

INSPECTION REPORT

LEY HILL JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Northfield, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103297

Headteacher: Mr R S Turner

Reporting inspector: Mr G T Storer
19830

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th June 2002

Inspection number: 195102

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Rhayader Road
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Birmingham

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S Dicker

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G T Storer 19830	Registered inspector	Mathematics Physical education English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? School improvement How well is the school led and managed
Mrs C Wild 19369	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance How well does the school care for pupils? Partnership with parents
Mrs M Palmer 20646	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art Music Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mr D Pattinson 19120	Team inspector	Science Geography History	Curriculum and other opportunities Assessment
Mr C Lewis 22831	Team Inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ley Hill Junior and Infant School is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Birmingham and serves the local community living on nearby local authority housing estates. With 228 pupils on the school roll, this school is about the same size as other primary schools nationally. However, numbers on roll have fallen sharply over the last four years as a result of the demolition of run-down, local authority housing stock. The school faces very challenging social and educational circumstances. Unemployment in the area is high and many families experience hardship. Well over half the pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is high in comparison to the national average. Children's attainments on entry to the nursery are well below average and a considerable number of pupils face difficulties in their learning. There is an above-average number of 62 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and 8 pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The number of Statements is well above average for a school of this size. Two pupils speak English as an additional language. This is typical of schools nationally. The school also deals with a high turnover of pupils. In recent years, it has been as high as 40 per cent of all pupils and last year a quarter of the pupils entered or left the school at times other than the beginning of the reception year and the end of Year 6. Many pupils moving into the school face quite profound social and educational problems and this is reflected in the outcomes of the national tests and in overall levels of attendance.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils, who make sound progress. Whilst the proportion of pupils that attains the nationally expected standard¹ in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11 is below the national average, almost all pupils make sound gains in relation to their attainment on entry or to the special educational needs that they face. Teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples of good teaching throughout the school. The headteacher and senior staff provide sound leadership. They receive satisfactory support from the governing body and together they have developed a view of the way ahead. The school has effective links with parents and successfully enlists their support. The school manages its budget effectively and provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Children in the Foundation Stage² get a good start to their education and almost all children make good progress during their time in school.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science are rising every year.
- The teaching of mathematics is consistently good, which improves pupils' progress.
- The school makes good arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils who speak English as an additional language. They are fully included and make good progress.
- The school's education support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- The school's very effective links with neighbouring schools and colleges add to the quality of the curriculum and improve pupils' learning.
- The school has effective links with parents, who fully support most aspects of the school's work.

What could be improved

- Standards in English are well below the national average.
- Teachers are not using assessment information systematically enough to identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum or to plan the next steps in pupils' learning.
- The arrangements for checking the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough.
- Senior staff do not have enough opportunities to contribute to whole-school management and development. As a result, some teachers are not fully committed to development initiatives and this slows the school's rate of improvement.
- Teachers in infant and junior classes do not often allow pupils to make choices and develop independence; this restricts aspects of their personal development.

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

¹ The nationally expected standard / national expectations for most pupils aged 11 is National Curriculum Level 4.

² The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the Reception class year. It is a distinct stage, preparing children for later schooling, and is based on six areas of learning: communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has not yet fully addressed some issues from the last inspection in 1997. Two reasons for this are the reduction in staffing caused by the fall in pupil numbers during the redevelopment of local housing and the early departure of the previous headteacher. However, despite these problems, the school has improved the quality of education that it provides for its pupils since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage has continued to develop and improve. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in English, mathematics and science are higher. Teaching throughout the school is better than it was. More lessons are now good or very good and fewer lessons are unsatisfactory. The teaching of mathematics has improved considerably and is now consistently good throughout the school. Whilst remaining below national expectations, standards in design and technology and in information and communication technology (ICT) are higher and standards in music now meet national expectations throughout the school. Curriculum planning is better; pupils gain knowledge, understanding and skills more systematically, although there are still weaknesses in the planning for some areas of the curriculum. The school's assessment procedures allow more realistic targets to be set for the raising of standards, but staff still do not use assessment information properly to improve planning for pupils of differing abilities. The school has better resources for ICT, which will develop further in the coming year. The school has improved its partnership with parents by making them feel more confident and comfortable in approaching the school with problems or concerns.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E*	E*	E
Mathematics	E	E*	E	C
Science	D	E	E	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

bottom 5% nationally E

 *

When children enter the nursery class, their attainments are well below average. Most children make good progress, but by the end of the Foundation Stage few attain standards normally expected of 5-year-olds. In the national tests for 7 and 11-year-olds in 2001, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science were well below the national average. However, these results do not indicate serious weaknesses in teaching and learning. In all subjects other than writing for 7-year-olds and English for 11-year-olds, standards in 2001 were in line with those in schools with similar social and educational circumstances. Inspection evidence and evidence from the most recent (unpublished) tests in 2002 indicates that standards are continuing to rise. At the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing remain well below average overall, but more pupils are attaining the above average Level 3. In mathematics and science, the number of pupils achieving above average standards has improved considerably, moving the school ahead of similar schools in this respect. Whilst standards in English remain well below average by the end of Year 6, the number of pupils achieving or exceeding the nationally expected standard has improved considerably. Standards have also improved in mathematics and science. In these subjects, the proportion of pupils currently attaining or exceeding the nationally expected standard is close to, though still somewhat below, the 2001 national average, but this should compare very favourably with similar schools. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and science and in mathematics their progress is good. The school has achieved these improvements despite social and educational circumstances that have become more challenging. In the current Year 6 classes, and throughout the school, between a third and a half of the pupils have special educational needs. Most are making good progress, but many will not make enough progress to attain the nationally expected levels in the annual tests. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully included and make good progress. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local guidance. In relation to their attainment on entry and to the difficulties that they face, pupils make satisfactory progress in most other subjects. However, in design and technology, history, geography and ICT standards are below national expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard and make a reasonable effort to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Many pupils have not yet learned to work independently. However, most pupils behave well in lessons, though there are times when the behaviour of a few interrupts the learning of others. Behaviour in the playground is improving steadily; there are fewer incidents of bullying or oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Most pupils get along well with each other and with their teachers. However, a small number of pupils find relationships difficult and do not easily co-operate with others.
Attendance	Very low. Levels of authorised and unauthorised absence are higher than in most schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in infant and junior classes. There are examples of good teaching throughout the school, more consistently in junior classes and in Year 6 in particular. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all but two lessons and just over a quarter of lessons in Foundation Stage classes were very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding to teach most subjects of the National Curriculum satisfactorily. The teaching of English and mathematics has improved because of the school's successful response to national strategies, although teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy skills through work in other subjects of the curriculum and this reduces pupils' progress. Some teachers are also less confident with ICT and do not use computers enough as a tool to support pupils' learning. Most teachers manage their pupils effectively. They use suitable resources to interest pupils and organise support staff well to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included, able to succeed and make progress. However, problems with the management of the disruptive behaviour of a small number of pupils contributed to unsatisfactory teaching in infant classes. Teachers are beginning to assess pupils' attainment more regularly, particularly in English, mathematics and science. However, teachers' use of assessment information in planning for pupils of all abilities in these and in other subjects is unsatisfactory. Teachers plan generally on the basis of broad target levels from the National Curriculum and not on what pupils know, understand and can do. This reduces the progress that some pupils make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Sound. The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum. Very good links with other schools and colleges improve the range of activities that the school can offer.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support, take part in all that the school has to offer and so make good progress.
English as an additional language	Good. Pupils speaking English as an additional language receive intensive support that ensures that they make rapid progress.
Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. There are, however not enough planned opportunities for spiritual development in assemblies and in work in many subjects.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school in which pupils' welfare is a priority. However, procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for using assessment information to inform planning for pupils of differing abilities are unsatisfactory.

There are effective links with parents, who fully support most aspects of the school's work. However, the school still needs to improve some of its information for parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has raised standards by directing the work of the school. However, staff with management roles do not get enough opportunities to carry out delegated responsibilities or to influence school development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and are playing an increasingly active role in the drive to raise standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Senior staff, subject co-ordinators and governors are not sufficiently involved in monitoring standards and the quality of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The governing body uses the school's budget and other grants appropriately, according to principles of best value and for the benefit of the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. • Teaching is good. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • Their children are making good progress. • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents. • Parents are comfortable in approaching staff with questions or problems. • Pupils' behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work that their children are expected to do at home. • The information that parents receive about how their children are getting on. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Parents returned 135 questionnaires (59 per cent) and 11 parents attended the meeting for parents. Most parents' responses supported the school and the quality of education it provides for their children. However, a number of parents expressed concerns. The inspection endorses most of the positive views, but also finds evidence to support some of their concerns. There are some inconsistencies in teachers' use of homework, but it usually relates well to the work that pupils are doing and so contributes appropriately to their attainment. The pupils' annual progress reports are unsatisfactory. They do not give parents clear information about what pupils know, understand and can do. The range of activities that take place outside of lessons is typical of schools of this size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter the nursery class, most are attaining standards that are well below those normally expected of children of this age. By the time that they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, few reach the nationally identified Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. Children's attainments in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development are below average, although their speaking, listening and counting are more typical of many children of this age. More children achieve average standards in their personal and social development and in their creative development than in knowledge and understanding of the world, but overall standards are below average in all of these areas of learning. Children's physical development is in line with standards expected of five-year-olds. In relation to their low attainment on entry, children in the nursery and reception classes make good gains in all areas of learning. Children at the end of the Foundation Stage are making better progress, attaining higher standards than at the time of the previous inspection. This is because lower numbers on the school roll allow all children to have full-time nursery provision and smaller class sizes mean that every child receives more individual attention from teachers and other adults. This more intensive experience means that almost all children get a good start to their time in school.
2. In the national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2001, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science were well below the national average. Standards in English at the end of Year 6 were very low in comparison to the national average. However, standards are as they are largely due to the very challenging social and educational factors that affect the work of the school. They do not, therefore, indicate serious weaknesses in teaching and learning. In all subjects other than writing for 7-year-olds and English for 11-year-olds, standards in 2001 were in line with those in similar schools. Furthermore, over the last four years, whilst remaining well below average, the school's results have improved at a similar rate to results in schools nationally.
3. Evidence from the work of pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 and evidence from the most recent (unpublished) tests in 2002 indicates that standards are continuing to rise. Pupils of all abilities are making satisfactory gains in relation to their attainment on entry or to the learning or behavioural difficulties that they face and their achievements are satisfactory. Pupils throughout the school are making satisfactory progress in reading, writing and science and in mathematics their progress is good. This is because:
 - at the end of Year 2, standards in reading and writing remain well below average overall, but more pupils are attaining the above average Level 3;
 - in mathematics and science, the number of pupils achieving above average standards at the end of Year 2 has improved considerably, moving the school ahead of similar schools in this respect;
 - whilst standards in English remain well below average by the end of Year 6, the number of pupils achieving or exceeding the nationally expected standard has improved considerably;
 - standards have also improved in mathematics and science. In these subjects, the proportion of pupils currently attaining or exceeding the nationally expected standard is close to, though still somewhat below, the 2001 national average, but this should compare very favourably with similar schools;
 - the school has achieved these improvements despite social and educational circumstances that have become more challenging;
 - in the current Year 6 classes, and throughout the school, between a third and a half of the pupils have special educational needs. Most are making good progress in relation

