that the school has established with the local community make a very good contribution to pupils' learning and are one of its major strengths. The children visit local places of interest and also people who can make a positive contribution to their academic and personal development are invited into school. The appointment of two Community Link Workers has done much to improve the interaction between school and community. They are able to provide a translation service in several languages. There is now a fully equipped and well used community room where members of the local community, including many parents, are currently studying for their NVQ Level 2 and 3 in Childcare in collaboration with Birmingham College of Food. Many previous entrants to such schemes are now employed by the school. The children learn much from the commitment to learning shown by visiting adults, while parents at their meeting with the inspectors remarked upon the greater 'community feel' within the school over recent years.
35. The school has maintained the sound links with partner institutions commented upon in the previous report. The arrangements, including induction and supporting documentation, serve to ease the transfer of the pupils to the next stage of their education.
36. The school makes good overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is reflected in the way that the staff and pupils relate to each other and the culture created that ensures a harmonious atmosphere amongst the pupils.
37. There is satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual development. This is developed chiefly through collective worship in the classrooms when pupils are given the opportunity to consider and reflect upon issues such as what makes a good friend, and the importance of school rules. Religious education lessons offer pupils the chance to consider world and local issues, reflecting sensitively on events.
38. The school provides a very good framework for the pupils' moral development. All members of staff encourage pupils to understand right from wrong and the thoughtful classroom and school rules that include such points as 'call everyone by their given name' support them. The reasons for the rules are discussed in class along with issues such as the top five qualities that older pupils would like to show to younger members of the school, and what makes a good friend? The staff provide a good role model; even the rules that teachers have to follow are displayed. An overwhelming majority of parents believe that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.

39. Social education is good and is provided through a range of activities and events. Pupils are actively encouraged to see issues from each other's religious or social perspective and to value everyone's point of view. Citizenship lessons give pupils the chance to explore issues related to the wider community. The school council provides pupils with the chance to have their opinions heard and to accept responsibility. The pupils support a charity on an annual basis and last year supported Comic Relief after considering the reasons why some African people need help. A residential visit provides the oldest pupils with a rich social experience.
40. The school's provision for cultural education is satisfactory. There are visits to the school by musicians and a group from a Birmingham theatre, when the pupils have the opportunity to participate in the production. Pupils are given the opportunity, through visits to local places of worship and discussion, to learn about the different beliefs and cultural practices represented in the school. The valuing of each other's culture is given a high priority in the school. Visitors from all cultures come in to school to share their experience and expertise, and art from different cultures provides a number of discussion points and gives pupils a chance to explore ideas of their own. They visit local museums and study centres, and last year the three oldest age groups visited the millennium dome. The pupils gain much from the annual local carnival that the school hosts, when all the local cultures are represented.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school makes good provision for the welfare, health, safety and personal security of its pupils, resulting in an atmosphere of confidence and wellbeing that lays a solid foundation for learning.
42. The well-rehearsed arrangements for child protection are based on the procedures laid down by the Area Child Protection Committee. The headteacher is the designated person, and is recognised as such throughout the school. Along with her deputy she has attended appropriate training, and has passed on her knowledge to all adults in the school, so that a high level of alertness is maintained. Proper arrangements are also in place for the personal security of all pupils.
43. The extensive range of policies and procedures for health and safety comply fully with statutory requirements. The site manager leads a health and safety group with responsibility for conducting termly risk assessments of the premises according to an agreed format. Termly fire drills ensure that safe evacuation procedures are well rehearsed, and proper procedures are in place for the reporting and recording of hazards.
44. The nominated first aider, along with some fifteen colleagues, has received a certificate of competence after attending appropriate training. The inspectors saw evidence of the efficient application of the procedures during their visit to the school, and noted the very caring attitude of those involved in the procedures. Such caring attitudes make a good contribution to the pupils' sense of security and wellbeing.
45. The good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance, upgraded since the last Inspection, have resulted in the steady improvement in attendance. The school's high expectations in this regard, including the strict use of 'late slips' and the active support of the education welfare officer, demonstrate the school's determination to improve attendance as a way of raising standards.

46. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving behaviour are good, and their effectiveness can be seen in the good levels of behaviour throughout the school. After only two weeks in the nursery the children are already learning to respond to instructions and to show consideration for others by playing safely and by sharing toys. In the other two key stages adults in the school offer effective incentives to improve behaviour through the use of the 'happy and sad side' strategy. The behaviour code is on display around the school. The assertive behaviour strategy, requiring adults to make at least two positive comments before a negative remark, has been adopted.
47. The good procedures for monitoring and promoting personal development have the support of most parents; 94% of them declaring that the school is helping their children become mature. The procedures include the formation of a democratically elected school council. Pupils approach this duty with a great sense of responsibility and maturity.
48. There are very good procedures in place for the initial identification and assessment of pupils with special educational needs, and for the assessment of their progress against the targets set in the individual education plans. There is highly effective liaison with special educational needs staff from a range of external services and they support the school well in identifying and meeting the individual needs of pupils with special educational needs. The provision for pupils with special educational needs as outlined in their statements is fully implemented.
49. Arrangements to monitor academic progress and support pupil progress are good. The children are assessed on entry to the school and all aspects of their development are monitored carefully. The school makes effective use of baseline information to plan the work for the children in the nursery but there is scope for improving the transfer of information from the nursery to reception classes.
50. Throughout the school the pupils' progress, particularly in English and mathematics is monitored carefully. Results of national tests in English, mathematics and science are very thoroughly analysed by the co-ordinators, which enables the teachers to adjust their teaching plans and set realistic targets for pupils. The analysis informs tracking sheets on each pupil and aids the grouping arrangements in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2. Assessment information is used effectively to set targets for different groups of pupils and to raise expectations. This has contributed to the improved standards in the core subjects. The pupils are made aware of what they need to do to improve. For example, in information and communication technology, there are clear indicators to show what the pupils should be achieving at the end of each school year and these criteria are being used to inform the teachers' planning and to raise standards.
51. The pupils' personal development is also monitored. The school has drawn up an effective assessment record file to track each pupil's progress through the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. The very good partnership with parents identified at the previous inspection remains one of the school's strengths and makes a major contribution to raising standards.

