

INSPECTION REPORT

**YEW TREE NURSERY INFANT AND JUNIOR
SCHOOL**

Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104058

Headteacher: Mr R. J. Hawkesford

Reporting inspector: Mrs. E. B. Camplin

Dates of inspection: 30th April – 3rd May 2001

Inspection number: 195052

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Wherretts Well Lane Solihull
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G. Wood
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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3586	E. Camplin	Registered inspector	English	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
8989	M. Romano	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18709	N. Bee	Team inspector	Geography History Religious education Provision for pupils with English as an additional language Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
25577	W. Jefferson	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Information and communication technology Music Equality of opportunity	
29378	K. Watson	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education Provision for pupils with special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Yew Tree Nursery, Infant and Junior School is situated in the Silhill ward, within the borough of Solihull. It serves a local community extending into part of Elmdon Heath. The roll has grown since the last inspection in 1997 by approximately 20 per cent. There are now 217 registered pupils. Of these, 27 children attend the new nursery part-time and 30 are in the reception class. Boys out-number the girls, especially in the nursery, reception and Year 1 classes. Pupils' family backgrounds are broadly typical of those found nationally. The ethnic mix is predominantly white but growing in diversity. A small minority is of Caribbean heritage whilst eleven pupils have home languages other than English, including Punjabi, Hindi and Japanese. The percentage they represent is high, compared with most schools. Twenty-two pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is close to the national average. Attainment on entry to reception in early reading and mathematics' skills is different each year and was below average in 2000. Over three years, the average is matched to national expectations for five-year-olds. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, including statements, is also broadly in line with the national average. Altogether, there are 28 such pupils, including three with statements and 13 who require the support of outside agencies. Their needs are wide-ranging and include emotional and behavioural difficulties, dyslexia, autism, speech impairment and moderate learning difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that is soundly led and managed. It has a strong, supportive ethos in which pupils achieve high standards of behaviour and develop very positive attitudes to learning. Pupils achieve standards that are at least as high as they should be in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school. The oldest junior pupils' attainment in English is good, and in mathematics and science satisfactory. Most teaching is good. Some weaknesses in teaching and learning are reflected in pupils' workbooks, particularly in Year 2. Overall, the school has made reasonable improvement since its last inspection, and is still providing satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- It provides a very good curriculum for nursery and reception children so that they achieve well at school.
- In both key stages pupils' performance is good in music, information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, design and technology and physical education.
- Pupils have good speaking and listening skills that they use well in most lessons.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning, achieve high standards of behaviour, and form excellent inter-personal relationships.
- The headteacher, staff and governors set a very good example for pupils of how to work in harmony to achieve common aims.

What could be improved

- Pupils could reach higher standards in mathematics and science, especially in Key Stage 1.
- Pupils could make better use of literacy and numeracy skills in their written work.
- The school could improve upon the way it (a) shows that it challenges its pupils to perform as well as those in the best schools and (b) consults with parents to meet their aspirations for high quality education.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997 when it was judged a good school. Since then, it has done well to maintain its strengths and has addressed most of its weaknesses. It has considerably improved provision for special educational needs and ICT. Improvements in the end of Key Stage 2 assessment results have kept up with the national trend. However, the school has not improved at the good pace anticipated by the earlier report findings. This is because the approach to identifying the reasons for below average standards in mathematics and science, and taking effective action, has lacked sufficient rigour. When compared with pupils' prior attainment on entry to school, progress at the infant stage has been slow. Despite good value added in the junior stage, improvement in standards has not been enough to make a significant difference in levels attained in mathematics and science compared with all schools nationally.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the year 2000, standards were average in English, well below average in mathematics, and below average in science, compared with all schools. Achievement was at least sound when compared with similar schools and with the results Yew Tree achieved in the 1996 Key Stage 1 tests, in English and mathematics. The improvement in average points scored in tests has been broadly in line with the national trend. Currently, Year 6 pupils are attaining good standards in English. Standards are satisfactory in mathematics and science, and are higher than last year. The school's statutory improvement targets for years 2001 and 2002, set at an appropriately challenging level, are likely to be met, particularly in English. In Key Stage 1, standards are average in English. They are below average in mathematics and science because infants are underachieving. Standards throughout the school are good in music, art and design, design and technology, ICT, and physical education. They are sound in history, geography and religious education. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well. By the end of the reception year they are likely to attain all the expected early learning goals.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are very good. Children are keen and enthusiastic in all of their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in classes and around the school. Pupils are polite, considerate and very responsive to the high expectations of adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' relationships with each other and adults are excellent. They are mature and very responsible when they transfer to secondary school.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

These aspects of achievement are very good and no significant weaknesses were found.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

In English, teaching is predominantly good. As a result, pupils in most year groups make good progress in speaking and listening, reading and handwriting skills, and they usually apply these well in lessons. Pupils' progress in writing for different purposes is predominantly sound. Teaching in mathematics is good, with an appropriate emphasis on the number attainment target. A scrutiny of work shows that teaching is not always focused enough on the application of literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills in all subjects, particularly science. There is some evidence of inadequate challenge for more able pupils. Some tasks for lower-achieving children, or pupils with English as an additional language, are either too difficult or unfinished because time for completing them runs out. The impact of staff sickness has been the cause for some slow progress, especially in Year 2 and to a lesser extent, in Year 6. Older juniors are also catching up from a very unsettled year when they were in Year 3. In the lessons observed, 20 per cent of teaching and learning was very good or better, 80 per cent was good or better, 98 per cent was satisfactory or better, and 2 per cent was unsatisfactory. Learning was particularly good in high quality art and design, physical education and music lessons. Children in the Foundation Stage are well taught and make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	This aspect of provision is sound overall. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good. It is good in its breadth and balance at Key Stage 2. Provision in mathematics and science has shortcomings at the infant stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, provision in this aspect is sound and has improved since the last inspection. It is good in the Foundation Stage as a result of focused assessment, specific learning targets, and good liaison with parents.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school provides sound support for these pupils and they make progress in line with their peer groups
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision in these aspects is good. Aims and values that focus on respect for people from diverse social, cultural and religious backgrounds are well implemented. The impact on pupils' social and moral development is high and satisfactory on their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school makes very good provision for pupils' care and protection and it has sustained the high quality reported at the time of the first inspection. Overall, assessment procedures are sound.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The partnership with parents is good but plans to sustain it are not well explained. Parents contribute effectively to pupils' progress in literacy and in the development of study skills. They have a strong influence on the school's family ethos and climate for learning. The involvement of the community, and good opportunities for extra-curricular activities, add good value to the quality of pupils' learning.

The school knows it should strengthen assessment in Key Stage 1 and teachers' awareness of the stages of language acquisition in order to cater for the needs of its growing number of pupils with English as an additional language. The withdrawal of pupils for additional support in literacy and numeracy sometimes causes pupils to miss lessons in other subjects and this needs monitoring.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Overall, this aspect is sound. The pastoral leadership provided by the headteacher is of high quality. All key staff are committed and share high expectations. Leadership to ensure clear direction in the drive for school improvement requires more focus and rigour.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors soundly fulfil their statutory duties and are closely involved in the life of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This aspect of management is mainly sound. There are some weaknesses in the way the school analyses and accounts for below average standards in mathematics and science.
The strategic use of resources	The strategic use of resources is effective. Recent benefits include the new nursery, substantial improvements to the main building, and training in ICT resulting in higher standards.

The adequacy of accommodation is good, and the range of learning resources is sound. The school staff is well qualified and deployed appropriately. The school is not sufficiently analytical in its interpretation of data to identify and then rigorously address possible reasons for differences in the performance of different groups of pupils. It needs to do more to apply the principles of best value effectively.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They like the new nursery and the good start children make there, and at reception. • They are happy with the school's welcoming atmosphere and the way in which very good relationships and high standards of behaviour are promoted. • The school responds well to parents' suggestions and concerns. • All staff work hard on pupils' behalf. • There is better provision for pupils with special educational needs than in 1997. 	<p>The views of a small minority are:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Year 2 standards could improve. • That their children do not make sufficient progress at school. • That there are shortcomings in the way older junior pupils are taught. • That information they receive about progress is not good enough. • That the partnership with parents is not good enough.

The number of parents who shared their views with the inspection team was relatively small. They are not necessarily representative of the parent body as a whole. The reasons for the wide range of views expressed were thoroughly investigated. The strengths identified are fully substantiated. The concerns about standards at the end of the infant stage are also justified. The evidence did not support adverse views about teaching of older juniors, or parents' access to good quality information about children's progress. Inspectors found that the school values its partnership with parents but needs to communicate this more effectively. Parents are well represented on the governing body and their contribution is good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the year 2000, results of Year 6 statutory assessment tasks in English, mathematics and science were, overall, below the national average for all schools. Though pupils reached average standards in English, attainment was low in mathematics, and below average in science. However, the headteacher provided the registered inspector, and the team, with additional comparative data about prior attainment in Yew Tree at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1996. It demonstrates that pupils performed particularly well to achieve the results they did in English. Fewer pupils than the national average achieved results lower than level 3, and pupils matched their peers in other schools at levels 3, 4 and the above average level 5. Test results were also as high as could have been forecast in science, but lower than might have been expected in mathematics.

2. During the inspection, the school provided additional information about other relevant circumstances that also affected the results. It explained the weaknesses in mathematics, partly explained those in science, and the low achievement of girls. The high rate of pupil mobility, equating to 25 per cent, had a significant effect on the average scores that are used to determine national benchmarks. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in numeracy was very significant. In the relatively small year group, there were six pupils with specific difficulties in mathematics. Four were girls. Three joined the school in Years 5 and 6, whilst two highly performing pupils, predicted to reach level 5, moved abroad before taking the tests. In view of their special needs, the lower attaining group performed relatively well, but a smaller than average percentage of pupils reached levels 4 and 5. Girls did less well in mathematics than they did in either English or science. The reverse was the case in science. A higher than average percentage of pupils reached the expected level 4 with 100 per cent of girls achieving the benchmark but none moving above to level 5. Only 70 per cent of the boys reached the average level but of these two gained level 5. These are outcomes related to gender that the school had not thought to explore and explain until asked to do so during the inspection.

3. Nonetheless, the data provided shows that the school monitors the progress of individual pupils in Key Stage 2. It has been able to show that most pupils made good progress over the junior stage. It was established that in the year 2000, and in the previous year, 1999, pupils made overall gains of at least two levels above their Key Stage 1 test results. The analysis is also revealing that the foundations laid in mathematics and science in Key Stage 1, were not as good as those in English. Despite this, the encouraging evidence is that Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1 results have improved at the same rate as standards nationally. The trend in improvement over five years has been satisfactory in both key stages.

4. In Key Stage 1, in the year 2000, standards were average in reading and writing, but below average in mathematics and science. When compared to attainment levels on entry to reception, infants made sound progress in English tests, but slow progress in the two other subjects. One pupil with a statement was disapplied from tests. This affected the overall average points score. Nonetheless, standards in mathematics and science should have been higher. When results achieved over a three-year period are analysed, it is the performance of

boys rather than girls that has been below average and not as good as boys nationally. The overall average performance reflects a marked improvement in reading, some gains in writing, but no gains in mathematics or science. There is a pattern of underachievement in mathematics and science in Year 2 that is not seen in Year 1.

5. The school is committed to raising standards and has begun to address key issues. It has organised a programme of professional development opportunities for staff on gender related teaching and learning strategies. It has joined a Local Education Authority project whose remit is to raise standards at the infant stage. It is using assessment information to set forecasts for Year 6 pupils' performance in years 2001 and 2002. Teachers have set realistic targets, based on results gained in English and mathematics in Key Stage 1. These were above average in the year 1997, and below average in 1998. Account has also been taken of a badly disrupted year when Year 6 pupils were in Year 3. However, the school still has work to do to analyse results even more rigorously to establish more clearly why there are differences in the performance of boys and girls. It also has a growing number of pupils for whom English is an additional language who are not initially assessed to determine their level of English acquisition. At present the school cannot accurately evaluate the progress they make.

