

INSPECTION REPORT

OSBORNE JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Erdington, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103363

Headteacher: Miss H H James

Reporting inspector: Mr W Goodall
15127

Dates of inspection: 8-12 October 2001

Inspection number: 194225

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Station Road
Erdington
Birmingham

Postcode: B23 6UB

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs K Morris MBE

Date of previous inspection: 28 April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15127	Mr W Goodall	Registered inspector	Art and design	What sort of school is it?
			Design and technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
				How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
11072	Ms S Elomari	Lay inspector	Special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20743	Dr D Lever	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well are pupils or students taught?
			Foundation Stage curriculum	
20707	Mr D Brettell	Team inspector	English	
			Music	
			Religious education	
			Equal opportunities	
27292	Mr J Calvert	Team Inspector	Geography	

6282	Mrs P Raja	Team Inspector	Science	
			Physical education	
			English as an additional language	
12013	Mrs J Joy	Team Inspector	Information and communication technology	
			History	

The inspection contractor was:

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 13
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
 PART B: COMMENTARY	
 HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	 14 - 20
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
 HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	 20 - 25
 HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	 25 - 27
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	 27 - 29
 HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	 29 - 31
 HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	 31 - 34
 WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	 34
 PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	 35 - 39
 PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	 40 - 64

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Osborne Junior and Infant School is a large urban school situated in Erdington, a suburb of Birmingham. It has 365 pupils from the ages of four to eleven, of which 172 are boys and 193 girls. These are all taught in single age classes, with two classes in each year. There are about 50 surplus places in the school, and in common with other schools in the area, its numbers are slowly declining. The school is split-site, with the junior classes being accommodated in modern, open plan classrooms and the infants and reception classes about 100 metres away in a 19th century building shared with an adult education centre. There are no playing fields. The area has been identified as having a high level of social deprivation. The proportion of pupils with free school meals has steadily risen since the previous inspection to its present level of 42% and that of pupils with English as an additional language has also risen to 16%, both being above the national average. There are no significantly large ethnic groups in the school. The turnover of pupils is amongst the highest in Birmingham, the present Year 6 has had a 30% change in pupils since Year 3, and the present Year 2 a 44% change since they entered the school. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, 20%, is around the national average, but that of statemented pupils, 0.5%, is low compared to the national figures. About two thirds of pupils attend the nearby nursery school, but overall the attainment of children on entry is just below that expected.

The school has had a significant period of uncertainty and upheaval over the past four years. This was caused by changes in the senior management that took a long time to resolve. It caused acute budget difficulties and prevented the school from addressing the issues raised in the previous inspection report until recently when a new headteacher and deputy headteacher were appointed. The effect on standards of attainment is difficult to quantify, but at present pupils are reaching overall standards in line with national expectations by the age of seven, but below them by the age of eleven.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Osborne Junior and Infant School is a very effective and well organised school. The leadership and management of the school are very good. Pupils make steady progress as they move through the school, they achieve well when individuals' prior attainment is taken into account. Standards of achievement have improved since the previous inspection, when they were well below national averages. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. The quality of the teaching provided by the school is satisfactory as is the pupils' learning. The very high costs of running the school mean that it is judged currently to provide poor value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and the deputy headteacher provide clear educational direction.
- Leadership and management are very good, and there is a shared commitment to improvement.
- The school cares for its pupils well, it promotes good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning.
- The school has strong support from those parents who responded, who are very pleased with the improvements they have seen in the past two years.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics and science by the age of 11.
- Challenge and more appropriately demanding tasks for the more able and the gifted and talented pupils identified by the school.
- The use of information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum.
- The attendance and punctuality of pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The overall rate of improvement since the previous inspection in April 1997 has been satisfactory. Standards achieved by the time pupils leave the school have improved. The school has set appropriate targets and is on line to meet them, although last year it failed to do so. Teaching has improved considerably, both in the organisation, planning and delivery of lessons. This is due to the recent actions of the senior managers and governors in responding to the issues raised in the previous report, and taking effective measures to move the school on from what was a difficult situation. Attendance has improved, and the school is taking effective measures to improve it further. There have been extensive developments of the ICT resources, although their use is still not effective in supporting learning in all subjects. The recently introduced national guidance for the teaching of children in the Reception Year (Foundation Stage) has been used well to plan for the work of these young children. The work of co-ordinators of the different subjects to support pupils and other teachers has been developed well. There are now effective assessment procedures to track each pupil through their time in school. These are mainly for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, in other subjects the systems are more informal. To help all pupils to attain their full potential, especially the gifted and talented pupils that the school has started to identify, these procedures need to be used more widely. The school ethos is now very positive, supports the raising of standards, and most importantly is now shared with a large proportion of the parents, which is a big improvement since the last inspection.

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				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	C	D	B	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	C	C	D	B	
Science	E	E	E	C	

Standards have improved since the previous inspection, but the trends have been inconsistent. In these results in 2000 there were 38 boys out of 58 pupils in Year 6. Their scores were lower than the girls and the overall figures distorted as a result. The scores in the national tests and assessments in 2001, although having been available for four months, are not yet moderated in a format for publication in this report. In these the infants improved significantly in reading and mathematics, but writing scores were lower. There was a big improvement in the attainment of the boys. The school's analysis indicates that the vast majority of Year 2 pupils exceeded their predicted scores. In the tests of eleven year olds in 2001, the scores in science have improved, but in mathematics they are lower, with English staying about the same. The school analysis based on their performance at the end of the infant stage suggests that these results are overall in line with predictions, but one third of pupils have arrived in the school in that time. Those that were at the school throughout this time have made better than expected progress in mathematics and English. Overall, standards in mathematics and science still need to be improved, and generally the more able pupils need to achieve the higher levels that they are capable of. Standards are good in design and technology and in art and design, in other subjects they are satisfactory, but in ICT they are below that expected nationally. Targets are set for individual pupils to attain by the age of seven and eleven. These are based on the outcomes of regular assessments and the tracking of individual pupils over time. The targets set are appropriate, realistic and challenging, and although they were not met last year, the present Year 6 pupils are judged to be on track to achieve those forecast.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are good. Most pupils are keen to come to school because they enjoy the lessons. They are appreciative of the way the teachers make the lessons interesting.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils respond to the rewards system, and the high expectations of the teachers. There is some concern over the behaviour of a small number of pupils, mostly boys. These are well supported and controlled.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good. Relationships throughout the school are good.
Attendance	Attendance has improved, and the school is taking effective measures to make it better, but it still remains below the national average. The punctuality of some pupils at the start of the day is poor, the school is trying hard to improve this.

Almost all parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their child liked school. Pupils show positive attitudes to their work, are enthusiastic and settle down well in lessons. They try hard and co-operate well. All pupils share in these positive attitudes. They behave well as a rule, are courteous and take responsibility when required to. The rate of exclusion of pupils from the school is low. Pupils feel safe in the school and there are few instances of bullying, which are taken seriously by the staff. Attendance was an issue in the previous report and is now improved, there are extensive measures in place to bring it up to an acceptable level.

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

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

Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Very few lessons were observed that were unsatisfactory, and in 42% it was good or better. This improvement is recent, and has yet to make a significant impact on the standards achieved in national tests at the end of the year. The teaching of English is good in the infants, and in the juniors it is satisfactory, as is the teaching of mathematics in both stages. Teachers make use of the national guidance for teaching literacy and numeracy and plan thoroughly to a common format. Some lessons are long and pupils, particularly the less able, find it difficult to concentrate for the whole time. A positive feature is that different tasks are often set for pupils of different abilities. There is reference to how classroom assistants will help pupils with special educational needs, who make sound progress. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported and progress appropriately. Overall girls are identified as performing better than the boys, and teachers' plans now specify ways of addressing this balance. Boys' performance has

been seen to improve in the latest tests.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	There is a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements. The use of ICT in subjects is still underdeveloped.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into the life of the school. Their needs are identified and planned for at an early stage and effective support is given.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There is good provision for pupils with English as an additional language. A specialist support teacher is used well to work with identified pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils write their own class rules, take care of their environment well, and have taken responsibility for raising money for charities.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The staff know the pupils very well as individuals. The arrangements for their care and protection are good.

There are a number of good links with parents, and the school is trying hard to work in partnership with all of them, rather than the core of very supportive parents who help the school a lot. The home-school agreement is clearly set out, meetings are held to inform parents about the curriculum and school events are now well supported. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with provision for ICT to contribute more to all subjects being planned effectively. The range of other opportunities for pupils has been extended to include visits and extensive Education Business Partnership links as well as extracurricular clubs. The school cares for its pupils well, there are good relationships and good support for all pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership of the school is very effective. There is clear educational direction and skilful management to provide a secure basis for improvement and the raising of standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has worked well to maintain stability over a difficult phase in the school's development. It is now fulfilling its role effectively and supporting the changes that are taking place.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance. This is fed back to class teachers and others, and plans drawn up to remedy any weaknesses identified.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well. Accommodation is not ideal but is not allowed to affect pupils' learning. The new arrangements for ICT are well thought out, and will support learning, but library provision is poor.

The very effective measures the new headteacher has taken to pull the school around after a very difficult phase are to be applauded. Her clear vision and effective management skills, now supported by the new deputy headteacher, involves the governors and other staff in the school in a shared vision of improvement. Although results in tests have yet to be influenced by these changes, the teaching and learning has already shown significant improvement. The governors and senior management are now applying best value principles to increase the efficiency of the school. The accommodation is badly designed for the planned curriculum, but the staffing and resources are appropriate to deliver it.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • Their children are progressing well. • The good behaviour of pupils. • The high standard of teaching. • The school is friendly and approachable. • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. • The school is well led and managed. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons. • The information they receive from the school.

Indications are that the majority of parents support the school. This is a big improvement, as relations have been particularly poor in the past. Few parents returned the questionnaires or attended the parents' meeting, but there were very few negative comments. Inspection evidence supports the parents' positive views of the school. The range of activities available to pupils outside lessons is actually wide, there are few after school clubs, mainly in sport and the arts, but other visits, links and initiatives are provided for pupils to extend their experiences, and these are judged appropriate. Information for parents is also judged to be satisfactory, annual reports are of sound quality, and there are opportunities for parents to consult both formally and informally with staff and governors.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The inspection took place at the start of the autumn term, six weeks into the school year. The results of the 2001 national tests of pupils, although available for four months, have not yet been officially published or standardised. The school has analysed and acted upon these results, but they are not ready to be used in this report, and the 2000 figures are the ones that appear in the summary and school data. Pupil mobility is very high, amongst the highest in Birmingham. The school has analysed the numbers joining and leaving very thoroughly, and the progress of the group of pupils that have stayed in the school the whole time is better than those that join towards the end of a key stage. The team of seven inspectors observed 76 teaching sessions and interviewed staff, pupils, parents and governors. They looked at work in folders and in progress, and reviewed documents and plans.
- 2 The attainment of pupils aged five years and under is on average lower than that expected of pupils of this age. At the time of the inspection, reception children were beginning only their second week of full time attendance in the reception classes, and teachers had not yet fully identified each child's individual learning needs. This is because the inspection took place before the local authority's assessment of these children had taken place. Staff had received assessment information from both the local nursery, which about two thirds of the children had attended, and other local authority nursery schools. Scrutiny of records shows that the standard of attainment of children when they enter reception varies from year to year. This affects the proportion of those that reach the level typical for children when they start Year 1. Many do not attain these early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development. Most children do attain them in personal and social development, creative development, physical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. The performance of children at the time of the inspection indicates that they are likely to attain all the early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.
- 3 The results of national tests and assessments at the end of the infant stage in 2000 showed that the percentages of pupils attaining the level expected, (Level 2), in reading and science was well below the national average, in writing they were in line, and in mathematics they were below that expected. Compared to schools with a similar proportion of free school meals, the number of pupils achieving the expected levels was average for reading and science, with mathematics above and writing well above the average. The performance of boys was markedly lower than that of the girls, and of the 58 pupils who took the tests, 38 were boys.
- 4 In the 2001 tests and assessments, reading and mathematics scores have improved significantly, but writing scores are now lower. There was a significant increase in the attainment of the boys. The school's analysis of pupils' progress from the assessment undertaken when they arrived at the school through to these tests shows that the great majority has exceeded their predicted scores. None failed to meet their targets in

reading and mathematics, and only five pupils failed to reach their target for writing. The findings from the inspection visit indicate that standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are now in line with national expectations by the age of seven. The performance of the more able pupils is however a cause for concern. Fewer pupils than expected attain the higher levels in the tests at seven.

- 5 In English, standards of attainment are now judged to be in line with national averages by the end of the infant stage. The trend over the four year period from 1996 to 2000 shows that reading performance has dropped from below to well below average, compared with writing, which has remained close to national expectation. Inspectors judged that reading has improved since the 2000 tests and that the implementation of the Literacy Hour is having a positive effect upon performance, revealed in the 2001 tests. In reading, the more able pupils at age seven can understand examples of simple text and they are able to express opinions about the story being read. They read fluently and are usually able to decode an unfamiliar word by using letter sounds or breaking the word into smaller sections. In writing they are beginning to write in sentences that have capital letters and full stops. Their handwriting is beginning to show consistency in terms of letter formation and size. However, there were no examples seen of pupils writing with joined letters.
- 6 Overall, attainment in mathematics is now around that expected for pupils aged seven years. Since the previous inspection, the school's results have varied from one year to the next, reflecting the different attainment patterns of pupils. The overall trend is broadly in line with the national trend. Year 2 pupils add and subtract confidently, can calculate amounts of money accurately, and correctly identify shapes, indicating which fit best together. Higher attaining pupils can use fractions, tell the time, and use a range of mathematical vocabulary to describe what they are doing.
- 7 Standards of attainment in science are broadly in line with the national average by the age of seven. Progress through the infants is sound. It shows a gradual increase in knowledge and skills. Sound foundations are set through discussions, exploratory play and through class routines such as keeping the daily weather chart and calendar. All pupils are developing simple procedures for recording observations. However, most pupils do not use a sufficiently broad range of scientific language when explaining about their work and their findings in investigations.
- 8 Pupils with special educational needs progress appropriately in the infants, but more able pupils, particularly the gifted and talented pupils identified by the school in a preliminary audit, do not attain the higher levels that could be expected of them. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups receive good support and achieve appropriately.
- 9 An analysis of the outcomes of the national tests and assessments at the end of the junior years in 2000 indicates that, compared to all schools, the proportion of pupils who reached the level expected, (Level 4), was below the national average in English, mathematics and science. This is actually an improvement on the previous inspection as they were well below at that time. When compared to similar schools this figure was above the average in English and mathematics, and in line in science. In the most recent tests, in 2001, science scores have improved, but mathematics scores are lower,

with English staying about the same. The school has analysed these results and compared them to the same pupils' results at the end of the infant stage. This indicates that the results were overall in line with expectations, but one third of the pupils had come to the school since that time, and of the pupils that arrived, only two made Level 4 in writing, and five reached it in mathematics. Detailed analysis undertaken by the new deputy headteacher indicates that the pupils made better than expected progress in mathematics and English.