53. Parents attending the meeting with inspectors and those responding to the questionnaire expressed very positive views about the school. More than 90% of them agree that their children like coming to school, that they behave well and that they make good progress. A similarly high percentage declare that the teaching is good, that the school expects their children to work hard, that it helps them become mature people, and that the school is well led and managed. Opinion is more divided about homework, some suggesting that there is too much, others that there is too little. The inspectors' view is that homework is generally allocated and marked in accordance with the school's homework policy (as described in the school brochure) and is appropriate. A few parents commented on the lack of stimulating reading material in the classrooms but the recent purchase of new reading books has greatly improved this.
54. The very effective links that the school has established with parents greatly aids their children's learning. The very good flow of information from the school to parents not only keeps them up-to-date with their children's progress, but also describes how they can help their children to improve their work both at school and at home. For example, the pupils' annual reports describe what has been done and identifies areas for further effort, indicating what parents can do to help. The reports comment not only on academic performance but also on personal development, consideration for others, and presentation of work. Termly parents' evenings, occasional surveys of opinion, consultation meetings, parent-governor surgeries, all supplemented by informative parents' notice boards around the school leave no doubt about what is going on in the school, and how parents can assist their children in their learning.
55. Parents respond positively by involving themselves in the work of the school by spending time working with their children at their desk. At home they listen to them read and help them complete their homework. This involvement has a very positive impact on the work of the school. The community link workers, appointed by the school, do much to break down linguistic and cultural barriers for parents. They arrange English as an additional language classes and provide translator services through their contacts in the local community.
56. The 'Inspire' workshops and the 'Keeping Up With The Children' sessions, when parents spend time in school doing a joint project with their children, help parents to grow in confidence and to realise that their contribution is greatly valued by the school and by their children. Indeed, one pupil was so determined that he should have parental help that he commandeered the father of another child as he was leaving the building, and retained his services for the whole of the 'Inspire' morning.
57. Parents have a positive impact on their children's learning by ensuring that they arrive at school punctually each day as laid down in the home-school agreement. They also help their children by raising considerable sums of money for school equipment, especially through the activities of the Barford Home School Association.
58. The school provides good information for parents about the progress of pupils with special educational needs and they are regularly invited to participate in the review of their child's progress.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. At the time of the last inspection in 1997 the national tests for 11 year-olds indicated that the pupils' attainment on leaving the school was well below average in English,

mathematics and science. Since then, the school has had a clear focus on improving the results in these national tests. The headteacher's strong and effective leadership has been instrumental in helping the school to successfully bring about these significant improvements. The school has been so successful in its quest to raise standards that current inspection evidence indicates that the Year 6 pupils' attainment is now average compared with national standards in English and mathematics and above average in science.

60. A feature of the headteacher's leadership is the trust and value that she places in all members of staff. The senior management team, which plays a major role in determining developments, is made up of a good representation of the staff. Teachers, classroom assistants, clerical, dining and all of the others employed by the school are consulted and involved in the running of the school. This involvement of all staff has been recognised through the presentation to the school of the national 'Investors in People' award.
61. The monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning with a view to raising standards is a particular strength of the school. Two school evaluation initiatives Effective Early Learning (EEL) and Primary Effective Early Learning (PEEL) have been used in school to assess the effectiveness of the learning taking place. As a result, the school is applying strategies to bring about improvements, for instance, in giving pupils more responsibility for their own learning. The headteacher and teachers with a subject management role carry out regular monitoring of teaching and learning. This information is then used to provide individual teachers with pointers for improvement and to inform the professional development planning for the staff. The deputy head plays a key role in making these arrangements as well as establishing and providing for the training of all other staff. She has also organised an effective programme for mentoring, support and guidance of the five newly qualified teachers.
62. The school is effectively using information from the national and other tests to identify strengths and weaknesses and to set targets for the pupils. In this context, writing was identified as a weakness and appropriate strategies put in place for 2000-01 to bring about improvements. As a result, standards of writing have improved significantly over the last year. Targets are set for pupils on an annual basis and the tests carried out by the school are proving very useful in helping to assess whether enough progress is being made by the pupils as they move through the school.
63. The school is clearly focused on raising standards. The governors are actively involved in this process and support developments through their participation in committees including finance, management and buildings. The chair of governors is a regular visitor to school and is kept well informed of developments. The school's planning for improvement gives a comprehensive overview for the school's development over the next few years. However, it lacks the detail in terms of timescale to be used as a working document for governors to monitor whether planned developments have been successfully achieved. The governors are successful in fulfilling their statutory duties.
64. The role of the special educational needs co-ordinator is well established. The organisation of the support staff is very well managed and good use is made of the funding allocated to special educational needs. As the co-ordinator does not have a full class commitment she is ideally placed to evaluate the implementation of the individual education plans of the pupils. The school is effective in identifying pupils with learning difficulties at an early stage and makes good use of specialist help such

as educational psychologists and speech therapists. The co-ordinator is continuing to extend and expand the range of resources to support learning. There are good arrangements in place for the governing body to maintain an overview of special educational needs, as the governors with this responsibility, work in the school. As they know the pupils on the register individually they are aware of the overall progress of special educational needs pupils and the way in which the policy is carried out.

65. Arrangements for the induction and support of new teachers are very good. They are based on the identified needs of staff and are part of the excellent and coherent programme of staff training and development. The headteacher holds regular staff development interviews for all staff and targets for professional development are set on an annual basis. Training opportunities for teaching, support and midday supervisory staff are very good and meet the needs of individuals and the school. School based training for support staff and courses designed to help parents and employees gain national qualifications are excellent.
66. The overall management of the school's finances is good. All funding, including additional grants that the school is particularly adept at gaining, is carefully targeted and spending is monitored well. The budget is set through a process of consultation and based upon the priorities in the school development plan. The school has appropriate educational targets linked to the budget and there is regular monitoring of the effectiveness of expenditure on standards achieved and progress made. Accumulated reserves have been carefully used to enable the school to pursue its strategy of maintaining high levels of teaching and support staff, whilst continuing to improve resources and accommodation.
67. Financial planning, administration and control is good and the recommendations of the last auditors' report have been acted upon. All school routines are appropriately established with the office manager and her staff providing good support for the school. The principles of best value play a significant part in obtaining tenders and the school makes a detailed analysis of all available information when comparing its performance with that of similar schools.
68. Staffing levels are very good and both teaching and non-teaching staff are well deployed. The school has made a significant commitment to maintaining this high level of provision by using money from a number of sources and initiatives. Careful management of funding has allowed the school to increase the hours of existing support staff and appoint more staff to work alongside teachers in the classroom. Support staff play a crucial part in the success of the school. They are well trained with many having gained national qualifications by attending school-based training.
69. Overall, in terms of the standards attained by the pupils, their good progress, the quality of the education they receive and the value added by the school to the quality of life within the community, the school provides good value for money.
70. Resources for learning are satisfactory in all curriculum areas and are very good in English where the school has recently developed the school library, provided good quality books for all classrooms and purchased many Big Books for use in the Literacy Hour and as classroom reading books. Although there is an impressive computer suite, the number of computers available in the Foundation Stage is inadequate.
71. The school's accommodation is adequate for teaching and learning both inside and outside. Most classrooms accommodate pupils comfortably, though access to the

building and especially to first floor classrooms is difficult for people with mobility problems. The school is clean and well maintained, with bright décor and displays creating a warm atmosphere. The provision of a spacious library, a computer suite and a community room further enhance the accommodation. The school halls are used as thoroughfares which detracts from their use for physical education (PE) lessons. Although the school has a large playground, there is no field for the development of the games aspect of PE.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