- to the targets set for them, but many will not attain the nationally expected levels and this affects the school's performance in the annual tests;
- pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully included and make good progress.
4. Pupils make satisfactory gains in the skills of literacy. However, there are currently not enough opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend these skills through work in other subjects and this reduces the progress that some pupils make, particularly in writing. Pupils' numeracy skills develop well because they have more regular opportunities to solve number problems and to work with numbers in 'life-like' situations. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local authority's guidance. In relation to their attainment on entry and to the difficulties that they face, pupils make satisfactory progress in most other subjects. However, in design and technology, history, geography and ICT, standards are below national expectations for pupils aged 11 years. Most pupils make sound progress in their personal and social development. This progress is an important factor that allows most pupils to adopt helpful patterns of behaviour and response and enables teachers to establish conditions in which satisfactory learning can take place.
 5. There are no significant differences in the attainments of pupils of different gender, background or ability. Where pupils have statements of special educational need or speak English as an additional language, the good support, closely focused on the individual, results in at least satisfactory progress across a wide range of areas. Work for more able pupils is usually sufficiently challenging to enable them to achieve above average standards in English, mathematics and science. As a result, the number of pupils achieving the above average Levels 3 and 5 is increasing year by year. However, this degree of challenge does not always extend to other subjects, where pupils of differing abilities often complete the same tasks because teachers are not using assessment information to match tasks to the differing abilities of pupils in the class.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. Pupils' attitudes to the school are satisfactory. In the parents' questionnaires, almost all parents who replied agreed that their children like school and are happy to be there. Most pupils show interest in their lessons and are happy to be involved in class discussions and activities. Whilst the majority of pupils are suitably motivated and their overall response to what the school offers is sound, teachers have to make a sustained effort to bring about a positive response from a minority of pupils. Some pupils, including the youngest, arrive at school ill prepared to cope with the demands of the day, but because of the considerable efforts of the staff, most pupils find the day's experiences enjoyable and rewarding. Nevertheless, a small minority merely tolerates the school and makes little real effort to improve. In lessons, most pupils sustain concentration for reasonable periods and persevere satisfactorily, but there are few opportunities for pupils to develop independence and initiative. In the Foundation Stage, children come into school on their own, take their seats and are able to perform small tasks such as getting their own drinks from the fridge. However, independence and initiative are not encouraged in older pupils. For example, in science investigations, the pupils are kept under tight control. Pupils cope satisfactorily with both shared learning with partners as well as working by themselves, but they are not accustomed to organising their own work.
7. At the parents' meeting and in the questionnaires, parents indicated that behaviour in the school was good overall, but that inappropriate behaviour sometimes occurs. These views are largely consistent with the findings of the inspection. Most pupils behave satisfactorily. They respond adequately to the school's expectations of how they should behave in and around the premises. A few pupils occasionally display unacceptable behaviour in the playground, but in the classroom most teachers exercise firm management of pupils. As a

result, most of the pupils understand how their actions affect others and develop helpful patterns of behaviour that allow teaching and learning to proceed unhindered. Pupils know the school and classroom rules and most respond to them satisfactorily. The majority are polite, courteous and respectful, although occasionally, some pupils interrupt others when they are speaking to the teacher or to other pupils. The Behaviour Log Book shows that there are sporadic instances of bullying, aggressive or racist behaviour. The number and frequency of such incidents are in decline and there were no observations of this type of behaviour during the inspection. The incidence of exclusions during the last reported year was considerably higher than in many schools of this size. However, all exclusions are justifiable and have often involved extremely difficult pupils, who have also been excluded from several other schools.

8. Personal development and relationships are satisfactory. Most pupils understand how their actions affect others, but there is a minority of pupils who do not realise the link between this and self-control and so, at times, display a lack of consideration. Pupils talk confidently about their behaviour, feelings and experiences with their classmates. Many pupils take part in activities, for example singing in the choir and helping to tend the school gardens, and in this way contribute to the school and to the community. Pupils display suitable concern for feelings, values and beliefs of others. They talk with confidence about their own views and beliefs, and most are prepared to listen to others' views. There are sound relationships between the pupils and between pupils, teachers and other adults within the school. When learning support assistants work to support individual pupils, relationships are good and this contributes to the success of this aspect of the school's work. The appointment of a learning mentor is a positive step and, as a result, relationships with some of the school's more troubled pupils and families are developing well.
9. In the last complete school year, attendance was very low in comparison to schools nationally. However, in reality, attendance at the school is not the problem that it appears from the statistics. In this turbulent community, families often move or are moved with little or no warning. Pupils leave the school but are not removed from the school roll until official notification is received. This sometimes takes a long time and these pupils are marked as absent from school in the meantime. This distorts the school's attendance statistics, making the situation appear much worse than it actually is. Despite these difficulties, the attendance rate is improving slowly. Last year's attendance was higher than in the year before and figures for the current year indicate that attendance is continuing to improve. Significantly, the proportion of pupils absent without good reason is improving. The unauthorised absence has improved by 1 per cent, but is still well above the national average. Procedures for registering pupils are satisfactory and meet the requirements. Most pupils arrive on time at school and for classes, but a few arrive late in the morning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in the rest of the school. During the inspection, teaching in the Foundation Stage was consistently good and was very good in about one-third of lessons. There was very good teaching in both the nursery and the reception class. Teaching in infant and junior classes was more variable. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all but two lessons and there were frequent examples of good teaching, most notably in Years 3 to 6. The two unsatisfactory lessons were in Year 1, but the teaching in that year group is also satisfactory overall. This constitutes a significant improvement since the last inspection when there were fewer good and very good lessons and teaching was found to be less than satisfactory in a much higher proportion of all lessons.

11. Teachers in the nursery and in the reception provide the children with a rich and stimulating range of activities that successfully promote progress in all areas of learning. They plan carefully, using their observations and assessments to match tasks to the needs of children with differing abilities. They work in very effective partnership with support staff, who make a considerable contribution to children's learning. All Foundation Stage staff have high expectations and ensure that children adopt good habits of behaviour and response that allow effective learning to take place. This quality of teaching gives children a good start in the school.
12. In both infant and junior classes, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum and the subjects they teach. As a result, planning is thorough and results in systematic coverage of most areas of the curriculum and the sound teaching of basic skills. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when the coverage of some subjects was unsatisfactory. In most lessons, teachers know exactly what they expect pupils to learn - objectives that, in the best cases, are made clear to the pupils at the start of the lessons and reinforced throughout. For example, in a Year 2 ICT lesson, the teacher had identified the key skills pupils would be developing and presented them clearly and methodically. As a result, pupils had a good understanding of the task, responded well to the teacher's advice and improved their skills well during the lesson.
13. Teachers have successfully introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this has brought a greater consistency to the teaching of English and mathematics that is helping to raise standards. During their literacy hours, pupils have suitable opportunities to speak, listen, read and write, and there are signs that the introduction of an additional weekly writing lesson is encouraging pupils to write at length and with increasing independence. However, as yet, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy skills, and especially their writing, through work in other subjects. At the beginning of mathematics lessons, teachers use a regular quick-fire question and answer session successfully to engage pupils' interest and to promote their rapid recall of number facts and accurate mental calculation. This adds significantly to the development of pupils' numeracy skills. However, teachers' use of ICT to support learning is currently unsatisfactory. There are some examples of pupils using this technology as a source of information and for presenting work, for example in English and mathematics. Nevertheless, there are still many lessons where teachers do not use ICT as a resource to improve pupils' learning. This is because some teachers do not have the confidence or expertise to make the best use the school's new resources. The school's new ICT suite has improved the teaching of computer skills, but pupils often have to take turns and work in short bursts when working in class.
14. All teachers take account of the difficulties faced by pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. They plan activities that are consistent with targets in pupils' individual education plans and use additional teaching and support staff effectively to ensure that these pupils are fully included and are able to succeed and make progress. However, in many lessons teachers do not give enough attention to providing work that is matched to the abilities and prior attainments of the remainder of the class. Teachers have begun to make more regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress, but their use of assessment in planning the next steps in pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. As a result, pupils often complete the same work, which is either too easy or too difficult for some pupils in the class. Whilst teachers and support staff ensure that most pupils are able to experience some degree of success, pupils of differing abilities do not always make as much progress as they should. Where tasks are planned at different levels, this is on the basis of broad target levels from the National Curriculum and not on the basis of what pupils know, understand and can do. This also reduces the progress that some pupils make. In the best cases, as for example in a Year 6, teachers assess individual pupils' attainment and understanding continually. As well as formal assessments, they use skilful questioning, observations and the marking of work.

Mistakes and misconceptions are recognised by the teacher and used constructively to set targets and to facilitate learning. During the inspection there were examples of teachers using their ongoing, day-to-day evaluations of pupils' learning to amend their planning, but this quality and use of assessment are not consistently in place throughout the school.

15. In most lessons, teachers' organisation and management of activities are effective. Teachers use a good range of techniques and are generally successful in motivating pupils and securing satisfactory behaviour and response. Much of this success results from teachers' high expectations and the positive relationships that teachers and other adults forge with the pupils. This is particularly evident in junior classes. However, throughout the school there is a small minority of pupils, many with special educational needs, who have significant behaviour and attitude problems. Teachers throughout the school work very hard and consistently to motivate and control the behaviour of these pupils, whilst at the same time providing interesting and challenging tasks for the majority of pupils. In some cases this has a damaging effect on the progress that pupils make during the lesson. For example, in one Year 1 physical education lesson, the teacher's ineffective class management meant that many pupils were restless and inattentive throughout the lesson. They made little real effort to improve and their behaviour interrupted the learning of others. The teacher had to stop the lesson every few minutes in order to reprimand pupils and this disrupted the pace of the lesson. As a result, pupils' progress was unsatisfactory.
16. Teachers prepare and use resources effectively and imaginatively to motivate and interest pupils. They use an appropriate range of teaching styles, carefully balancing direct teaching of the whole class with group activities where the teacher works with groups or individuals. They use encouragement appropriately and work very patiently and sensitively with pupils with behaviour difficulties. However, the over-riding need to maintain control of classes leads in some cases to the over-direction of pupils. There are, consequently, insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their own initiative or take responsibility for their learning and this impedes some aspects of pupils' learning, for example investigative skills in science, and their personal development. Teachers make satisfactory use of homework; most pupils take their reading books home and regularly have spelling and number work to complete. Pupils in junior classes receive additional homework, although there are some inconsistencies in the amounts set and in the frequency of assignments.

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

17. The school provides a sound curriculum for its pupils in which all subjects required by the National Curriculum are securely represented. There is a clear framework, which enables pupils to develop knowledge, skills and understanding in most subjects and ensures that work carefully builds on previous learning for most pupils. These are improvements on the findings of the last inspection. Teachers use different methods, such as teaching the whole class, small groups and individuals to make sure that they teach all that is required.
18. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage are good and take full account of the Early Learning Goals for pupils of this age. Pupils take part in a wide range of planned and carefully structured activities and experiences, which give them a good start to their education.
19. The curriculum is well organised to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make good gains in learning over time. Work is usually matched to their particular needs and, where additional support is available, it is carefully targeted to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.