- 10 Judgements based upon evidence gathered during the inspection show that, overall, the attainment of pupils in English is in line with standards expected for eleven year olds. At age eleven almost all pupils are writing with ink pens. They take a pride in presentation and are using joined letters. In their extended writing, eleven year olds were using complex sentences with a variety of connecting words or phrases. They were also manipulating the clauses in sentences to explore how the meaning can be changed. Another group of pupils were observed re-telling a passage from *Treasure Island* through the eyes of a character other than the narrator. In their reading, the older pupils showed that they understood ideas and events and were able to use inference and deduction. They also demonstrated their ability to use the library as a source of information.
- 11 Attainment in mathematics of eleven year olds is below the national expectation. Tracking of individual pupils indicates that such is the movement of pupils in and out of school that many of the Year 6 pupils had not attended this school at age seven. Consequently, the comparison of performance by reference to pupils' prior attainment should be viewed with some caution. The 2001 national assessment tests indicate a fall in performance with the numbers of pupils attaining the expected standard lower than teachers predicted. This is partly explained by the absence on the test day of several pupils forecast to attain at or above the expected standard. In Year 6 pupils work out proportions and change fractions to decimals. Even the lower attainers can match fractions of equivalent value, explain the value of decimal places and identify different types of triangles.
- 12 In the juniors, inspection findings are that overall attainment is below the national expectation in science. The knowledge and understanding gained by the age of seven is extended to include more detail. However, as pupils move through this stage the depth and breadth in science is constrained by a general lack of opportunities to research for information or independent study and more reliance on set tasks which results in progress over time being slower than in the infants. Pupils in Year 6 investigate a range of materials and they develop their skills in recording their findings.
- 13 There is a difference between the performance of boys and girls at both ages seven and eleven. The girls consistently score better than boys. Teachers are aware of this difference and strategies are being put in place to raise the performance of boys. The more able pupils throughout the school are not reaching standards of which they are capable. The school is working hard to raise standards and they are succeeding in getting a higher number of pupils reaching the nationally expected level. However, the more able pupils are not being provided with sufficient challenge to encourage them to reach even higher grades. Pupils who have English as an additional language

make satisfactory progress and are well supported, as are those pupils who have special educational needs. Both groups enjoy an inclusive environment and are well encouraged to make appropriate progress.

- 14 The trends over the past three years in both the infants and juniors have been very inconsistent, there has been a great deal of upheaval at the school, and staff have been unsettled. Overall trends show a steady improvement in all core subjects, and progress is broadly in line with the national picture. The lower performance of the boys has held down this improvement, but their results were better last year. Teachers' assessments have not been very accurate, particularly in mathematics, and the need for better moderation and training has been recognised. Both Year 6 teachers changed during last year, and the targets and teachers' assessments were based on a brief period of acquaintance with the pupils.
- 15 The school sets appropriate targets for its national test results for eleven year olds each year, it set challenging targets last year, but failed to reach them. This was partially due to the number of pupils who left or arrived during the year, and to the changes in teachers. The school uses the performance data it collects very well. The deputy headteacher analyses it carefully to compare results to those of other schools and identifies particular individuals and groups who are then targeted for specific support. Action is also taken to improve the teaching and learning in the core subjects in order to raise standards even further, and the school is judged to be on course to meet its targets for next year.
- 16 Overall pupil attainment in ICT remains below that expected nationally in both the infants and juniors. Statutory requirements in this subject are now met which is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils progress well in the lessons seen, particularly in the new ICT suite, which is a good resource.
- 17 Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with staff indicate that there are satisfactory standards being reached by both infants and juniors in religious education (RE). Standards, as shown in the samples of pupils' work, indicate that children are reaching the appropriate levels set out in the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for RE.
- 18 Standards are above that expected nationally in art and design in both the infants and juniors. Pupils progress well using a range of media and approaches. Design and technology is studied on an irregular basis, but standards are still good in the work seen and pupils are progressing well in both this subject and in art and design. Little work was seen in geography or music, but standards are in line with that expected, as they are in history where pupils develop their skills of enquiry and knowledge of chronology well. In physical education pupils are attaining standards which are broadly typical for pupils of this age range.
- 19 The effective use of both literacy and numeracy in other subjects as well as in English and mathematics has been enhanced across subjects by the introduction and use of the national strategies. These have enabled teachers to support their pupils' learning in science and design and technology through, for example, their use of accurate measuring and the analysis of graphs. Literacy skills are employed well in the reading and writing tasks that they complete in history, geography, RE and music.

- 20 Progress is satisfactory for those pupils identified as having special educational needs, and for those who have English as an additional language. The school has identified pupils who have particular talents in certain subjects, but as yet has no formal procedures for meeting their specific needs or measuring their progress. The performance of boys has been an issue, but recent results indicate that this is now not such a problem, and the inspectors found no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls. There were also no differences found in the attainment of any other specific groupings in the school. Overall progress is satisfactory. Although the juniors are still attaining lower than the national expectation, they are doing well compared to pupils in similar schools. The progress of the Year 6 pupils in 2000, measured against their previous attainment, was stated to be very low in the national data provided. This appears to be a hiccup, as the school's more detailed figures show that the Year 6 pupils had progressed very well in 2001.
- 21 Overall, most pupils in the school are achieving appropriately. There has been a long period where the school's procedures have been unsettled. The staff have been largely successful in not allowing this to upset the pupils or affect their learning. The pupils make progress in line with the national trends as they move through the school, a judgement supported by the exemplary tracking records kept on them in the core subjects. This shows their gradual improvement in these subjects, informs the teachers of each pupil's performance and the areas for attention, and provides pupils with targets for improvement. They apply themselves to this work well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 22 The majority of pupils are keen to come to school because they enjoy the lessons and activities provided. Most of the pupils are enthusiastic about their school and appreciative of the way their teachers 'make lessons fun'. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their child liked school. Pupils generally have positive attitudes to their work and often show enthusiasm for it. For example, in a Year 1 history lesson pupils were amazed by the old toys the teacher had brought in and learned to distinguish new toys from old ones, partly by looking at what they were made of. Pupils settle quickly to work in most lessons and almost all concentrate well. They try hard to complete the work they are set. Pupils with special educational needs share in these positive attitudes. They show enthusiasm for their work and concentrate hard in lessons, especially in those lessons where the work matches their needs well. The good quality of individual support provided for pupils with special educational needs means that they are able to participate fully in their lessons. For example, in a Year 4 class during literacy lessons, the classroom assistant worked effectively with a small group to ensure that they listened well and did not disrupt others. The pupils responded very well to this and delighted in the team points they received for their contributions to the lessons.
- 23 Behaviour in lessons is good overall. Pupils respond positively to the high expectations teachers have of them. They are well motivated by the team points and other rewards they receive routinely for behaving appropriately. However, there is a small number of pupils, mostly boys, whose behaviour gives cause for concern. They are well supported through targeted support and individual behaviour plans so that

they are usually able to learn well. During the inspection, 76 lessons were observed. In 11 lessons behaviour was judged to be very good and it was good in 36 lessons. Behaviour was good or very good in over half of the lessons that were observed during the inspection. In 26 lessons behaviour was satisfactory. Behaviour was unsatisfactory in only three of the lessons seen. The quality of pupils' behaviour makes a significant contribution to the progress they make.

- 24 Behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes is good and sometimes very good. Movement around the school is quiet and orderly. Pupils are supervised when large numbers of them are moving around the building but at other times they keep up the high standards they know are expected of them. In the dining halls, pupils are usually polite and well mannered. Lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion. In the playgrounds, pupils play harmoniously together. In both the infant and junior playgrounds there are markings for games and also places to sit. This encourages friendly relationships. Pupils are almost always polite to one another and to adults. Pupils look after their own property well and take good care of the school's books and other resources. Almost all the parents who completed the questionnaire or attended the meeting stated that behaviour was good. There have been two fixed term exclusions in the last school year.
- 25 Opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning are good. For example pupils work well in small groups during the literacy and numeracy lessons and usually stay on task when the teacher does not directly supervise them. In a Year 1 literacy lesson pupils were reminded that they should try to work independently in their groups for ten minutes and achieved the target. In a Year 2 numeracy lesson pupils collaborated well, taking responsibility for different aspects of the task. Pupils are willing to help their teachers by undertaking a range of classroom jobs. They take such responsibilities seriously and take pride in having a tidy classroom. Overall, the school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils of all ages to take responsibility and pupils respond well to them. The school provides a range of opportunities for pupils to show initiative. Some of these are in lessons, where pupils are expected to make independent choices. Recently, pupils in Years 5 and 6 asked if they could raise money for the American disaster by selling unwanted toys, books and games. The school supported this and pupils sold their goods in the hall every day for two weeks, raising a considerable amount of money.
- 26 The school is successful in fostering pupils' personal development. Throughout the school, pupils have a good range of opportunities to discuss their feelings and responses, for example at circle time and in personal, health and social education lessons. They learn to listen with respect to the views of others. Pupils enjoy the many opportunities they have to work together in pairs and small groups. They are willing to help one another. For example, in a Year 1 numeracy lesson pupils enjoyed helping one another out and showing off their knowledge. Pupils share books and equipment sensibly.
- 27 Relationships throughout the school are good. Staff support pupils very well, and consistently use praise and rewards, such as team points, to good effect. Pupils co-operate very well with each other. They develop a growing understanding of the

impact of what they do on others as they move through the school, and this helps them to show respect for other's views and beliefs. Instances of bullying are infrequent. Pupils understand the importance of reporting bullying to staff and are confident that teachers and other staff take their concerns seriously. Pupils feel safe in school.

- 28 Attendance was a key issue in the previous inspection report. At that time, attendance was 88% and the level of unauthorised absence was very high. The school has been successful in raising attendance levels by 4% to 92%. This represents a significant improvement, although attendance levels remain well below the national average. The level of unauthorised absence has also fallen but remains above the national average. A significant number of pupils arrive late in the mornings, but they settle down quickly once they are in lessons. Registration procedures comply with statutory requirements. The school has a wide range of strategies in place to reduce lateness and continue to increase attendance. Parents are frequently reminded of the need for regular, prompt attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 29 The pupils are taught in fourteen classes, two per year from reception to Year 6. The school occupies two sites, with the eight junior classes in a modern building and the reception and infant classes in a Victorian building located some two or three minutes walk away in the next road. Considering the high numbers of pupils who are admitted or leave during a typical school year, the classes in each year group are matched as closely as possible in terms of the ability range and numbers of boys and girls. Every class has a full-time teacher and, in the reception and infant classes, a full-time classroom assistant. Part-time teachers support pupils with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language, usually but not exclusively, in the classes of younger pupils. The deputy headteacher, in her joint role as school improvement co-ordinator and special educational needs co-ordinator, works alongside colleagues throughout the school.
- 30 Seventy-six teaching sessions were observed during the four days the inspectors were visited the school. The size of this sample does not reflect the length of time spent in observing whole lessons, many of which extended to or beyond an hour. Taken with other evidence, including scrutiny of teachers' records and planning, talking to them, looking at pupils' work and displays, it is sufficient to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in each subject of the school's curriculum. Inspectors focused particularly on the teaching of English and mathematics and observed the teaching of these subjects in all classes.
- 31 The quality of teaching seen in the school was satisfactory or better in 93% of the lessons seen. This represents an improvement since the last inspection of the school in 1997. Teaching ranged from excellent (one lesson) to unsatisfactory (five lessons). Teaching in 32 lessons (42%) was good or better. This also represents an improvement from the previous inspection. The improvements in the quality of teaching, according to the school's and local education authority's monitoring reports (which match inspection findings), are recent. Consequently, the impact on the progress, achievements and learning experiences of all the pupils cannot yet be seen in the school's results in national assessments of performance.

- 32 Approximately two thirds of children transfer to the reception classes from the nearby local authority nursery. Liaison between the school and nursery is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Staff in reception classes work to ensure that by the end of the very effective induction programme, all children feel happy, safe and valued for the individuals they are. No one is excluded or disadvantaged by ability, gender, background or pre-reception educational experience. The work of the classes is ably managed and organised. Support staff work as a team and contribute effectively to the quality of teaching that is satisfactory overall with many good features. All children benefit from the subject knowledge that the adults in class have, which has been developed by teachers in partnership with nursery colleagues, their awareness of the needs of young learners and their ability to make learning relevant and fun. For example, one of the part-time teachers read the story of *Little Lumpty* with such vitality, whilst the class teacher acted out events and used objects to depict them, that children sat in wonderment and talked about it enthusiastically afterwards. Such teaching makes lessons enjoyable but also helps develop children's skills in listening and speaking. On a very few occasions, teachers evaluate what children are doing rather than what they are learning. This is more noticeable in 'free flow' sessions when children can choose to move between rooms to select activities. Teachers are aware of this and are about to introduce a more rigorous monitoring scheme.
- 33 The learning and development needs of reception children are clearly understood. At the time of the inspection the local authority's assessment had not taken place. Even though teachers had received information about assessments carried out in the summer term in the nurseries, they were rightly still in the process of determining the precise learning and development needs of each child. Planned work acknowledges the information received and reflects the different areas of learning appropriately. Children are happy and secure in school and enjoy good relationships with adults and each other. They understand class and school routines and enjoy opportunities to work independently.
- 34 In the infant classes, 22 lessons were observed. In 21 lessons (96%) the quality of teaching was at least satisfactory. In 10 lessons (46%) it was good or very good. The quality of teaching was good in English and science and satisfactory with good features in mathematics. An effective element of the teaching of these subjects is the way in which teachers use the first part of lessons to remind pupils of what they had previously learned and then to make explicit what they are going to learn now. Pupils are moved on in their learning in a sensitive but purposeful and challenging manner. The final part of lessons is used effectively to assess what learning had actually taken place. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, having questioned pupils briskly about the previous day's work on addition and subtraction to twenty, the teacher gave a list of problems which required pupils to develop new strategies to solve them: the last part of the lesson was used well to challenge pupils to explain how they had completed the task. Learning was limited where tasks made insufficient demands on higher attaining pupils, noted in English and mathematics lessons in particular, or where access to tasks was restricted by a lack of reading skills.
- 35 In the junior classes, 48 lessons were observed. In 44 lessons (92%) the quality of

teaching was at least satisfactory. In 20 lessons (39%) it was good or very good and in one it was excellent. The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science was satisfactory. In mathematics no lessons were less than satisfactory. As in the infant classes, teachers usually plan the introductions and final sessions of lessons in these subjects carefully. The most effective teaching occurs when teachers have high expectations of pupils' conduct and performance and ensure that no time is wasted. In an English lesson in Year 6, pupils were able to form complex sentences after tackling tasks that required them to extend and apply what they already knew in a new and challenging situation. They responded well to their teacher's confidence, enthusiasm and love of the subject and were happy to work quickly and sustain their effort for an hour. On a few occasions, the poor behaviour of one or two pupils distracts both teacher and classmates and hinders the progress of pupils. Teachers are usually aware of the key vocabulary associated with tasks and encourage pupils to use appropriate language themselves. However, there are instances where pupils do not complete tasks because they have general language difficulty that slows down their rate of working either until they manage to puzzle out the language, or receive help from their teacher or another pupil. Tasks for higher attaining pupils sometimes provide only further practice of work they can already do – where additional activities are planned to challenge them further, these pupils make the progress they are capable of.