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

- Improve standards in reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1.
(paragraphs 3,5, 94, 97, 99, 105)
- *Provide more structure to the teaching of reading in the Foundation Stage.
(paragraphs 15, 82)
- Broaden the curriculum so that the foundation subjects (particularly geography) have sufficient quality and depth.
(paragraphs 8, 20, 29, 118, 126, 128, 130, 149, 152)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve the standard of the pupils' handwriting.
(paragraph 6, 99)
- *Implement the planned action to further improve the pupils' attendance.
(paragraph 13)
- Include a timescale in the school's planning for improvement so that the governors can monitor the progress of planned developments.
(paragraph 63)

*Indicates action already planned, either in writing or informally, by the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	60

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	8	33	41	4	0	0
Percentage	2	9	38	47	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	65	366
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		145

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	113

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	128

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.96
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	27	28	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	23
	Girls	24	23	25
	Total	45	43	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (76)	78 (78)	87 (70)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	23
	Girls	23	25	22
	Total	45	48	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (83)	87 (83)	82 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	24	19	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	18	20
	Girls	13	14	17
	Total	28	32	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (62)	74 (62)	86(70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	22
	Girls	12	15	18
	Total	27	32	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (53)	74 (60)	93 (72)
	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	92
Black – African heritage	28
Black – other	
Indian	61
Pakistani	33
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	57
Any other minority ethnic group	45

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	11	
Black – African heritage	1	
Black – other		
Indian	5	
Pakistani	1	
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	3	
Other minority ethnic groups	1	

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.9
Average class size	26.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	21
Total aggregate hours worked per week	404

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32.5
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	997477
Total expenditure	951798
Expenditure per pupil	2199
Balance brought forward from previous year	25689
Balance carried forward to next year	71368

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	330
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	25	6		
My child is making good progress in school.	51	40	7		1
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	41	9		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	41	16	4	1
The teaching is good.	59	31	6	3	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	32	7	3	
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	33	1		1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	37	3	1	4
The school works closely with parents.	54	40	1	3	1
The school is well led and managed.	63	31	3		3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	41	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	31	12	4	6

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

73. The Foundation Stage consists of a purpose-built, full time nursery and two reception classes. The five staff in the nursery and four staff in reception work closely together to provide a broad curriculum with many learning activities and play opportunities. This is having a positive impact on the children's learning. The work is further supported by a teacher specifically appointed to support those children for whom English is an additional language. These children make good progress in speaking and listening.
74. Many children start in the nursery with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence. Good teaching ensures most children will attain the early learning goals by the end of reception in personal and social education, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Despite good teaching in mathematics most children are unlikely to reach the goals. Whilst teaching is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy, given the low starting point, most of the children will fall short of attaining the learning goals. They are not likely to achieve the goals in creative development.
75. Due to the timing of the inspection, so early in the academic year, not all of the children had been admitted. At the start of the inspection there were 27 children which increased to 42 by the end of the inspection. All the children are three years old. There will be 65 children by the end of September. There are two reception classes of 30 children, most of whom have attended the school nursery.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. Nearly all the children enter the nursery with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they complete the reception year they are achieving the early learning goals in this area. They achieve well and this reflects the skilful teaching and organisation in both the nursery and reception areas where children are constantly encouraged to feel good about what they can do.
77. In both year groups children feel valued and secure. The nursery, though large, has several semi-private bays where children can form close relationships with their designated adult and small group of peers. Parents are encouraged to stay for 30 minutes each day to share the early morning activities with their child. The high ratio of adults to children, together with effective organisation, means there is always at least one adult able to talk to individual children and encourage conversation and interaction. The structured daily routine ensures children develop a sense of belonging and security. Although it was very early in the term, the children were already showing consideration by handing round the biscuits at snack time or putting their art on the drying rack without being prompted.
78. Throughout the Foundation Stage there is much praise for good behaviour with stickers, congratulation cards and children's names being placed on the 'happy' side of the board instead of the 'sad' one. This is fostering a positive attitude towards learning. Each day there is designated time to promote good relationships such as passing round handshakes or wearing their own sad or happy masks to examine how they feel. The adults provide good role models for the children. They are cheerful and

always treat the children with respect and courtesy. The teachers use playtime to teach the children games which promote social interaction.

79. Personal independence is also promoted through the wide choice of activities for children to choose from. Equipment and resources are easily accessible and always tidied away by the children.

Communication, language and literacy

80. Children enter the nursery with low levels of speaking and literacy skills. Teaching and progress is satisfactory but most children will not achieve the early learning goals by the time they leave reception.
81. On entry to the nursery, the staff place great emphasis on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Children learn to listen to others and take turns in speaking. Staff take every opportunity to help the children to learn and use new words. The children work in small groups and this is particularly beneficial for those who are learning English as an additional language to learn new words. Early reading skills are being developed through the sharing of books and stories. Books are well displayed and children appreciate the characters and the sequence of events. Children know words and pictures convey meaning and print goes from left to right and top to bottom.
82. Throughout the Foundation Stage children have a wide variety of books from which to choose, talk about and share with peers and adults. They are introduced to the Literacy Hour and can point to the title of a book and explain the role of the author and the illustrator. There is, however, a lack of books matched to the children's own reading levels. They are not able to access books they can read independently and enjoy. Few of the books build up a simple sight vocabulary and the day-to-day assessment of pupils is inadequate. There are no detailed records of reading progress and consequently the teachers' expectations, particularly for the more able pupils are too low. The group reading tasks lack focus and little actual teaching takes place.
83. The children are provided with many opportunities to experiment with their own writing. Supplies of paper, pencils, crayons and pens are readily available. Most children can write their first name by the time they leave reception. Handwriting skills are taught in many ways which include painting and sticking activities and are developing well.