6. Encouragingly, inspection evidence shows that the school is likely to reach achievement targets in English and mathematics, and at least match national expectations this year. Year 6 pupils have made sound progress, despite the temporary absence, through sickness, of their classteacher for part of the year. Currently, pupils are achieving above the expected standard in English and most are working at the level expected in mathematics and science. Year 5 pupils' work is of a good standard. Their good progress suggests that they are likely to achieve the higher achieving goals set for them. Additional support in literacy and numeracy, targeted at lower-achieving pupils, is having a positive impact on pupils' accuracy with spelling and grammar, and confidence with number operations. Attention to all the learning objectives in the national strategies for literacy and numeracy is also helping the more able pupils. The oral start to lessons has been good enough to raise standards in Key Stage 2 in speaking and listening skills. Pupils listen intently, are fluent in discussions, and are agile in mental calculations involving number to 1000. Older juniors read well, are familiar with a wide range of authors, and have good standards of handwriting. They do not make enough use of library reference skills or write in sufficient length about their opinions and ideas. They also achieve less well in data handling than the shape, space and measure attainment target. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the different aspects of science are satisfactory. They discuss the cause and effects of things that affect life and growth, materials and physical phenomena. They are not as proficient as they should be in writing to explain hypotheses and the outcomes of testing and investigation. With more constructive marking in mainstream lessons, Year 6 could be encouraged to perform even better.

7. During the inspection, standards of work seen were satisfactory, overall, for children in the Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in the nursery and in reception. Their personal, social and emotional development is very good. Pupils have achieved well in developing speaking and listening, numeracy and early ICT skills. They apply these in all the areas of learning effectively. They are also good at the musical aspect of creative development. They enjoy reading and are knowledgeable about books. They willingly attempt to write and record ideas and information. Higher-achieving children are working within the National Curriculum lower levels. They could be better at handwriting with more direct instruction on how to form letters.

8. Currently, standards in Key Stage 1 are satisfactory in English, but unsatisfactory in mathematics and science. Year 2 pupils are reaching at least the expected standard in two out of three attainment targets for English. They show above average skills in reading and listening. Their speaking and handwriting skills are satisfactory and writing and spelling skills are only just below average. Attainment in mathematics and science is below national average standards. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of number are satisfactory for their levels of prior attainment. They can perform addition and subtraction with numbers up to 99, using practical apparatus, as well as pencil and paper methods. They have a reasonable grasp of estimates of length and capacity but only high and average achievers can confidently and accurately use standardised units of measure. Pupils' understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shape is secure, but most have little knowledge of three-dimensional shapes. Most pupils have insecure understanding of simple fractions related to parts being equal. In science, pupils do not have sufficient grasp of how to apply scientific knowledge to practical investigation. Their written work is not organised well and does not reflect sufficient progress from Year 1, when standards were sound.

9. Overall, standards in literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, they are developed well in Year 1 through cross-curricular opportunities in other subjects. A scrutiny of books indicates their use is more restricted in Year 2. Discontinuity of teaching, combined with a lack of focus on direct monitoring of their performance, has resulted in some missed opportunities for regular and stimulating opportunities for practising the skills in meaningful contexts. There are a few good examples. One is a dictionary of animal characters that has reinforced knowledge of the alphabet, the order of letters, and knowledge of animals and their characteristics.

10. In Key Stage 2, there are good links between ICT and English, and sound links with history and geography. Pupils use computers frequently in creative writing and for research. Numeracy skills are used well in creative subjects including art and design and design and technology. Handling data is insufficiently promoted through ICT. Writing for a purpose in science is not sufficiently well taught to enable children to consistently use a full range of writing and recording techniques, such as note-taking, compiling lists, using bullet points and recording in charts or tables. Lower achievers often need more guidance and higher attainers are not consistently challenged to apply their skills independently.

11. Standards are sound in history, geography, and religious education in both key stages. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of these subjects is reflected through their confidence to talk about the various elements and concepts, rather than through the quality and range of their written work. Standards are above expectation in ICT, art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Pupils are so good at co-operating and sharing ideas that they apply practical skills carefully, and often imaginatively. The achievement of all pupils is high because of the intellectual, creative and physical effort they make.

12. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, and good in art and design, music, design and technology, physical education and ICT. This is because good planning and clear learning objectives give both high and low attaining pupils the confidence to work to their full potential. Pupils withdrawn for extra help in literacy and numeracy are set appropriate tasks related to their individual education plans and achieve well at these times. These pupils do not attain as well in mainstream class lessons, particularly in mathematics, science, history, geography and religious education. This is because pupils

sometimes miss these lessons, or the tasks set by the teachers are

inappropriate and do not take enough account of individual targets. This sometimes leads to lack of incentive, untidy or unfinished work and underachievement.

13. From an evaluation of all the work seen, inspection findings are that achievement is sound overall given the disparate levels of prior attainment in both key stages. In summary, the school must ensure it maintains its standards where they are above expectation. It must add rigour to the approach to developing literacy and numeracy skills across the school and raising standards of achievement in mathematics and science, particularly in Key Stage 1.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have very positive attitudes to their learning. Their behaviour is very good, both in and out of lessons, and they enjoy school. There were no exclusions last year and there have been none since. The quality of inter-personal relationships is excellent. Even the youngest pupils are keen and enthusiastic in their learning. They show the same high level of respect for teachers and all other adults; this is such a strong feature of all pupils' conduct in this school.

15. Pupils' co-operative attitudes, very good behaviour, and high quality relationships are evident in all classes. In a Year 2 numeracy lesson, for example, all pupils were eager to learn, and collaborated very well during group work. In a Year 4 literacy lesson about poetry, pupils' response to their teacher could hardly have been better. They worked hard with no fuss and in a highly co-operative spirit. Pupils with special educational needs flourished in the supportive atmosphere. They were as successful as their peers in composing and performing their own poem.

16. Sometimes, behaviour is excellent and contributes significantly to pupils' personal development. In a Year 6 lesson where pupils were examining H. G. Wells War of the Worlds, they were keen to express their views, yet they also listened attentively when necessary. They clearly showed great respect for their teacher. The accent on skills in speaking and listening, and pupils' understanding of citizenship, is evident throughout the school. It is a key feature of personal development and helped by the excellent contribution in every class of two class council representatives. Pupils willingly take responsibility for jobs delegated by their teacher. These include taking and collecting registers, giving out resources and running the 'School Bank'. They enjoy being praised and also seeing friends' efforts acknowledged, and their self-esteem developed. This is exemplified by the awarding of 'star of the week' certificates, at a weekly assembly. This occasion is highly valued by all pupils.

17. The way pupil's work in collaboration in pairs and groups is a very good indication that they understand the impact of their actions on their neighbours. They develop an ability to share emotional and social problems during circle time. They sit in a ring and take it in turns to discuss issues, such as bullying or their fears. This understanding is exemplified also in the orderly way in which they play and act at lunchtime around the school. Pupils often show initiative and personal responsibility through their work and particularly in projects they do at home. They readily help one another, and take care of school resources. They are very well prepared for secondary school.

18. The school's attendance figures are broadly in line with the national average and are satisfactory. The statistics are sometimes adversely affected by extended family holidays. This is not seen to have a detrimental impact on learning but is potentially disruptive.

19. Overall, the significant strengths reported at the time of the previous inspection have been sustained. Attendance levels have fluctuated but the quality of relationships is even better.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. Overall, teaching is predominantly good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in most lessons. The focus on speaking and listening is a successful feature of many lessons throughout the school. Teachers know pupils well and take good account of individual needs in discussions, in the introduction to lessons and in the plenary session at the end. Questions are skilfully targeted at high and low achievers, and all are fully involved. Provision is not as good in the middle part of lessons where tasks set are often the same for all abilities, and pupils with special educational needs sometimes struggle to finish work successfully. Marking, particularly at the top end of the school, is sometimes over-critical, focusing on mistakes rather than the good points. Provision when pupils are withdrawn for extra help is well planned, but individual education plans are not usually included in class teachers' planning, so individual targets are not consistently reinforced. Teachers are aware of the pupils with an additional language and these pupils make sound progress, in line with their peers, in developing literacy and numeracy skills. However, teachers are unsure of how best to assess and measure their success in the acquisition of English.

21. Good practice begins in the Foundation Stage. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is consistently good in all areas of learning, for all groups of children. Significantly, the teacher, nursery nurse and classroom support assistant, share a very good understanding of the early years curriculum. Their sensitive child-management makes a positive difference to pupils' social, emotional and personal development. The teaching team encourages listening and language development in all the activities they provide. A very good example of these features combining very effectively is where groups of children were pretending to go shopping. The practical activity provided good opportunities for handling and counting coins. It enabled children to talk about money and extend their understanding of the value of several coins added together. It also helped them to decide how to spend it. The adults helped children to share and work together and made the activity fun. Such activities ensure that children under five enjoy their learning, develop positive attitudes, and are particularly well behaved. This means that children use time very constructively and make good progress in most of their work. The teaching of handwriting could be better with more emphasis placed on letter formation.

22. In the infant and junior stages, the ratio of good or better teaching compared with sound practice is less pronounced than in the Foundation Stage, but is still high. It is most consistently good in classes that have not been disrupted by absence due to the ill health of a teacher.

23. In Year 1, all teaching is good or better in English, mathematics, ICT, and music; it is excellent in art and design. The very good learning outcomes are due to high expectations and a strong focus on demonstrating and practising specific skills. Lessons are consistently well planned for pupils of different levels of prior attainment. Children understand what is expected of them. Lessons proceed at a good pace and make imaginative use of resources, and effective use of adult helpers. They are delivered in a lively style that pupils find

stimulating and supportive. Pupils respond with enthusiasm and work well together. The technique of printing, for example, was very well taught and links were skillfully made with numeracy through a focus on repeating patterns. Pupils were enthralled by the William Morris print examples and thoroughly enjoyed investigating a variety of materials to draft and begin their own designs. They made excellent progress during the lesson. The same features work effectively in science, but this subject is not taught to such high quality because of some inadequacy in the teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject. This is reflected in a lack of clear objectives for what children are to learn, for example, about the differences between the roots of a variety of plants. Pupils learnt more about what roots rely on to grow, but not as much as they could have about why some roots grow straight and others coil or become damaged. Consequently, progress in science is satisfactory but could be better.

24. The scrutiny of work in Year 2 highlighted some issues in the quality of teaching earlier in the academic year. Some tasks in literacy and numeracy lacked challenge and variety and pupils' progress has been erratic. The limited range and quality of work produced pointed to slow progress in the acquisition of independent writing skills, and weak application of literacy skills in science. In mathematics some incorrect calculations were marked with a tick. Higher-achievers' errors in division were overlooked. Lower-achieving pupils had uncompleted work. Either the tasks were too difficult or group work time was not managed well enough.

25. Two separate teachers have taught Year 2 pupils during the course of the year, the one this term on a temporary supply basis. This has caused some discontinuity in teaching style but learning is better this term than during the autumn term. The lessons observed were good in mathematics and religious education, and sound in English and literacy. The mathematics lesson was successful due to the thorough planning in line with the national strategy for numeracy. The teacher demonstrated good knowledge of basic skill development, organised group activities well with appropriate use of practical resources, and forged an effective partnership with the classroom assistant. As a result, pupils knew, and were comfortable with, what was expected of them and enthusiastically engaged in the lesson. They worked with a sense of purpose and determination. Though the standard achieved was below average, their progress during the lesson was good and pupils gained a better understanding of subtraction as the inverse of addition. The start of the literacy lesson worked well. Pupils learnt more about letter strings and improved their spelling and comprehension of non-fiction texts. Taking their cue from the teacher, pupils made good use of book vocabulary. They knew how to locate information, and could summarise key points about minibeasts from what they read. They did not gain as much knowledge of the use of bullet points from the lesson as they had the potential to do. This was because they did not have quite the right focus for their individual writing.