20. The curriculum places good emphasis on the development of numeracy skills in mathematics and sound emphasis on the development of literacy skills within English. The school has successfully introduced the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, which are helping to raise standards in English and mathematics over time. However, pupils' writing is not well represented across the curriculum. Pupils rarely write for different purposes in subjects, such as history, to help improve their knowledge and understanding of written English.
21. A satisfactory range of clubs and activities appeals to the interests of some pupils. Most clubs, such as soccer, netball, dance, and computer clubs, are well supported and greatly appreciated by girls and boys from Years 3 to 6. Pupils attending the gardening club have helped to improve the school grounds. A sound range of educational visits, such as to Birmingham city centre, St. Leonard's Church at Frankley and a local residential visit of adventure activities held once every two years for older pupils, serve to extend pupils' learning opportunities. Visitors, such as musicians, dance groups from neighbouring schools and representatives of local services, such as the Fire Service, help to further enrich pupils' learning experiences.
22. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and the opportunity to be included in and to benefit from all that the school offers to its pupils. Teachers make every effort in all lessons and most activities that support the curriculum to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are celebrated and valued. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language take a full part in the life of the school. The school successfully provides learning opportunities for all pupils, whatever their ability, age, background or ethnicity, to help them to make mostly satisfactory progress.
23. Teachers give satisfactory emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education within the curriculum. However, these areas are not yet promoted as part of a carefully structured and integrated programme. Pupils learn about the importance of a healthy diet and exercise for maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and about drug use and misuse, as part of their science work. Sex education is taught in line with agreed policy. Teachers often give praise to enhance pupils' self-esteem. Some use discussion to provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate the views of others, although many pupils are not yet good listeners or tolerant of the views of others. Older pupils learn to understand the need for rules in certain situations. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to use their initiative or to develop as independent learners. As a result, pupils rely heavily on their teachers to help them learn and many have limited concentration. Only pupils in Year 6 have learning targets, to help them to take responsibility for their own learning. Where pupils have specific tasks to perform, they carry out them out appropriately. Fund-raising for local and national charities is helping them to develop consideration for others. However, many pupils have not yet learnt to respect one another and support each other's learning.
24. The community makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning. For example, some pupils extend their knowledge of the wider world to help them to become good citizens by visiting the council chamber. 'Inspire' workshops are proving successful in helping pupils and parents to work together. However, few parents help in school to support pupils with their learning. There are few business links, from which pupils can learn about the world of work.
25. Links with neighbouring schools are very good. There are firmly established links with the schools to which most pupils move at 11, which help to ensure a smooth transition for pupils at the end of Year 6. Older pupils visit a local school's sports hall to help them to develop their games skills. There are good links with a local technology college, from which pupils develop their skills in ICT. Links with a local performing arts college benefits pupils through enabling them to take part in drama initiatives. Dance groups from a

nearby school visit annually to give performances, which are very much appreciated by pupils.

26. However, weaknesses still exist, and these slow the progress that some pupils make as they move through the school.
 - Schemes of work in some subjects are not yet well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are often given identical work.
 - In geography, mapping skills are not taught in logical order.
 - Some pupils are not taught subjects regularly enough for them to build carefully on their previous learning. For example, pupils in Year 6 are not taught any geography until the summer term.
 - Some teachers under-emphasise the importance of 'real-life experiences'. The local area is not used enough to enable pupils to develop important skills in history and geography. The curriculum is, therefore, not always relevant for pupils and rarely makes learning exciting for them.
 - ICT is not yet represented well enough in pupils' work in other subjects, although this is developing.
27. Weaknesses in the arrangements for promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development were identified in the previous inspection. Although some aspects have improved and provision for this area of the curriculum remains satisfactory overall, some of the concerns have not been adequately addressed.
28. There are still weaknesses in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies offer very limited opportunities for thoughtfulness. Daily acts of collective worship are of a mainly Christian character and meet statutory requirements. However, they are frequently very brief and make limited contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual development. There is usually a prayer, but it is not presented in an atmosphere of quiet stillness and there is no visual focus to support pupils' sense of reflection. Teachers occasionally promote pupils' awareness of beauty in the natural world. For example, a group of reception class children gasped in wonder at the sight of a potato growing in the nursery garden. However, this aspect of pupils' personal development is given too little emphasis. The school provides pupils with satisfactory insights into their own and others' values and beliefs through work in religious education.
29. Arrangements for the promotion of pupils' moral development are satisfactory. Systems of rewards in classrooms and assemblies and the interactions between staff and pupils successfully encourage pupils to recognise their own individuality and worth. School rules are displayed prominently and in most instances staff ensure that pupils know what is expected of them and that they understand the difference between right and wrong. Assembly themes, such as 'forgiving', 'courage' and 'bullying', satisfactorily promote pupils' awareness of moral issues. The headteacher and staff provide good role models. They treat pupils, other members of the school community and each other with courtesy and respect. However, on some occasions teachers do not deal effectively enough with those pupils who do not listen respectfully to others who are sharing their ideas and experiences.
30. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory. Supportive and constructive relationships between teachers and pupils successfully build pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Assembly themes, such as 'teamwork', 'sharing' and 'friendship', satisfactorily heighten pupils' social awareness. Teachers regularly expect pupils to work collaboratively in lessons and give older pupils the opportunity to participate in residential school trips. These activities successfully improve pupils' skills of co-operation and social interaction. Teachers in the Foundation Stage successfully encourage children to begin to act on their own initiative. However, although older pupils are keen to help around school and carry out duties as 'monitors', they have few opportunities to exercise responsibility as

they move through the school. For example, they cannot currently contribute to the life of the school through a school council, although there are plans to establish such a group in the coming year. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on the needs of others and give support to a range of local and national charitable causes, including a children's hospice and the National Children's Home. In some classes pupils address issues of citizenship and living in the local community, as when Year 6 pupils visited the local Council Chamber. Occasional visitors extend pupils' experience of life in Britain's multi-ethnic society, but this aspect is given too little emphasis.

31. There are satisfactory arrangements for promoting pupils' cultural development. The school extends pupils' cultural awareness satisfactorily through such visits as those to the art gallery and museum, theatre and Roman fort. In art lessons teachers promote pupils' awareness of the works of a satisfactory range of famous artists. However, pupils have limited opportunities to learn about non-western artistic traditions. Visitors to school successfully extend pupils' cultural experience. These include a theatre group, an author and musicians. For example, following a demonstration of African drumming, pupils performed in a large concert in the city centre. Through work in religious education, the school satisfactorily teaches pupils to appreciate the richness and diversity of major world faiths and cultural traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school provides satisfactory care for its pupils and their well being is a priority for all staff. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is satisfactory overall and results in sound levels of support and guidance for many pupils. However, weaknesses in the school's use of assessment information mean that not all pupils derive the maximum benefit from the school's current arrangements.
33. Child protection procedures are adequate and the school follows the local area guidance for child protection. The child protection policy is very basic and too brief to give helpful guidance to staff and governors. However, the headteacher is the designated person with responsibility for child protection and has received training and advice from the local area authority. He ensures that all staff are aware of the school's procedures and whilst non-teaching staff have not received training or guidance in this area, they know who to approach if concerns arise. The school receives good support when needed from outside agencies.
34. Procedures to ensure pupils' well being, health and safety are satisfactory. Adequate numbers of staff have received training in first aid, including some mid-day supervisors. They record all accidents and provide parents with written notifications if a bump to the head has occurred. The caretaker, who is also a governor, lives on the site and monitors the condition of the building and premises thoroughly. He has received training in aspects of health and safety, such as the safe keeping of cleaning materials, and deals with these matters conscientiously. Fire precautions are satisfactory and this includes the regular testing of fire and electrical equipment and the monitoring of evacuation procedures by the local fire brigade. The school also helps the pupils to protect themselves. For example, pupils have visited the fire station and the officers have provided information on smoke alarms and talked about their jobs. In addition, a governor who is a police officer takes assemblies and talks to pupils on subjects such as 'stranger danger'. There are also informal links with the police, who assist in reading in the school, but also work hard to build trusting relationships with pupils.
35. Levels of supervision are good. Eight mid-day supervisors are on duty at lunchtime and the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the learning mentor also help to supervise at this time. Some non-teaching staff have other roles in the school, working in the classroom and helping with the lunchtime clubs; consequently, pupils are well known to

them and the trusting relationships that exist mean that pupils are confident in their care. The lunchtime supervisors meet termly with the headteacher for exchanges of information and for the voicing of concerns. A recent initiative has been the introduction of healthy eating at break-times; pupils appreciate the toast, milk and fruit juices that the school provides.

36. The school's procedures for the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour are good. There is a behaviour co-ordinator, who works alongside staff to devise and implement improved procedures for managing pupils' behaviour throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2 the school has already introduced a policy of identifying and tackling behavioural difficulties at the earliest possible moment. There are clear strategies for behaviour management that include the writing of individual behaviour plans for pupils with behavioural difficulties and all staff have received training. Implementation of a similar early intervention programme in Years 3 to 6 is planned for the autumn term. The school is systematic in its recording of incidents of inappropriate behaviour and of any racial incidents; parents are informed and are required to work with the school on securing an improvement. A detailed anti-bullying policy is in place which, combined with the new behaviour policy, provides a cohesive whole-school approach to behaviour management. The behaviour policy is supported by a suitable system of rewards and sanctions and class and school rules are in place. However, these good procedures have not been in place long enough to have had an impact on the behaviour of all pupils, which is why occasional incidents of unacceptable behaviour still occur. Presently it is the firm control of most of the teaching staff and good individual support to pupils from classroom assistants and a learning mentor that help to maintain satisfactory standards of behaviour and response in most lessons.
37. Procedures for the monitoring and improving of attendance are good and have resulted in year-on-year improvements in the overall attendance rate during the last three years. Registration takes place at the beginning of each morning and afternoon. The recording of pupils' attendance is accurate and is done in line with current requirements. The learning mentor produces and analyses data on attendance and continually monitors pupils, particularly those with less than 80 per cent attendance. The learning mentor and the educational welfare officer work closely together to support pupils and families that are vulnerable and the school is acquiring good information on pupils' attendance due to their efforts. The headteacher supports the school's drive to improve pupils' attendance. He makes home visits, as required, and secures sponsorship from commercial organisations that allows the school to operate impressive incentive schemes, for example offering a mountain bike as a prize for full attendance. Parents are periodically reminded of the need to maintain regular attendance in newsletters.
38. The school's arrangements for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Teachers regularly assess pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science using a variety of approaches that help them to identify what pupils know and understand. Teachers keep conscientious records of how pupils are performing in tests and other assessments in these subjects. Teachers use these records satisfactorily to identify and support pupils who need additional help, as the basis of reports to parents and, in Year 6 only, for the setting of personal targets. Most pupils are not yet involved in monitoring their own work, for example, by sometimes marking their work themselves and taking ownership of targets that help them improve. Only the oldest pupils in school are becoming involved in, and more responsible for, their own learning. In other subjects, the monitoring and supporting of pupils' progress are informal, as current procedures do not extend across the whole curriculum.
39. The school has satisfactory arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment as they move through the school. Teachers use a suitable range of materials including commercial tests, statutory and optional National Curriculum tests and the school's own informal

assessments. There are termly assessments in English and mathematics and teachers make informal assessments in other subjects when topics are completed. This is an improvement on the procedures reported at the time of the previous inspection. However, despite these improving arrangements, the school's use of data and information obtained from national tests and other assessments is unsatisfactory. This is because senior staff and class teachers are not using this information in order to:

- establish priorities for curriculum development and to improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- compare the performances of different groups of pupils, such as boys and girls;
- set targets for all pupils that help them to improve their learning;
- place pupils in groups by ability in the mixed-age classes so that work can be more precisely matched to their needs and prior attainments;
- plan work for pupils of different abilities that ensures that all pupils make the best possible progress;
- monitor pupils' work against learning targets and National Curriculum levels, although this has begun in mathematics.