Mathematical development

84. Despite good teaching most children will not reach the early learning goals by the end of reception in their understanding of number. Teachers in the nursery set up tasks which encourage the children to acquire new mathematical language. For example, children sort pairs of socks to hang on the washing line and the teacher skilfully encourages the children to use the terms, pair, the same, numbers 1 and 2, shortest, longest, biggest and smallest. A few of the most able children can order and match numbers up to 10, understand the + and – sign and identify coins up to 50p.
85. In reception, some children can understand the difference between 2D and 3D shapes and name a cuboid. Children with special educational needs use finger paint to feel and record the sides of 2D shapes. Many children can count to 10 and beyond, but there are few opportunities for children, particularly the more able, to work with larger numbers.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. Good teaching, especially in science, ensures children will reach the early learning goals. In the nursery, the children experiment with materials which float or sink, grow beans and understand the life cycle in terms of baby, child, adult, old person. The story of the three pigs initiates a study of houses and the 'my family' topic raises the children's awareness of past and present. All children observed are able to control a mouse with accuracy on the computer. They can pick up, move objects around a screen and paste. However, there is only one computer in the nursery and when there is the full quota of 65 children, this will be inadequate.
87. In reception, the children know the meaning of waterproof. They predict outcomes of testing and suggest how to set up an experiment. During a walk to the local shopping centre the children show that they understand the range of shops provided, some street signs and the work of some adults within the community. They appreciate different places of worship and enjoy sharing the experiences of a teacher's visit to a mosque in Saudi Arabia. Those children who choose to work on the computers can open and close programmes and access a simple file. There are only two computers for the 60 reception children.

Physical development

88. The children develop their physical skills through both indoor and outdoor activities. In the nursery playground the children can jump, run, balance and climb. They are encouraged to develop control of different parts of their body and show awareness of the needs of others in the space around them. In reception, the children have regular physical education lessons in the hall and also daily outdoor activities. Before afternoon play, groups are taken outside to be taught a skill such as rolling a ball to a partner and receiving it, or throwing a small hoop into a large hoop. In both nursery and reception there are a variety of wheeled vehicles and prams which help children develop pushing and pulling skills but there are too few of these to meet the needs of the large groups of children, especially in reception.
89. Teaching and progress are good and by the end of reception most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals. There are many opportunities for children to develop safe control of their finer movements such as using scissors, threading beads, completing jigsaws, using paintbrushes and holding pencils correctly. Children in the nursery make pizzas from playdough which require them to roll, pat, squeeze, stretch and flatten with their hands or select from a range of cutting and rolling tools. The children are encouraged to independently put their coats on from their first day in the nursery.

Creative development

90. The children in the nursery have many opportunities to paint, draw and make collages using materials such as cotton wool balls, feathers and hessian. In reception, they investigate texture through crayon rubbings on different surfaces and using different papers in a collage. The children in the nursery learn the names of colours and in reception they explore mixing red and white paint to make shades of pink.
91. Children learn a variety of action songs and sing enthusiastically. However, they have no opportunities to develop or compose their own rhythms or begin to listen to and appreciate the styles of music or composers. There are few 'dressing up' clothes

which limits the range of opportunities for the children in the role play areas. Teaching and progress are satisfactory in terms of skills taught but the children are unlikely to reach the early learning goals in the areas of musical and artistic experiences and appreciation.

ENGLISH

92. The literacy levels of most pupils entering the school are below average. Inspection evidence indicates that the pupils make satisfactory progress and by the age of seven their attainment is likely to be below average in reading and writing. The pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 and by the age of 11 their attainment is similar to the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are given a significant amount of support and make good progress overall.
93. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with the national expectation but better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 where some pupils do not listen attentively to adults and some find it difficult to listen to each other. Some pupils, often boys, are so anxious to contribute that they launch into speech before they have heard and understood the question. Pupils gain in concentration and confidence as they move through the school. In a Year 4 class the teacher required small groups of pupils to discuss together and predict what might happen next in the story. They listened carefully to each other and made thoughtful suggestions. Older pupils sometimes engage in debate and teachers of these pupils use well-targeted questions to extend their responses. Guided reading groups are very effective in promoting speaking and listening because teachers and support staff pose questions that require reflection and inference. The school has a consistent and regular means of assessing pupils' progress in speaking and listening. Staff build upon these assessments as they plan further lessons.
94. Standards in reading are below average at the end of Key Stage 1. The more able pupils in Key Stage 1 read accurately although their fluency varies, understanding often being affected by a limited vocabulary. Most pupils enjoy books and teachers develop oral language well in group reading. Less able pupils recognise a few words and letters but many rely too much on picture cues and adult support. Teachers work hard to help them acquire phonic skills and to gain the confidence to attempt to read new words independently. Most pupils understand terms such as 'author', 'illustrator' and 'title' and enjoy sharing texts during the Literacy Hour. In both key stages, pupils share 'big books' with their teachers and they enjoy being read to. They focus well on the text in these books and this helps their learning.
95. Standards of reading in Key Stage 2 have improved significantly. The pupils make good progress and their attainment is similar to the national average by the age of 11. More able pupils read fluently and with reasonable expression. They are able to discuss their reading preferences and talk about their favourite authors. About half the pupils in Year 6 are skilful in analysing texts. This was demonstrated well in a good lesson when they read and explored the story of Odysseus and the Cyclops. Pupils were able to recognise differences in the text and the subtleties used in developing the plot. Average pupils do not always have a wide range of strategies to help them establish meaning and do not often self-correct words that they have not understood. Some less able pupils are not aware of errors and have very limited strategies for reading unfamiliar words. Most pupils use dictionaries confidently because teachers consistently reinforce these skills.