- 36 In literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers plan thoroughly to a common format and make effective use of the national guidance available. This ensures that lessons make the best use of time available. Opening sessions are usually brisk with teachers questioning pupils effectively. Mental number sessions are normally conducted with vigour and pupils are reminded constantly, including in their homework diaries, of the need to learn multiplication tables. However, some lessons are too long to sustain pupils' concentration – this is particularly true of some numeracy lessons observed which exceeded an hour. The greatest effects of this are on lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs whose progress falters visibly. Sometimes, it is only the pupils' general compliance or the teacher's superhuman efforts to maintain pupils' interest that ensure the lessons remain intact.
- 37 The teaching of phonics is reasonably structured in the reception and infant classes, though many of the younger pupils confuse letter names and sounds and try to guess their way out of difficulties. There is great emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills and an insistence throughout the school that it is respectful to listen to and consider what anyone says. The school's aims are put into practice. Many pupils of all ages and abilities find difficulty in expressing or explaining themselves – some, including most pupils with English as an additional language, will persist until they have conveyed their message, but others give up easily and say, "I don't know" or "I can't". Adults are very patient and sympathetic and respond kindly with, "You do ... you can ...". Pupils, too, respond well and often try to work out what a friend or classmate is trying to say.
- 38 During the inspection, it was possible to observe only three lessons of ICT in the junior classes. The quality of teaching was good in two lessons and satisfactory in one. There is evidence of the developing use of ICT to support learning across different subjects, for example in a Year 6 science lesson where pupils, studying thermal insulation, recorded water temperature on a line graph which they then

developed on an EXCEL spreadsheet. Reception children use a computer program, *Paint Magic*, to design faces and learn how to control the mouse to fill in colours or erase mistakes. The work that is done is limited, but planning shows how improvements are to be made. Scrutiny of past work shows how infant classes used computers to design and print invitation cards. Teachers now have access to a computer suite of ten networked computers and the 'stand alone' computers in both the infant and junior buildings are also networked, with internet connection. This increased provision, as well as the effective support of a technician and the development of teachers' subject knowledge, expertise and confidence through attendance on training courses, is already having a positive effect, but the longer-term impact on standards has yet to be seen. Nevertheless, this situation is an improvement on that described in the previous inspection report.

- 39 It was possible to see only two lessons in religious education (RE) during the inspection. The quality of teaching in these lessons, one in an infant and one in a junior class was satisfactory. Although no design and technology or geography lessons were observed, 12 lessons, spread across the infant and junior classes, reflected the teaching of art, history, music and physical education (PE). Both effective and poor teaching was seen in art and music. The teaching of PE was satisfactory overall with some good features. The teaching of history was good overall. However, these judgements relate to small samples of lessons seen and should be viewed with some caution. This and other evidence gained during the inspection, indicates that the quality of teaching in these subjects is satisfactory overall. A common element in the effective teaching is teachers' good subject knowledge and the confidence with which they teach the subject, for example in a Year 1 PE lesson where the teacher demonstrated and danced to music, showing the pupils what they might try. Where teaching was less effective or unsatisfactory, the weaknesses usually related to poorly planned activities and poor pupil management, resulting in pupils making little or no progress.
- 40 Lessons are usually well planned and what the pupils are to learn is identified, more clearly in English and mathematics where teachers refer to national guidelines. Different tasks are often clearly set out for pupils of lower, average and higher abilities and, sometimes, reference is made to how classroom assistants will support pupils with special educational needs. There are times when provision for these pupils is not identified in plans but practice reveals that the classroom assistants were involved in the planning and know what contribution they will make. Apart from odd occasions when they are passive in lessons, usually when the teacher is introducing or reviewing a lesson, their support enhances the quality of learning for pupils.
- 41 Overall, teaching meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs satisfactorily and they make sound progress as they move through the school. The school rightly seeks now to improve its monitoring of pupils who are experiencing difficulties, including any newly admitted to school during the school year, so that they can be included on the special educational needs register if and for as long as appropriate. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and make satisfactory progress during their time in school. They are valued as individuals which makes them happy and ensures they always do their best. A detailed analysis of the results of tests showed that, overall, girls performed better than boys.

Consequently, teachers planned activities to address the specific needs of boys. The 2001 national tests in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged seven and eleven demonstrate that, the performance of boys has improved. This confirms the effectiveness of teachers' response to an identified difficulty in pupils' learning.

- 42 Teachers evaluate pupils' work by scrutinising it, discussing it both with pupils and amongst themselves and, where they can, observing pupils at work. They analyse the results of tests to identify trends in pupils' attainment and to assist in setting performance targets. The school is aware of the high number of pupils who leave or are admitted throughout the school year and has tracked the performance of the core of pupils who have remained at the school between Years 2 and 6. These records show that this group of pupils makes sound progress year on year. Scrutiny of teachers' assessments of pupils' performance in national tests in 2001 shows teachers over-estimated the numbers of pupils aged eleven likely to attain the national standard expected for pupils of this age in English and mathematics. However, teachers' records show that the result was adversely affected by the absence of several higher attainers at the time of the tests. Pupils are kept informed of their progress by having their work regularly marked, although the school's marking policy is inconsistently applied. In the best practice, teachers add comments that will help pupils move forward in their learning. They also add helpful notes to refer back to at a later date. Reports to parents are also of mixed quality. The most helpful are comprehensive, written without jargon and personal to each pupil. Homework, set regularly, extends pupils' learning when it reflects the work covered in lessons.
- 43 Most pupils make satisfactory progress throughout school, although the higher attainers could do a lot better in gaining the higher levels in national tests. The rate at which they learn is directly related to the quality of teaching they receive. Where teachers have high expectations, set challenging, carefully thought out tasks, are confident and manage pupils well, pupils make good progress and enjoy what they do and the success they are able to celebrate. On occasions, teachers do not set sufficiently challenging tasks for higher attaining pupils, which means they do not learn as quickly as they might. The school has recently established a register for gifted and talented pupils and teachers' planning will identify appropriate tasks for them. This is timely.
- 44 The deputy headteacher, recently appointed, is deployed in a very effective way to model literacy and numeracy lessons in the infant and junior classes. Not only does she require pupils, some of whom are specifically targeted in her lessons, to make great efforts, but also supports staff in developing the quality of their teaching. Her subsequent monitoring of teaching, together with that of the headteacher and co-ordinators, helps the school to evaluate its effectiveness. This is already having a positive effect on the quality of teaching but the impact on standards is not yet seen. The large proportion of pupils who come to the school during the year are tracked well and their needs assessed and planned for. The vast majority of pupils almost always behave well in lessons. They want to learn and to succeed. Older pupils say that school is now a happier place to be and praise their teachers that this is so.

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

- 45 The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements, which is an improvement since the previous inspection when there were significant gaps in provision. The balance of time for different subjects is appropriate, although some of the literacy and numeracy sessions are quite long and pupils, especially the younger ones, are quite tired by the end. The wide range of activities and experiences addresses the interests, aptitudes and needs of the different individuals, including those who have special educational needs. Newly developed policies and schemes of work for all subjects are starting to help teachers to plan effectively and contribute positively to the continuity and progression of pupils' learning.
- 46 The quality of the curriculum being provided for pupils under the statutory school age is good. Since the previous inspection teachers have very effectively developed their planning to reflect the new national materials for the Foundation Stage. They relate clearly to helping their pupils address and achieve the early learning goals.
- 47 Numeracy and literacy are taught each day in all classes. Other subjects are included in a weekly timetable as separate lessons, although some aspects of religious education (RE), geography and history are combined in a topic approach, especially in the infants, and some of the design and technology strands are covered in science or art and design. A feature of the planning is the way cross curricular links are made, for example when design and technology work is being covered in RE to make structures or in English lessons to make puppets. Each scheme of work is based on those provided by the Qualifications and Assessment Authority (QCA), but customised and improved by the subject co-ordinators and the two teachers in each year, who plan together. The locally agreed syllabus provides a structure for the planning of lessons in RE.
- 48 Some teachers provide specialist teaching and support for other classes, as in music, and the deputy headteacher has developed a programme of support in specific classes for targeted pupils to boost them up to an appropriate level in English and mathematics. Other initiatives are used effectively to identify and support pupils who may not be progressing as expected. Individual teachers' plans take account of the wide range of ability within each class, although the higher achievers do not always get the extension work indicated.
- 49 The provision for learning outside the school day is good, it includes a range of lunchtime and after school clubs and training. Although limited to sports and the arts, they are an improvement on those available at the time of the previous inspection. There is also a very good selection of opportunities for pupils to extend their learning outside the classroom. These include a sports day, Christmas concert, summer drama production and harvest festival. There are also a wide range of community links, for example an excellent range of partnerships organised through the education business partnership, fund raising activities, often initiated by the children, and visits to

community events such as Asian dance and Caribbean story telling. The school is also targeting lottery funds for out of school activities on a more formal basis. The school uses internet links well, with appropriate safeguards, to make links beyond the local area.

- 50 The curriculum provides access and opportunity for all the pupils in the school. Physical access is provided for disabled pupils where appropriate and is being extended to all areas. Outside agencies such as an outreach worker from a special school are used to consult on special educational needs. A teacher employed by the ethnic minority and traveller achievement service teaches in the school one day a week with identified pupils. This was observed to be very effective. The school has clear and well implemented policies on anti-racism, anti-bullying and equal opportunities, and an inclusive environment is evident, with standards fund money being used well to support it. No groups of pupils are disadvantaged if their parents or carers cannot make a financial contribution to learning activities and trips during the school day.
- 51 Arrangements for providing personal and social education for all the pupils are satisfactory. There has been a programme of staff development to increase the school's provision and focus planning, including the use of circle time. There is now a coherent programme for the delivery of health education, sex education, and attention to drug misuse, which is appropriate to the ages and needs of pupils, although its delivery is still inconsistent. Records of pupils' personal details are kept centrally, and their health care plans distributed to class teachers. The behaviour policy is based on assertive discipline and a framework for intervention, which provide a good structure for support.
- 52 There are positive links with the neighbouring nursery school, with regular visits and meetings. Year 5 and 6 pupils take part in a sports challenge at a local secondary school. As the school has no playing fields, the infants have arranged with the independent girls' school across the road to use their sports facilities when available.
- 53 The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The staff have received training from the Birmingham Advisory and Support Service to enhance their awareness of spiritual development, which was an issue in the previous inspection report. Staff are encouraged to highlight opportunities for this in their planning. Examples were seen in the reception classes, where children reacted with wonder to the use of puppets, and when they realised that words can look like what they mean. In history pupils realised that a stuffed koala had once been alive and that a drum was covered in pigskin. There were several opportunities in RE for reflection and spiritual awareness.
- 54 Acts of worship are well planned and regular. All pupils can attend, and if not, parents are invited in to work with their children in that time. Pupils contribute to assemblies and venture answers to questions about values and beliefs, especially in the light of recent conflicts. This enables the school to address issues of right and wrong in a communal context. A lot of work is done with individuals and the way that moral codes are promoted throughout the school. School rules are short and relevant, reinforced by class rules that the pupils have written. They are aware of them and

even the youngest pupils can explain why they are there. One of the classes is known as being quite difficult to control, but the way that the teachers manage it to overcome potential problems successfully without extensive sanctions is a good example of the school's moral code in practice.

- 55 The school encourages pupils to take responsibility where possible. School routines are orderly and pupils co-operate well around the building and in the playgrounds. They are reminded of what they have to do before lunchtimes and breaks, and support staff are used well to reinforce the school's provision for social development.
- 56 The schools promotes the pupils' cultural development through a range of visits and events such as Asian dance and song, and local theatres and galleries. Teachers use of a range of cultural resources in history, geography, art and design and RE to widen their classes experience outside their immediate locality.
- 57 The school makes effective use of external agencies to support pupils with special educational needs and those whose behaviour is a cause for concern. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into the life of the school and take part in all activities.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 58 The arrangements for ensuring the welfare of pupils are good. The good quality of relationships throughout the school helps to ensure that adults in school know the pupils very well. This enables the care pupils receive to be of a high quality and tailored to their individual needs. Procedures for Child Protection are in place and take full account of the locally agreed procedures. Appropriate training has taken place and there is a good level of awareness amongst staff. Good attention is paid to health, safety and hygiene in lessons such as physical education, including swimming, and science. A formal health and safety audit is carried out regularly and the school has recently addressed a number of issues successfully. Staff report any issues as they arise. Procedures for first aid are good. Parents are informed routinely of any illness or injury suffered by their child at school.
- 59 Throughout the school there is good support for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs are identified at an early stage and assessment procedures are well established and appropriate. Individual education plans of good quality are in place and used well in the classroom. Targets are reviewed regularly. The school ensures that the conditions of the statements of special educational need are fully met. Individual education plans in place, and used effectively by teachers and support staff, enabling these pupils to make good progress. Support staff are deployed effectively and provide sensitive help in the classroom. Pupils are also withdrawn from lessons for small group work, such as additional support for literacy. This is well matched to the needs of the pupils and makes a positive contribution to their learning. The school works effectively with a range of outside agencies, such as the educational psychology service, to ensure that pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support.
- 60 The school monitors attendance effectively on a day-to-day basis. Good procedures

are in place to follow up any unreported absences, including a telephone call home before lunchtime on the first day of absence. Parents and carers are made aware of the school's expectations for regular, prompt attendance but a significant minority fails to comply. In particular, the school has drawn parents' attention to the disruption caused to pupils' education by holidays, but this is an ongoing cause of concern, especially when holidays coincide with the SATs tests. The education welfare service is involved in those cases where attendance is a cause for concern. Levels of attendance have risen by four per cent since the time of the previous inspection. The school is currently involved in a project aimed at reducing the level of lateness in the mornings.