40. Despite these weaknesses, there is one area in which assessment makes a worthwhile contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. The most effective use of assessment under the school's current arrangements is that which relates to pupils with special educational needs. In preparing individual education plans, teachers set very clear targets for pupils with special educational needs in order to help them to improve their learning or their behaviour. These plans effectively inform the teachers and classroom assistants how best to support these pupils when planning what they need to learn next in different subjects of the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The school has a good relationship with parents. Parents are very happy with the quality of education that the school provides for their children. A few parents are unhappy with the information they receive about their children's progress or about the range of activities outside of lessons and some feel the school does not provide the right amount of homework. However, they feel comfortable in approaching the school with their views or concerns. The school is becoming the heart of the community, providing accommodation for community groups and childcare. The relationship with the families it serves is rapidly becoming a strength of the school.
42. The school is forging constructive links with many of its parents. Before their children start school, parents receive an invitation to come and discuss school life. This helps parents to prepare their children for the transition from home to school and paves the way for an on-going, mutually supportive relationship. There are parents' evenings in the autumn and summer terms, which enable parents to discuss with the class teacher the progress of their children. The school is responsive to its parents. Consultation evenings are held to discuss, for example, the anti-bullying policy and lunchtime provision. The school has also improved site security in response to parents' concerns made known by parent representatives on the governing body. The school has introduced a basic home/school agreement, but is not yet making effective use of the document in support of its relationship with parents.
43. The information provided to parents is satisfactory. The school's brochure is a useful document and, apart from a too brief statement regarding special educational needs, meets the statutory requirements. The information that is included assists parents in preparing their children for school, although there is scope for the prospectus to give more detailed information about the content and organisation of the curriculum. The school provides good quality information for parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are invited into school to discuss the needs of their children and they are involved

in the reviews of individual education plans. Parents receive regular newsletters that are friendly and welcoming in tone. However, there are weaknesses in some aspects of information to parents. Annual progress reports are inconsistent in the quality of information that they provide. Some reports celebrate the pupils' achievements, but fail to inform parents about targets for improvement. In other classes, reports give details of the work covered, but do not indicate clearly what individual pupils know, understand and can do. In the worst examples, reporting on some subjects is covered by a single word and this is unsatisfactory. The governors' annual report to parents contains statements that are too brief to meet the requirements and omits some statutory information.

44. The school recognises the important contribution parents can make in helping with their children's learning. The school takes part in the local authority 'Inspire' programme. This allows parents to come into school to work alongside their children, sharing the school experience and gaining valuable insights into how the school operates and how subjects such as literacy and numeracy are taught. In this way, parents are informed of what their children are doing and helped to work with them at home. Parents are also invited into to school to help in the classrooms and, as a result, some have gained sufficient experience to become employed by the school as classroom assistants. Others have successfully taken examinations after encouragement from the school. The gardening club involves parents and pupils in learning about the environment and improving the school grounds. An active parent-teacher association is very supportive and contributes to the learning of the pupils by raising funds to supplement the school's resources.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

45. The recently appointed headteacher and senior members of staff provide sound leadership for the school. Since the last inspection there has been a significant reduction in the number of pupils on the school roll and in the number of staff. However, despite this, the headteacher has successfully restructured the school and begun to come to terms with what needs to be done. This has enabled the school to make satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and, although there are still issues to address, its capacity to succeed is now improving. Central to this has been the school's drive to raise standards and its efforts to rebuild its relationship with parents, which until recently had been in decline. The school is succeeding in both of these areas. Results are improving more rapidly than at any time during the last four years and the school has regained the confidence and support of the overwhelming majority of parents. As such, it is well placed to make further improvements.
46. The school does not have a well-developed senior management team and most of the tasks of school management fall on the headteacher. Members of staff have accepted responsibility for co-ordinating the development of curriculum subjects, managing the provision for pupils with special educational needs and overseeing aspects such as assessment. However, the school has not provided some of them with the time or opportunity to fulfil these responsibilities thoroughly. Consequently, the processes of monitoring and evaluating the school's work are not as rigorous as they should be. There is some monitoring of standards and quality by classroom observations, but these observations do not always have a clearly identified purpose or extend to all subjects. Whilst they have resulted in improvements to the teaching and learning of English and mathematics, they have yet to provide the quality of management information required for really effective development planning or to secure the consistency of commitment and response needed for successful, whole-school improvement in areas such as assessment.
47. Governors are very supportive of the school and they are proud of the high esteem in which it is held in the community. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively and they are well informed by the headteacher about the school's work. The headteacher encourages governors to become more involved in the school by fostering a climate in which questions

and challenge play an increasing role. As a result, governors are more confident in, for example, placing parental concerns on the agenda or expressing strongly held principles when they discuss the school development plan. Governors know and value the strengths of the school and the quality of leadership that the headteacher provides. Their role in shaping its direction is satisfactory, but they do not monitor many aspects of the school's provision at first hand and this leads to some variations in their awareness of relative weaknesses. For example, they are particularly rigorous in their monitoring and taking action on matters of health and safety and in their drive to improve the security of the school site, but do not hold the school to account in relation to its main priorities in raising pupils' standards of attainment.

48. This is an inclusive school. Its aims and values place strong emphasis on all pupils having equal access to what the school offers. The headteacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator manage this aspect of the school's work effectively, with the result that these aims are reflected well in its life and work. They ensure that the school adheres to the Code of Practice³ and that pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need receive their full entitlement to additional support. This makes a strong contribution to the learning of almost half of the pupils in the school and, as a result, these pupils make good progress. All receive effective support from teachers and a good number of assistants who help them. Because it is organised and managed well, the work of classroom assistants and learning support assistants is very effective. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive intensive on-going support that enables them to take part fully in all activities and to make rapid gains in their confidence and competence in the English language.
49. There are sound financial links between the school's budget and the priorities set out in the school's development plan. Governors understand and consider best value principles in their financial dealings, as well as comparing the pupils' attainments with those in other schools. Funds for special purposes are used well. Notably, their effective use of grants for pupils with special educational needs results in good provision for these pupils, and this fosters their good progress. Recently the school has held a relatively large amount of surplus money in its budget. This has been earmarked for a range of suitable purposes, including maintaining staffing levels, providing additional reading and library books and for the planned refurbishment of the staff-room. The school is taking suitable steps to ensure that future contingency funds are kept to a lesser amount, so that most of the school's funds are spent on the school's current pupils.
50. The number of teaching and support staff is appropriate to the needs of the school. There is a satisfactory mix of age, experience and expertise amongst the teaching staff. The governing body has introduced suitable arrangements for managing the performance of staff. Suitable objectives that are closely linked to the school's main development priorities have been set for each member of staff and these are to be reviewed annually. All newly-appointed teachers receive support from other members of staff. This enables them to settle into the school and become increasingly effective. The procedures for the induction of newly-qualified teachers are good. Newly-qualified teachers receive effective support from an experienced mentor as well as having access to a full programme of training and visits that help them to develop and improve the quality of their teaching.
51. The school has a good number of classroom assistants, who work closely with the teachers and support pupils effectively in their learning. Classroom assistants know the pupils really well and relationships between most of the pupils and the adults in the

³ [Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.](#) [Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1922 Education Act](#)

classroom are good. This promotes a good climate for learning and ensures a good level of personal support for pupils of all levels of attainment. Teamwork between classroom assistants and teachers is very good and where classroom assistants work with lower attaining pupils or with pupils with statements of special educational need, the same sensitive, good quality personal support is evident. The quality of this work is a strength of the school.

52. In all subjects, the resources are at least satisfactory. In the Foundation Stage, resources for all areas of learning are satisfactory and the range of indoor and outdoor equipment is good. Resources for ICT have improved enormously with the opening of the school's computer suite and, except that there is no games field, there are good resources and facilities for physical education. However, the school needs more books. At present, library resources are inadequate, although the school has already acquired a range of new reading books and has set aside a substantial amount of money to continue the book replacement programme. The school makes satisfactory use of the locality as a resource for pupils' learning; visits take place to a number of nearby places of historical, geographical and cultural interest.
53. Accommodation is spacious and provides satisfactory facilities for the teaching of the primary curriculum. A recent reduction in pupil numbers has created extra space. Resource areas are suitable for the teaching of creative activities. The nursery and reception areas are appropriate for the teaching of very young children and although they have a separate outdoor play area, the surface is now deteriorating and could in time become hazardous. The school has two playgrounds providing ample space for pupils' recreation and a pleasant quiet area with benches and plants, which is conducive to the calm moments some pupils need. The building is clean and well maintained. Displays around the school value the pupils' work and add to the character of the school.
54. The headteacher, administrative assistant and the finance officer make satisfactory use of computer technology to improve the efficiency of the school. The school maintains pupils' records, attendance data, some assessment data and the school's budget on the office computer. Staff have secure administrative and ICT skills and use them effectively to analyse data, identify trends, track the school's budget and prepare reports for the headteacher, governing body and local authority. This enables the headteacher and governors to make decisions on the basis of accurate and up-to-date information and so adds to the overall efficiency of school management and administration. The governors' finance committee is satisfactory in its monitoring of the school's budget. As a result, specific grants are spent for their designated purpose and the school operates within its budget. Budget setting takes full account of the long-term plans of the school and different priorities are carefully matched against the funds available. As a result, the school is successful in meeting most of its targets in the school development plan. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

55. In order to extend the school's current achievements and to further raise standards of attainment, the governors, headteacher and staff should jointly:
- (1) raise standards of attainment in English by:
 - i) using assessment information to track the attainment and progress of all pupils and to set individual performance targets that help pupils to improve;
 - ii) ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to speak, listen, read and write as part of their work in other subjects;
 - iii) improving the school's stock of fiction and non-fiction books and ensuring that pupils use the school's libraries as a resource to support their learning; *
(paragraphs: 4, 13, 20, 23, 52, 66, 69, 70, 73)
 - (2) improve teachers' planning in the medium and shorter term by:
 - i) identifying the criteria that are to be used in assessing pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects; *
 - ii) ensuring that all staff receive the necessary training to apply these criteria consistently;
 - iii) devising a manageable way of recording assessment information so that it is readily available to teachers when topics or skills are revisited; *
 - iv) ensuring that teachers use assessment information more systematically to identify what pupils of different levels of attainment need to learn next;
(paragraphs: 14, 39, 66, 78, 81, 86, 95, 99, 111)
 - (3) improve the management of the curriculum and the monitoring of standards and quality by:
 - i) agreeing and delegating management roles and responsibilities for the deputy headteacher, senior staff and curriculum co-ordinators; *
 - ii) ensuring that all staff with management responsibilities undertake training that enables them to observe teaching and learning and to evaluate other aspects of the school's work more effectively;
 - iii) establishing a rigorous, on-going programme of classroom observations as part of the curriculum development process in all subjects;
 - iv) using the outcomes of the monitoring of standards and quality to inform staff development, curriculum and whole-school improvement initiatives and ensure that all teachers follow the school's agreed procedures consistently;
(paragraphs: 39, 46, 47, 73, 78, 86, 91, 95, 100, 105, 111, 121)
 - (4) improve the quality of pupils learning and personal development by:
 - i) ensuring that teachers provide more opportunities for pupils to develop initiative and independence and to take greater responsibility for aspects of their work.
(paragraphs: 6, 16, 23, 38, 71, 78)

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

1. Introducing a more systematic approach to pupils' spiritual development (paragraph: 28)
2. Ensuring that national guidelines for the teaching of geography are adapted so as to reflect pupils' experience and prior attainment (paragraphs: 26, 93, 95)
3. Giving pupils more chances to use ICT in support of their work in other subjects*
(paragraphs: 13, 26, 66, 99, 105)
4. Improving the quality of pupils' annual progress reports (paragraph 43)

* The school has already begun to address these issues or includes them in the current development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	5	24	25	2	0	0
Percentage	0	9	43	45	3	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost two percentage points.