96. Library and research skills are good. The recently built library makes a significant contribution to the development of such skills and has a positive effect on pupils' social development. Most pupils read regularly to an adult at home. They have interesting and stimulating reading diaries and the home-school reading relationship is well developed. The diaries have regular entries from parents and pupils.
97. Standards in writing are below average at the end of Key Stage 1. Younger pupils write for an increasing range of purposes and audiences and the work they do is generally interesting and purposeful. The work includes writing letters, stories, notices and labelling. By the end of the key stage the more able pupils produce clear descriptive and imaginative writing, which is appropriately punctuated. Some are beginning to use connecting words effectively to join ideas. For a significant number of pupils, however, spelling is unsatisfactory and the content of stories is distinguished by limited vocabulary and punctuation, and little depth of imagination.
98. The Literacy Hour is having a significant impact on the development of pupils' grammatical knowledge and their understanding of language in Key Stage 2. The school has identified the need to improve writing as a top priority. The resulting highly focused teaching has been effective in raising attainment. The most able pupils have a good understanding of how to write narrative, factual accounts and poetry. They write on such diverse subjects as biography and bias in journalism. Most pupils in Year 6 are able to produce a sustained piece of writing with the variety of language and the accuracy expected at this age. An examination of work produced by pupils in Year 6 during the last academic year indicates that many were able to produce writing with clear sentence structure, good presentation, punctuation and reasonable spelling. This represents good progress. Teaching in ability sets is having a marked impact on attainment across the key stage. Younger pupils make good early progress and this accelerates in classes of older pupils. They have a good understanding of the purpose of re-drafting writing and many are developing skills such as note-taking to good effect. Additional time provided for extended writing is having a positive impact on improving standards.
99. By the time they are seven many of the pupils are still printing; they do not have a joined handwriting style and their presentational skills are variable. By Year 6, the style of the pupils' handwriting is still generally underdeveloped with only around half of the pupils writing regularly in a neat, joined script. All classes have regular handwriting sessions and teachers emphasise direct letter joins and general points of neatness. However, the time spent does not always produce good outcomes.
100. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall, but there are some strong features. Adults are expert at reading and telling stories and are appropriate models for the expressive reading of poetry with pupils following their example enthusiastically. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is good and is particularly good in Year 6 lessons. In one such lesson, the teacher modelled the reading of a story using distinctive voices. Consequently, the pupils were equally thoughtful and accurate in their reading, paying very close attention to the techniques illustrated by their teacher. Humour is used to good effect and relationships are warm and encouraging. The meticulous and consistent planning which has been introduced, together with good marking and regular assessment, is having a good impact on the pupils' achievement and progress. In the best lessons, learning objectives are made clear to pupils at the start and returned to in the plenary session at the end. This does not always happen and in some lessons the final session is merely a brief sharing of

independent tasks. Assessment is built into the very good planning and this is effective in providing new targets for pupils.

101. Some teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their developing literacy skills in other subjects. For example, they maximise the opportunities for pupils to practise their reading and writing skills in subjects such as history. The co-ordinator has produced a useful guide for staff which sets out where this can happen, but unfortunately the ideas it contains are not always followed by the teachers.
102. The co-ordinator provides clear leadership and direction for the subject. She has worked hard to raise standards in reading and writing, with clear targets set for pupils in order that they begin to take responsibility for their own learning. Assessment in English is thorough and rigorous and the results of national tests are analysed carefully. The data is used effectively to plan learning and to provide targets for pupils. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' progress in reading, writing and speaking and listening. Targets are set for groups of pupils and individuals and the pupils' progress is tracked through annual testing and by the completion of portfolios of each pupil's work. Resources in English are very good with an excellent range of high quality books for use within the Literacy Hour and in class libraries.

MATHEMATICS

103. Although the pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 their attainment is below the national average by the end of the key stage. The pupils make good overall progress in Key Stage 2 including very good progress in Year 6. In this year group, a stimulating and challenging environment enables pupils of differing abilities to learn very well across all aspects of mathematics. Their ability to calculate mentally is particularly impressive. Less challenge, particularly in the mental arithmetic part of lessons, has been a contributory factor to pupils from other year groups not making such good progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support that enables them to make good progress towards their targets.
104. The school has placed great emphasis on preparation for the Year 6 national tests and this has been very effective in improving results. The curriculum is broad, although the use of mathematics in other subjects could be developed further. This is particularly so in information technology where the regular use of computers to support the pupils' mathematical development is inconsistent across the classes.
105. Many of the pupils enter Year 1 with attainment that is below average. They make generally satisfactory progress across Key Stage 1. When they start in Year 1, a significant minority of the pupils have difficulty counting to 10 or in finding one less than a small number. However, some pupils are able to add numbers to 15 by combining two groups of objects. In Year 2 many pupils can recognise numbers to 100 and recall at least some number facts to 10. Some are able to double numbers from 1 to 9 and are using add and subtract symbols appropriately in their calculations.
106. The pupils make good progress overall in Key Stage 2 with particularly impressive improvement taking place in Year 6. By the age of 11 many of the pupils can add decimals to two places, multiply and divide numbers by 10 and 100 and have a reasonable recall of multiplication tables. Nearly half of the pupils have a good working knowledge of fractions and are able to calculate the percentage of various

quantities. They are able to calculate areas and perimeters of regular shapes, add and subtract negative numbers and interpret co-ordinates.

107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Excellent teaching was observed in Year 6 where the teachers show great enthusiasm, ensure learning is carried out at a brisk pace and constant challenge is offered to the pupils. The teachers establish the pupils' current understanding and through astute questioning build on this. The use of a class set of small whiteboards enables each pupil to be actively involved in the introduction to the lesson and promotes rapid learning. In one lesson, the enthusiastic approach of the teacher, combined with challenging activities with an element of fun, led to the pupils being so engrossed in their work that a groan of disappointment greeted her when she informed them that it was time to finish. Not surprisingly, the work produced by the pupils was of a very high standard. In Year 6, the National Numeracy Strategy is appropriately applied to include a brisk quick-fire mental arithmetic session, followed by group work at a challenging level and concluding with a class session to sort out any problems and consolidate and assess the progress made.
108. Weaknesses in the teaching in some lessons result in the pace of lessons being too slow. Sometimes the pace of the mental arithmetic start to lessons is much too slow and too few pupils are drawn into answering questions. This leads to some of the pupils losing interest and becoming restless. Follow-up activities are not always used effectively for developing the pupils' skills. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the pupils spent far more time copying questions down than practising the skills of adding objects. Although the best teaching includes high expectations and the setting of time targets to ensure a good pace to the lessons, this approach is not used in the less successful lessons.
109. The pupils are organised into ability groups across each year group from Year 1 to Year 6. This system generally works very well in enabling appropriate work to be provided for pupils of differing ability. The classroom assistants play an important role in supporting individuals and groups of pupils. The mathematics co-ordinator is actively involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning and in the scrutiny of planning. This has helped him to produce a useful action plan to guide the development of the subject but it does not include the identification of opportunities to develop the use of mathematics across other subjects. The regular testing and assessment of pupils is successfully used to monitor their progress through the school and to set realistic targets for them to achieve on a year-by-year basis. Homework is used very effectively to support and develop the activities taking place in the classes.