- 61 There are extensive and effective systems for assessing how well pupils are doing academically. The newly appointed deputy headteacher and the assessment co-ordinator have developed a clear and comprehensive assessment policy that all staff are aware of. They are starting to implement it effectively in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, but more work needs to be done in other subjects when it is prioritised.
- 62 Pupils' personal development is monitored carefully, there are central records and health care plans are distributed to all class teachers. The positive links with the nursery school means that detailed profiles of the children moving between the two are provided for teachers, who use them to plan their lessons. Parents of the children entering reception are offered individual consultations and can attend an induction afternoon. The pupils have a phased entry to the reception class, and the inspection took place during their second week of full-time schooling.
- 63 Assessment arrangements conform to the national requirements at the end of the infant and junior stages. The teachers' assessments are generally sound, but last year the Year 6 teachers' estimates were quite at odds with their actual scores because they took over the classes during the year. Pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science is tracked carefully, they are regularly tested and assessed in these subjects, and the resulting data analysed and acted upon. In other subjects the assessments are more informal and rely on the teachers' memory and knowledge of the pupil. The reports to parents are generally comprehensive and detailed, but the use of statement banks makes them impersonal. The comments on the core subjects are appropriate and helpful, but in other subjects they are most often a list of things the pupil has done rather than a pointer to how well they have achieved, and what they need to do to improve.
- 64 The teachers know their pupils well, and what their strengths and weaknesses are. Most staff have taught in the school for some time and know many of the families that send children to the school. Pupils and parents are informed of how well they are progressing regularly. Time is allocated at the end of each year for class teachers to discuss the social and personal issues of the children they will be receiving. Those pupils who arrive during the year are integrated well into classes and their assessment records discussed with relevant staff.
- 65 Assessment of pupils with special educational needs is carried out effectively and in line with the nationally set out Code of Practice. The school supports the pupils with English as an additional language well. The specialist teacher from the support

service works with identified pupils effectively, and their progress and achievements, as well as those of the different groups in the school, are monitored carefully.

- 66 Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good and are firmly based on praise. All staff have very high expectations of behaviour and almost all pupils rise to these. The school's code of conduct is well displayed throughout the school. Each class is involved in formulating its own rules, which ensures that all pupils understand the expectations. Lunchtime supervisors are well integrated into the school behaviour systems and are provided with clear guidelines for the management of behaviour. The positive discipline system is very effective in motivating pupils and is used consistently well by all teachers and by the lunchtime supervisors. Pupils perceive staff to be firm but fair. Teachers use praise well to motivate and encourage pupils. The good relationships and the mutual respect shown by teachers, staff and pupils help ensure that behaviour is good and that the school is a harmonious community. There is a small number of pupils whose behaviour gives cause for concern. They are well supported through individual behaviour plans and through the appropriate involvement of external agencies.
- 67 The procedures to deal with bullying are good. This issue is addressed in assemblies and circle time as well as in personal, health and social education lessons. Pupils are taught to respect the feelings of others and to have a good awareness of the effects of their actions on others. This results in a low incidence of bullying. Pupils feel safe in school. From the reception classes up to Year 6, pupils are confident that there is always an adult to turn to in times of need.
- 68 Pupils have opportunities to celebrate their own and others' good work in lessons and through the system of team points. Pupils' personal development is fostered well through the programme of personal, health and social education, and circle time. However, the inconsistency in the quality of teaching in this subject is a weakness. Teachers know their pupils well and use this knowledge effectively in their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 69 The replies to the pre-inspection questionnaires, comments of those who attended the parents' meeting and discussions with parents during the inspection week indicate that the majority of parents who responded are very supportive of the school. However, only one in ten parents returned the questionnaire and nine attended the parents' meeting. Parents particularly appreciate that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and that the teaching is good. Almost all would feel happy to approach staff with questions or problems. They also state that their children like school. Parents believe that the school achieves good standards of behaviour. Inspection evidence supports the parents' positive views of the school. Some parents do not feel that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. However, although the school does not provide extracurricular activities for infants, the range of clubs and activities for juniors is good. The school also enriches the curriculum by bringing in groups such as Indian dancers and offers Year 6 pupils the opportunity to go on a residential trip. Some parents do not feel that they are well informed about the progress their child is making, but inspection evidence does not bear out this concern. Annual reports are of sound quality and parents have three

opportunities each year to consult formally with teachers.

- 70 Since the time of the previous inspection the school's relationship with the parent body deteriorated to a very significant extent. The present headteacher has worked very hard and with remarkable success to turn this situation around. Although few parents managed to attend the parent's meeting or to complete the questionnaire, their support for the school was very strong. Parents perceive a considerable improvement in the school over the last year or so. The absence of complaints indicates that the previous unsatisfactory situation has been resolved.
- 71 The school has established a number of good links with parents. The basis of the home-school partnership is set out clearly in the home-school agreement. Parents receive good quality information on a regular basis. The prospectus is a well-produced document that contains the full range of required information, an improvement since the previous inspection. The annual report of governors to parents provides a useful overview of the school year and complies with requirements. Each term, parents of those in all classes are provided with a homework policy that outlines the curriculum for the term, sets out ways that parents can help and what homework they can expect their child to have. Parents are well informed about school life and events through the regular newsletters. These are of high quality and celebrate pupils' achievements as well as reinforcing school's expectations about issues such as attendance and punctuality. In order to gain parents' views of the school, parent governors are present at the school gates on a very regular basis.
- 72 Good arrangements are in place to keep parents informed about their children's progress. Parents have three formal opportunities each year to discuss their child's progress with his or her teachers. Levels of attendance at parents' consultation meetings are satisfactory and show recent improvement. The school follows up those who do not attend. At other times, parents are welcome to discuss their child by arrangement with the teacher concerned. Parents, particularly those of children in the reception and infant classes, have the opportunity to talk to teachers informally when they bring and collect their child. The annual reports use a clear format. Overall the quality of reports is satisfactory overall but within the school there are examples of very good practice that the school could build on. Reports for children under five provide a clear picture of their strengths and areas for development in all the areas of learning. When pupils start to study the National Curriculum, the comments about the core subjects of English, mathematics and science give a clear picture of what the pupil has achieved. In most cases the pupil's strengths and weaknesses in each subject are identified, although specific targets for improvement are not set. In other subjects, comments are generally more focused on attitude and effort than on achievement. Comments on progress are insufficiently specific overall. Occasionally comments include educational jargon such as "Use inference and deduction to interpret texts", which are not accessible to many parents. Reports show that teachers have a very good knowledge of pupils as individuals. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed about their child's progress and appropriately involved in the review process.
- 73 The majority of children enter the school from the nearby nursery and they have many opportunities to become familiar with the school before they transfer to it. Induction

procedures are good and involve both parents and children. Children start reception classes by attending part time. They settle very quickly into school life and, by the time of the inspection, were confident members of the community.

- 74 The school makes every effort to work in partnership with parents and parents are now responding. There is an effective parents group, Link, which raises considerable funds to support the school and its work. For example, they recently bought a book bag for each pupil. Meetings are held to inform parents about aspects of the curriculum such as the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy. Support for school events such as concerts and performances is very good. A small number of parents help in school on a regular basis, for example helping with reading and escorting pupils when they go swimming. Homework is regularly set and pupils benefit when their parents become involved in this. Pupils in the junior classes have a homework diary and parents are expected to sign this every week.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 75 The leadership of this large urban primary school is very effective. This is better than it was at the time of the previous inspection and a significant improvement on the very difficult period that occurred just after it. First as acting headteacher, and over the past two terms in a permanent post, the headteacher has provided clear educational direction and skilful management, supported by the governors, and the newly appointed deputy headteacher. This provides a solid framework for the work and development of the school and the promotion of high standards. All the staff are involved in discussions to raise standards and help to draw up the school's development plan and priorities for action.
- 76 There is a clearly defined procedure for consultation and evaluation of the plans for improvement that involve the governors and all stakeholders. This is a two-way process, with staff feeding back to senior managers, and regular analyses of effectiveness. The senior staff are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and have taken appropriate steps to address them which have shown immediate improvement. The aims and values of the school are clearly identified and addressed in all its work.
- 77 The very effective measures taken to involve staff and governors have created a shared commitment to improvement. This delegation of responsibilities has given staff the opportunity to contribute to the management of the school. They have been well supported in this and are now starting to address the issues identified and prioritised through the consultation processes, led by the headteacher, governors and senior staff.
- 78 The governing body are well aware of the improvements that have been made over the past year and the way these have addressed the problems the school faced. The regular absence of the then headteacher created financial as well as educational difficulties; and the governors saw their role as keeping the school going and overcoming issues as they arose. Now that there is a period of stability they are planning for progress in a systematic way. They have now addressed the issues raised in the last inspection report, are fulfilling their role effectively and meeting statutory

requirements. They are helping to shape the direction of the school together with the senior staff who provide them with relevant information when required. They each have specific responsibilities and are given access to training to enable them to fulfil their roles. Performance data and other information is regularly discussed, actions based on the school's development plan are costed and approved, and parent governors are used well to link with parents and carers in formal and informal ways. The governors' arrangements for the appraisal, pay and performance management of staff is effective, and the setting of annual targets for the headteacher well managed.

- 79 There are rigorous procedures for the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching, and standards are now higher than at the time of the previous inspection. There are lesson observations by senior staff, audits of teachers' plans for their classroom work, scrutinies of displays and classrooms, and reviews of pupils' books, all used to identify areas for development and targets for individual teachers. These are monitored through the performance management cycle. Termly evaluations are used to judge the effectiveness of the teaching and the support given. The annual programme of staff training is securely linked to this process and the priorities in the school development plan. Information and data about standards are gathered by the school improvement co-ordinator. The very detailed and perceptive analysis of these is fed back to the class teachers, post holders and governing body; and targeted team teaching programmes drawn up to address problems of under-achievement. Other staff are being trained to take a more pro-active role in this process.
- 80 The induction programme for new staff is effective, and once the changes the new managers have introduced have bedded down, the school will be well placed to be an effective provider of initial teacher training.
- 81 The process of setting targets for improved pupil performance did not work well last year when the Year 6 teachers' assessments and targets for pupil were not met. The school is now engaged in identifying appropriate priorities and targets through detailed procedures and is taking the action it sees as necessary to meet them and remedy this.
- 82 Financial planning is good. The school development plan is now reviewed and re-written to run from each September, which means that financial planning can be based on a known budget. Plans can be adjusted when the educational year starts and pupil numbers are confirmed. The standards fund is used effectively to supplement staffing for identified areas of improvement. The governors are kept informed of the data and are able to review spending decisions carefully. Every finance issue is discussed by the finance committee, and the recent audit report was complimentary of the improvements in the school's procedures since the last report. The headteacher and finance staff have a clear view of the school's financial procedures and their work is monitored by the chair of the finance committee. Management information systems use ICT appropriately, and specific grants are used for their designated purpose. The school applies the principles of best value, led by the headteacher's expertise. The budget is enhanced by a split-site allowance, which makes the unit costs of the school extremely high.
- 83 The staff are well qualified and experienced, with few recruitment problems, there

were two supply teachers during the inspection, one to cover a maternity leave, and the other covering a vacancy while the headteacher considers the situation in ICT to see if a new co-ordinator is needed and can be afforded. All teachers contribute well to the running of the school whether they have a responsibility allowance or not. The staff working with pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language also contribute effectively and are used appropriately.

- 84 The accommodation is adequate in terms of overall space and number of teaching areas, but the design is unsuitable for the modern curriculum. The school uses the spaces it has well. The junior building has small teaching areas with flexible partitions separating them from other classrooms, corridors and shared areas. This inhibits the introductions to both literacy and numeracy strategy lessons when pupils need to be focused and at the front with the teacher. In the infant building the Victorian layout, with classrooms off a central hall, also creates problems. The reception classes have little space to create informal areas, the mobile for one of the Year 2 classes are isolated from the rest of the school, and the library is a partitioned area of the hall. Outdoor areas are particularly limiting. There are no playing fields, the hard surfaced areas are well marked-out with stimulating games and symbols, but they are too small and lunchtimes have to be separated to allow safe play. There are interesting areas in the infants' yard which have been designed and made to give them places for quiet, but there are no large play apparatus for the reception classes.
- 85 Resources are adequate for the planned curriculum, they are in a good condition and looked after well by the site manager and teachers. The problems that do arise have not had a significant detrimental affect on standards. The new ICT centre in the junior building is a good resource, but this has taken up library space and at the moment the library is not well stocked and is inadequate. There are extra books in classrooms and the teachers' work area, but in order to promote higher levels of literacy, provide a resource for personal study and to encourage pupils to value reading as a source of pleasure and information, the library leaves a lot to be desired.
- 86 Provision for pupils with special educational needs is effectively managed by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Records are comprehensive. The conditions of statements of special educational need are met. Individual education plans are of good quality and readily available to teachers and support staff. Individual behaviour plans are also well structured. The school maintains good working relationships with a wide range of external support agencies.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 87 In order to continue the improvements the school has made, the headteacher, governors and senior staff should:
- (1) seek ways to improve standards in mathematics and science by the age of 11 (see paragraphs 128, 129, 131, 144, 146);
 - (2) develop more appropriately demanding tasks that challenge the more able and the gifted and talented pupils identified by the school to achieve even higher (see paragraphs 4, 13, 43, 116, 143);
 - (3) develop the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum to enhance and extend pupils' learning (see paragraphs 16, 172, 173, 175);
 - (4) further improve the attendance and punctuality of pupils (see paragraphs 28, 60, 71).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

[completion needed, obviously]

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

76

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	24	39	5	0	0
Percentage	1	9	32	51	7	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

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)	n/a	364
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	151

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	73

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	37

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	50
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	54

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	38	20	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	25	31	33
	Girls	19	20	19
	Total	44	51	52
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	76 (77)	88 (96)	90 (75)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	24	30	28
	Girls	19	19	19
	Total	43	49	47
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	74 (88)	84 (88)	81 (93)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	25	23	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	15	16	18
	Girls	17	18	20
	Total	33	34	39
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (63)	69 (60)	80 (60)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	13	16	14
	Girls	19	18	17
	Total	33	35	31
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (65)	71 (61)	63 (60)
	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	18
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	6
Pakistani	21
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	3
White	263
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	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	2	0