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)	26	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		147

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	60

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	41

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	14	25	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	9
	Girls	20	20	22
	Total	26	27	31
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	69 (69)	69 (67)	79 (89)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	8
	Girls	20	21	21
	Total	26	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	67 (69)	72 (97)	74 (78)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	16	20	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	5	10	13
	Girls	12	12	14
	Total	17	22	27
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	47 (35)	61 (41)	75 (65)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	3	10	10
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	13	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	36 (39)	58 (43)	61 (65)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	196
Any other minority ethnic group	23

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	15	0
Other minority ethnic groups	3	1

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.5
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	245.85

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	809,077
Total expenditure	774,625
Expenditure per pupil	2,475
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,816
Balance carried forward to next year	65,268

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	2
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0.4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 59%

Number of questionnaires sent out	228
Number of questionnaires returned	135

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	33	5	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	36	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	42	7	4	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	37	17	6	4
The teaching is good.	61	36	2	1	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	31	13	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	27	4	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	55	37	5	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	63	30	4	2	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	44	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	49	32	10	5	4

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

56. The school makes good arrangements for the children in the Foundation Stage. Children join the nursery in the September or October before their fourth birthday. Children enter the nursery with levels of attainment substantially below average for their age. Many demonstrate particularly weak skills in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Because of the fall in numbers of children entering the school in 2000 and 2001, children have attended the nursery full-time, rather than on a part-time basis as in previous years. This has had a marked impact on children's learning and enabled those in the current nursery and reception classes to make better progress, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. The teachers and skilled support assistants work very hard to ensure that the nursery and reception class are calm and welcoming. This ensures that all boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, settle securely into school life and are very well motivated to learn. They make good progress in the nursery and reception class. Children's learning is particularly successful in personal, social and emotional development and physical development with almost all children attaining the Early Learning Goals. They make good progress in aspects of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development, although by the end of the Foundation Stage many do not attain the Early Learning Goals for children of their age.
57. The high standards of teaching seen during the last inspection have been maintained. Throughout the Foundation Stage the quality of teaching is consistently good, with examples of very good teaching in both the nursery and reception class. The nursery teacher and nursery nurse and the reception class teacher and classroom assistant work very well together. The support staff are clear about what the children are to learn in the course of each session. They support groups and individuals purposefully and contribute significantly to children's learning. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and their detailed planning successfully incorporates the required areas of learning. They carefully assess children's skills shortly after they join the nursery and the reception class, using systems developed in school and local authority materials. They note children's achievements and create a range of records, which are regularly updated. Arrangements are well established for systematically observing and assessing each child's strengths and weaknesses and using the results of this assessment to identify development and learning priorities for each child. The nursery and reception classrooms are thoughtfully organised with a good range of resources to stimulate children's curiosity and encourage them to become independent learners. There is direct access from the nursery to both a secure outdoor garden and a play area so that children have regular opportunities to learn by working on a more active scale than is possible indoors. For example, they reinforce and extend their physical skills by riding on wheeled vehicles. Although the reception classroom is in another building, separated from the nursery outdoor areas by a flight of steps, the reception class teacher plans worthwhile opportunities for the children to use these facilities. For example, she accompanies small groups who take turns to care for the sweet peas and tomatoes they have planted. Children in the reception class also join the infants in the playground for playtime.

Personal, social and emotional development

58. Children make very good advances in their personal, social and emotional development and many attain satisfactory standards by the end of the Foundation Stage. Parents attend a meeting and children visit school and meet their teacher informally before starting

the nursery. These well-organised arrangements successfully promote a smooth transition between home and school and enable links with home to begin to be established. This effectively promotes children's sense of belonging so that they gain confidence and begin to learn the classroom routines. Initially many children are dependent on adult demonstration when approaching unfamiliar activities. They become increasingly interested and very keen to learn, approaching tasks willingly and concentrating for extended periods. Almost all put on their coats for outdoor play and their aprons for art and craft activities with a minimum of adult help. By the time they are in the reception class, the children show a very good degree of independence in their approach to activities and daily routines. They respond promptly to instructions and put out and clear away equipment efficiently. They are very well motivated to learn, settling quickly to tasks and concentrating hard. Books and equipment are accessible and children learn to handle resources carefully. When moving around school, when they go to the hall for assembly for example, they behave very sensibly and co-operatively. The children are happy and well used to the classroom systems. The nursery and reception class teachers have high expectations of children's involvement and the children respond well. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Teachers plan opportunities that enable every child to feel fully involved and valued. For example, children in the nursery made a large 'Dragon Boat', shared special cakes sent in from home and celebrated a 'Water Festival' with a child who has recently arrived from a country with a different cultural background from the rest of the class. All staff appreciate each child's efforts and give lots of individual praise and encouragement. These arrangements very successfully build children's self-esteem and promote their confidence in learning and in their relationships with others.

Communication, language and literacy

59. Children make good gains in their communication, language and literacy skills. A minority attain the Early Learning Goals for children of this age and a small number exceed them. However, many do not reach these standards. The teachers plan a very good range of worthwhile opportunities for all children to improve their skills in this area of learning. Children are consistently encouraged to talk to adults and each other. Staff take every opportunity to promote children's confidence and communication skills. For example, the teacher in the nursery, who is 'setting up camp' with a small group of children and deciding what is needed, asks straightforward, well-directed questions, which encourage individual children to respond. Within such small groups adults successfully encourage all children to contribute, although some of the children are reticent and their speech is often immature. Throughout the Foundation Stage children enjoy sharing stories. In the reception class they eagerly join in with the repeated phrases in *The Three Billy Goats Gruff* during their literacy session. Children very successfully extend and reinforce their learning by retelling the story with the help of a 'story box', containing small toys and props associated with the tale. As a result of such daily opportunities, children make very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. The quality of teaching is often very good. Detailed planning ensures that children of all levels of attainment are well challenged and supported. Carefully prepared activities successfully stimulate children's interest in letter sounds, reading and writing. Lively activities and games successfully reinforce their learning and encourage the children to see learning as fun. For example, reception class children are keen to help Harry, the hedgehog puppet, to identify the sounds at the ends of familiar words. From their earliest days in school, children regularly take home books to share with their parents. They demonstrate increasing confidence in handling books and higher attaining children are on the initial stages of reading. They recognise familiar words and associate letters and sounds. Children regularly practise writing patterns. They form their letters carefully and often accurately. Most children understand that writing conveys meaning. By the end of the reception year, they write their own names and many are beginning to use their knowledge of the sounds letters make to write simple words. They often select and copy from a range of carefully prepared word cards to support them in their writing. A minority of children writes familiar words and phrases independently.

Mathematical development

60. Children make good progress in developing their mathematical understanding, although many do not attain the goals set in this area of learning. In the nursery and reception class most children develop a secure sense of number, order and sequence through regular counting routines. Most know the names of primary colours and can identify two-dimensional shapes including circles and squares. By the end of the Foundation Stage, higher attaining children count to 20 and beyond. They recognise numerals within 10 and are beginning to record them. However, many children's limited language skills restrict their ability to talk about and describe patterns or the position of objects. They respond eagerly to instructions, but few independently use the vocabulary associated with adding or subtracting. The quality of teaching is often very good. Staff successfully promote a positive approach in numeracy sessions. In the nursery, the younger children happily participate in a wide range of sorting, matching and counting games, which successfully promote their mathematical development. The children successfully learn to count through active involvement in such activities as jumping on large spots marked one to ten. In the reception class, the teacher and classroom assistant work purposefully with small groups of children. They carefully plan activities that successfully extend children's learning, involving number songs, working with number lines and sequencing numbers within ten. They successfully reinforce children's mathematical skills and check their understanding through well-directed questions. They provide lots of support for all children so that higher attaining children are well challenged and those with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. **Many children join the school with very limited knowledge and understanding of the world. They have very good opportunities to extend their experiences through well-planned topics and make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. However, many children do not attain the Early Learning Goals. They learn about the properties of materials such as sand, water and clay by handling and working with them. They learn that substances can change their form by making peppermint creams and baking buns, gingerbread men and bread. They make very good progress in finding out about living things through practical activities, such as planting sunflower seeds and potatoes and feeding the birds. They gain an increasing knowledge of features in their immediate locality by exploring the school and its grounds. In the nursery and reception class they progressively extend their learning by participating in carefully planned trips, such as those to the local library, park and baby clinic. The teaching of this area of learning is good. The teachers plan topics in which children are actively involved. For example, they find out about animals by visiting the zoo and the environmental centre. This adds relevance to children's work and very successfully stimulates their interest. The teachers arrange a programme of visitors, which effectively extends children's knowledge and understanding in this area of learning. These include familiar figures, including the caretaker and nurse, as well as a baby and a toddler, fire fighters and a range of animals. Children are interested and very eager to learn about topics introduced by their teacher. However, most children display limited questioning skills. Children in the nursery and reception classes become increasingly confident and independent as they use and become familiar with a range of simple computer programs. They also make satisfactory progress in learning to operate other forms of technology, such as a tape recorder. Children begin to gain an awareness of the traditions, cultures and beliefs of others. For example, they learn about food from around the world by tasting breads from different countries. However this aspect of their learning is not well developed.**

Physical development

62. Children demonstrate satisfactory standards of physical development and attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. They move safely and confidently in and around the nursery and reception classroom. They play vigorously and confidently outdoors, using a wide range of large, good quality resources, including climbing and balancing equipment. The quality of teaching is good. Children have regular well-planned opportunities to be active in physical education lessons. They demonstrate satisfactory control and co-ordination and move around the hall without bumping into each other when they practise rolling, aiming, throwing and catching a ball. They also have opportunities to move imaginatively to music. Within the classroom, carefully prepared activities satisfactorily promote children's physical development alongside other areas of learning. They fit together jigsaws and construction materials. They frequently use a good range of paintbrushes, marking pens and simple tools, such as scissors and glue sticks, and demonstrate sound manipulative skills.

Creative development

63. Many children's creative skills are poorly developed when they join the nursery. They have regular opportunities to take part in creative activities and make very good progress in extending their knowledge, skills and understanding. However, by the end of the Foundation Stage, although many children are well on the way to attaining the Early Learning Goals in this area of development, they often need adult support to express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings. They enjoy singing together and join in readily with action songs. They enjoy exploring sounds made by percussion instruments. Throughout the Foundation Stage children have frequent opportunities to draw, stick, print, use paint, pastels and chalk. Their art and craft activities successfully support other areas of learning. For example, in the reception class children look at the work of Monet when they are learning about water and they carefully observe the colours of water before painting the background of their water pictures. The quality of teaching is good. Staff ensure that stimulating materials and tools are accessible to the children. Teachers plan activities that successfully engage pupils' interest and promote their use of imaginative language. For example, children collaborate satisfactorily in the nursery role-play area organised as a camp and the reception class vet's surgery.