26. Teaching in Years 3, 4 and 5 has been uninterrupted by the absence of teaching staff because of sickness. This continuity has had a positive impact on learning. Lessons in the lower junior stage were good or better, with particular strengths in literacy, ICT, and the foundation subjects, notably music. Subject expertise is a highly significant contributory factor in music. Excellent preparation for a literacy lesson and skilful class management results in very good learning in Year 4, about haiku poetry. Discussion is promoted very well, and pupils appreciate the many opportunities to discuss and share ideas. They are always keen to learn and make the best use of their time. Their progress has accelerated since moving into Key Stage 2.

27. In Year 5, the lessons are usually planned carefully to match the requirements of each subject. Music, design and technology are good examples of lessons that work very well for all pupils. Pupils are grouped appropriately and work co-operatively at all times. The lower-achieving pupils are sometimes unsure of the purpose of tasks in mathematics and English. For example, they were reluctant to seek help in their writing when required to write from the perspective of a selfish character in a story. Some lack of teacher confidence in science hampered pupils' progress in work about evaporation of liquids. Pupils have some difficulty with the idea of fair tests.

28. There is some excellent teaching in Year 6 in physical education. The way all pupils were encouraged to participate was impressive. Subject knowledge, class organisation, clear guidance, and praise for effort were all of a high order. This led to pupils' improving their ability to plan, evaluate and improve their work on balance and body control. Their performance was of a high standard. Similarly, subject knowledge and a mastery of the special concepts and vocabulary were very positive features of lessons in mathematics, science and English. The use of ICT is regular and it is organised systematically. Pupils always concentrate very well, are good at discussion and sharing ideas, and are mature in their management of themselves. On just one occasion, in an effort to cover as much ground as possible and move pupils' understanding on about futuristic writing in the 'sci-fi' style of War of the Worlds and The Tripods, the writing task proved too difficult for pupils. The teacher, in her haste, had forgotten to provide pupils with a framework she had prepared. It would have provided pupils, especially those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, with useful clues about how to organise their ideas. In this circumstance, though eager to please, pupils were slow to understand the specific writing requirements and their progress was correspondingly slow.

29. Overall, teachers should now concentrate on gaining further subject knowledge in science and mathematics. They should also ensure consistency in the quality of planning for literacy and numeracy for all groups of pupils across the curriculum. This action will help to raise standards.

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

30. At the time of the last inspection the curriculum for Key Stages 1 and 2 was broad, balanced and met statutory requirements. The quality and range of the curriculum remains sound and in some subjects and areas, particularly long-term planning and provision for ICT, and for children under five, the curriculum has improved. Pupils receive their entitlement to the full range of National Curriculum subjects, to religious education, and to personal, social and health education, including sex education and attention to drug misuse.

31. The school benefits from a team of co-ordinators who have been in post for some time, know their subjects thoroughly, and have worked hard to produce comprehensive and detailed policies and schemes of work. They are backed up by a headteacher who gives good support, and by governors who are committed to the school and increasingly knowledgeable about the subjects for which they are each responsible. Planning is particularly good for the Foundation Stage, and for art and design, ICT, design and technology, physical education and the speaking and listening aspects of English. Planning is not as good in mathematics and

science in Key Stage 1. Short-term planning, such as individual lesson plans, is not generally as well developed. It does not always ensure a good balance of activities to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language. Principally, the lack of a written policy for pupils with other home languages accounts for an absence of clear references to their particular needs. Expectations for presentation of work, and the exploitation of cross-curricular skills, are not always sufficiently explicit. There is some imbalance in the attainment target for

writing. In some classes too much time is spent on comprehension exercises, at the expense of developing literacy skills across the curriculum.

32. The provision for pupils with special educational needs outside the classroom is good. The co-ordinator is responsible for an up-to-date register and keeps detailed notes on the progress of pupils in meeting their individual targets. The quality of individual education plans, both those produced by class teachers in the early stages, and those for which the co-ordinator is responsible are good. The statements for children at stage 5 of the Code of Practice show that all procedures are fully implemented, including consultation with outside agencies and the involvement of parents. The school benefits from a full-time special needs assistant who gives effective help to special needs children throughout the school in withdrawal groups. Provision within the classroom is not as effective because planning does not often include reference to the individual education plans.

33. The previous report referred to the need to ensure that the withdrawal of lower-achieving pupils from mainstream lessons did not limit their access to the whole curriculum. The school has not paid sufficient attention to this, and there are some cases where pupils are regularly missing important parts of lessons. The school needs to evaluate its procedures and demonstrate through a clear statement in its curricular policies how it ensures full access to the curriculum for all pupils.

34. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been fully implemented. The literacy strategy has had a positive impact on standards of reading, but is less effective in promoting writing for a variety of purposes across the curriculum. The numeracy strategy has led to improvements in pupils' knowledge and understanding of number and in their agility in mental mathematics. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills could be further improved. Although strategies are identified in some schemes of work, for example in design and technology, they are not usually identified in short-term planning.

35. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. A well-planned scheme of work that includes sex education and drug misuse is used effectively throughout the school. A good range of extra-curricular sporting activities including football, netball, and table tennis are provided in addition to clubs, such as science and dance. The staff give generously of their time to these and other activities that enrich the curriculum and raise the self-esteem of pupils. The school makes good use of visits, visitors and parent helpers to further enrich the curriculum and promote cultural and social awareness. Some examples are the displays in Class 4, inspired by the work of an environmental sculptor and the visit to a local Discovery Park. Links with partner institutions are also good. The school staff benefits from the regular contact with teachers from other local primary schools, and older pupils from organised visits to the local secondary school.

36. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. There are some good examples of cultural development through music and art and design. There is a good range of musical instruments to support the playing of the music of non-European cultures, such as 'Mango Spice' from the Caribbean, 'Dragon Boat', a Chinese folksong, and traditional children's songs from India. In art and design, Egyptian sculptures and Aztec ceramics have been used to inspire pupils' work. Spirituality is promoted mainly through assemblies and circle time. The local priest contributes regularly to school assemblies and helps to develop

religious and spiritual awareness. Once again, music and art and design contribute to this area through such things as the appreciation of a piece of music or of the work of a well-known artist. For example, Year 1 pupils shared their work on William Morris with the whole school in an assembly. If spiritual and cultural awareness is to be raised further, it needs to be more explicitly identified at the planning stage across a wider range of subjects, and opportunities for reflection exploited more frequently in subjects like English.

37. Provision for social and moral education is very good. The behaviour policy and code of conduct is consistently implemented. The development of responsible attitudes is fostered through such things as class councils and class improvement plans. These are on display in every classroom along with work on the value of friendship and fairness. Older pupils are given responsibility for a wide-range of tasks, such as preparing for assemblies or helping with the 'School Bank'. A 'good work' assembly is held each week, attended by parents, and this is very effective in promoting confidence and self-esteem, and encouraging the pupils to appreciate the efforts of others regardless of age, ability, sex or ethnicity. Pupils are constantly given opportunities to work co-operatively in the classroom and outside. The headteacher provides a very good role model with his caring and sensitive manner, and the staff has very high expectations for pupil behaviour. As at the time of the last inspection, these important aspects of the school are a real strength.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' health and welfare. It manages very well pastoral care, pupils' personal development and procedures for promoting good behaviour. Pupils feel comfortable and confident when approaching their teacher or any other member of staff when troubled. Teachers and supporting adults know pupils well, and set a good example with their caring, sensitive attitude.

39. The school ensures it follows the guidelines of the local area child protection committee. The headteacher has received appropriate training in child protection as the designated person responsible. Members of staff are vigilant and aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have concerns.

40. The school has an effective health & safety policy, with appropriate procedures for fire, first aid, and medicines. Responsibility is appropriately designated to the headteacher. Risk assessment, and safety audits, are effectively carried out by the caretaker and health and safety governor. The school deals appropriately with any bullying issues raised by parents or children.

41. Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress and for assessing the progress pupils make are sound. They are particularly effective for children in the nursery and reception classes. Early contact with parents ensures that teachers and nursery support staff learn a lot about their pupils before they start school. They use this information well when planning learning opportunities. The quality of liaison between home and school continues into the reception class. Significant information is shared well and carefully used to plan future learning. Possible special educational needs are identified and support for these are appropriately provided.

42. The school has worked hard to develop and strengthen procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. Since the beginning of the academic year the headteacher and teachers have been analysing results of statutory and school-based tests or assessment tasks. They have noted that in Key Stage 1 boys perform less well than girls and they are working to remedy this. They have not, however, noted and explained weaknesses in Year 6 girls' performance in mathematics or boys' results in science. Neither have they looked at how well pupils with English as an additional language have performed as a group. It would be constructive to do this explicitly. However, teachers have used the information they have gathered to set appropriate class targets in both literacy and numeracy. Some display these prominently and also ensure children have individual targets in the front of their exercise books. This means children can check on their own progress and it is a successful motivator when managed carefully, and regularly monitored through marking. Teachers have a sound overview of progress in foundation subjects and religious education. Their reports at the end of the year to parents are informative and provide a comprehensive picture of pupils' success over the year and areas for future development.

43. The setting of targets is positive. However, there are ways in which their impact on children's learning could be further improved. They are not implemented with sufficient consistency. Literacy targets are predominantly for writing rather than for reading and this is an important oversight for pupils of all ability groups, and particularly for children where English is an additional language. Numeracy targets require emphasis to include a cross-curricular context. Targets are also sometimes too broad and difficult for pupils to understand. 'Take care with spelling', for example, does not provide a focus whereas, 'check where to double a consonant when adding 'ing', is helpful. The feedback from marking can sometimes be inappropriate. 'Good work' when what is good is unexplained, or an imbalance of critical comments, such as 'you have forgotten paragraphs', especially for lower-achieving pupils, is counter-productive. They need to be clear about the positive features of the content of their writing, as well as their mistakes, to make good progress.

44. Teachers know pupils with special educational needs well. Their files contain detailed information about their medical, emotional and academic needs. Individual education plans are of good quality and are regularly reviewed and updated. These pupils are receiving their full curricular entitlement, including appropriate support from outside agencies. Systems for making use of individual education plans and day-to-day assessment could be improved. Most pupils, particularly the younger ones, enjoy working with the special educational needs assistant in withdrawal groups. There are times when older pupils feel that they are missing something and would prefer to be with the class. The school needs to take careful account of this in planning.

45. There is a well-structured programme for personal, social and health education, including sex education, drugs awareness, bullying and racism. Counselling procedures work very well. Bullying is discussed with pupils regularly and particular issues or concerns are raised and discussed responsibly during circle time sessions. These play an important part in the school's provision for monitoring pupil's social and emotional development. Children are encouraged to give their views, both to develop good relationships and also to improve their communication skills as part of their personal development. They are also carefully taught about safety, for example, in science, and other practical subjects.

46. Personal support for pupils extends outside lessons. The headteacher plays a key part in putting policy into practice and is an exemplary role model. He gives priority, as do all staff, to praise rather than penalty in behavioural matters. However, penalties are there for the rare cases where penalty is needed, and these are consistently applied across the school. Pastoral care is of a high quality from all staff, including the caretaker who is fully involved in many activities.

47. The school has a well-structured behaviour policy with rewards and sanctions to which all staff adhere, including the midday supervisors. The policy is successful and very well monitored. Classteachers generally use a system of stickers to reward good conduct, or effort, with removal of these stickers as the main sanction for less serious misdemeanours. In addition, 'star of the week' certificates are presented in the weekly assembly, and this certainly motivates the pupils to co-operate.