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	26.0

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	14.3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-1
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	£
Total income	853913
Total expenditure	865716
Expenditure per pupil	2340
Balance brought forward from previous year	52154
Balance carried forward to next year	40351

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	364
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50.0	42.0	6.0	2.0	0.0
My child is making good progress in school.	50.0	44.0	4.0	2.0	0.0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35.0	60.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31.0	48.0	15.0	2.0	4.0
The teaching is good.	37.0	63.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29.0	48.0	19.0	0.0	4.0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62.0	35.0	4.0	0.0	0.0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52.0	48.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
The school works closely with parents.	15.0	63.0	15.0	2.0	4.0
The school is well led and managed.	42.0	44.0	6.0	2.0	6.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33.0	58.0	8.0	0.0	2.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13.0	48.0	29.0	6.0	4.0

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

- 88 Almost all children enter the two reception classes, each staffed by a teacher and classroom assistant, having had experience of attending a nursery. Overall, their attainment as they start school is lower than that typically demonstrated by children of this age. At the time of the inspection, reception children were beginning only their second week of full-time attendance.
- 89 All staff who teach or support the reception children's work well together as a team. They see themselves as a unit within the infant stage of education in this split-site school, the junior classes being in a separate building round the corner. Work is planned for the whole year and makes use of materials available in the national programme for pupils up to the age of six. At the time of the inspection, the staff were using guidance from this programme but had not yet identified each child's individual learning needs. This is because the inspection took place before the local authority's assessment had taken place. Staff had received assessment information from both the local nursery, which about two thirds of the children had attended, and other local authority nursery schools. This information provided details of children's attainment by summer 2001 with some prediction of the level of attainment expected by the end of October 2001. Scrutiny of this and the children's work, together with discussions with the headteacher of the main 'feeder' nursery, class teachers and the infant department co-ordinator, confirms the inspection judgement about the children's overall level of attainment at the start of the school year.
- 90 The induction process is effective. In the summer, children walk from the nursery and spend time in reception, meeting staff and children. They attend assemblies. They join in activities with other pupils and can do things on their own in order to become familiar with day-to-day routines. Staff visit the nursery and discuss information about the children they will be admitting. Parents are encouraged to visit, look round the school, raise issues and pass on information. The school sets great store in developing good links with parents and ensuring all pupils are made to feel welcome and valued. Parents bring their children into school at the start of the day and collect them from the classroom at the end. Staff are always available for a quick word or lengthier discussion. The dinner supervisors have received training in the Osborne Code and are regarded as "lunchtime teachers" – each class has a supervisor who will stay with them throughout their reception and infant years. All of these procedures are well received by parents. The result of all of this is that children are happy, relaxed and at ease with each other, their teachers, other staff and the general routines. This is impressive considering they have recently had the long summer break from school, are getting used to full-time education, spend their time in a building very different from what they have previously regarded as school, and are making new relationships with adults and pupils alike.
- 91 Overall, the education provided for reception-age children is satisfactory with some good features. The pupil/adult ratio is low and this helps children gain the individual attention they need. A few parents spend time in school and support children's

learning well. Pupils enjoy coming to school and have good attitudes to their learning, as evidenced one morning when several children told off two latecomers. The organisation and care of children is good and staff already know them well and respect them for the individuals they are.

- 92 Accommodation is satisfactory, though there are some limitations. The classrooms are cramped and restrict some of the activities on offer. However, staff are ingenious in creating space, for example by removing furniture or setting up activities jointly in two rooms with children free to move from one to the other. Support staff are involved in the planning of activities and are sometimes able to take groups into other rooms or the hall where they supervise effectively. Children respond well to these arrangements. Lack of large apparatus outdoors restricts children's opportunities for physical development. Classrooms are bright and stimulating places for children to learn. There are many interesting and exciting areas where children can experiment and play with different materials. For example there is shop which doubles as a dressing up area; water and sand trays which change quickly from the beach to a construction site; displays of brushes and groups of objects which children can handle and talk about. The displays reflect the multi-cultural background of children. Staff work hard to create a safe and secure place for children to play and learn. Link, an association of parents, raised £1000 for the purchase of additional resources, for example large toys, and these will widen the scope of activities. The level and quality of resources have improved since the previous inspection. All of these factors contribute to children's progress which is satisfactory overall.
- 93 Statutory testing of all reception-age children was due to take place immediately after the inspection. Teacher's records indicate that the outcomes are analysed to determine the future activities for individuals and groups of children and to ensure that both classes have the same proportions of children with varying abilities. Assessments of what children can do as a result of the teaching are maintained and regularly updated, often during lessons. Examples of children's work are retained so that staff can assess progress and set tasks that will challenge children. Scrutiny of these records shows that the standard of attainment of children when they enter reception varies from year to year, affecting the proportions of those who reach the level typical for children about to start infant education. In particular, many do not attain the goals agreed nationally (early learning goals) for children of this age in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Most children do attain these goals for their age in personal and social development, creative development, physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. The performance of children at the time of inspection reflects this picture, although in two of the lessons seen, children's overall attainment in the literacy and numeracy elements of the early learning goals was at a level typical for their age.
- 94 Since the previous inspection, teachers have very effectively developed their planning to reflect new national materials. They use a range of strategies to meet the needs of their pupils very well. Judged by the current criteria, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with many good features. In the five lessons observed by inspectors, the quality of teaching was satisfactory in three and good in two. The features of the good teaching observed include:

- encouraging children to work independently on challenging tasks, for example when three children worked on the computer designing faces;
- effective class management, for example getting children seated in a circle to roll a ball from one to another with the recipients having to introduce themselves;
- high expectations of conduct, for example when children were reminded about thanking each other and taking turns;
- warm greeting of children at the start of the day, for example when a teacher and classroom assistant stood by the door asking after each child's well-being and directing them to a quiet activity with a partner or group.

- 95 Teachers are aware of the need to concentrate on developing children's skills in literacy and numeracy and planning shows a considerable investment of time in doing so. They have also made a start in developing a more rigorous system of ongoing assessment of what children are learning as opposed to doing. The school's recognition of the need for improvement in these areas is timely and necessary if more children are to achieve the nationally agreed goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the end of their Reception Year.
- 96 All staff are involved in liaison with colleagues in the nearby nursery school. Nursery staff gave useful advice about ways of introducing the new national materials for reception children, and the planning of what will be taught is based on the guidance given. For example, the reception classes have lessons on an eight-day cycle, ensuring that the experiences and tasks for children are broad and balanced. This continues the nursery's programme very effectively. The relationship between the two schools has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Staff ensure their knowledge is up to date by attendance at meetings, discussions with colleagues from other schools and reading relevant publications. They work well in partnership with the infant department co-ordinator and staff. They are very conversant with the national materials relating to reception children. They manage reception well and receive clear direction from the infant department co-ordinator who monitors their work and the performance of their children effectively. They share the commitment to raising standards and have the capacity to succeed.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 97 Almost all children have had experience of socialising with other pupils before entering reception. This stands them in good stead for making new relationships with children whom they have not met before, either because they attended different nursery schools or, as is often the case, because many children are admitted (and re-admitted) throughout the year. Provision for personal, social and emotional development is good. Most children, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, are likely to achieve the early learning goals at the end of the Reception Year. Adults are sensitive to the needs of all children, including those with special education needs. Children who have English as an additional language are also supported appropriately so that they make relationships easily – they are valued as individuals and this makes them feel happy.
- 98 Children are provided with many opportunities to become independent of adults and they work well together in small groups, for example dressing up as princes and

princesses. Teachers and classroom assistants constantly visit a group and take every opportunity to encourage conversation and develop new vocabulary. Individual monitors take their responsibilities for sweeping the floor, putting chairs straight and lining up the desks very seriously. Children are learning to take turns, for example at snack time. They play happily together outside and receive good support from adults. Their behaviour and concentration is usually good, but towards the end of both long practical or physical sessions and the afternoons, some of the younger ones are very tired. Children are taught how to respond to others and they relate well together. No one is left out or disadvantaged by ability, age, gender or background.

Communication, language and literacy

- 99 Overall, children's language and literacy skills are below the level expected of children joining reception. Some of their language skills are underdeveloped and many children of average and below average ability have difficulty in expressing themselves, either because their vocabulary is limited or because they have difficulty in pronouncing words correctly. Children of higher ability talk happily to other children and adults, for example saying, "A starfish has five legs but my turtle has four feet". Almost all children try very hard to answer questions – they want to join in and please. Some will persevere until they have managed to make themselves understood. This is noticeable with most children who have English as an additional language. These children benefit from the encouragement not just of their class teachers and classroom assistants but also the part-time teacher who is effective in meeting their needs, for instance by stimulating them to talk about something they are familiar with or reading a story with which they can identify.
- 100 Children enjoy sharing books and a few talk about reading with their parents at home. They handle books with care and know that print has meaning. One child proudly pointed to the edge of a book and said, "This is its spine". They relish opportunities to listen to stories, like *Little Lumpty* and show great delight when their predictions are proved correct. They enjoy watching their teachers act out sections from stories and comment enthusiastically. Many know the names of letters and some can say what sounds they make. However, children of lower ability and some of average ability mix up letter names and sounds, for example one child said, "Fish has a 'f' and a 'sh' and a 'l'". Some children can write their first name or make a reasonable approximation of it and a few can add their second name too. Staff display children's names in classrooms and add individual photographs to names by children's coat pegs. There are also displays which show children how languages differ, for example a chart indicating 'welcome' in several languages including those spoken by some children and their families at home. A Braille version is added and one boy said, "You can stroke that". A few higher attaining children recognise several whole words and try to read simple sentences, guessing at unknown words by looking at pictures for clues. They know that reading is done from left to right and top to bottom on a page.
- 101 Progress made in reading and writing is satisfactory overall but this rate is insufficient to enable most children to reach the expected standard by the time they leave reception. Boys and girls do equally well. Teachers are rightly making the teaching of reading and writing skills a priority. The drive to improve standards in writing has been a whole school focus. Scrutiny of last year's reception folders indicates that

opportunities for children to write for themselves were limited. There was little well formed or tidy writing and much was restricted to adding captions to pictures. Children's attainment, judged by reference to last year's work, is barely in line with that usually seen by the end of the reception year. At the time of the inspection, there was understandably little evidence of writing from the present classes on wall displays. However, the small amount of work seen indicates some improvement over what was done at the same time one year ago.

Mathematical development

- 102 Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that by the end of the Reception Year, many children's understanding of mathematics is barely in line with that typical of this age group. However, they make sound progress given their low level of attainment at the start of the year. Furthermore, in two lessons seen, good teaching enabled the majority of children to work to the expected standard for this age. This represents an improvement over the standards being reached by most children twelve months ago and would, if the current rate of progress is maintained, result in most children attaining the early learning goals by the end of their Reception Year. Higher attaining children can use coins to 5p to buy dresses and shoes in their shop and know which is more expensive, for example saying, "This dress was 2p... these shoes cost more". They understand 'more' and 'less', 'bigger' and 'smaller'; can count to ten (one girl reminding her teacher that she had forgotten to "put zero" on the washing line of numbers) and sometimes beyond; and know that a shark is heavier than a crab. Lower attaining children sing the numbers in number rhymes; know that each number has a value; can complete simple patterns; and some are able to name numbers in sequence. All children can put out sets of objects such as "only red cars in the hoop" and know that squares fit together better than circles "because they're straight at the ends". They know that change is given when a customer offers too much money. Some can refer to events which happen on different days of the week, saying for example, "We don't come to school on Saturday. We do come to school on Monday".
- 103 Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are able to complete most of the same tasks given to lower attaining children, thanks to the good support they receive from staff. However, there are occasions when all children find difficulty in completing a task, not because of a lack of mathematical skill, but rather because they do not have the language skills to understand what they are supposed to do. Similarly, they have difficulty in answering questions or explaining their difficulties. Usually, they will persevere or help each other, but they know that their teachers will always help them.
- 104 Teachers use many opportunities to show children how their mathematical skills are useful, for example comparing the height of children as they line up for assembly and using a range of vocabulary in physical education lessons such as, "You jumped further this time". They point out numbers on the telephone and computer and refer to the calendar. Sometimes, these are spontaneous comments but teachers' planning shows how much importance they put on extending language development and developing children's mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of situations. These strategies are effective in supporting children's mathematical development.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 105 Evidence was drawn from photographs, displays of work, scrutiny of the previous year's work, and brief discussions with children as they worked and played. Teachers' planning was also scrutinised. Overall, children are on course to reach the early learning goals in this area by the end of reception. Teaching and learning in this area are satisfactory with many good features. Children enter reception with widely varying experiences and great differences in their general knowledge. Some children have difficulty in recognising the similarities and differences between now/long ago and here/faraway, for example referring to something which happened yesterday as if it were the distant past and saying that, "Birmingham is a long, long way from here". Good use is made of both visits to local places of interest and visitors. Teachers build on children's natural curiosity and help them to develop their understanding of the world in which they live. Each day, children repeat the day and date and spend a few moments talking about the weather, future events, family issues, news stories or television. Teachers are very adept at extending children's knowledge and use great subtlety; for example, in a group printing activity children were given a range of cut fruits to which were added a lime and an avocado, or in a drawing activity when the teacher placed a fresh rainbow trout on the table. Children show delight in exploring items new to them. Every day during the inspection, there was always something new on display and accessible to stimulate children, enabling them to make sound progress.
- 106 There was little evidence of information and communication technology being used during the inspection, although a group of children in one lesson used a *Paint Magic* program on the computer to design faces. Previous work seen includes printed text. Most children know what a mouse is and does ("You press it and it changes something"). A few referred to "the keyboard" and one girl explained that if she made a mistake on the screen, she could rub it out. She found great difficulty in trying to explain how she did it, and eventually decided a demonstration was the way forward. Some children said they had computers at home and could play games on them – one referred to her parents who "do letters" and "have a tinternet" (sic). Teachers' planning includes practical activities, for example using a construction kit to build a house (which became a fire station) or exploring a range of objects found at the seaside (including a shark...) to see which would float/sink. A higher attaining child predicted correctly that his shell would sink "because it lives at the bottom of the sea", but that his dolphin would float "because it's only plastic".

Physical development

- 107 During the inspection, children were observed taking part in physical education activities inside but not outside. Teachers' planning shows how movement and dance is incorporated into the learning programmes and the part played by access to large toys that can be ridden, driven, pushed or pulled. There are no opportunities for children to use large outdoor equipment and this inhibits their progress. Despite this, children are on course to reach the early learning goals in this area by the end of reception. The quality of teaching seen was always satisfactory with some good features helping children's learning effectively.