ENGLISH

64. Pupils' attainment in English is well below national expectations for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. However, taken in context, pupils are achieving satisfactory standards. This is because:
- the attainment of these pupils was well below national expectations in all aspects of English when they first came to the school;
 - there is a high proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register throughout the school and particularly in the current Year 6 class. Many of these pupils have difficulties with language and literacy;
 - the school has had to contend with a rapidly reducing school roll and resulting changes in staff;
 - nevertheless, there has been a significant year-on-year improvement in the school's national test results over the previous three years. Results have improved at a similar rate to those in schools nationally. The majority of pupils do now attain the nationally expected standard at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, although the proportion remains less than in schools nationally;
 - inspection evidence and the results of the most recent (unpublished) tests indicate that pupils' attainments are now on a par with those in schools facing similar social and educational circumstances;
 - in relation to their attainment on entry, almost all pupils make sound progress and the progress of pupils with special educational needs and pupils speaking English as an additional language is good. They receive good support from teachers and classroom

assistants that focuses on their individual difficulties. This enables these pupils to participate fully in all literacy activities and improves the progress that they make;

- pupils who speak English as an additional language also receive good individual support that enables them to make rapid gains in their confidence and competence in English.

65. Standards of attainment are rising and pupils' progress is improving because:

- for the last two years, children in the Foundation Stage have benefited from full-time education in the nursery and smaller class sizes in both nursery and reception. As a result, pupils are entering Year 1 better placed to benefit from the National Literacy Strategy;
- the school has successfully adopted the National Literacy Strategy. All teachers have undergone intensive training and so their lesson plans and lesson formats conform fully with those recommended for the strategy. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved;
- there has been a recent whole-school emphasis on developing pupils' writing skills;
- the school maintains small classes in many year groups and provides a good number of support teachers and classroom assistants and so pupils receive a lot of individual and small group support that improves the quality of their learning.

66. Despite satisfactory overall levels of attainment and progress, there are some weaknesses in the current arrangements and standards could be higher. The school has introduced procedures for the regular assessment and recording of pupils' attainment. However, teachers are not yet using assessment information effectively to plan for pupils of differing abilities. During the inspection, there were a number of lessons in which the same tasks were given to all pupils within the class. As a result, more able pupils were not always sufficiently challenged and less able pupils had to rely on adult support to understand and complete the task. This lack of planning for pupils of differing abilities is unsatisfactory as it reduces the progress that some pupils make. Furthermore, whilst the school has had a drive on improving pupils' writing, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to complete pieces of extended writing as part of their work in other subjects. In subjects such as geography, history and science pupils often fill in simple worksheets requiring single word or single sentence answers and this does not do enough to extend pupils' literacy skills. Similarly, pupils do not often get the chance to use ICT to reinforce aspects of literacy.

67. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are well below national expectations throughout the school and their low achievement continues to hinder pupils' progress in all areas of English and, indeed, the wider curriculum. Teachers provide pupils with some suitable opportunities for speaking and listening and, in the best lessons, skilfully encourage pupils to talk and put forward their ideas. However, teachers throughout the school have to work very hard to obtain merely satisfactory responses from the majority of pupils. They sit quietly and apparently listen, but many pupils do not willingly offer responses and, in a number of cases, when asked individually by the teacher for their response, fail to give one. For example, in the Year 2 literacy lesson pupils found it difficult to give any response to the teacher's questions after a class reading of *Burglar Bill*, despite considerable and lively encouragement from the teacher. Similarly, in a Year 6 lesson designed to develop pupils' skills in note-taking, pupils needed a great deal of support and skilled questioning before they were able to provide answers and their answers, when forthcoming, tended to be monosyllabic. During reading interviews, pupils throughout the school struggled to re-tell simple stories or to explain their preferences despite having read competently and with apparent enjoyment.

68. Standards in reading are improving. More pupils are attaining or exceeding the nationally expected standard than in previous years. However, the high level of special educational needs pupils and the very low levels of attainment on entry to the school mean that the percentage of pupils with reading skills below or well below expectations is considerably

higher than would be typically found. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils know the sounds made by letters of the alphabet and have the basic skills that enable them to tackle new words and understand text. They read a variety of texts, but for many pupils reading remains a chore. By the end of Year 6, a small minority of higher attaining pupils read well. They read accurately, with expression, talk about the characters in the stories they have read, predict outcomes and discuss their favourite stories and authors. However, the overall attainment of the current Year 6 group remains well below expectations. Most pupils read at a superficial level, understanding stories and other texts at a very basic level. Many do not know how libraries are organised or how to locate and use information in a reference book. For example, pupils' ability to find specific information in texts is weak and the concept of 'note-taking' is not fully understood by the majority of pupils.

69. The task of motivating pupils to read is made all the more difficult because the school's two libraries are unsatisfactory. The overall number, range and quality of both fiction and non-fiction books are inadequate for the number of pupils in the school. Discussions with pupils of all ages indicate that they do not have enough opportunities to use the libraries. Consequently, they do not develop a love of books and the habit of regularly exchanging and reading books for pleasure or of selecting and using reference books to help them with their work.
70. Standards of writing are well below expectations throughout the school. Teachers place a suitable emphasis on writing during literacy lessons, but are not providing enough opportunities for pupils to write as part of their work in other subjects. Consequently, by the end of Year 2, just over half of pupils understand basic sentence structure, write using an appropriate range of vocabulary and spell simple words correctly. At the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is also well below national expectations. For example, fewer than a third of one Year 6 class who were given the task of 'writing a letter with varied vocabulary and lively description' were able to do so independently at a standard typical of the end of Year 6. Pupils throughout the school regularly practise forming and joining their letters. Some pupils have begun to develop a neat, cursive style of writing by the end Year 6 and in the best cases are beginning to develop a personal style. However, overall standards of handwriting and presentation are below expectations for pupils at the age of 11 years. Standards of spelling similarly vary considerably and are below expectations overall.
71. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the English are satisfactory in both infant and junior classes. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils are enthusiastic, eager to learn and work well at their allotted tasks without the need for constant teacher intervention. However, a number of pupils require constant and repeated intervention and one-to-one support and encouragement to respond appropriately and concentrate on their work. Some pupils arrive in school for the first lesson of the day with poor attitudes to their work, but with skilled and patient management by the class teacher most pupils improve considerably during the lesson.
72. The teaching of English is satisfactory throughout the school, with examples of good teaching in Year 6 classes. In these classes, the teachers have developed a good rapport with the majority of their pupils, use questioning well and skilfully to guide and assess pupils' learning, move the lesson along at a good pace and organise very good support for pupils during the tasks. As a result, pupils are well motivated and the quality of their learning is good. Most teachers organise and manage their lessons effectively and cope well with the challenging behaviour of a minority of pupils. An important factor in this is the contribution made by classroom assistants. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that pupils benefit from the support of all adults in the class and effective teamwork and good relationships add to this aspect of teaching and learning. Marking of pupils' work is up to date and, in the best examples, offers pupils positive encouragement and guidance on how to improve their work. However, not all marking is of this quality.

73. Resources for English are generally satisfactory. However, the two school libraries are currently unlikely to increase pupils' enthusiasm for reading. Funding has been provided to replace old, worn books with new, colourful and attractive stock but, at present, there are not enough books for the number of pupils and neither library is used effectively or regularly. The subject co-ordinator has introduced a number of initiatives designed to improve attainment in the subject. However, she has not had the opportunity to observe lessons and monitor the quality of teaching since the introduction of the literacy strategy. She has, therefore, not been able to develop a good overview of English in the school or verify that whole-school initiatives agreed in staff meetings are being fully and appropriately implemented. The co-ordinator has clear priorities for the development of the subject. She recognises the need for a firmer focus on improving pupils' speaking and listening skills and would like to introduce a system setting individual targets for pupils in English, but neither of these initiatives were in place at the time of the inspection.

MATHEMATICS

74. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are improving steadily. Whilst overall standards have remained well below the national average for the last three years, the proportion of pupils attaining or exceeding the nationally expected standard has improved, despite growing numbers of pupils with special educational needs. In the National Curriculum tests for 7 and 11-year-olds in 2001, pupils' results in mathematics were in line with the average for similar schools. Inspection evidence and the results of the most recent (unpublished) tests indicate that pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are making good progress and that standards are set to move much closer to the national average and above the average for similar schools. Overall, standards are likely to be higher than last year because a greater proportion of pupils is on course to attain the above average standard than in previous years, particularly at the end of Year 6. Developments and training that derive from the National Numeracy Strategy are taking root and beginning to improve the quality of teaching and learning. In relation to pupils' attainment on entry or to the specific difficulties that some face, all are achieving well and have made good or, in the case of some pupils with special educational needs, very good progress. This is because teachers and classroom assistants ensure that tasks are relevant and enable pupils to succeed and make progress alongside others in the class.
75. By the age of 7, all pupils count forwards and backwards to and from 100. They recognise, read and sequence sets of numbers accurately. They are confident about the value of digits in numbers up to 100 and higher attaining pupils extend this area of understanding to 1,000. They know the pairs of numbers that add up to 10 or, in the case of higher attaining pupils, 20 and use this to carry out simple calculations quickly and accurately. They use the language of simple fractions appropriately when comparing numbers or shapes. Their knowledge of tables is developing well and higher attainers apply this to division problems. They solve problems involving familiar coins and estimate and measure length with a good degree of accuracy. Almost all name a good range of two- and three-dimensional shapes and higher attaining pupils identify or classify them by their properties. All record data effectively using bar graphs.
76. By the time pupils are 11 years old, most have a secure knowledge of number facts to 20 and a reasonable grasp of tables to 10 times. They use this knowledge and understanding effectively to solve simple number problems. Higher attaining pupils have a wider range of strategies at their command, including the use of factors and multiples. Most understand written methods for adding and subtracting numbers up to and over 1,000 but for average and lower attaining pupils, multiplication and division are limited to simple calculations. Pupils understand simple fractions and most accurately calculate fractions of simple shapes or whole numbers, but for many this understanding does not extend beyond $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, or $\frac{3}{4}$. Most pupils know the properties of several two-dimensional shapes, correctly identify different angles and accurately calculate the areas of simple and compound

shapes. Almost all can construct and interpret basic bar graphs and higher attaining pupils draw and interpret pie charts and line graphs.

77. Teaching is successful and most pupils achieve well because:

- the co-ordinator, with strong support from the headteacher and local authority adviser, has managed the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy very effectively. This has brought a greater consistency to the teaching of mathematics that is helping to raise standards over time;
- the school's mathematics curriculum ensures that pupils cover all aspects of mathematics thoroughly;
- teachers have secure mathematical knowledge and understanding and this makes their teaching clear, methodical and accurate;
- planning emphasises the development of number skills, which help to improve mathematical understanding. For example, mental agility work forms a lively part in most lessons, improving pupils' confidence and the speed and accuracy of their thinking. When teachers target questions skilfully and require pupils to explain their thinking, as in a successful Year 6 session on expressing complex number patterns using algebraic notation, pupils of differing levels of attainment benefit and make good progress;
- pupils reinforce their mathematical understanding effectively through work in subjects such as science, geography and ICT, for example in their work on graphs and charts;
- teaching and non-teaching staff work as very effective teams. Classroom assistants and support staff know exactly what is expected of them and this enables them to support teaching and learning very successfully and to ensure that pupils of all levels of attainment are fully included. This is particularly important as it allows the school to meet the needs of all pupils more effectively by providing additional support for pupils with special educational needs, for those speaking English as an additional language or by helping higher attaining pupils move on to more challenging work. This was seen to particularly good effect in a Year 2 lesson on solving money problems, when very effective work by the additional teacher and the two classroom assistants had a significant impact on the attainment and progress of lower attaining pupils in the class;
- the teachers value everyone's contributions and this helps to improve levels of confidence and performance among all pupils, whatever their ability. This was clearly the case in a Year 5 lesson on symmetry when pupils joined in well, persevered with challenging tasks and responded positively to all of the adults who were helping them.