SCIENCE

110. Inspection evidence indicates that, by the time the pupils leave school, they achieve standards that are above average. It shows that the pupils make very good progress in Key Stage 2 as standards are below average at the age of seven. The pupils' progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory.
111. At the end of Key Stage 1, particular strengths are in the pupils' understanding of living things and in their knowledge of materials. They know the main external parts of the human body and can identify a range of animals. Pupils in Year 2 can suggest different ways that sounds can be made. They identify a range of materials and describe and classify them accurately in terms of texture and colour. They know whether certain materials are manufactured or natural. Although the pupils engage in

a suitable range of practical activities and the teachers present them with a range of first hand experiences, the pupils' progress is limited by their literacy skills. They have difficulty in describing their findings and recording their experiences.

112. In Key Stage 2, the school's policy on setting the pupils according to their ability for their science lessons has a positive impact on their learning. The lower attaining pupils benefit from working in smaller groups and the higher attaining pupils benefit from the level of challenge. This enhances the pupils' confidence and results in good progress and high levels of attainment. This is particularly evident in Year 6 where the pupils are given considerable autonomy in organising their experiments. For example, the pupils make an analysis of the properties of different soil samples to determine how porous they are. The pupils have a secure grasp of appropriate scientific vocabulary and use information and communication technology effectively to record their results. However, there are too few opportunities for the pupils to use information and control technology in either research or recording in other year groups.
113. In Year 6, many of the pupils are already working at a level usually expected of pupils about to leave the primary school. Their strengths lie in their well-developed skills in understanding food chains and use of accurate vocabulary in terms of predators and prey. They understand similarities and differences in the main stages of life cycles of animals and flowering plants and accurately describe the process of metamorphosis. Pupils in Year 3 apply the basic concepts of a fair test when investigating how quickly different sugars dissolve in liquid. Older pupils understand the processes of evaporation and condensation; they apply this knowledge to the water cycle and to how mixtures of soluble and insoluble substances can be separated. At the end of the key stage, the pupils know the planets of the solar system and benefit from their practical work with an orrery. Throughout Key Stage 2, the pupils engage in a range of practical investigations and record their findings systematically. They are aware of safety issues concerning scientific experiments.
114. Overall, the pupils make good progress; it is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress because of the high quality of support and suitable tasks that are set. The pupils' positive attitudes towards science support their learning. They work well together in small groups and are eager to share their ideas.
115. The overall quality of teaching is good and makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning. It is more effective in Key Stage 2 where lessons consistently have good pace and are characterised by high expectations; higher than in Key Stage 1. The teachers' planning is clear, relevant to the topic and relates well to most of the pupils. The teachers have good subject knowledge and explain the purpose of each lesson clearly. The teachers maintain the pupils' interest through lively discussion and the good use of questions. They organise their resources well and in almost all classes maintain good standards of discipline. Additional planning and good use of classroom support ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set for them and in science generally. Effective use is made of homework and visits to places of scientific interest to enhance the pupils' understanding. However, the element of asking the pupils to predict likely outcomes from their investigations is too often lacking. The pupils' work is marked regularly but there are too few comments that encourage pupils to achieve higher standards of presentation.

116. Appropriate systems have been established to assess the pupils' attainment and track their progress. The subject co-ordinator has made a good start to organising the subject in her new post. Good use is made of the national guidelines for teaching science and she has ensured that there are sufficient resources to teach the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

117. The quality of learning and the progress made by the pupils is satisfactory. This is similar to the last inspection. At the age of seven, the work that the pupils produce is of the standard expected for their age. Satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 1 is apparent in the work the pupils produce in lessons and in displays around the classrooms. The pupils build up their knowledge and understanding of a variety of techniques and mediums. They mix paint, learn to control their brush strokes and show an understanding of colour when working on self-portraits. They show satisfactory pencil control in their observational work to record their work in science. The few higher-attaining pupils use their pencils effectively to illustrate the difference in texture in their studies.

118. In Key Stage 2, the pupils have the experience of working with a range of materials in two and three-dimensional forms. For example, younger pupils explore warm and cool colours in their pastel work. Pupils in Year 4 explore the techniques of batik to create images of wild animals. By the age of 11, the pupils use tools to texture clay and successfully create tiles depicting athletes. They have an appropriate understanding of tone and shade when using pencils to make observational drawings of clocks and flowers. However, the pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 is barely satisfactory as too little time is given to the subject to enable the pupils to develop their skills effectively.

119. In both key stages, the attitude of the pupils towards their work is good and this supports their learning. Most pupils listen attentively, work confidently and persevere well in lessons. They use resources sensibly and share ideas with one another. They work with enjoyment, talk willingly about their work and show satisfaction with the outcome of their efforts.

120. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have realistic expectations of the pupils' attainment. They plan lessons carefully and are well prepared in terms of support and resources. In the best lessons, the teachers intervene at appropriate times to make good teaching points about different techniques. They use the pupils' own work to serve as exemplars of good practice and to give encouragement. The teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage their behaviour well.

121. Throughout the school, artwork is well linked to other subjects such as history. For example, in Year 4 pupils use collage to depict the ships of the Spanish Armada and use chalk against a black background to support their work on light and shadow in science. However, there is too little emphasis on the pure aesthetics of the subject. Too little is made of the richness of the artistic traditions of the range of the ethnicity represented in the school. There are too few opportunities provided for the pupils to appreciate the styles and techniques of celebrated artists of the past. Although the pupils have sketchbooks, their use is inconsistent. Little use is made of information and communication technology to support the pupils' work.

122. The recently appointed art co-ordinator has produced a scheme of work and regularly checks her colleagues' planning. A start has been made in assembling a portfolio of

pupils' work. The pupils' artwork is displayed effectively to enhance the learning atmosphere in the classrooms and corridors.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any design and technology lessons. Scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils indicate satisfactory progress is made in both key stages. Pupils in Year 1 design faces and then make them using card, wool and a variety of papers. In Year 2, pupils make exciting sock puppets. They draw designs, select materials from buttons, wool, pasta, lollipop sticks, beads and pulses.
124. Skills are further developed in Year 3 when pupils make finger puppets and learn to sew, thread and cut. Pupils in Year 5 disassemble toys and then design new ones using nets. Much evaluation of the completed artefacts is undertaken to establish their suitability and safety. In Year 5, the pupils also use their knowledge of electrical circuits studied in science lessons to design and make torches. Year 6 pupils take this further by using circuits to assemble motorised vehicles. Pupils make strong frames, attach wheels and axles and complete their structures by covering them with different sorts of paper to make them look realistic. There are further links with other subjects. Pupils make Indian food as part of a study of India and Year 4 pupils make a purse to hold the Roman coins studied in history. Pupils experiment with malleable materials such as salt dough and clay to make animals and plaques. Information and communication technology is used for some design questionnaires and spreadsheets. Pupils are beginning to use the computer to control the movement of a merry-go-round and a lighthouse.
125. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership and has good subject knowledge. He supports staff well and helps to increase their expertise and confidence. The scheme of work makes useful links with other subjects and gives clear guidance on how to teach the necessary skills. Monitoring of the subject is through scrutiny of planning and evaluation and discussion with pupils about their work.