48. Attendance is correctly monitored by classteachers, the headteacher, and by the education social worker. However, the school's expectation for regular attendance is not always clearly communicated to the parents. The incidence of absence, particularly during the time when standardised tests take place, might be reduced if there were an attendance policy which was published, and which clearly stated the school's attitude towards absence. Attendance is promoted by the giving of a class award for the best attendance record at the end of an academic year. Registration procedures meet with requirements.

49. The findings of this report are similar to that of the last inspection. The school continues to offer its pupils a very high standard of care. There remains a need to improve methods of assessing and monitoring the performance of different groups of pupils, particularly in mathematics and science in Years 2 and 6.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The partnership with parents brings many benefits to the school and aids pupils' learning in a variety of ways. A large majority of parents with whom the inspection team came into contact had highly positive views of the school. Parents are generally very pleased with the education and care their children receive though some had understandable and justified concerns about the adverse effect of discontinuity of teaching, due to staff sickness. The school is doing what it can to maintain continuity, despite the absence of the regular teacher in Year 2. A minority of parents who returned questionnaires, predominantly those of older pupils, had a range of negative opinions of the school. These primarily were to do with the progress children make, the quality of teaching, and communication with parents. These, when thoroughly investigated, could not be fully explained, or substantiated. A disrupted academic year when pupils were in Year 3, and the temporary absence of the classteacher in the autumn term were found to be the most likely reasons for concern.

51. Parents were very supportive of the school at the Parents' Meeting with the registered inspector, as were the considerable number of parents interviewed by the lay inspector during the inspection. They particularly like the attitudes and values promoted by the school. To enable even closer links with parents, they identify that it would be helpful to include a clear attendance policy in the prospectus, and also to explain what the school plans are for increased parental communication and involvement in the school improvement plan.

52. The school has good links with parents. A reasonable number help in school, with reading, the care of resources, lunchtime clubs and outside activities. Their support is very welcome and appreciated. Parent involvement is particularly strong in the nursery and in reception and makes a very positive difference to children's pace of learning. There is a good quality induction programme for all pupils including the provision of booklets to help develop the reading partnership. All teachers are always available to see parents in classes, and they organise three parents' evenings each year. The first one is used to provide 'settling in' information on each pupil; the other two concentrate more on pupils' work and progress. Parents are also invited to a weekly assembly, to the Christmas production and to assist on educational visits.

53. Over 90 per cent of parents have signed the home/school agreement. Homework is given regularly, and most parents show they appreciate its value by signing their child's homework book. This book is used as an effective means of communication between home and school. Homework is well promoted in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 2 to help pupils learning. In Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory but needs to be implemented more consistently. Some parents feel that children need reminding if they forget their work and this means the policy, designed to teach pupils to be independent, needs explaining with more care.

54. The vast majority of parents are satisfied with the information they receive through the predominantly good quality prospectus, the governors' report to parents, and the weekly newsletter, 'Yew to You'. This letter contains a useful summary of curriculum plans in addition to timely notice of a variety of social and cultural events. The quality of annual reports to parents is very good. They not only give a full account of pupils' progress, but also a clear indication of targets for improvement. They have space for parental and pupil's comments and many take advantage of this opportunity. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed about their progress, and are fully involved in reviewing individual education plans. Some parents are unhappy with the 'statement bank' used for the computer-generated reports. They view them as somewhat impersonal, but it may be a matter of coming to terms with this style instead of handwritten reports. The school has plans to work with parents to review the format shortly.

55. There is an effective and dedicated Parent/Teacher Association, which raises money for resources through social events. In recent years, funds have been used efficiently, for example, to provide an outside quiet area, with wooden benches and a garden, and to purchase additional resources for ICT. Social events organised by the Parent/Teacher Association. are very well supported, and parents' evenings attract over 90 per cent attendance. Parent Governors, though relatively new to their role, are keen to involve the rest of the parents in the life of the school.

56. The school continues to enjoy the support and loyalty of most parents as it did at the time of the previous inspection. Nonetheless, the concerns of the minority indicate that the school now needs to be more pro-active in the way it promotes and achieves a fully effective, high quality, home/school partnership.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The school is soundly led and managed by the headteacher, and teachers with delegated responsibility for curricular areas or subjects. The headteacher's vision, acknowledged as a strong feature of leadership at the time of the last inspection, remains firmly rooted in the well-framed school aims and philosophy. Pastoral leadership is very good. Those aims that reflect a belief in developing self-disciplined, motivated, responsible pupils, who respect and value people and property, are very successfully promoted. Teamwork is advocated strongly and recognised as a uniting force. There is a shared will to increase the school's effectiveness in the interests of the community it serves.

58. The headteacher and staff regularly review evidence of pupils' achievements. They reach valid conclusions about standards, and are clear about the overall strengths and weaknesses in results and pupils' performance. They identify the reasons for pupils' successes

and difficulties. They share conclusions with governors. The governing body includes the main areas for improvement in the priorities identified in the school development plan. For example, it has recently introduced targets for every class in literacy and numeracy, in a bid to raise standards. Most pupils have individual targets that focus on the essential things they need to practise to make good progress. The initiative to improve ICT standards through efficient use of a special grant has been very successful. However, some individual targets are too broad for pupils to be sure of small steps to improvement. Similarly, targets in the school development plan are also difficult for staff to follow through systematically. Success criteria are not specific enough for staff and governors to easily use as measures of success. The plan has potential to be a far more useful tool in practical terms.

59. The current absence, through ill health, of the deputy headteacher and other incidences of staff absence during the year, has held up some appropriate plans of action. Classroom observation and feedback has occurred, but not with the frequency or focus that the school had hoped. Co-ordinators know what is planned and are sure that each year group is following an appropriate curriculum. However, they are not necessarily fully aware of standards achieved in all elements of their subjects, at each key stage and this impedes progress. The approach to evaluating the outcomes of lessons, in terms of the quality of the learning that is taking place, requires improvement. The co-ordinators are not complacent. They are keen to find more successful ways to manage this task.

60. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It has rigorous policies for most of the school's work. There are, however, some matters, such as attendance, and English as an additional language, that would benefit from written guidance. Individual governors liaise effectively with the headteacher and subject managers. They visit classrooms to assess the impact of policy on practice. They feedback to the whole governing body and their reports, in tandem with the termly headteacher's report, ensure that all members are soundly informed about progress of the initiatives relating to the development plan. Parent representative governors, in particular, are becoming increasingly knowledgeable about what is happening in school. The governing body is playing a more constructively critical part in shaping the future direction of the school than at the time of the last inspection.

61. The school manages its financial resources responsibly, linking spending decisions appropriately to educational priorities. Since the last inspection, the key issue to provide more resources for the support of pupils with special educational needs has been addressed well. There are more learning resources and improved space, and three additional classroom assistants work with pupils. Governors ensure the very effective management of financial control systems. They have addressed the small number of recommendations in the most recent auditor's report. The school receives a small amount of extra funding for the pupils with English as an additional language. It uses this judiciously to buy in some support from the local education authority. Nonetheless, school staff lacks expertise and need additional training in how to cater effectively for the increasing number of pupils in this category.

62. Accommodation is good, with many advantageous changes since 1997. A recent refurbishing programme has improved the learning environment considerably. The new nursery has made a very positive difference to the school and its ethos. Children under five now receive very good provision. The computer suite is also an asset and used well. Parents have generously contributed to equipping it. The drawback is that the library area has been

much reduced and is no longer an inviting area for private study. It is little used and this reduces pupils' opportunities to advance their appreciation of books.

63. Overall, the school is well staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. Induction of new staff and professional development opportunities are both good. When all members of staff are present there is a balanced team, though additional expertise in science would help to further strengthen subject expertise. There is a skilled group of support staff, including a nursery nurse, classroom and special educational needs assistants. They contribute well to the smooth running of many lessons. Financial and administrative members of staff work very well together and ensure the smooth running of the school on a day-to-day basis.

64. There is little doubt, however, that the absence of the deputy headteacher is placing a strain upon the headteacher. Whilst the school provides an overall sound quality of education it is not as effective as it should be. Value is being added in Key Stage 2, especially in advancing standards in English, but there is inadequate value added in Key Stage 1. Standards in mathematics and science are too low and make it all the more difficult for older pupils to make up for gaps in knowledge and understanding, and achieve high standards, when they are eleven.

65. The school does not yet have a firm grasp of how to implement the four principles of best value to the best effect. In this respect it has not moved on at the rate anticipated at the time of the last inspection. More attention to these principles is necessary help the school focus on essentials. The school has begun to analyse comparative data. This must be taken a step further so that any significant differences in the attainment and achievement of different groups can be pinpointed and managed well. Historically, this is reflected in boys' attainment in Key Stage 1, the performance of girls in mathematics and that of older boys in science in Key Stage 2. The ability to explain and address these differences will help the school raise academic standards closer to the levels of the best schools nationally. Such matters as the apportioning of curriculum time and the withdrawal of pupils for additional support require full evaluation. The school must demonstrate more clearly in its school development plan that it sets itself challenging targets and monitors all aspects of provision in order to meet them.

66. The adverse views expressed by a small minority of parents point to a lack of focus on the parental partnership in the school development plan. There is a need to consult with parents more carefully to address their main concerns, and to promote the school's aims more forcefully.

67. Overall, the school has sufficient expertise and the shared commitment to deal with these issues successfully.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to meet its aims and increase effectiveness the school should now:

- (1) Raise standards in mathematics and science, especially in Key Stage 1 by:
 - Providing continuing access to appropriate professional development opportunities to improve staff expertise and competence;
 - Ensuring the better coverage of the first attainment target in science and shape, space and measure in mathematics;
 - Improving the quality of marking so that pupils can understand what they do well and how to remedy mistakes.(Paragraphs 8, 13, 24, 29, 101, 108, 112)

- (2) Ensure that pupils have adequate time to practise, improve and make better use of their literacy and numeracy skills in all curriculum subjects by:
 - Including references to appropriate opportunities in weekly lesson plans;
 - Finding manageable ways of keeping evidence of the range of opportunities and outcomes;
 - Involving the co-ordinators for English and mathematics in the monitoring of samples of work from other subjects to assess how well skills are being applied.(Paragraphs 10, 11, 13, 24, 31, 34, 95, 104, 105)

- (3) Improve the process of school self-evaluation, the effectiveness of development planning and the use of the four principles of best value by:
 - Adopting a more rigorous approach to comparing pupils' performance in statutory assessment tasks at the end of each key stage with that of other schools;
 - Competing with the best schools by using performance indicators to set very specific improvement targets for different groups of pupils, especially where there are significant differences in their results;
 - Rising to the challenge of monitoring teaching and learning to show that the school caters well for boys and girls, including the growing number of both with English as an additional language;
 - Consulting with parents to maintain a good partnership with them, and keep abreast of their views about the quality of provision and standards achieved.(Paragraphs 6, 33, 43, 49, 56, 59, 62, 65, 66)

Other issues that should be considered by the school when preparing its action plan are:

- Providing information about the attendance policy in one of the annual publications to parents;
(Paragraph 48)
- Improving the library facilities in order to promote pupils' appreciation of literature;
(Paragraph 62)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4	16	60	18	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	191
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	22

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y6 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	28

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.10
National comparative data	5.20

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.03
National comparative data	0.50

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	19	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	16
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	24	24	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (72)	80 (76)	90 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	16	13
	Girls	10	11	10
	Total	24	27	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (76)	90 (79)	77 (97)
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	10	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	11	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (77)	52 (57)	86 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	16	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (63)	70 (53)	80 (63)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Where the total number of boys or girls in the year group is ten or fewer the individual results are not reported.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	7
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	146
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.50
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.47
Average class size	27.30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.50
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	5.20
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	411 332
Total expenditure	410 140
Expenditure per pupil	2 072
Balance brought forward from previous year	16 278
Balance carried forward to next year	17 470

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	217
Number of questionnaires returned	56

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	39	2	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	38	39	9	13	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	55	7	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	57	13	0	5
The teaching is good.	46	36	4	13	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	36	11	11	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	23	9	4	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	38	13	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	39	41	14	5	0
The school is well led and managed.	52	34	4	7	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	41	5	4	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	39	11	4	5

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

69. The school has maintained its high level of provision for children in the Foundation Stage. Since the last inspection a nursery has been opened. It has 27 part-time children on roll. One child has special education behavioural needs and receives support from external agencies. Two children have English as an additional language. All adults who work with these young children have responded positively to the new curricular requirements for this age group. As a result of high quality leadership and management, very good structures have been introduced. Very good structures have been introduced. These begin with a very effective induction programme, which results in the children settling into nursery life quickly and happily. Parents are well informed about procedures in both the nursery and the reception class.