- 108 In the hall, they use slides, benches, boxes and mats to develop awareness of what their bodies can safely do. In one lesson, a group worked with a classroom assistant who not only supported their physical development but also contributed effectively to their language and mathematical development by comments such as, “You’re higher than I am now” or questions like, “What made you come down faster?” Children learn how to work things out for themselves, for example completing large floor jigsaws or using construction kits to build towers, fire engines and hospitals. Thoughtfully planned activities, such as cutting out faces and decorating them with a range of materials or covering a fish shape with finger paint, are supported by a range of attractive and appropriate resources. These increase children’s confidence and develop their skills in using paint, brushes, pencils, crayons, scissors and collage materials. Children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully integrated in all physical development activities.

Creative development

- 109 On entry to reception, children’s attainment in this area of learning varies considerably. Whilst some lower attainers have difficulty in holding a pencil or brush correctly, higher attaining children show good control when using a crayon to draw a body or a brush to add eyes to a face. This was particularly noticeable in one lesson where a group of children of different abilities made an observational drawing of a rainbow trout. The outcome varied from a clearly recognisable fish to an all black scribble. Scrutiny of the previous year’s art and design work indicates that children make satisfactory progress in drawing, painting and printing. Comparison between current art and design work and that completed at the same stage last year shows that the standard of the present reception children overall is a little higher. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children make sound progress overall and most are on course to attain the early learning goal.
- 110 All children enjoy singing games and join in enthusiastically, clapping or responding to actions. Opportunities are provided for children to feel and describe materials, recognising rough and smooth, soft, silky, lumpy and, in the case of the rainbow trout, “slimy and smelly”. Imaginative play is good and children make up their own stories and use simple stage properties to act out their ideas. Higher attaining children change roles as they act and direct other children into supporting roles. Staff support the lower attainers well. However, on occasions, staff note what children are doing rather than what they are learning – this is more noticeable when children have “free flow” between activities available in both classrooms. In whole class sessions, children enjoy predicting the outcomes of stories read or told to them. Books, items on display and resources represent various cultures though there is a preponderance of materials relating to western cultures.

ENGLISH

- 111 Inspectors judged from lesson observations, discussion with pupils and detailed scrutiny of pupils’ written work that attainment of pupils at seven years of age is in line with national expectation. On entering the school at the Foundation Stage, children’s attainment is below what is expected, but by the time pupils have reached

the age of seven, they have progressed well, and their overall attainment in English matches the national average.

- 112 Test results in 2000 showed that pupils' performance in reading was well below average compared with all schools, whereas performance in writing was close to national expectation. When compared with similar schools, however, reading was still below average, but writing performance was well above average. The trend over the four year period from 1996 to 2000 shows that reading performance has dropped from below to well below average, compared with writing, which has remained close to national expectation.
- 113 Inspectors judged that reading has improved since the 2000 tests and that the implementation of the Literacy Hour is having a positive effect upon performance. The school's monitoring has shown that the 2001 test results will reveal an improvement in reading performance.
- 114 By the age of eleven, the attainment of pupils is in line with national expectation. Although the results of the 2000 tests shows that performance in English was below the national average, the comparison with similar schools shows that English performance was above average, which was continued in the provisional results in 2001. Judgements based upon evidence gathered during the inspection show that, overall, the attainment of pupils is in line with standards expected for eleven year olds.
- 115 There is a difference between the performance of boys and girls at both ages seven and eleven. The girls consistently score better than boys, particularly in writing. Teachers are aware of this difference and strategies are being put in place to raise the performance of boys.
- 116 Although the progress and achievements of the vast majority of pupils is at least satisfactory, the more able pupils throughout the school are not reaching standards of which they are capable. The school is working hard to raise standards and they are succeeding in getting a higher number of pupils reaching the nationally expected level. However, the more able pupils are not being provided with sufficient challenge to encourage them to reach even higher grades.
- 117 Pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress and are well supported, as are those pupils who have special educational needs. Both groups enjoy an inclusive environment and are well encouraged to make appropriate progress.
- 118 Work in other areas of the curriculum makes a valuable contribution to the development of pupils' competence in English. Good examples of extended writing were observed in history, geography and RE. Teachers continue to teach the literacy skills from within the other subject. Listening and speaking skills are taught throughout the curriculum. A particularly good example was observed during an RE lesson where a class of seven year olds worked with a 'talk partner' for their group work.
- 119 Pupils do very well in maintaining concentration throughout the whole of the literacy

lesson. Some of the lessons observed lasted well in excess of an hour so it is credit to those who remained on task and behaved well, while it is understandable why a small number of pupils drifted into lost concentration and disruption.

- 120 In reading, the more able pupils at age seven can understand examples of simple text and they are able to express opinions about the story being read. They read fluently and are usually able to decode an unfamiliar word by using letter sounds or breaking the word into smaller sections. In writing they are beginning to write in sentences that have capital letters and full stops. Their handwriting is beginning to show consistency in terms of letter formation and size. However, there were no examples seen of pupils writing with joined letters.
- 121 At age eleven almost all pupils are writing with ink pens. They take a pride in presentation and are using joined letters. In their extended writing, eleven year olds were using complex sentences with a variety of connecting words or phrases. They were also manipulating the clauses in sentences to explore how the meaning can be changed. Another group of pupils were observed re-telling a passage from *Treasure Island* through the eyes of a character other than the narrator. In their reading, the older pupils showed that they understood ideas and events and were able to use inference and deduction. They also demonstrated their ability to use the library as a source of information.
- 122 In some classes computers were used well for pupils to write text or to seek information. However, in many classes the use of information and communication technology was very limited.
- 123 The teaching of literacy is effective in a number of ways. Teachers' planning is thorough and reflects the format of the National Literacy Strategy. To ensure continuity, teachers in each of the year groups plan together and each half term carry out an evaluation which is shared with teachers in other year groups. In most lessons the pace is brisk and pupils respond well to having to complete tasks within a given time. Teachers use a good range of questioning strategies to involve all pupils and they value the responses from the most to the least able pupils, even when they are incorrect. The management and control of pupils is particularly effective and this is reflected by very good behaviour and an excellent attitude to work by the pupils. Teachers have a good knowledge of the National Literacy Strategy and they teach it with confidence. Assessment is well used to track the progress of pupils. There are useful half termly, formal assessments carried out, but just as important is the day to day use of assessment strategies, when pupils' books are marked and endorsed with helpful and constructive comments. Excellent use is made of classroom support from classroom assistants, parents and other teachers. A number of targeted pupils are receiving helpful support from the deputy headteacher.
- 124 Teaching meets the needs of most pupils. Pupils who have English as an additional language or who have special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress. Pupils of above average ability make unsatisfactory progress because they are given insufficient challenge to make the accelerated progress of which they are capable.

- 125 Pupils learn to share and co-operate in their literacy lessons, this is most evident during group or paired work where there is an expectation of collaboration. This makes a useful contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
- 126 The management of the literacy strategy is particularly effective. The subject leader has held the post for only two terms, yet it is clear that her vigorous and enthusiastic approach is having a marked impact. She sees her role as putting in place strategies to raise standards, ensuring provision of resources, in-service training, monitoring, leading staff discussion and providing leadership by example. Teachers are responding well to her leadership and they are using the guidance and advice that is offered. She is well aware of the need to improve standards and to address issues like the difference between the performance of boys and girls. She is also aware that it is necessary to provide the challenge and support to encourage the more able pupils to achieve their potential.
- 127 Resources for the teaching of literacy are good. There is a wide range of useful material, which is well catalogued and readily available for use. The junior library has been reduced in space by the provision of a computer suite. It still provides a useful resource for fiction and non-fiction material and it is centrally placed and accessible by all pupils in the upper part of the school, but many books are now spread around the building and teachers have to guide the pupils to where they are. The Key Stage 1 library is similarly well set out and is placed within the school hall, immediately adjacent to all but one of the classes. In addition to the good range of books within the libraries, there is a rich collection of books to be found in each class area. Teachers can refresh this collection from the main library from time to time. The subject leader has provided substantial quantities of new books to enhance the library, and she intends to build further upon these resources as and when funding allows.

MATHEMATICS

- 128 Evidence was gained by scrutinising the work of pupils, talking to them, discussions with the subject and infant department co-ordinators, analysis of national assessment results of pupil performance, looking at displays, scrutinising teachers' planning and records, and observing seventeen lessons. Overall, attainment in mathematics is around that expected for pupils aged seven, but below that expected for eleven year olds.
- 129 At the time of the inspection, the school's results of the 2001 national assessment tests were known, but comparison with national figures was not possible as these were not available. Since the previous inspection, the school's results have varied from one year to the next, reflecting the different attainment patterns of pupils. The overall trend is broadly in line with the national trend. In the 2000 national assessment tests for seven year olds, pupils' performance was below the national average but above that of similar schools. The 2001 national assessment tests indicate improvement for this age group. In the 2000 national assessment tests for eleven year olds, pupils' performance was below the national average but above that of similar schools.
- 130 Comparing the schools' results for eleven-year-olds and their previous performance at age seven with results in similar schools indicates that pupils' performance was well

below the average. However, the school's tracking of individual pupils indicates that such is the movement of pupils in and out of school that many of the Year 6 pupils had not attended this school at age seven. Consequently, the comparison of performance by reference to pupils' prior attainment should be viewed with some caution.

- 131 The 2001 national assessment tests indicate a fall in performance. The numbers of pupils attaining the expected standard was lower than their teachers predicted. This is partly explained by the absence on the test day of several pupils forecast to attain at or above the expected standard. At this time in the school year, pupils at the end of the infant and junior stages are attaining standards at least as high as pupils were twelve months ago.
- 132 Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support and this enables most to attain standards similar to those achieved by pupils of higher, though less than average, ability. Teacher's knowledge of pupils and skill in managing their behaviour enables all pupils to make satisfactory and sometimes good progress as they move through the school. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, cannot always access the work at the appropriate level or apply their mathematical skills and knowledge due to difficulties in reading. This impedes their progress. Talking to pupils and reading teachers' comments in books confirm this. However, the support they receive in class usually enables pupils to complete at least some of the tasks. In the past few years, boys have performed less well than girls in the national assessment tests for both seven and eleven year olds. This adversely affects the school's results. It did so particularly in 2000 where there were twice as many boys aged seven as girls. The school is aware of this and has taken steps to address the needs of boys as shown in teachers' planning. The 2001 national assessment tests indicate an improvement in boys' performance, especially that of the seven-year-olds.
- 133 Pupils enter Year 1 with many having attained the nationally agreed goals (early learning goals) for children leaving reception. A few have gone beyond these but some have not yet reached the average standard. At this early stage in the school year, pupils in Year 1 can use coins to 10p and put numbers from 1 to 10 in correct order. They can measure a teddy bear's arm and know it is shorter than an adult's. Year 2 pupils confidently add and subtract to 20, know that five 10p coins have the same value as one 50p coin and correctly identify a range of shapes, indicating which fit together best. Higher attaining pupils know that two $\frac{1}{4}$ s have the same value as one $\frac{1}{2}$, can tell the time and use a range of mathematical vocabulary to describe what they are doing. Pupils with special educational needs insert missing numbers on a number line and understand the difference between adding and subtracting. Scrutiny of work completed twelve months ago indicates that attainment overall in each age group now is at least at the standard it was then. It is higher now in Year 2.
- 134 The school is appropriately seeking to provide more opportunities for pupils to apply their knowledge, understanding and skills in other subjects and new situations. For example in a science experiment, pupils used block graphs to chart the reducing temperature of water. They then analysed their data and entered it on an *EXCEL* spreadsheet. Infant classes measured the bride's veil, "folded in half ($\frac{1}{2}$)" greetings

cards, made cake boxes as “triangular prisms” and drew graphs of favourite sandwich fillings in a project on ‘The Wedding’. In a Year 1 physical education lesson, pupils used their counting skills as they danced to a story.

- 135 Since the previous inspection, the school has placed great emphasis on developing pupils’ confidence in handling numbers, as is evident by the work in their books and participation in lessons. Developing mental agility in number, including quick recall of multiplication tables has also been a priority. Inspection evidence indicates that there is some improvement in both these areas. At the same time, teachers ensure a balance in the type of activities planned and the experiences these will give to pupils.
- 136 In the juniors, Year 4 pupils use a 100 number square to calculate addition and subtraction problems and higher attainers have good recall of some multiplication tables. They can identify a range of shapes and talk about their properties, using appropriate vocabulary such as ‘angle’ or ‘straight edge’. They understand the difference between two-dimensional shapes, such as a semi-circle, and three-dimensional shapes, such as a cube or cuboid. Some pupils are able to draw the ‘skeleton’ of a cuboid. Pupils of average and below average ability often find difficulty in explaining what they are doing. By the time they are in Year 6, pupils can work out $\frac{3}{4}$ of 16 and some know that $6\frac{1}{4}$ can be written as 6.25. They can use a calculator to find the decimal equivalent of $\frac{7}{8}$ and higher attainers can then calculate this as a percentage. Lower attainers can match fractions of equivalent value, explain the value of 6 in 469 and identify various types of triangle. Scrutiny of work completed twelve months ago indicates that attainment overall in each age group now is at a similar level as then.
- 137 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the eight lessons observed in the infant classes. In two lessons the quality of teaching was good. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in the junior classes. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen in the nine lessons observed. In two lessons the quality of teaching was good.
- 138 Effective teaching is characterised by brisk pace in lessons, which keeps pupils on task, engaged and suitably challenged. The structure of lessons in the national guidance (National Numeracy Strategy) is implemented consistently and to good effect. The frequent use of a ‘game’ approach appeals well to pupils, maintaining their interest and involvement, for example in a Year 5 class when the pupils took on their teacher in a fractions game. Good questioning skills, often seen in the introductory and closing sessions, search pupils’ understanding and require them to explain their thinking and review their learning. This is an effective strategy to develop pupils’ speaking and listening skills. Teachers always show care for pupils who find difficulty in answering or talking about their work and this gives pupils the confidence to persevere. When teachers have good subject knowledge they inspire confidence in pupils. They are also unafraid to adapt their lessons when they see the need to change tack. Where teaching is less effective, teachers allow themselves to become distracted by the poor behaviour of one or two pupils and, as a consequence, the lesson proceeds at a slow pace. Sometimes, in lessons that exceed an hour, they labour points and lose the interest of some pupils. Much teaching is sound but somewhat unremarkable. Teachers are making more use of technology, for example

in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher projected a calculator display on to a whiteboard, giving the pupils a focus for their attention.