GEOGRAPHY

126. The pupils make unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 and their attainment does not meet the standards expected by the age of 11. In Key Stage 1, the pupils make satisfactory progress and their attainment is close to average by the age of seven. Geography is timetabled but, overall, the subject has received insufficient attention and the rate of pupils' learning is limited. This represents a decline in standards since the last inspection when the subject was judged to be satisfactory.
127. In Year 2, the pupils have an appreciation of environmental issues and record that 'I don't like litter', and 'When there is too much noise'. They know that when recording features on a map that a key is a useful aid and enjoy using one to plot the main buildings and other features in their own area.
128. In Year 4, pupils have an appreciation of the way that the weather affects our lives and know that water seeps into the ground, or flows into rivers on its way to the sea. In Year 6, pupils have made a study of the physical features of the United Kingdom and the features of rivers. They can explain in diagrammatic form a range of terms such as mouth, estuary, mud flat and meander. However, the pupils have little understanding of why places differ, or the reasons for the development of certain

towns and cities. There is little evidence of development in the pupils' mapping skills in relation to scale, plans and the use of atlases.

129. In the two lessons observed, in Years 2 and 3, the teaching was good and the teachers questioning and enthusiasm retained the pupils' interest. In Year 2, good use was made of large scale maps of the area and sketch maps as the pupils were introduced to mapping skills. Pupils in Year 3 had the opportunity to make a survey of the shapes, colour and purpose of the signs and symbols in the area and recorded the information on note pads and with a digital camera.
130. Work in the lessons observed does, however, contrast sharply with the overall picture. In Key Stage 2, the scrutiny of the pupils' work from the previous year reveals that expectations are too low. Much of the work involves merely filling in worksheets with little opportunity for original written work by the pupils.
131. The co-ordinator, who has only been in post for two weeks, is aware of some of the shortcomings. A detailed scheme of work is in place but consideration now needs to be given to the progressive teaching of key skills through the school.

HISTORY

132. The pupils make satisfactory progress and their attainment is in line with that expected nationally by the end of both key stages. This is a similar picture to the last inspection.
133. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy looking at toys from the past and thinking about how they differ from toys today. They are starting to understand some of the differences in how the past can be represented. They list the differences between their lives and those of children who lived 100 years ago and are beginning to perceive why people in the past acted as they did.
134. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 know that living conditions for many people in Victorian Britain were poor especially in towns, and that they affected people's health. When studying the Tudors they consider the role of Henry the Eighth and offer interesting views on why he decided to chop Cardinal Wolsey's head off. Pupils in Year 6 have a sound knowledge of life in war-time Britain. They write sensitively about the thoughts of children their own age who were evacuated, recording that 'my mother gave me her favourite toy so that she would always be with me'. They consider the roles of women during the war and indicate that one of the greatest fears for everybody was poison gas. Pupils are able to compare life in ancient Greece with their own and enjoy discussing the Olympic games and how they have changed over the years.
135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons, the teachers display good subject knowledge and involve the pupils in their own learning whenever possible using a good range of activities that hold the pupils' interest. This was particularly noticeable in a Year 6 lesson on the Greeks. After discussing the Olympic games the pupils were given the opportunity to re-enact the ancient games, through the eyes of a well-known Saturday afternoon television sports programme, with appropriate commentary and introduction. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher used a range of group activities to enhance a lesson on the Romans. Pupils were able to 'dig' for Roman coins and use the internet to gain information about shopping.
136. Work in history is well planned and assessed in accordance with the cycle outlined in the school's scheme of work and carefully monitored by the co-ordinator.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. The pupils make satisfactory progress and by the end of both key stages, standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations. At the time of the last inspection there was a lack of assessment of the pupils' progress. This has been fully rectified and the school has significantly improved its capacity to teach information and communication technology skills effectively.
138. In Key Stage 1, the pupils use a mouse to access simple programs and can click on an item and drag it to where they want it to go. For example, the pupils in Year 1 select different colours and density of line when using a drawing program to design features of an ideal playground. In Year 2, the pupils use computers to word process their stories. They are familiar with a range of keyboard functions such as the cursor keys, the space bar and the delete key. The pupils can produce a simple sign using a graphics program and can save and retrieve their work.
139. In Key Stage 2 the pupils extend their range of skills. They use electronic keyboards to create and organise sounds to compose simple tunes. In Year 4, the pupils are able to log on to a website to research daily life in ancient Rome. Older pupils understand the use of search engines to access information about a range of topics. They use spreadsheets to record their findings from science experiments and are able to combine this information with text to give an illustrated account of their investigations. As yet, the pupils do not use sensors to monitor changes in their science work and control technology is at an early stage of development. However, the pupils do make good use of the digital camera. For example, the pupils in Year 3 investigate street signs and use the digital camera to record their observations. In the upper school, certain pupils act as class experts and they willingly give support to less accomplished classmates.
140. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the most successful lessons, particularly those in Year 6, the lessons are conducted at pace. Clear explanations are given and good links are made between subjects. For example, the pupils' interest in the study of ancient Greece is used to motivate the pupils to search the internet for further information. The class teacher ensures that the correct terminology is used at all times and this further develops the pupils' confidence. In less successful lessons, typically when teachers are explaining techniques in the classroom, the detail of the screen is too small for many pupils to understand the process being described. Furthermore there is often a substantial interval between the explanation and the opportunity for the pupils to practise the skill and this limits progress.
141. The co-ordinator leads the subject well and has managed innovations such as the establishment of the computer suite with a series of networked computers. The curriculum is designed to make full use of both the class-based computers and those in the suite. In actuality, opportunities are missed in different classes through the lack of teacher expertise to make full use of information and communication technology to support learning in different subjects. However, further staff development is planned. The co-ordinator has a clear plan for the development of information and communication technology.