70. Over recent years, baseline test results conducted soon after admission to the reception class indicate that attainment on entry is broadly average. However, in the year 2000, the majority of children reached standards below the national expectation. End of year teacher assessments show that progress during the year was sound, with a few making good progress. The current children in the reception class are reaching the expected standards, and making good progress, in all areas of learning. In emotional, personal and social development, and in the foundations of music, the standards are higher than expected. Achievement is good because teaching in this stage is consistently good, and often very good in the nursery.

71. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is closely linked to the early learning goals. Planning in both classes is good and clearly shows the target groups within which individual children work. Profiles are developed on entry to the nursery, that indicate what each child can do. Day-to-day assessments add useful information to these profiles and this information is used to determine the next steps of learning and ultimately shows progress through each area of learning. All children in both classes have literacy and numeracy targets. The links between the nursery and the reception class are excellent. They are due to the nursery teacher and one of the nursery nurses working in the nursery in the mornings and in reception in the afternoons. All adults who work with these children understand clearly how young children learn. They are good role models and work very well as a team.

72. Learning resources are good to promote all areas of learning inside and outside the classroom. Facilities for outside play are good and are well used. There are grass areas as well as playground surfaces for the children to develop skills in all areas of learning. There are regular opportunities to use wheeled vehicles and large climbing frames.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. This area is promoted well. By the time children are ready to start in Year 1 standards are higher than the levels expected for children of this age. Nursery and reception children show very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy attending school. Most demonstrate good skills in listening as they take part in the activities offered to them. Behaviour is impressive and the children demonstrate very good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other. Most concentrate well as they work in pairs and small groups and begin to

develop the skills necessary to work independently. They have a very good idea of working as a team. A lovely example was overheard in the reception class as two boys got out bricks to build a house. Before they started, one said to the other, "Now just remember we must work together as a team!" All children select activities with confidence and begin to tidy away at the end of the sessions.

Communication, language and literacy

74. The good quality of teaching of communication, language and literacy is clearly shown during the early morning session in both nursery and reception. Adults work with their key groups developing basic speaking, listening and language skills. By the time they reach Year 1 most children are likely to have attained the standards expected nationally. Adults consistently promote the development of speaking and listening skills and this is a strength that ultimately affects progress in all areas. The majority of children use a good range of vocabulary and many recall information, such as 'the eggs over there are going to hatch into chicks soon'. They confidently talk with adults about themselves and their families. All children enjoy listening to stories and like looking at books. Most understand their purpose and handle them carefully from an early age. As they get older they learn the names and sounds of letters and some familiar words. In the reception class, the children begin to read familiar words in texts and many identify initial blends in words, such as 'sh' in 'shoe'. A few read books fluently and make very good progress in reading. All children attempt to write their names, in pencil, crayons and paint. In the reception class, children begin to write simple sentences, build on their knowledge of sounds and systematically develop their handwriting. However adults in both classes do not consistently make children aware of how to form letters correctly and this ultimately hinders the standards some reach and slows the progress they make in handwriting. A few higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged. They sometimes waste time when they have finished work organised by the teacher.

Mathematical development

75. Basic mathematical skills and vocabulary are taught effectively in a variety of activities. The very good teaching and learning in the early morning session in the nursery results from adults using resources well to promote numeracy. Very good explanations are given regarding how numbers are ordered. More able children in one group clearly understand that one more than 5 is 6 and confidently order numbers to 10. Another group focus very well on counting with accuracy and identifying basic colours. The less able group grasp the basic idea of counting pennies into a purse. All children complete number jigsaws and learn number rhymes and songs to reinforce counting skills. Speaking and listening skills are very well promoted in this area. Children are constantly encouraged to talk about their learning. Children in the reception class confidently count beans and make number lines to add numbers up to 10. More able children are challenged to record neatly and accurately; for example, they use mathematical symbols correctly as they write 6 add 4 equals 10. The majority is likely to reach the expected standard by the time they reach Year 1, and a few children should achieve higher standards. All children work enthusiastically, in particular on practical number activities, such as when playing the shopping game in the nursery class. All learn how to write numerals demonstrating varying degrees of success. The children will leave reception with a good understanding of basic addition and subtraction skills, and mathematical vocabulary.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Adults take advantage of many opportunities to promote understanding in this area of learning. Most children should reach the expected standards in the foundations of science, technological subjects, and the humanities, by the end of the reception year. In the nursery, the children learn about living things as they enthusiastically talk about the class guinea pigs. Higher-achieving children talk confidently about the eggs, which are due to hatch in the incubator in the nursery. Most children are aware that they will hatch into chicks. Reception children begin to understand that certain factors are necessary in order to sustain life. In particular they demonstrate a good understanding of the conditions plants need to grow as a direct result of the practical experience of planting a variety of seeds and observing their growth. This area of learning is well promoted in many other activities. For example the children used beans to count in the mathematical activities offered in the reception class. Children learn about their senses, and begin to understand how important it is to be able to hear and see, as they work on creative and literacy tasks. In both classes they listen carefully as they learn simple songs and rhymes. The children confidently select materials and develop skills needed to cut, stick and join materials together for simple models to their individual designs. For example, the children in the reception class cut and stick and join the pieces of a house together. In the reception class they are more adventurous and skilful as they make use of a wider range of resources including split pins to make paper teddy bears with moving arms and legs. Computer skills are developed well in both classes. The children in the nursery work independently or in pairs as they use simple computer programs, which teach and reinforce many learning objectives. In the reception class, the children visit the computer suite and confidently work on programs that promote basic literacy, language and numeracy skills. They listen maturely and most work with confidence. Lower-attaining children benefit from extra adult support as they work on the computer.

Physical development

77. Most children reach expectations for physical development by the end of the reception year. There are daily opportunities for safe outdoor play in well-developed areas at the back of each classroom. The children in the nursery use a good range of equipment including wheeled vehicles and climbing apparatus. As they get older, children use some of the equipment for physical education in the main school hall. By the time they leave the reception class, children have sound body awareness and the majority move with confidence and listen well to instructions. In the best sessions teaching promotes listening skills well in all activities. The children handle scissors, paintbrushes and pencils with safety and sound control. All children play imaginatively with construction toys and malleable materials, such as dough. They talk enthusiastically about what they have made.

Creative development

78. Most children reach the standards expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. In music, many pupils reach standards that are higher than expected. Music sessions are well thought out and imaginatively researched. This enables, for example, the youngest children to develop a good understanding of loud and soft sounds as they compose music using pictures and then use instruments to 'read and play' the music they have created. All children sing with great enjoyment. There are many opportunities in both classes for children to express ideas and communicate feelings through well-organised role-play sessions in the classrooms.

For example in the nursery they pretend to be the checkout assistants at the supermarket and in the reception class they are 'customers' or 'work' in The Yew Tree Garden Centre. Careful artwork is created using a sound variety of techniques, such as collage, printing, painting and drawing. The adults who work in the nursery and the reception class value all artwork and good quality displays enhance the learning environment. In the nursery the children have carefully completed self-portraits and in the reception class

artwork was successfully linked to literacy when the children made 'collage sandwiches', then wrote about them.

ENGLISH

79. The twenty-one pupils in the Year 6 class group attained sound standards last year. Compared with all schools nationally the percentage reaching the expected level, and those performing at level 5, was close to the national average. In 1999, results were much higher, yet they were lower in 1998. However, between 1996 and 2000, the trend in improvement has kept pace with the national trend. Since 1998, standards have exceeded the national average figure by almost a full percentage point. Compared with all schools, standards have been at least satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on standards of achievement.

80. Further analysis of the test data from Key Stage 2, and of information about the particular group of pupils, has a significant bearing on how well pupils achieved. The data reflects the relative strengths and weaknesses in the performance of the boys and girls within the school. The main strength in the results is that boys were well ahead of boys nationally in 2000. Over three consecutive years from 1998, boys achieved very well. However, girls have not achieved as highly as the boys, even though they have still exceeded the national average for their peer group by half a percentage point. This suggests that girls were underachieving. The school has not identified the differences and consequently, it has not found out whether this is indeed an issue. When prompted, the school was able to identify that the group had 20 per cent within it who had special educational needs in English, half of them girls. It was established that this group met challenging individual targets even though they were below average. High mobility within the class also proved to be an unexpected and significant factor. Overall, when the results of eleven-year-olds in 2000 are compared with the school's Key Stage 1 results in 1996, pupils achieved highly in the Key Stage 2 tests. Progress over the junior years was very good.

81. In Key Stage 1, in the year 2000, standards in reading and writing were close to average and most pupils reached the levels expected compared with average levels of attainment on entry to school. A good performance by the girls led to an above average number of them achieving the higher points of level 2, and the next level up. However, boys' performance was well behind the girls. It has been for three years running, though the results are not much behind boys nationally. The group of boys included one with English as an additional language and a statement of special educational needs. He was disapplied from the tests. In fact, results in reading showed considerable improvement compared with the previous year, whereas gains in writing were negligible. These pupils should have reached better standards in writing. Nonetheless, pupils achieved better test results than was forecast by the school in teacher assessments.

82. Overall, current standards in English in Key Stage 2 are above average. Year 6 pupils' achievement is good compared with their attainment when they were in Year 2. Year 5 pupils show equally good progress. Year 6 and 5 pupils are likely to exceed the national average in the end of key stage statutory assessment tasks when they take them this year, and in 2002. The older year group has maintained good reading standards and shows improvement in writing since they were age seven. Year 5 pupils have advanced from below average in reading and writing to at least in line with expectations for the end of the key stage

in both skills. Both year groups should attain the challenging targets set for them based on prior levels of attainment.

83. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils assessed by teachers as middle and higher achievers make sound or better progress. Pupils with individual education plans for special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, also make satisfactory progress. They receive good support with oral skill development, punctuation, spelling, and grammar targets, but are not always credited with positive recognition of their effort, especially in Year 6. This is potentially de-motivating. The handwritten work of lower-achieving older junior pupils does not show the same sustained improvement as their peers. Either an unavoidable change in teacher has disrupted their continuity of learning or tasks have been too demanding and children have not had time to complete them. When they work on a computer they are noticeably more confident and complete tasks more successfully.

84. Speaking and listening are above average. Most Year 6 pupils listen intently, in lessons and when talking to unfamiliar adults. They have a good command of spoken English when sharing ideas informally about, for example, their favourite works of fiction and attitudes to reading. Pupils in the lower junior year groups show the same confidence and skill. This is the case in other subjects too. Sharing their perceptions of the quality of their performance was, for instance, a positive feature of a Year 4 music lesson.

85. Older juniors read well. They make choices from a range of modern and classical authors. Two advanced readers, both girls, read aloud from an abridged version of Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* and an unabridged copy of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*. The less advanced readers had texts that stretched but motivated them because they were humorous or exciting. They used a range of skills to speedily work out new vocabulary and then re-read a passage with appropriate expression.