- 139 Ongoing assessment of pupils' learning and prompt feedback motivated pupils well. This is particularly useful when pupils experience difficulties in reading problems or instructions. Pupils are expected to present their work neatly and most do. Teachers mark work, including homework, regularly and often add comments that help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. Some add notes that they can refer to a later date and this is a useful assessment strategy. However, marking is not consistently applied even though there is a clearly written school policy. Homework is set weekly and extends pupils' learning when it reflects the work covered in lessons. In all classes and around the school, displays of mathematical vocabulary and symbols reinforce and promote pupils' understanding and learning well.
- 140 Teachers employ a range of grouping arrangements during mathematics lessons. These include putting pupils together by ability or, sometimes, by interest or friendship. Pupils each have a 'talk partner' and refer to them when preparing a response, working out a problem or needing help. This is a very effective way of encouraging independence from adults. Opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class, in large or small groups, pairs and on their own do much to develop pupils' social skills of collaboration, listening to and respecting an alternative point of view, and sharing resources. A good example was seen in a Year 1 class when pupils worked together to design and make a skeleton from strips of paper. On the occasions when pupils are given choices in how they complete their work, there is a significant impact on their personal development and independence – the school has rightly identified this as an area requiring further improvement. Pupils usually behave well in lessons, though there are a few occasions when the poor behaviour of one or two is a distraction to other pupils. Most show enjoyment. They want to please their teachers.
- 141 The deputy headteacher is recently appointed. Her expertise in mathematics is already having an effect on provision. She very effectively models lessons for colleagues in infant and junior classes. As well as raising the quality of teaching in school by her own practice, she is ably supporting colleagues to develop their effectiveness further. It is too early to see the impact on standards of pupils' performance
- 142 The co-ordinator has only recently taken on a whole school responsibility, previously having led and managed the subject in the juniors only. She liaises well with colleagues in the infant department (including reception), particularly the infant co-ordinator, and is already developing her knowledge of standards and provision in these classes. She is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and committed to improvement. She has reviewed the mathematics policy. She has developed a file of photo-copiable resources for teachers. She has invested considerable time in scrutinising national guidance and has now produced a document identifying opportunities for introducing data handling in mathematics lessons from reception to Year 6. Her monitoring of teachers' planning shows this is being used and enhancing pupils' learning. She has repeated the exercise to identify how mathematics skills can be used in other subjects. Monitoring teachers' planning, scrutinising pupils' work and talking to colleagues and pupils indicates that this is beginning to have an effect. Inspection evidence confirms this.

- 143 She has contributed to the in-depth analysis of national assessment tests and the school's own annual testing which is based on national guidance. She is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' performance and has developed assessment record sheets to track the progress of pupils. Annually, teachers make assessments of the level of attainment reached by pupils and the co-ordinator analyses these. One of the intended outcomes is to identify pupils for inclusion on the newly established register of the gifted and talented. She meets with colleagues from other schools to discuss matters of mutual concern and disseminates this information to staff. To support her professional development, she has attended training courses. She maintains a satisfactory range of resources from the budget she manages.

SCIENCE

- 144 Standards of attainment are at present broadly in line with national average by the age of seven and below the national average by the age of eleven. This is not as good as indicated at the time of the previous inspection in 1997. Then standards were judged to be above national average by the end of age seven and in line with the national average by the age eleven, even though the 1996 national tests for eleven year olds indicated that standards of attainment in science were well below the national average. At age eleven, standards have improved from 43% reaching the expected levels in 1997 to 81% in 2001 reaching them. When comparing the attainment of pupils aged eleven with all schools nationally in 2000, standards were well below national average but in line with schools of similar background. Teachers' assessments in science by the age of seven in 2000 indicated that attainment was well below average with only one pupil reaching the higher Level 3. Inspection judgements are based on an analysis of current and previous work in pupils' books, teachers' planning and talking to pupils, class teachers and the co-ordinator. Lesson observations in infants and juniors show that the weaknesses in investigative science have been strengthened considerably. However, throughout the school higher attainers are insufficiently challenged and do not always progress at an appropriate pace.
- 145 Progress through the infants is sound. It shows a gradual increase in knowledge and skills. Sound foundations are set through discussions, exploratory play and through class routines such as keeping the daily weather chart and calendar. In Years 1 and 2, healthy eating is given a high priority and pupils are developing awareness of the benefits of a balanced diet. In Year 1, pupils identify parts of their bodies. They explore different sounds and taste a variety of foods and learn about the five senses. In Year 2, pupils can identify different food groups in a balanced diet accurately and make clear pie graphs when classifying foods in these groups. They know how to make bar graphs of the favourite foods in the class. By the age of seven, pupils investigate how to make simple circuits in order to light bulbs with understanding. All pupils are developing simple procedures for recording observations. However, most pupils do not use a sufficiently broad range of scientific language when explaining about their work and their findings in investigations.
- 146 In the juniors, inspection findings are that overall attainment is currently below average. The knowledge and understanding gained by the age of seven is extended to include more detail. However, as pupils move through this stage the depth and

breadth in science is constrained by a general lack of opportunities to research for information or independent study and more reliance on set tasks which results in progress over time being slower than in the infants. In Year 3, pupils can explore the properties of materials and carry out investigations to consider the elasticity in materials with care. The process of filtration is considered in Year 4 and pupils understand that solids and liquids can be separated through this process. By the age of ten pupils construct their own models to find out about the different phases of the moon. Pupils in Year 6 investigate a range of materials to find out the best insulators. They develop their skill in plotting points in line graph to record their findings with accuracy.

- 147 The development of using and applying skills, knowledge and understanding has been given a high priority since the last inspection resulting in pupils learning science by exploring and investigating through practical work. This approach has contributed to a significant improvement in the standards achieved. Throughout the school when pupils are provided with appropriately challenging work, they make satisfactory progress but higher attainers are capable of making better progress. At a very simple level, pupils can explain their own ideas or plan investigations independently but these skills are not well developed. They have fewer opportunities to record their investigations and experiments in different ways, consequently recording skills particularly in the juniors are limited and insufficient use is made of charts, diagrams, graphs and information and communication technology. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive adequate support and make satisfactory progress.
- 148 Work in science makes satisfactory contribution to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. In the infants and juniors, investigations involve making simple calculations as in a Year 6 lesson when pupils calculated the temperature loss in materials over 30 minutes. Year 2 pupils read simple bar graphs of favourite foods. Throughout the school, pupils are taught key words in the lessons and frequently write about their conclusions. Many show improvement in handwriting and spelling over time. However, too often in juniors, pupils copy texts from the board as a way of supporting the recording of their work.
- 149 The quality of teaching is mainly satisfactory with some being good. Teachers have secure command of the subject, which underpins detailed explanations and clear instructions helping pupils to understand the task and complete their work. Lessons are appropriately structured with clear objectives which meet the needs of most pupils but the individual need of the higher attainers are not always targeted effectively. Where differentiated work and extension work is provided, higher attainers work briskly and make good gains in the lesson. Where teaching is most effective, teachers consolidate previous learning, they encourage good pupil participation and skilful questioning techniques extend pupils' learning. Teachers deploy good methods and manage their pupils well, resulting in good behaviour and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers generally give evaluative feedback, which helps pupils to improve their work but marking of tasks is inconsistent and too often amounts to ticks, reiterating objectives and remarks for encouragement. In the juniors, the frequency of recorded work is limited to short pieces of weekly work. Where teaching is less effective, lengthy explanations focusing on setting the work and copying objectives from the

board constrain the time available for practical work, which adversely affects the quality of learning.

- 150 Assessment is used to record what pupils know understand and can do. The good practice of using an assessment activity at the end of a topic is applied consistently. The information gained is used to identify strengths and weaknesses. Teachers know their pupils well and this adds to the quality of learning. However, assessment procedures and findings are not shared between teachers to form a common understanding of the National Curriculum levels, particularly at the higher Levels 3 and 5. There is no moderated portfolio of pupils' assessed work to develop consistent practice in assessment of science. As a result, the teachers' assessments at the end of key stage tests are on occasions unreliable.
- 151 The management of science is satisfactory. A comprehensive, recently revised policy is in place supported by well thought out scheme of work, which is linked to the national guidance. The identification of key skills in investigation and experimental science by year groups is particularly effective. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching and learning across the school and is in the process of identifying areas for further development. Resources are generally satisfactory for the subject except for computer software.

ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 152 Five art and design lessons were observed during the inspection, all in the junior classes. No design and technology lessons were planned during the week. The two subjects often share a timetable slot and are taught in blocks of time over the year. They are sometimes planned together, especially in the infants. Some design and technology aspects such as research into the working characteristics of materials are studied in science topics.
- 152 The scrutiny of infant pupils' art and design work on display and in folders confirmed the inspector's judgements that the standards achieved by the infant classes are above that expected for their age, which was also the case in the previous inspection. They make competent repeat print patterns, experiment thoughtfully with different media to explore their qualities, and make good quality observational drawing of fruit and portraits to make a healthy eating display. All pupils are progressing appropriately.
- 153 Standards of art and design work in the junior classes are also above that expected nationally, the work is exciting and well executed. The Year 6 pupils are working on a project on containers which involves individual research on the Crafts Council website for ceramics, detailed and well observed objective drawing, and the making of personally designed containers in ceramics and card. Sketchbooks are used well to record and develop ideas, although not that often.
- 154 Design and technology is studied on an irregular basis, standards in the infants are high, involving a number of practical tasks where they follow instructions involving food, textiles, and constructed materials. They make books with illustrations and text printed on their computers to explain how to make things, they design a play feature for a park, suggesting materials to use, and design their own games. In the juniors a

lot of work is done in making gifts from fabric and materials for their fund raising activities. Pupils design and make a school prospectus for younger pupils who are coming to the school, and devise ways to improve the school environment. Overall the standard of the work seen in folders is high, but projects such as the cushion designs in the juniors are incomplete after a term's work because there are such long gaps between design and technology projects.

- 155 Pupils in both juniors and infants use the two subjects imaginatively across the curriculum, they illustrate their workbooks and make displays for other subjects which demonstrate good skills in sketching and painting. They make constructions and posters to demonstrate Jewish festivals in religious education and puppets and workbooks to support their work in English. They also talk with interest about their work in design and technology, and are aware of the links between the planning and evaluations of their work and how it will improve their skills and awareness of good design. Both subjects contribute to pupils' social and cultural development, they co-operate in designing and making objects, and they are aware of community needs.
- 156 Standards are enhanced by the good range of resources for art and design that the school possesses, although their use is limited by the lack of space for classes to undertake practical activities. Although the pupils use clay the school has no kiln. Design and technology resources are adequate to deliver the planned curriculum, but the same limitations apply. There are appropriate tools and resources in each area with supplementary equipment on trolleys. The long term planning in both subjects is based on the recently published schemes from the Qualifications and Assessment Authority. The co-ordinators and class teachers have developed these to create personal and interesting lessons that are an improvement on those described in the previous inspection report. This planning provides for pupils to experience a wide range of techniques and materials, the emphasis in the schemes of work is on developing skills, knowledge and understanding of the subjects through a sequence of linked lessons. The pupils have access to the full range of activities outlined in the National Curriculum for art and design, and for design and technology, over each key stage, and involve the use of information and communication technology in both subjects, although this could be further developed.
- 157 Sketchbooks are now used in junior classes and this gives pupils an opportunity to develop art and design work and for teachers to monitor their progress over a period of time. The juniors have design and technology workbooks where they write up their evaluations carefully. The recording of achievement is informal in both subjects and pupils are only systematically assessed by the teacher at the end of a year when the report is completed. This is inadequate. Teachers need to identify how well each pupil is achieving and what level they are likely to reach so that they can achieve their full potential. This is particularly important for the gifted and talented pupils who are identified on the school's register, but as yet have no formally developed extension materials. In design and technology the co-ordinator has developed good planning documents, which are being gradually introduced, but assessment still needs to be related more systematically to the National Curriculum levels.

GEOGRAPHY

- 158 There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. No lessons were seen during the inspection. Overall judgements are therefore based upon the extensive scrutiny of pupils' work, examination of documentation including planning, discussion with the subject co-ordinators and pupils. Standards are in line with those expected of pupils at the end of both key stages and similar to those previously reported. Since the last inspection the school has updated the policy, and the use of national guidance has been adapted effectively to support teachers' planning. Business partner links have been established by the subject co-ordinator in the juniors. These are integrated into the geography curriculum.
- 159 Infant pupils learn effectively to compare and classify human and physical features at the seaside. They all begin to learn the names of the five countries which constitute the British Isles. There is evidence that good marking recognises achievement and effort and helps guide the pupil to the next stage of learning. Junior pupils in Year 4 link their work with history. Whilst studying the Egyptians they develop atlas and mapping skills. Similarly within the local history study pupils interpret and use mapping information well whilst researching details surrounding change within the Birmingham area. Year 5 pupils begin to develop useful fieldwork skills whilst visiting the River Cole. They learn about different types of settlements and their functions. Pupils can locate places and rivers using an atlas. As part of their Greek study Year 6 pupils explore coasts and coastlines, including Greek beaches. They investigate and compare the different types of coastlines found in Britain. Year 6 pupils are encouraged to write in their own words using appropriate geography vocabulary. They demonstrate a secure knowledge and understanding of geography facts relating to the British Isles and can use maps with confidence. Where marking is good in Key Stage 2 it provides pointers for improving written work and questions to further develop the pupils' geographical knowledge and understanding. There is evidence that more able pupils are not challenged consistently well enough. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to use questions and research to produce their own findings but there is some evidence that independent research skills have yet to be consistently developed through the school. Work is generally neat and well presented. Overall pupils' learning in the school is good for the vast majority of pupils.
- 160 Teachers' planning is generally detailed and appropriate, and provides a structured framework for covering the National Curriculum programmes of study. However, the format for teachers' planning is different in each key stage, therefore there is a lack of consistency of the process through the school. The co-ordinators recognise that the scheme of work, which will incorporate the development of skills throughout the school, is yet to be fully implemented. Although links with other subjects, particularly history, are good, the school plans teaching of geography as a distinct subject. Pupils record their work in a topic book. In the geography topic, where junior pupils study the Caribbean, it provides them with the opportunities to explore the cultural background of families in the school.
- 161 Informal assessments take place but a formal assessment system and procedures to monitor pupils' progress have yet to be fully developed. The subject policy makes clear statements about monitoring. Pupils' books and teachers' planning records have been examined by the co-ordinators, but not extensively monitored with appropriate

action taken to improve pupils' performance. A portfolio of pupils' work is evolving, but samples are not discussed by staff and matched to National Curriculum levels. The monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons has yet to be undertaken.