MUSIC

142. Since the last inspection, average standards in both key stages have been maintained and the pupils make satisfactory progress. However, in Key Stage 2 there have been further improvements in some aspects. Standards in many areas, in particular performance, are clearly enhanced by the teaching, guidance and enthusiasm engendered by a specialist music teacher employed by the school for a full day each week.
143. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils sing in tune and have a sound awareness of pulse. Year 1 pupils perform well together in class orchestras and follow a simple musical score to play loud and soft sounds. They use instruments and their bodies well to illustrate fast and slow and demonstrate an understanding of rhythm and intonation. Throughout the key stage pupils increase their knowledge and use of musical terms. Older pupils can name a variety of instruments and can control the use of instruments by reading simple symbols. They learn to sing a range of songs from memory and demonstrate suitable rhythm and pitch. They sing a two part round well and accompany their singing with a range of instruments.
144. The pupils in Key Stage 2 develop their listening skills and discuss images evoked by different types of music. They portray their own interpretation of the music through carefully constructed artwork. By the time they are 11, the pupils can sing expressively with control and precision. Working with the visiting music teacher, the pupils learn to sing a good range of songs. Some of these are very challenging and the pupils show real enjoyment when performing them in a large group. The pupils and staff sing with joy and enthusiasm. However, opportunities to use this uplifting singing at other times of the week or in assemblies are missed.
145. The pupils of all ages have the opportunity to listen to and appreciate music during assemblies. They enter and leave assemblies to a wide variety of recorded music, carefully chosen to create a suitable atmosphere. The music is discussed and pupils show a good knowledge of composers and styles.
146. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with pupils being provided with a range of interesting and worthwhile activities to develop their musical skills. Teachers plan carefully and use a variety of teaching methods. They work hard to complement and develop the work of the visiting teacher. The quality of teaching provided by this music specialist is very good. He has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Lessons are well planned, move at a rapid pace, reinforce previously learned concepts and introduce new skills. In a Year 6 lesson he quickly and successfully taught a large number of pupils to play simple chords on the xylophone to accompany a class song.
147. The music co-ordinator provides good leadership and has updated the policy document and scheme of work. The scheme is well used to support the development of musical skills.
148. The school has a good number of percussion and other instruments that are easily accessible but there are not enough instruments from other cultures. Visiting instrumentalists and singers perform in the school and there are good links with local orchestras.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. Pupils are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum that includes athletics, dance, games, gymnastics, and outdoor and adventurous activities. In addition, pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 have swimming lessons every other half term. Although there is sufficient breadth to the curriculum, the amount of time devoted to the subject is low. For example, during the inspection only six (out of 12) Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 classes had more than one physical education (PE) lesson planned for the week. This is significantly less than the 6% of teaching time normally devoted to PE in each year group in primary schools.
150. Pupils of all abilities are making satisfactory progress and by the end of each key stage they are likely to be close to achieving the national expectations in PE. Standards have been maintained at a similar level since the last inspection.
151. In the only lesson observed in Key Stage 1, the pupils learned how to throw a ball underarm and by the end of the lesson most could throw and roll a ball fairly accurately over a distance of about eight metres. In Key Stage 2, the pupils showed a great deal of enthusiasm as they interpreted various tempos of music. A few pupils moved with great freedom and expression using their whole body to emphasise the changes of mood whereas the majority limited movements mainly to their arms and legs. In an orienteering lesson (as part of outdoor and adventurous activities) the pupils followed specified courses and through good use of teamwork were able to modify their routes to improve their times.
152. Only pupils in Year 3 and Year 4 have swimming lessons and they attend for about 18 sessions during the year at the local swimming pool. The pupils work in five ability groups and have an intensive session of forty-five minutes in the water. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in improving their style and confidence. For many of the pupils much of the time is spent building up their confidence in the water. To assist this process armbands and floats are used well to aid their progress. About a quarter of the pupils are able to swim unaided at this stage and it is predicted that 40% of them will be able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school. This is significantly lower than is found in most primary schools.
153. The quality of teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory but is satisfactory overall. Where the teaching is good, the teachers make good use of demonstration to praise and to show good practice. The pupils are taught new skills and practise them well and the lessons run at a brisk pace with the pupils active for much of the time. Where teaching is less than satisfactory the pupils are not enthused by the activities; they lose interest and the behaviour of a few deteriorates. The situation is made worse because the PE halls are used as thoroughfares and some pupils are easily distracted by the constant flow of people. The teachers use a structured scheme of work that has a positive impact on the teaching by providing for progression through the school and a balance of activities.
154. The PE co-ordinator enthusiastically promotes the subject. He has many good ideas that are included in an action plan for improvement. The school has no playing field and has to make use of the playground and a local park for outdoor activities. Extra-curricular clubs are provided for cricket, dance, football and netball and coaching in basketball will be provided this term by the Birmingham Bullets.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

155. The pupils' attainment is in line with the locally Agreed Syllabus and the pupils make satisfactory progress. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. Pupils throughout the school build on their knowledge of the world's major faiths and display a sound understanding of the differences and similarities associated with them.
156. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a clear appreciation that all faiths need rules for living. They believe that these include treating other people well and 'not saying hurtful things'. They know, for example, that the torah contains the Jewish people's rules for living and helps them to live 'sensibly, thoughtfully and responsibly'. They know the importance of baptism in the Christian church and know that the parents and godparents promise to teach the child right from wrong. They understand the role that John the Baptist played during the early life of Jesus.
157. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 know that signs and symbols play an important part in worship. They understand that a pilgrimage is a sacred journey and that food plays an important part in religious festivals. Year 6 pupils know the importance of light to different religions and record that 'light represents hope' when a candle is lit in the classroom. Pupils appreciate that all people need rules and laws to guide them and that the five pillars of Islam help Muslims to live a good life. They have an awareness of the different places of worship in the area following a range of visits to the mosque, the synagogue, the church and the gurdwara.
158. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. In the best lessons, the teachers encourage the pupils to think deeply and to relate their studies to life at home and at school by asking questions such as, "What would you have done in a similar situation?" Particular emphasis is placed on world issues and the teaching in Year 6 does much to encourage the pupils to think deeply about these. They display a mature approach to the terrorist attack in New York when reflecting on a changing world. However, there are few opportunities provided for the pupils to record their own thoughts.
159. The subject is led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator and the planning appropriately reflects the guidelines of the locally Agreed Syllabus. The subject forms a basis for much other work in school and provides a foundation for the very good social integration that permeates the school.