86. Year 6 pupils have mastered joined handwriting. Standards are good. They are able to write fluently and legibly and present their work very well, when the context requires this. A good example is a display of their writing about *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes. When undertaking formal exercises on the structure of written language, most pupils are generally accurate in their punctuation, grammar and spelling. They are able to write persuasively, presenting a logical argument, for example, to keep open a leisure centre. The higher attainers remember to use paragraphs to separate key points. Their creative work contains interesting vocabulary and is often imaginative, though not always sufficiently extensive.

87. Junior pupils make good use of literacy skills when given appropriate opportunities but time for writing is not long enough in subjects, such as science, history, geography or religious education to make the best use of what they know. They make productive use of CD-ROM for independent research. However, they rarely use the library either for English or topic work. They are unsure how the Dewey cataloguing system works and this indicates less constructive use of library facilities than at the time of the last inspection. Work in topic books throughout the key stage suggests that pupils have too few opportunities to use information books independently. There is little evidence in their writing of reading to help pupils interpret or develop opinions about events or ideas.

88. Infants attain sound standards and most pupils achieve satisfactory but not necessarily balanced progress. When they were admitted to the reception class, this year group had

broadly average levels of attainment in early reading skills. They have made good progress in speaking and listening, and in reading. The six pupils who read to an inspector, irrespective of their different levels of prior attainment, were very knowledgeable about books of all kinds. They willingly discussed fiction and non-fiction texts and could, for

example, identify fairy tales, adventure, real-life, and horror as different kinds of stories and suggest titles for each category.

89. The same pupils' progress in writing for a range of different purposes has been erratic. Work in exercise books from earlier in the year is not good enough. It contains few pieces of creative writing. It consists mainly of worksheets showing a rather slow developing knowledge of phonics and the standard is behind that seen in Year 1 in a literacy lesson. There is more imaginative work this term of a cross-curricular nature, with increased use of ICT to compose and print out simple sentences. An 'Amazing Animals' poetry book contains good examples of each child's awareness of alliteration and an awareness of animal movement. A class book, 'A Health Dictionary' is full of well-crafted individual efforts. They are carefully illustrated and written in pupils' best handwriting. Over half are in a cursive style. Marking is becoming more constructive though opportunities are sometimes missed to pick up errors, such as incorrect use of capital letters, to use them as individual development targets. It is unlikely that, in a difficult year, these Year 2 pupils will perform significantly better than last year's group.

90. Throughout the school, pupils show positive attitudes in lessons. Their behaviour, and ability to support each other, is very good. This means that teachers can teach without needing to pause to wait for individual pupils to attend. Pupils respond consistently well to teachers' high expectations of them. Their concentration and intellectual effort is good in both key stages, and very good by the time they reach the last two junior years.

91. Teaching is good with some very good practice in Key Stage 2. Less than 10 per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. Lesson aims are not met on the rare occasion when the teacher ambitiously attempts to cover too much new learning in one session. In the lesson observed, pupils were unsure of the main purpose of the writing task. The concept of stereotypical phrases was unfamiliar to them in the context of scientific features. They persevered with their writing without asking for clarification and this meant that they wrote little in comparison with their normal output. In the 20 per cent of satisfactory lessons, and also in some of the good lessons, some opportunities were missed to clarify misconceptions or reinforce a particular kind of writing appropriate in another subject, such as science. A telling example was in an infant lesson when a potentially very good activity could have improved pupils' understanding of using bullet points to record information about minibeasts. Instead they read, and then wrote a sentence or two, without being instructed to provide a heading for their work. This means the special purpose of the activity may soon be forgotten.

92. There are strong contributory factors to successful learning. Lessons are planned effectively. They make good use of resources and the help of classroom assistants. Teachers have a good command of specialist language. This means pupils also use relevant vocabulary as they join in many worthwhile and well-managed question and answer sessions. Objectives are linked appropriately to National Literacy Strategy expectations for each year group. The focus of each lesson is always shared with pupils, usually with positive benefits. Pupils generally fully understand what is expected of them. This adds to their levels of motivation and to the pace of working.

93. The best example of very effective teaching and learning for all ability groups was in a lesson in Year 4. Many strategies were used to help pupils to compose Japanese style Haiku poems with lines of five and seven syllables. Pupils with special educational needs made

particularly good progress. Supported by an assistant, who charted their ideas, a group of six boys that included a pupil with a statement made up a poem entitled 'The Lizard'. When they read it aloud to the class every word was pronounced rhythmically and the group captured the effect very well, to their delight and that of their peers.

94. Curricular opportunities are sound overall, good in Key Stage 2, but with room for more consistency in provision in Key Stage 1. There is potential to extend pupils' opportunities to use reading and writing skills in subjects other than English. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is also poorly documented in the otherwise comprehensive and thorough policy and guidelines. The monitoring of pupils' subject performance is sound. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment and each group has relevant targets that they discuss with teachers and classroom assistants. Some, but not all, record these in the front of their books. It makes self-checking and teacher marking more effective where they do this well. Assessment practice is better than at the time of the last inspection and a sound quality of leadership and management has been sustained.

95. Now, even more rigorous use needs to be made of performance data. In addition to tracking each child's progress the school needs to assess how well different groups are performing. The analysis of outcomes of pupils of different ethnic backgrounds, boys and girls, is necessary to help the school identify even more specific improvement targets in the future. A key issue will be to extend opportunities for writing in order to raise standards in English and literacy, especially in Key Stage 1.

MATHEMATICS

96. In national tests in the year 2000, Year 2 pupils achieved standards below the national average and Year 6 standards were well below the national average. When compared to similar schools, the younger pupils achieved standards below average and the standards of the older pupils were average. The reason is that the Year 6 class was a numerically small group. It contained a significant number of pupils with special educational needs and two of the more able pupils had left Yew Tree School before the national tests were undertaken. At the time of the previous inspection, standards for both age groups were judged to be average. Inspection evidence now shows standards in Year 2 are below the national average and standards in Year 6 are similar to the national average. Year 1 pupils make good progress but by the end of Year 2 the rate of progress is unsatisfactory. In junior classes, the progress of girls and boys is satisfactory and they make up this lost ground. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.

97. By the age of seven, most pupils are beginning to understand pattern in number and place value of tens and units. A small number of higher achievers handle large numbers well and understand the concept of inverse operations. All pupils make reasonable estimates of length and capacity, but only high and average achievers can confidently and accurately use standardised units of measure. Pupils' understanding of the properties of two-dimensional shape is secure but most have little knowledge of three-dimensional shapes. They can perform addition and subtraction with numbers up to 99 using practical apparatus as well as pencil and paper methods. Most pupils have insecure understanding of simple fractions related to parts being equal.

98. By the age of eleven, most pupils have a well-developed understanding of place value to tens of thousands and their overall understanding of number concepts is good. This provides the foundation for their ability to work confidently with the relationship between fractions, decimal fractions and percentages and to solve problems using long multiplication and division. Higher achievers and average ability pupils understand mean, median, mode and can work with negative numbers. They appropriately identify and measure the perimeter of a variety of polygons and use protractors to draw angles. Most pupils have a clear understanding of area and can calculate this property using regular and irregular shapes. Higher ability pupils have a good understanding of how angle determines shape. Pupils investigate different ways of presenting graphical information and they can construct their own bar charts. They have limited understanding of which type of graph might best represent particular data. This is because they are given insufficient opportunities to collect, represent and then question their own information. ICT is insufficiently used to support pupils' work in handling data.

99. Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is good. This is the same judgement as following the previous inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy is well managed by the teachers. Appropriate lesson objectives are devised for the class and groups set by prior learning. They are shared with the pupils, so that they have a good understanding of what they are to learn. The start of the lesson is consistently used to develop the pupils' mental mathematical skills. During this part of the lesson in most classes, good attention is paid to extend pupils of all abilities, and to reinforce mathematical vocabulary. In a very good lower infant lesson, a wide variety of practical activities, well matched to the different abilities of three groups, enabled all pupils to make very good progress in ordering numbers. The most able children order up to a thousand.

100. In a very good Year 6 lesson, five different ability groups work very well to consolidate their understanding of the relationship between decimals and fractions. One group uses an appropriate computer programme to support their learning well. Teachers' explanations are always clear but sometimes lack enthusiasm. When teachers are enthusiastic, pupils are inspired to apply themselves well and to work hard. Higher-achieving pupils are usually given work that is appropriately challenging. In a good Year 2 lesson the teacher makes good quality resources to help pupils understand that addition is the inverse of subtraction. Most teachers evaluate their lessons effectively during the final part of the lesson, to highlight things that have gone well and to identify pupils who had difficulty with a concept. This is good practice. Some teachers do this less effectively.

101. Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks and exercise books shows a great inconsistency in the quality of marking. Work is always marked, but in some classes there is little evidence of either congratulatory comment or clear identification to individual pupils as to what they should do in order to improve. In other classes, marking is good and standards of presentation improve as a result. Scrutiny of autumn-term books belonging to Year 2 pupils shows repetitive and potentially boring work, much of it similar to the work already covered by lower age group pupils. They include incorrect concept development related to division and incorrect work sometimes marked as being correct. Since January the level of work set is much more appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils.

102. The behaviour of pupils during lessons in mathematics is very good overall and most pupils really enjoy the subject. When behaviour is excellent or very good, it reflects the

quality of teaching. In the one lesson when overall behaviour is only satisfactory, the tasks set are not matched sufficiently accurately to the different abilities of the pupils. Most pupils are keen learners and demonstrate great respect for their teachers. During an infant literacy lesson when a theme of selfishness was being discussed, a pupil spontaneously used his excellent understanding of fractional parts when describing how the distribution of fifty chocolate bars could be managed in a selfish or unselfish manner.

103. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable, has attended a number of in-service training courses for mathematics, and is a keen advocate of the National Numeracy Strategy. She has involved all teachers in implementing its principles. Subjects such as art and design and design and technology contribute well to the development of pupils' numeracy skills, in raising awareness of pattern, shape, size and scale. Their use is not as effective in science. Resources are well organised and there is a good range of good quality classroom based equipment accessible to pupils, in addition to a central resource area for large equipment.

104. The monitoring of standards is unsystematic. The co-ordinator is given no opportunity to observe the teaching and learning of mathematics throughout the school. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and pupils with special educational needs receive additional support. 'Booster classes' are held for Y6 pupils and 'springboard mathematics' lessons for Y5. These form an important addition to the school curriculum. However, information from statutory and non-statutory testing is insufficiently analysed to influence future planning.

105. Performance data is inadequately used to identify what areas of the mathematics curriculum will need reinforcing, when they are revisited in the National Numeracy Strategy. This is a particular issue in Key Stage 1 where there are gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding that impede their learning in Key Stage 2. Junior pupils work hard but have a lot of ground to make up. These issues must be addressed so that standards can rise to reach and then exceed the levels attained in all and similar schools.

SCIENCE

106. At the time of the last inspection, levels of attainment matched national averages at the end of both key stages, although the National Curriculum test results in 1996 showed standards had been below average. These standards have not been sustained and reflect the different levels of prior learning in a school with relatively small numbers in Year 6. Last year, teacher assessments showed that at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance was well below average when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. From below average levels of attainment on entry to school, pupils made few measurable gains in their learning by the end of the key stage. In Key Stage 2 the results were also below average. Yet when the higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs and incidence of pupil mobility is taken into account, the percentage of children reaching the expected level 4 was close to the average. However, the difference in the performance of boys, compared with the girls, is a concern. Boys in Key Stage 2 performed poorly compared with boys nationwide. The girls did better, with 100 per cent reaching the expected level 4. This has not been explained and reflects a need to more carefully monitor results by gender to establish and address the reasons for differences.