- 162 The wide range of good resources effectively support teaching and learning in the subject, although some atlases are dated and provide incorrect information. The two co-ordinators for the subject were both in post at the last inspection and remain keen to develop the subject further. They liaise well between the buildings. However, they experience some difficulties to meet formally on a regular basis due to the nature of the split site. Evidence in samples of work, booklets and photographs of visits and field trips shows the school's provision for geographical experience is good overall. The co-ordinators identify the need to develop the use of the wider community. The use of information and communication technology has insufficient impact upon the teaching and learning in geography.

HISTORY

- 163 A small number of lessons was seen during the inspection. However, an analysis of samples of pupils' work, an interview with the subject co-ordinators and a meeting with Year 6 pupils together with the lesson observations indicate standards achieved by the oldest pupils in both key stages are in line with national expectations. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained standards within the subject. However, formal assessment procedures remain underdeveloped. Although co-ordinators do examine pupils' books and teachers' planning, their role remains underdeveloped because there is insufficient opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in lessons. Teaching overall is good, which represents an improvement since the last inspection where it was judged to be satisfactory.
- 164 By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to devise their own questions and find the answers in a variety of ways, which enables them to increase their skills of historical enquiry and gain, for example, a better understanding of and insight into the life and works of Florence Nightingale. In the one lesson observed in the infants the teacher generated many ideas through discussion and very well resourced activities. Pupils and adults brought in many old and new toys for the toy museum and pupils responded very well to the teacher's challenging questions. It provided pupils with the opportunity to develop an emerging sense of chronology. In lessons seen in the juniors, pupils had a clear understanding of what they were to learn and enjoyed the opportunity to work with a partner within a group. Year 3 pupils showed sound knowledge of a Roman villa and explained why they would like to have lived there. In lessons seen, teachers managed pupils well because of the good relationships they establish. Pupils responded well overall with a positive attitude and enthusiasm for learning. Generally they take pride in presenting work thoughtfully and neatly. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 5 use head phones to listen to information, for example about Tudor Life. They use this to help form ideas, which they can share, and answer specific questions about pre-recorded text. All Year 5 pupils know that the monarch ruled the country during this period of history and learn what affects King Henry VIII as the head of the English Church had upon peoples' lives. Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of chronology and can name significant events and

people from the past. They discussed their Greek study confidently. Pupils in Year 6 use different sources of evidence to learn about the past and begin to understand how people lived at the time. Overall progress is good throughout the school.

- 165 The curriculum is thoughtfully planned incorporating national guidance for the subject. Educational visits enrich pupils' learning, for example where Year 4 enjoy a range of stimulating experiences at the Egyptian Museum. The linking of history with geography and other subjects when appropriate helps make the pupils' learning meaningful and maintains positive attitudes towards the subject. The co-ordinators promote history as a fun subject. Planning is thorough and provides good coverage of history, which meets National Curriculum requirements. Scrutiny of resources reveals there is a good range and that teachers use them effectively with a particular emphasis on artefacts for pupils to research their work and increase their historical understanding. CD-ROMs are used for information, but the co-ordinators are aware that the consistent use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in history is underdeveloped. A portfolio of pupils' work is evolving although samples are not discussed by staff and not matched to National Curriculum levels. The two co-ordinators liaise well between the infant and junior buildings and meet informally on a regular basis, but as yet lack time and opportunity to meet to discuss specific aspects of the subject's development. They are aware that to fully implement the recently agreed policy will serve to further raise standards in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 166 Only three information and communication technology (ICT) lessons were seen during the inspection, all in junior classes. Looking at pupils' work and discussions with the headteacher, co-ordinator, teachers and pupils has provided further evidence of the use of ICT.
- 167 Overall pupil attainment in ICT remains below that expected nationally. However, progress in lessons seen, particularly in the new ICT suite, is good. The quality of provision in ICT is now satisfactory with the recent changes that have been made. Statutory requirements in this subject are now met which is an improvement since the last inspection
- 168 Year 1 pupils have the opportunity to use a computer graphing application to create graphs recording their hair and eye colour, which supports their work about themselves. They all make satisfactory progress and continue on to carry out a simple survey about how they come to school recording this pictorially as a graph again using the computer. They also use a simple click and drag program to create self-portraits, which they then compare with self-portraits drawn by hand. The pupils have word-processed short sentences which have been put together by teachers to produce a large fiction and non-fiction class book.
- 169 When pupils enter the juniors, their attainment is below that expected nationally as they have only basic mouse and keyboarding skills. Some Year 3 pupils are introduced to the Internet for the first time in the new ICT suite. All pupils including

those with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, were seen to make good progress accessing information about the Romans. From the teacher's given instructions they independently logged onto the BBC website and followed the on-screen links. This supported their class work in history. Some Year 4 pupils made satisfactory progress discussing and deciding the field names for a class database about British Monarchs. Some Year 6 pupils also accessed a website about Athens and independently viewed and selected an image. All pupils in this lesson made good progress independently copying and pasting the image to a document, which has a newspaper layout. They resized the image to fit and began to write the text deciding the headline and subheading to support their historical studies. Other Year 6 pupils created on screen routes to move an object from one place to another and were able to modify their routes appropriately. In one literacy lesson two pupils sorted connectives into groups using a word processor rather than pen and paper. In addition there is evidence in books to show that pupils use a graphics application to create Christmas cards and use repeating patterns when designing wrapping paper. They also follow instructions to complete an adventure game. Pupils demonstrate their understanding of ICT when writing in their books about the applications they have used. Last year, some current Year 6 pupils won an internet competition to design an Environmentally Friendly Scarecrow.

- 170 Pupils enjoy ICT lessons and are particularly inspired when they are working in the ICT suite. They behave well and share the use of computers appropriately. They confidently help each other to develop mouse skills and collaborate well as they discuss the on screen information whilst searching Internet websites. All pupils are Internet safety aware and know never to give out their own names when communicating over the web.
- 171 No specific teaching of ICT was observed during the last inspection. However, this has now improved and the quality of teaching is now good, particularly in the ICT suite. Teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to support all pupils during well-planned, well-paced lessons. They research the websites well, which has a positive impact on pupils' learning as they work together to carry out their research. Teachers know their pupils well, they challenge them appropriately, and constantly check that they are all on task and understand what they are doing whilst connected to the World Wide Web. Assessment to track pupils' progress in this subject remains under developed and is a weakness, as it was at the time of the last inspection.
- 172 Led by the headteacher, the school has a clear vision for its ICT development. Through the National Grid for Learning (NGfL) both the infant and junior buildings have been linked by a computer network infrastructure that supports the sharing of software applications, internet and e-mail for all users. This development although in its infancy is a secure basis for future developments in all subjects, although the storage and retrieval of pupils' work remains to be thought through and this is a weakness. The school has a useful policy for the subject; and the scheme of work links the development of ICT skills, knowledge and understanding to learning in other subjects, which has a positive effect on learning. However, the impact of the use of ICT in subjects remains under developed. It is beginning to emerge in literacy, which is in line with the school's ICT development plan. This development plan now needs extending beyond next year.

- 173 Some monitoring of ICT throughout the school has occurred. This should now be developed to review the impact of the ICT suite on pupils' learning as this resource becomes established. All teachers are currently undergoing training funded through the New Opportunities Fund (NOF), however it is too early to tell how this is impacting on teaching and learning. For example, the links between ICT and its use by teachers for pupil assessment is currently under developed.
- 174 The support provided by the ICT technician is a strength of the school. His technical ability with the computer network, and his work with teachers and pupils has a positive effect on teaching and learning. Parents are fully informed about the schools policy for safe Internet access.
- 175 Resources for learning in this subject are satisfactory, with a pupil:computer ratio of 12:1, similar to the national average, and there are future plans to increase the number of available computers. The range of software and hardware supports the curriculum well. However, the use of a scanner, digital camera, sensors and control equipment remains under developed and they should now be included into future curriculum development planning. There is still insufficient use made of classroom computers in some lessons. However the ICT suite, a new initiative this term, is emerging as a very effective resource. Pupils who use it are gaining the ICT skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to support their work in the curriculum. The school is now well placed to extend this style of learning to all.

MUSIC

- 176 There was little evidence of music available for inspectors to see and only five lessons were observed where music was taking place. It is difficult to make a secure judgement of pupils' attainment or progress. However, the small amount of observation, together with scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with the music co-ordinator indicate that pupils are given a range of appropriate opportunities to gain musical experience. These include performing, composing, listening to and appraising music at levels appropriate for their age.
- 177 The co-ordinator has provided teachers with a well structured plan of musical activities for all age groups. This sets out clear guidance for the non-specialist teacher to follow and it includes learning objectives, activities and resources needed to deliver the lessons. The guidance relates to the different elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study for music.
- 178 Music is used well within the curriculum and pupils have the opportunity to listen to a range of music. During music lessons and in assemblies pupils listen to music from different cultures and from different periods. Teachers choose pieces of music to match the theme for assembly and this serves to enhance the value and quality of the assembly.
- 179 The music co-ordinator is released from her class so that she can carry out a specialist role in classes throughout the school, from reception to Year 6. In this role she works alongside the class teacher, delivering effectively a demonstration lesson which can

then be followed up by the class teacher. This helps to enhance the confidence of the non-specialists. Despite this support, it was evident from those lessons observed that there is a range of competency and subject knowledge amongst teachers, which suggests that there is a training issue that may need to be addressed.

- 180 The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Her visiting role to all classes in the school does provide an effective consistency and an assurance that pupils are receiving appropriate musical experience. She has organised a number of extracurricular activities for pupils, including an upper school choir and a recorder club which is open to all pupils who are interested to take part. A visiting violin teacher provides lessons for some pupils, with parents paying a proportion of the charge (except in the case of pupils whose parents cannot pay and the school discretely pays the whole amount).
- 181 Music plays an important part in the life of the school with groups of pupils involved in making music and singing at concerts, in assemblies and at venues in the wider community. Resources for the teaching of music are good, with a wide range of instruments being available in both parts of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 182 Few lessons in physical education (PE) were observed, but overall standards are in line with national expectations. Only one lesson was observed in PE in the infants but planning indicates that appropriate coverage is maintained for pupils to attain the national expectation. Due to insufficient evidence no judgements were made about standards attained in the infants. In the lessons observed in the junior classes standards were as expected for pupils by the age of eleven.
- 183 Pupils in Year 1 move around the hall in a controlled way, creating body movements to music. They shiver, wobble and stamp around with due regard to space and awareness of others. Year 4 pupils develop different ways of moving in a sequence of movements; their limb extensions and body position contributing effectively to their movement. Year 5 pupils responded imaginatively to the dance and poetry stimulus by showing awareness of linking emotions to movement. Throughout the lessons seen pupils understand the purpose of warm up and cool down exercises during the lessons. In these lessons pupils were well behaved, capable of extended exercise, and improvement was evident for most pupils. They collaborated well in pairs and responded positively to the challenges provided for them. Pupils with special educational needs are given the same opportunities as others and are fully involved in all activities. Swimming is given a high priority and a high proportion of pupils achieve the recommended minimum requirements in stroke techniques and water safety, as is demonstrated by the good swimming records maintained.
- 184 The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. It was very good in the one lesson seen in Year 1. The teaching of swimming is good. When teaching was most effective as in the Year 1 lesson and in the swimming lessons, the pace was brisk and challenging and periods of inactivity kept to a minimum. Safe practice was given a high priority and pupils were taught how to enter and leave the pool safely. Instructions were clear and challenging. Pupils listened attentively and followed the instructions accurately.

Opportunities were provided for pupils to refine, practise and apply skills. Effective use was made of pupils to demonstrate good practice. Pupils evaluated one another's performances and shared constructive feedback. On occasions, introduction, explanations and instructions took too long resulting in a lengthy period of inaction.

- 185 The school has made some improvement since the last inspection by ensuring that a comprehensive updated policy is in place. A long-term plan provides an appropriate framework for teachers' medium and short-term planning. The medium-term plans are based on nationally devised schemes of work which provide good guidance and support for teachers, but have not been made personal to the school or the class. The schemes of work need to be developed in more detail in the light of information from assessment and evaluation by the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and the termly reviews carried out by all teachers to ensure that National Curriculum requirements are met. He has not, as yet, had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in lessons. The national guidance being used has had a positive impact on the quality and range of activities provided to pupils. Although good use is made of comments and advice about performance to pupils, the school is aware of the need to develop more formal assessment practice.
- 186 Accommodation for physical education is barely satisfactory. In both infants and junior buildings the halls are fairly small but teachers make good use of the space available. The school has recently extended facilities for physical education by hiring a playing field from an independent school near the infant school building and another one for the juniors, which is a long walk away from the school. It has also introduced a hockey and netball clubs for the juniors. Years 5 and 6 pupils have an opportunity to visit a residential centre for outdoor pursuits for a week, this is well attended by pupils. Resources, including large and small apparatus, are satisfactory and the hard surfaced areas have a good range of marking for formal and informal activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 187 Evidence upon which secure judgements can be made is limited, as only two religious education (RE) lessons were observed during the inspection. However, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with staff indicate that there is satisfactory provision of religious education. Standards, as shown in the samples of pupils' work, indicate that pupils are reaching the appropriate levels set out in the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for RE.
- 188 Pupils have a sound knowledge of the main principles of the Christian and other faiths, including Islam, Sikhism and Judaism. By the age of seven pupils have heard and understand the parables from the Bible. In the one lesson observed in Year 2, pupils were trying to explain the meaning of the parables 'The Lost Coin', 'The Prodigal Son' and 'The Lost Sheep'. As a result of careful introduction by the teacher and using a very effective paired activity with a 'talk partner', pupils were able to suggest the meaning conveyed by the stories.
- 189 Older pupils in Year 6 were observed carrying out research into the Amrit ceremony in Sikhism. This was a jigsaw type activity where five separate groups carried out a specific area of research to bring back to the whole class, in order to show the

complete picture. This was a very effective teaching and learning strategy.

- 190 Teachers plan effectively, using the guidance provided by both subject co-ordinators in the infants and juniors. There are different approaches to planning in the key stages but both relate well to the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus. The teachers plan in year groups to ensure consistency; and co-ordinators monitor their planning to ensure continuity through the key stages.
- 191 All topics within the planning are given an assessment focus and assessments of pupils' progress are carried out at the end of each topic.
- 192 Resources for the teaching of RE are very good. There are topic boxes for Islam, Sikhism, Christianity, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism and Collective Worship. There is also a useful range of posters and books which deal with festivals, multifaith material and biographies of great religious leaders.
- 193 Both subject co-ordinators provide satisfactory support and leadership for teachers. They monitor planning and displays around the school, and they have discussions with teachers to help with the planning and delivery of the R.E. curriculum. They also scrutinise the termly evaluation sheets and meet on a regular basis to ensure continuity across both key stages.