107. The evidence obtained from observation of lessons and scrutiny of work indicates that standards in science now are close to national averages at the end of the primary stage. However, the performance of older pupils in Key Stage 1 is below average. The group is unlikely to reach the expected standard by the end of the key stage. It is only by making good progress over the four junior years that pupils are able to achieve standards in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making a sound start to the National Curriculum programmes of study in Year 1. However, this is not sufficiently consolidated, and work in the Year 2 books is often less than satisfactory. This is

partly explained by staff illness and the disruption this has caused to

continuity of learning. There are signs that since the spring standards are improving, but they are still not high enough.

108. Overall, teaching is sound. It is better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 where it can be unsatisfactory. The observation of two lessons indicates that teaching is good, in both key stages, when teachers are confident in their own subject knowledge and communicate clear learning objectives to pupils. Pupils are keen and co-operative in these lessons and their attitude is always positive. In a lesson on plant reproduction with the older children, the teacher used good scientific language and correct terminology, and was successful in stimulating good scientific thinking and understanding. Most pupils were confident in identifying different parts of a flower, such as the ovary or the stigma, and the way the teacher linked plant and human reproduction helped the pupils to understand the common features of all living things. The follow-up activity to dissect and study a flower had a clear purpose, and enabled the pupils to consolidate their understanding in a practical situation. A good feature of most lessons is the high quality of speaking and listening. Teachers are very skilful in targeting questions at pupils with different abilities and involving all the class in worthwhile discussion. This means that the beginning and end of lessons are often the most productive.

109. Teaching and learning is less effective, particularly in Key Stage 1, where teachers' subject knowledge is insecure and learning objectives are not focused on scientific ideas. This is most evident when marking is evaluated. Much work in both key stages is ticked or assessed with general comments such as, 'well done' or is marked for its English content, such as spelling and punctuation. Good formative assessment and marking occurs in some classes. For example, comments appearing in Year 3 books, such as "You need to draw a conclusion from these results" and, "Did we make this test fair?" give clear guidance to the pupils about how the scientific content of their work can be improved. There are also some good examples in Year 1 with such comments as, "Lots of good push and pull ideas" indicating to the pupil what is good about the piece of work. In Year 2, the lack of focus on scientific concepts is not helped by the work being contained in a 'topic' book alongside history, geography and religious education. There is no common theme to link the different subjects.

110. Lesson planning is usually sound. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, tasks set for higher and lower ability pupils are often appropriately differentiated to stretch the more able and to enable less able pupils to achieve a successful outcome. However, at the end of the key stage, and increasingly in the older classes, recording of work done tends to be the same for all abilities, and quite often heavily reliant on sentences copied from the board or from worksheets. Some tasks are inappropriate for the less able pupils, including those with special educational needs, and this can de-motivate pupils, leading to untidy and unfinished work. The reliance on too much teacher-directed work means that although progress in knowledge and understanding is sound and sometimes good, skills, such as devising a fair test, making predictions and testing hypotheses, are less well developed.

111. Pupils' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are underused. Writing for a purpose is not sufficiently well taught to enable children to consistently use a full range of writing and recording techniques, such as note taking, compiling lists, using bullet points and recording in charts or tables. Opportunities are missed for enhancing such mathematical skills as measuring and data handling. The use of ICT, such as the computer-generated graphs in Class 3 about sun and shadows, is comparatively rare. In contrast, a particular strength is the way

that speaking and listening skills are very well promoted, both in whole-class discussion where teachers are very careful to include all the pupils, and in paired and group work where pupils display great maturity and good co-operation. Homework is generally well used, particularly when pupils are asked to find out something in connection with a particular topic.

112. There is a good scheme of work that, if fully implemented, should help to raise standards throughout the school. However, systems for monitoring, evaluating and supporting teaching and learning are lacking. Some teachers' subject knowledge is insecure and they require extra support to develop their expertise. The action plan needs to focus more on raising standards, through more in depth analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils, and levels achieved in different attainment targets. The school also needs to monitor carefully the equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. During the inspection a group of pupils missed a whole science lesson when withdrawn for extra help unconnected with the lesson.

113. Resources and accommodation are satisfactory, and there is much good teaching going on throughout the school. The ingredients for success are in place. The school must now harness resources and make them work in the best interests of the children so that standards can rise to the levels of the most successful schools.

ART AND DESIGN AND MUSIC

114. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are above national expectation in both subjects. They are very good in music in Key Stage 2. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Although the time available to music and art and design has been reduced because of the requirements nationally of numeracy and literacy, the good range of experiences provided by the school in both curriculum subjects, adds significantly to pupils' all-round aesthetic and cultural development

115. In the infant classes, pupils explore printing with polystyrene sculpture and include the effective overprinting of two colours using paint. They imitate the work of William Morris very well by repeat printing, again using the medium of paint on individually made polystyrene carvings. An effective corridor display exhibits their self-portraits, accompanied by their favourite toy. In music lessons, pupils use their voices expressively and they understand how sounds can be made in a variety of ways. They choose and use these different sounds to respond to poetry stimulus and work towards illustrating a rhythm. They are introduced to, and show good appreciation of, the principles of dynamics, tempo, pitch and timbre.

116. Throughout the junior classes, pupils make good progress in extending the range and quality of their techniques. Year 3 pupils investigate, design and then make copies of African jewellery by painting pieces of wood dowelling. In Year 4, pupils study the work of Andy Goldsworthy and his investigation of pattern in nature. They make creditable copies following his techniques, to produce an effective display. They copy the patterns of Greek vases and plates very well. Year 5 pupils use press-print and tie-dye techniques very successfully to produce a most attractive display of handkerchiefs and T-shirts. In Year 6, pupils study Surrealism in good depth and make breezeblock sculptures. They write poems

based on Salvador Dali's dreams. Pupils then develop their artistic representation with collage effect, three-dimensional paintings based upon those poems.

117. In music lessons, Year 4 pupils develop the quality of their singing by learning the words of the song, keeping in tune, improving diction and controlling their phrasing. They make an early investigation of the Pentatonic Scale to enable them to compose their own simple, pentatonic melodies. They managed, through determined effort, to sustain three parts when performing 'Land of the Silver Birch'. In Year 5, pupils learn how the different components of music are organised to create mood. They match music to pictures well and are keen to share their reason for the proposed match. When discussing music with Year 6 pupils, they say it is fun, enjoyable and that they welcome the involvement that it requires. They remember well and with enthusiasm, the group work they undertook to compose percussion pieces representing aspects of the film 'Ghandi', such as the assassination, train incident and the human beatings.

118. The teaching of music and art and design is always good with one music lesson being very good and an art and design lesson excellent. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection when the teaching of both subjects was judged to be good. In the excellent art and design lesson inspected, the pupils are open-mouthed with expectation while a demonstration of what they are to do takes place. The pupils voice their appreciation of the teacher's skill, as the repeated pattern develops. The teacher is eager that the pupils should evaluate their own individual work and they learn to do this effectively. The quality of their work is well appreciated publicly during the following day's whole-school assembly. In the very good music lesson seen, the teacher's own enthusiasm and expertise shine through. He has an approach that encourages and motivates. His appraisal of pupils' work is sensitive and his own modelling is very good. Humour is used to good effect. Because of these very good teaching techniques, all pupils make very good gains in both knowledge and the understanding of the pentatonic scales and ostinato. They also improve the quality of their singing.

119. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, thoroughly enjoy and appreciate their lessons. They work very hard to improve and take responsibility for their own learning very well. Their behaviour is always very good and they show great respect for their teachers.

120. Leadership and management of both subjects are effectively delegated. Both co-ordinators are specialists in their respective subject. Their roles are underdeveloped because there are no formal systems in place to enable the monitoring of teaching and learning. The subject policies are of very good quality and support all teachers very well. Both schemes of work include detailed progression of work throughout the school and they are currently being referenced to the new curriculum. They are to include the requirements for assessment, recording and monitoring. Both subjects contribute significantly to the pupils' cultural development, by bringing the pupils to study music and art and design from a good number of non-European cultures. Resources for art and design are good and for music they are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

121. At the last inspection attainment in design and technology was found to be generally in line with national expectations. The school has continued to build on this sound practise and is now achieving good standards in both key stages. In lessons seen, which were all in Key Stage 2, the standard achieved by the pupils was satisfactory. However, the scrutiny of

work produced by pupils over the course of this school year suggests that overall, taking into account the systematic and thorough coverage of the programmes of study and the good development of skills, the standard is above expectations.

122. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are able to make suggestions and plan what they are going to do. They use pictures and words to describe their designs and select appropriate materials, tools and techniques to carry out the task. The more able make realistic plans for achieving their aims and understand the importance of using the right materials and techniques. For example, in their plans for the glove puppets on display in the Year 2 classroom some have carefully explained the method and order of the work. They use tools appropriately and assemble materials and components in different ways. A particularly strong feature of their work is the way they are able to evaluate and suggest improvements to their finished work, such as when making an animal character with moving parts.

123. In Key Stage 2 pupils are developing further skills, for instance product analysis. In a food technology lesson they analysed the contents of a commercially produced sandwich by separating the ingredients and placing them in food groups. They are beginning to make more use of research when preparing for a new topic. For example, one class had found out about bread from different countries. They then tasted and analysed a selection before deciding what ingredients they want to add to their own bread. Pupils are also beginning to consider who is going to use their products and its fitness for purpose. In a project to make pop-up books, pupils were able to say for whom their book was designed. By the end of the key stage pupils are undertaking quite complex projects, such as making battery-powered toys. They are using a broad range of skills, such as research, concept drawings, design, planning, testing and evaluation, in addition to showing good levels of skill in making. In both key stages all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.

124. Attitudes to the subject are very good throughout the school. Pupils enjoy the tasks set, respond with interest and enthusiasm and co-operate well with the staff and each other. Behaviour is invariably very good, and pupils act in a mature and responsible way even when carrying out a potentially messy and distracting task like taking a sandwich apart.

125. Teaching and learning is good because staff have adopted a whole-school approach to the subject. This means that there is very good continuity of learning, and progression throughout the school. Each class builds progressively on the skills and concepts from previous years and uses a format for recording designed by the co-ordinator. Standards of speaking and listening are very good, and teachers are very skilful at involving all groups of pupils in discussion and valuing each contribution. However, there are times when teachers' expectations for pupils' written work do not reflect pupils' prior attainment. Pupils of all abilities usually record in the same way; more could be done to help lower attainers and extend higher attainers.

126. Leadership of the subject is good. The governor with responsibility has monitored lessons in both key stages and written a useful report identifying some possible issues. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements and provides for a good range and quality of learning opportunities. Appropriate opportunities are identified for personal, social and health education and for citizenship. Opportunities for developing literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are limited at present although good examples are in evidence, for instance the use of a computer program to generate designs for money containers. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has sound plans to use design and technology as part of the literacy hour, for example by the use of instructional texts in whole-class reading sessions. He is aware that

more in-service training and support for less confident teachers are still needed, if the already good standards of teaching and learning are to be raised further still.

GEOGRAPHY

127. By the end of both key stages, pupils reach standards that are broadly in line with those expected for their ages. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Progress is generally satisfactory. However, past work shows in some year groups the quantity of work produced is limited. Some teachers do not have high expectations regarding the presentation of work. It is occasionally inadequately matched to pupils' abilities and there is no regular monitoring of its quality. These weaker features of practice prevent pupils from making more rapid and sustained progress over time.

128. There is too little evidence to make an overall judgement in teaching but in the one observed lesson in Year 6 teaching was good. The initial discussion was well resourced with beautiful photographic evidence of the rainforest. Good questioning, which was directed at pupils of different levels of prior learning, enabled all the pupils present to be fully involved. However, a few pupils missed this interesting and important part of the lesson because they were withdrawn for extra literacy support. There was very good use of ICT as the pupils began to develop multi-media presentations about the rainforest after previously researching using the Internet. All pupils worked confidently and enthusiastically during this lesson.

129. Pupils in Year 1 use maps from fairy stories to develop a sound idea of what maps are used for and relate this information to their local area. Pupils look at a variety of buildings and use skills, which they have learnt in mathematics, to develop block graphs to show the different types of houses where they live. Sound emphasis is given to directional language, such as above, over and under. In Year 2, pupils build on their learning about their local area and compare and contrast the characteristics of Solihull with Mawgan Porth. Pupils work with photographic evidence to develop understanding of the areas they are covering.

130. In Year 3, pupils show a sound awareness of the use of ICT to record information from a recent traffic survey. They identify possible solutions to calm the traffic, for example the introduction of 'speed bumps'. Planning shows that pupils in Year 4 compare their local area with Stromness and study the different types of weather. Pupils in Year 5 develop research skills well as they write accounts about life in Chembakolli in India. They are taught about farming, shopping and the education the children who live there receive. Word processing skills are used well to record their findings. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of rivers around the world and a clear understanding of vocabulary associated with rivers.

131. The pupils study a balanced programme of geographical themes during each term and the school has correctly identified the need to review the geography policy and guidelines to reflect the new curriculum requirements. Research skills develop well as pupils move throughout the school. The local area is used imaginatively and visits to places of interest, in particular when the pupils go on the residential visits, enhance the geography curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 further their knowledge of other places and use literacy skills well when they regularly write to their pen-pals in South Africa. Resources are satisfactory and geography displays in the classrooms and around the school enhance learning and reinforce concepts taught.

HISTORY

132. By the end of both key stages standards in history are in line with those expected nationally. The school has maintained these standards since the previous inspection. No direct teaching was observed to enable a judgement to be made about its quality. However, the evidence of pupils' previously completed work, teachers' planning, and discussion with pupils indicates that pupils develop sound knowledge and understanding of history at levels appropriate to their age.

133. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have developed satisfactory historical skills. They have learnt about how life was different when their parents and grandparents were children. For example, pupils in Year 1 have examined and discussed old and new toys and the differences between them. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of past events and how people lived long ago. Past work and displays in classrooms and the hall show the sound use of ICT to support the subject. Examples include, in Year 4, pupil's work on an Ancient Greece topic and in Year 3, the Romans. Pupils use appropriate vocabulary to discuss the past, and identify differences between people's lives, past and present.

134. Most pupils make satisfactory use of research skills but in some classes past work shows the range and quality of written work produced is too limited. Extended writing to demonstrate how well pupils are able to interpret and explain historical events is sparse in quantity. A few lower attainers do not always finish their written work because the task is not accurately matched to their abilities. This suggests shortcomings in the monitoring of pupils' learning and the standards achieved.

135. The subject is soundly promoted. History displays in the classrooms and around the school enhance learning and reinforce concepts taught and ICT is beginning to be used effectively to support learning. Resources are satisfactory and used well. For example, a good selection of photographs enables pupils to gain a sound understanding of what their local area used to look like. Visits to places of interest, such as museums, and in particular residential visits, enhance the history curriculum.

136. The school has appropriately identified the need to review the history policy and guidelines to reflect the new curriculum requirements.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Standards in ICT are above average in both age groups and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. This is an improvement on the last inspection when they were judged to be in line with national expectation overall, with standards varying in relation to individual teacher' confidence.

138. Only one designated ICT lesson was inspected but whole-class lessons take place regularly in the very well equipped ICT suite, with sufficient, very good quality hardware to allow pupils to work in pairs. Year 1 pupils were seen to work confidently and demonstrate good control of a commercial, data-handling programme. All pupils can log-on to software using a personalised code. Having gained valuable experience in collecting sweet-type related

data, they input data related to a wide variety of topics based upon 'my favourite'. They exhibit good mouse control and can select accurately from a menu, including the instruction to print their work. This is relayed to a centrally based printer.

139. Pupils from both key stages use ICT effectively on classroom-based hardware during lessons, in a variety of subject areas. Younger pupils confidently use floor-based 'Roamers' that they programme to respond to instructions. Older pupils use a screen turtle to develop well their skills in control and modelling. Year 6 pupils word process self-assessments of recently completed topics in mathematics. Year 5 pupils use a wide variety of font to display their creative writing from literacy lessons. In Year 4, pupils use ICT efficiently to produce an attractive display of their book reviews. Analysis of instructional text related to 'recipes' in literacy lessons, enables the production of an attractive ICT generated display in Year 3. Using commercial software, infant pupils produce pictures of their favourite toys and generate pictures relating to 'The Three Little Pigs'. They word-process their creative stories, such as 'Red Riding Hood' and in geography they construct screen plans of the local area, before printing them to display. Older pupils use the Internet confidently to download information they have researched, to support their progress in a variety of curriculum areas.

140. Teaching is good. The teacher observed demonstrates confidence in using the technology and intervenes well to support individual pupils. The lesson was well resourced, with the provision of a good variety of completed data sheets. These provided pupils with the means to achieve the lesson objective that was to practice in-putting data.

141. All pupils are very positive in their approach to ICT and the subject contributes well to their personal development. They work enthusiastically, behave very well and readily take turns to control the mouse. Older pupils are very confident in using new ideas or unfamiliar programs, building well on their previous understanding. They show very good collaborative skills, helping their partner well and listening carefully to each other's ideas and opinion. Pupils with English as an additional language, and those with special educational needs, make good progress when supported by the teacher or classmates. All pupils can sustain concentration and interest over lengthy periods.

142. ICT is very well led by a co-ordinator with excellent subject knowledge. All teachers have voluntarily undertaken courses to develop their understanding and confidence in using the school's very good resources. The co-ordinator follows up this training with very good support for those teachers who require it. He has a clear view as to how the subject should develop and plans to establish e-mail addresses for all staff and pupils. He has no opportunity to formally monitor the quality of teaching and learning taking place throughout the school. There is potential for this aspect of the role to improve in order to ensure that standards are sustained and all curriculum areas are sufficiently supported by ICT.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

143. At the time of the last inspection, attainment was above national expectations. Although only a few lessons were seen in Key Stage 2, and none in Key Stage 1, there was enough evidence from teachers' planning, observation of after-school clubs and discussions with pupils and staff to conclude that standards are still high. The impressive quality of gymnastics and creative movement displayed by the oldest pupils would not be possible without firm foundations being laid further down the school.

144. High standards in the lessons observed in Key Stage 2 were particularly evident in the way the pupils worked together co-operatively, evaluating their own and others efforts. They showed good understanding of the skills needed to improve and extend their performance. In

a gymnastics lesson, the oldest pupils were able to refine and improve sequences of movements taking into account such things as working at different levels and with varying speeds. The quality of their movement, and the control they showed, even when attempting quite complex sequences, was of a very high standard. During a lesson in games, pupils used a hockey stick to dribble and pass a small ball with accuracy and control. In the lessons observed, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, were achieving a good standard. Their behaviour was exemplary.

145. Teaching is good overall. In the lessons observed it ranged in quality from satisfactory to excellent. In all lessons, pupils' interest and concentration were good or better and they showed great maturity and independence. For example, in a lesson of indoor games, the pupils practised hockey skills in a confined space with concentration and application. They improved skills despite the crowded conditions. In the gymnastics lesson, pupils worked together in pairs to devise sequences involving balances and explosive movements. They planned, practised, evaluated and improved the sequences over the course of the session and made excellent progress in their skills and understanding. Learning is very good where the teacher makes the objectives clear, and pupils know what they need to do to improve. Learning is not quite as good when the pupils' practise is not as focused. For instance, pupils' learning in the hockey lesson could have been even better if they had been clear about which particular technique they were concentrating on, such as trapping, passing or shooting. In the best lessons, teachers use demonstration with great skill to enhance pupils' self-esteem and to exemplify best practice. They use the plenary session at the end of the lesson to identify what has been achieved and what can still be improved. This has a very positive effect on learning and standards of attainment.

146. As at the time of the last inspection, the curriculum is broad and well balanced and the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met. The time given to physical education is quite generous. Curricular provision is enhanced by after-school activities, such as football, netball, table tennis and dance. Outside agencies, such as the Birmingham City Development Scheme for football and the Warwickshire County Club for cricket, further enrich the curriculum. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 receive swimming tuition, which continues into Year 5 if they have not reached the required minimum standard. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, particularly in the way teachers promote independence and initiative, and encourage co-operation and the appreciation of each other's efforts. A good example of cultural development was provided when the teacher referred to the 'Asian movement' of the hands in one of the sequences. Boys and girls benefit equally from curricular and extra-curricular provision, but the school needs to be careful that pupils withdrawn for special educational needs tuition get their full entitlement.

147. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of subject requirements and has put in place highly effective policies and schemes of work, including more recently for the Foundation Stage. These provide good support for the teaching staff and ensure good curriculum coverage throughout the school. Plans for further development are sound, and include extra training for staff and closer monitoring of standards through the use of assessment sheets. Resources are generally good, and the school has plenty of space for indoor and outdoor activities. Overall, physical education continues to be a strong feature of the school's curriculum.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in religious education that are in line with those required by the Local Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained standards since the previous inspection.

149. Only two lessons were seen and there is too little evidence to make a judgement on teaching overall. In the best lesson in Year 2 the pupils made good progress. This was because the activities reinforced the learning objective well and resulted in pupils gaining a good idea of why people pray. Good questioning enabled all pupils to be involved in the class discussion. They shared ideas sensitively and maturely. Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning were good contributory factors to the quality of learning.

150. Learning is satisfactory. Pupils in Year 1 listen well to religious stories from different world faiths. They recognise that some people do things that show that they believe in a deity. In Key Stage 2, pupils extend understanding that religious beliefs make a difference to people's lives and of concepts, such as heaven and reconciliation. In Year 4, they draw pictures of what they think heaven might be like. They list what they think God might want for the earth and what he would not like. Year 5 pupils look closely at the word 'reconciliation' and try to understand what it means. Year 3 pupils are appropriately introduced to the symbolism of water and light in the ritual of baptism. Pupils are also encouraged to explore moral and spiritual meaning when they write sensitive poems about 'What is Happiness?' Pupils in Year 6 look at the story of The Pilgrim's Progress and learn about the lives of important people who influenced moral thinking, for example Martin Luther King. They look at pictures of Jesus and describe how they affect their own feelings. There are sound links with geography as they study a map of Jerusalem to get an idea of where events happened.

151. Progress is sound for all pupils as they move through the school. However progress is sometimes hindered because some pupils miss important parts of lessons when they are withdrawn for extra learning support. Lack of close monitoring of work completed affects progress in some year groups. A scrutiny of past work shows some variation in quality and quantity of work produced. Some teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations regarding the presentation of work. Work is not always accurately matched to the pupils' abilities and the less able pupils occasionally achieve little.

152. In both key stages, pupils show an interest in special occasions and relate them to their own experiences. They enjoy learning about festivals, such as Easter, Christmas and Eid. Pupils develop good skills in speaking and listening through the subject. For example, Year 6 pupils talk confidently in whole-class situations about how Hindus worship. They develop a caring approach to life from a young age, as was clearly demonstrated in the Year 2 lesson when they talked about what it means to be poor. This empathy is continued in Key Stage 2 where Year 5 pupils discuss and write sensitive poems about the feeling of 'anger'. All pupils have the opportunity to visit different places of worship and this gives them valuable insight into world religions.

153. Provision for religious education meets statutory requirements and planning is linked closely to the agreed syllabus. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is in the process of

developing useful assessment procedures. Resources are sound and generally used effectively though ICT is not sufficiently utilised.