78. There is one relatively weak aspect in the current arrangements for mathematics and that relates to the use of assessment information in planning for whole-school development or for pupils of differing abilities. The school is not using the outcomes of national and optional assessments to identify areas of the curriculum where teaching is largely successful and those areas where improvements are needed. Furthermore, teachers are not using on-going assessments to 'fine tune' their daily, weekly or termly planning. When teachers set work for pupils of differing abilities, they use broad target levels from the National Curriculum rather than detailed information about what pupils know, understand and can do. This is unsatisfactory. Teachers in Year 6 are beginning to use assessment information to track pupils' progress and to set individual targets to help them to improve. However, this effective use of assessment is not yet in place throughout the school.

SCIENCE

79. Standards in science are below national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. However, this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection when standards were well below average. Progress for most pupils is sound. When children enter the school, their knowledge and understanding of the world are well below average. In addition between a third and a half of all pupils have special educational needs. These pupils receive good support so that all take part fully in scientific activities and make satisfactory progress and some make good progress, going on to achieve nationally expected standards by the time that they leave school. Despite these challenging educational circumstances, the proportion of pupils achieving nationally expected standards is rising year by year. The most recent (unpublished) tests indicate that pupils are now doing better than those in similar schools.
80. Standards are rising because:
- teaching is more consistent. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and in some classes in Years 3 to 6, the teaching of science is good. Positive features of teaching that motivate and add to the quality of pupils' learning include teachers' secure subject knowledge and the enthusiasm that most show for the subject. They make good use of praise to enhance self-esteem and of purposeful and regular questioning to help develop pupils' understanding. Teachers use resources well to interest pupils and to illustrate key points;
 - the school's curriculum ensures that pupils cover the development of scientific knowledge and understanding effectively;
 - investigative approaches are given satisfactory emphasis. This enables pupils to develop some of the skills of scientific enquiry, such as carrying out and recording investigations accurately, although there is scope for further improvements to this area of the work in science;
 - teachers make regular assessments of pupils' work in some years to help them track pupils' progress;
 - most pupils show satisfactory attitudes to learning, especially when involved in scientific investigations.
81. However, despite these improvements, some pupils do not make the best possible progress in all lessons because:
- teachers are not using assessment information effectively to plan work for pupils at different levels of attainment. Consequently, all pupils in a class are usually given the same work to do, with teachers rarely matching work carefully to pupils' needs. For example, when all pupils copy the same account of an investigation or observation, this does little to develop or extend scientific thinking or understanding, particularly in the more able pupils;
 - some investigations are too simple or too tightly structured by the teachers. This restricts progress for some pupils because they have no opportunities to plan, initiate and record investigations for themselves. As a result, they sometimes miss opportunities to develop pupils' enquiry skills, such as predicting and considering what makes a test fair;
 - teachers sometimes place too much emphasis on activities such as colouring to enhance the quality of presentation, rather than on maintaining a clear scientific focus to lessons. Similarly, worksheets are over-used for recording work in Years 1 and 2. This does little to support the school's drive to raise standards in writing;
 - teachers are not planning enough opportunities for pupils to use the school's new facilities for ICT or their own developing skills to support their work in science;
 - the co-ordinator does not get the opportunity to be an effective leader and manager of his subject because he has not yet had regular opportunity to monitor teaching and learning or to evaluate pupils' work.

82. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise that living things grow and reproduce by studying the life cycle of a hen. They know that plants need air, water, sun and minerals to grow. They make a simple electrical circuit, discovering that the bulb will not light if the circuit is broken. They discover that they can change the shape of some objects by stretching and twisting them. Pupils name a range of materials and their properties. However, they are not able to describe confidently differences between materials or to classify them according to their properties. By the end of Year 6, pupils understand food chains and begin to appreciate the ways in which an animal is adapted to its surroundings. They know that filtration is one method for separating simple mixtures. They can carry out simple investigations, but to levels well below national standards. Most pupils are not able to carry out investigations without considerable support, find it difficult to take account of identified patterns and scientific knowledge in drawing conclusions, and are unable to explain their findings in enough detail because of their restricted language skills. They have not developed sufficiently as independent learners to enable them to plan and implement investigations for themselves, which restricts their personal and social development.

ART AND DESIGN

83. Pupils throughout the school attain satisfactory standards in their work in art and design. Pupils' carefully mounted and displayed work shows a satisfactory range of two- and three-dimensional projects. By the time they leave the school, pupils are familiar with a satisfactory range of materials, tools and techniques, including pastels, chalk, pencil, fabric, card and clay.
84. Year 1 pupils carefully examine photographs of themselves and use their findings as a basis for pencil sketches. They look at self-portraits by famous artists, including Van Gogh. They then produce their own, mixing paints to achieve particular colours. Year 2 pupils become increasingly aware of textures found in natural objects. They produce leaf rubbings and collages, using materials such as wool and pasta. In Years 3 and 4, pupils study the abstract art of Paul Klee. They produce pencil sketches, fabric and paper collages and paintings on the theme of 'Journeys'. Year 5 pupils tell the story of Aladdin, taking the Bayeux Tapestry as their inspiration. They use fabric crayons on cotton panels, which they display in sequence on the classroom walls. Year 6 pupils study William Morris prints and are increasingly alert to patterns around them. They begin to gain awareness of perspective in their pencil sketches and pastel landscapes. They extend their skills satisfactorily, designing and making hats of paper and card.
85. As no art lessons were observed during the inspection, there is not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, evidence from pupils' completed work, displays, talking to pupils and subject documentation indicates that teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are satisfactory. Teachers plan visits that successfully support pupils' learning. For example, Year 1 pupils look for patterns on buildings in the locality, Year 2 study the sculptures in public spaces in Birmingham city centre and Year 6 pupils visit the art gallery. There is also worthwhile collaboration with a local further education college. Each year students work with pupils on an art project, such as designing and painting a mural on the outside of the infant building. Pupils have occasional opportunities to gain experience of the creative potential of information and communication technology. For example, Year 2 pupils use a computer program when they design tablemats. However, this aspect of the curriculum is not well developed. Pupils' learning in art makes a valuable contribution to their cultural development. Throughout the school pupils are introduced to the work of famous artists. However, their knowledge of non-western artists is very limited. Pupils have a positive attitude to the subject and are keen to talk about their work.

86. The co-ordinator for art provides sound leadership. She has recently introduced a subject policy and scheme of work, which incorporates national guidance. This supports teachers' planning, although some teachers still lack confidence in this area of the curriculum. There are no procedures in place for assessing and recording pupils' progress in art, so that teachers do not have the information they need to plan topics on the basis of a clear understanding of what pupils have achieved and what they need to learn next. The co-ordinator is aware of teachers' planning, but does not have opportunities to visit classes to assess the quality of teaching and learning. This reduces her effectiveness in identifying strengths and weaknesses in current arrangements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

87. Standards in design and technology are higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection when teachers were not covering all aspects of the design and technology curriculum thoroughly enough and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Evidence from lessons in Years 3 to 6, from a sample of work completed by pupils throughout the school and from discussions with teachers and with pupils indicates that pupils throughout the school now undertake a much improved range of activities in which they design, make and evaluate products. As a result of these changes to the curriculum, pupils of all levels of attainment throughout the school are now making satisfactory progress in design. However, pupils' attainments remain below national expectations by the time that they leave the school. The reasons for this are pupils' low levels of attainment on entry to the school, the high percentage of pupils in the current Year 6 with significant special educational needs and their limited and irregular experience of the subject in previous years.
88. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 produce simple plans to show what their work will look like. They use a suitable range of tools and techniques for joining and assembling materials and are beginning to think about the quality of their work and how it could be improved. For example, they produce patchwork quilts. Pupils design and make their own squares and evaluate the resulting joint product. They also design a house, considering such issues as 'what my house will have' and 'what my house will look like' at the planning stage and evaluate their resulting models, comparing their work with their original designs. These projects indicate that attainment by the age of 7 is broadly satisfactory.
89. In Years 3 to 6, investigating and learning about what makes things work play a more prominent part in design and technology projects. For example, Year 4 pupils know about pneumatic systems and understand that air pressure can be used to produce and control movement. Similarly, pupils in Year 5 investigate musical instruments to find out how sounds are made as a preliminary step in a project to make their own simple instruments. Projects become more complex and technologically challenging. Year 3 pupils design and make a bag, planning their work in greater detail, considering how to join materials together in various ways and evaluating how well their finished product measures up to their original intentions. They also use their scientific understanding to make a slide switch and incorporate it into an illuminated design. However, despite these improvements, pupils in Year 6 do not have the necessary making skills to work independently with a range of tools and materials. This was evident in a lesson in which pupils were designing and making a controllable toy vehicle. Many needed a lot of one-to-one support in order to achieve the lesson objectives, needing to be shown, for example, how to use a ruler correctly and how to use a bench-hook and hacksaw. This is below the standard normally expected of 11-year olds.
90. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching and about pupils' attitudes to design and technology in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6, both teaching and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the three lessons seen were satisfactory overall. Teachers have subject knowledge. They

plan and prepare their lessons well, ensuring that tools and materials are readily available. They have high expectations of the pupils and demonstrate good classroom management skills with the result that in all lessons seen, the quality of learning was satisfactory. Most pupils are interested in their work and respond well to their teachers' questions and directions. They make sensible suggestions and clearly enjoy what they are doing. However, teachers have to work hard to gain and maintain appropriate standards of behaviour from a minority of pupils, a number of whom have individual 'Behaviour Education Plans' designed to control and moderate their behaviour. These pupils sometimes display unsatisfactory attitudes to their work and require very skilful handling and constant adult supervision to make any progress during the lesson. For this reason, pupils' learning tends to be very carefully directed by the teacher, giving pupils very little scope for independence or initiative.

91. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. She has a clear understanding of the subject and has introduced improvements to the curriculum. The school has adopted a scheme of work for the subject based on the current national guidelines. This is resulting in a more systematic approach to planning design and technology projects that ensures that all aspects of the subject receive suitable emphasis. However, although the co-ordinator is 'sure' that design and technology is now being taught 'a lot more' throughout the school, she has not been able to observe lessons to confirm this or to evaluate the quality of teaching. This reduces her effectiveness as a subject manager. Resources for the subject are satisfactory for the planned curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

92. Standards in geography are below nationally expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. By the time that pupils leave the school, most pupils have made satisfactory progress in relation to their attainment on entry or to the difficulties that they experience in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language receive effective support and make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6. However, pupils are not making enough progress in Years 1 and 2.
93. Pupils' progress is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 because:
 - teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Some lessons are not organised in a way that encourages pupils to be settled and to concentrate on the work that they are doing. Pupils are given work that they do not understand because it is beyond their experience;
 - pupils with learning or behavioural difficulties become very unsettled and behave badly because they cannot cope. When teachers do not manage poor behaviour effectively, the rate at which all pupils learn is reduced;
 - teachers allow pupils to undertake unchallenging activities, such as colouring pictures and maps, which do not extend pupils' geographical understanding;
 - work does not build carefully on what pupils know and understand. For example, mapping skills are not taught in logical order, with world maps introduced before pupils fully understand where they are in relation to their own locality, let alone their country or the world;
 - teachers do not use external visits regularly enough to bring the subject to life.
94. Pupils' progress improves in Years 3 to 6. This is because:
 - teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in Year 6. Good features of teaching include secure relationships, an enthusiastic approach, good use of resources to aid learning, good questioning of pupils to help develop understanding and brisk pace to most lessons. These positive characteristics help to establish interest and involvement in the lesson and this adds to the progress that pupils make;
 - teachers give more emphasis to the development of skills. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 consider problems in the locality, with particular reference to Claerwen

Grove and a visit to the Long Mynd in Shropshire helps bring the subject to life for older pupils;

- by the end of Year 6, pupils locate important rivers in the United Kingdom, know a river's features, acquire a suitable geographical vocabulary, such as glacier, waterfall, and valley, and distinguish between a mountain and a hill. They know where the world's longest mountain chains are found by studying an atlas. They demonstrate some knowledge and understanding of places in different parts of the world, for example, when they compare an Indian village with their own locality.

95. There are other weaknesses in the current arrangements. Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 are not taught geography often enough. For example, pupils in Year 6 do little geography until the summer term. This impedes progress and prevents teachers from building effectively on previous learning. The co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and this reduces her effectiveness in planning for the development of the subject. Teachers do not use assessment to track pupils' progress, to identify and overcome weaknesses in teaching and learning or to plan for pupils of differing abilities. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are usually given the same work to complete.

HISTORY

96. Standards in history are below national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. The proportion of pupils reaching the nationally expected standard is lower than in schools nationally. This is because pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world are very limited when they enter school and a higher than average number of pupils have special educational needs that constitute a barrier to progress in many subjects in the curriculum. However, pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past. They gain insights that enable them to compare life in the past with their own lives today.
97. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about the work of Florence Nightingale, how she cared for wounded soldiers during the Crimean War, and make simple comparisons between hospitals then and now. They know how and where the Great Fire of London began, and understand why it spread so rapidly. They compare days at the beach 100 years ago with those of today. By the end of Year 6, pupils compare the lives of rich and poor Victorian children and make comparisons with their own lives. They discover how the Second World War started, understand why children were evacuated from many cities for their own safety and know about the Blitz. Occasional visits, such as to museums, help to make the subject more relevant and exciting for pupils.
98. Pupils make satisfactory progress because history is secure within the school's curriculum. There is a scheme of work to ensure that work clearly builds on previous learning, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support that enables them to take part fully in history lessons and make satisfactory progress in relation to the difficulties that they face. Productive links with literacy are starting to develop as a result of the school's efforts to improve pupils' writing and these are also helping pupils reinforce their learning in history. For example, as part of a study of the life of John Lennon, pupils in Year 5 write accounts of how the famous musician came to die.
99. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Good features of the lessons inspected include teachers' secure subject knowledge that they use effectively in posing searching questions that aid learning. Teachers are enthusiastic, which helps to generate interest and involvement. They select and use resources effectively and this helps them to reinforce key ideas and concepts and so improve pupils' understanding. However, teachers are not providing pupils with enough experience of different historical sources, such as census returns, old log books, photographs, computer programs, tapes, as well as books, for them

to learn how historical information is interpreted and to help bring the subject to life. Neither are they using assessments as a guide to planning work for pupils of differing abilities. In some lessons, all pupils completed the same task, which was too difficult for many of them. Whilst such tasks are challenging and ensure that higher attaining pupils made good progress, lower attaining pupils struggle and need a great deal of support. Consequently, some pupils make much better progress than others.

100. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is new to the role. He has yet to undertake training as a subject manager and does not have a clear view of the subject. He has not been given the means, for example through the regular monitoring of pupils' work or through observing other teachers at work, to secure a clear view of future development needs in the subject. There are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as pupils move through the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards in information and communication technology are improving; they are higher now than at the time of the last inspection. By the age of 7, pupils of all abilities have made good progress and most achieve nationally expected standards for their age. In Years 3 to 6, and particularly at the end of Year 6, whilst pupils' attainments in the 'communicating' and in 'finding things out' areas of the subject are typical of pupils of this age, broadly satisfactory, their skills in other areas of the ICT curriculum remain below average. Despite significant improvements in the curriculum provision, there has been insufficient time for older pupils to achieve expected standards across the ICT curriculum as a whole. Nevertheless, pupils in Years 3 to 6 are currently making satisfactory progress. Standards are rising because:
 - staff training and the introduction of a scheme of work throughout the school have improved teachers' confidence;
 - coverage of the ICT curriculum is more thorough than at the time of the previous inspection;
 - the school's resources are much better than they were. The school now has a computer suite and timetables a regular weekly session for all classes. This has improved the teaching of basic computer skills and, in this respect, pupils are making rapid progress;
 - the school has a very effective link with a local secondary school that gives pupils in Years 5 and 6 access to additional resources, facilities and specialist teaching. This improves the quality of pupils' learning in complex areas such as control technology, where the school's current resources and levels of staff expertise are still developing.
102. In Year 1, pupils produce bar graphs following a litter survey, and made on-screen drawings of *Monsters* and of the *Enormous Watermelon* in links to literacy work. Year 2 pupils write instructions to move an on-screen, programmable 'turtle', planning a route to 'help Toby get home through the woods'. They also use a database program to produce graphs of hair and eye colour within the class. In the lesson observed in the ICT suite, all pupils in Year 2 knew how to switch the computers on, how to 'log on' and select the required program from the desktop. Most pupils understood the importance of ensuring their drawn shapes are 'closed shapes' before attempting to use the 'fill' or 'flood' tool. About one-third of pupils knew how to save and print their work and were able to do so independently.
103. Year 3 pupils send e-mails to another school and use an information-handling program to make pie charts. Pupils in the Years 3/4 class have used a spreadsheet and decorated text with 'clip art' and labels. Year 5 pupils have published their poems, decorating their work with 'clip art' and using a range of font styles, sizes and colours to enhance presentation. They also undertake surveys and search for information held on CD-ROMs. Pupils in Year 6 produce simple 'Power Point' presentations, use information-handling

software to look at mathematical problems and work with control equipment when they visit the local secondary school, learning how to create a program to control traffic lights that switches lights on and off in sequence.

104. It was not possible to see enough lessons to form a judgement on the overall quality of teaching or on pupils' attitudes to the subject. The quality of teaching was good in the two lessons observed. Teachers had secure subject knowledge and as a result their teaching was confident and accurate. There was particularly good teamwork between teachers and support assistants and this ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were fully included in the lesson and were able to succeed and make sound progress. This is important because a small number of pupils need frequent adult interventions in order to remain focused on the task. However, pupils' attitudes and behaviour in both of these lessons were mainly good. Most pupils enjoy the opportunity to work at the computers and work together co-operatively with their partners, taking turns and sharing resources. The quality of pupils' learning in lessons seen was good because most pupils respond well to the hands-on experience and actively help each other to learn.
105. Despite these improvements there are still weaknesses in the current arrangements:
- teachers are not planning enough opportunities for pupils to use computers as part of their work in other subjects. This means that pupils are not systematically reinforcing the ICT skills that they learn or using computers and other technology to improve their learning of other subjects;
 - teachers are not using assessment as a means of planning for pupils of differing abilities. Pupils usually undertake the same tasks, with some pupils coping quite easily and completing tasks quickly, whilst others need much more support. As a result, pupils do not always make the best possible progress in any particular lesson;
 - the two teachers temporarily taking responsibility for the subject have had no opportunity to observe teaching and thus have not been able to develop a good overview of strengths and weaknesses in the subject throughout the school. This slows the rate of development of this subject.

MUSIC

106. Pupils throughout the school attain standards in music expected for their age. Pupils regularly sing and play musical instruments. They also have opportunities to compose music and listen to and appraise recordings of their own performances. Teachers and support staff are committed to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully involved in musical activities. This enables them to make satisfactory progress in learning along with the other pupils in their class.
107. These findings mark an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were barely satisfactory and pupils made unsatisfactory progress in learning. The school has addressed the weaknesses highlighted in the last report by ensuring that:
- all pupils from the reception class to Year 6 have regular weekly singing lessons with a specialist teacher;
 - these lessons are planned in accordance with the scheme of work from the local education authority's music service, which incorporates national guidance;
 - class teachers have had training in providing additional music activities with their classes.
108. Pupils know a wide range of songs. They sing confidently and with evident enjoyment. They follow instructions well, control their voices and sing tunefully. Year 1 pupils, working with their teachers, make satisfactory progress in clapping and beating rhythm patterns. They understand that sounds can be represented by symbols and begin to produce simple compositions. Year 2 pupils know the difference between beat and rhythm. They clap the

rhythm of children's names and identify various insects by the rhythmic pattern of their name. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 respond positively to their music teacher's lively piano introduction and accompaniment. They join in, singing with gusto and volunteer readily to sing solo parts. Year 5 pupils practise and improve their performance of songs, incorporating a repeated pattern of rhythm or notes and accompaniment with untuned percussion. By Year 6, pupils sing with a satisfactory awareness of pitch and phrasing. They are keen to have their turn to accompany familiar songs on keyboards and xylophones, using three notes or chords. However, older pupils have too few opportunities to extend their musical experience by employing their information and communication technology skills to record, alter and combine sounds.

109. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with consistently good teaching from the specialist music teacher. His lessons are particularly well structured and planned to ensure the progressive development of pupils' musical skills. His very good subject knowledge and expertise lend confidence to his approach and his singing provides a very good model for the pupils. He has high expectations of pupils' involvement and pupils respond well. His ready praise and patience promote pupils' willingness to participate. They follow his instructions carefully and behave well. Other teachers plan their lessons to include a range of practical music-making activities. This active involvement increases pupils' enjoyment of music and successfully promotes learning.
110. Music makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. During the year, pupils take part in a satisfactory range of activities including concerts to which parents are invited. They also have the opportunity to participate in a singing festival with other local schools. These events reinforce pupils' positive attitude to the subject. Performances and workshops presented by visiting musicians make a valuable contribution to pupils' musical development and introduce them to music from other cultures. Older pupils have opportunities for instrumental tuition and regularly participate in city band rehearsals and performances with pupils from other schools. These activities very successfully extend the learning of the small number of pupils involved.
111. The co-ordinator for music manages the subject satisfactorily. He has successfully sought to address weaknesses identified in the previous report. However, there are no procedures in place for assessing and recording pupils' progress in the subject, so that teachers do not have the information they need to plan topics on the basis of a clear understanding of what pupils have achieved and what they need to learn next. The co-ordinator does not visit classes to assess the quality of teaching and learning. This reduces his capacity to identify and address areas of strength and weakness that exist in the current arrangements.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Pupils throughout the school reach the expected standards in the aspects of the physical education curriculum that were seen during the inspection. Inspection evidence and teachers' planning for physical education indicate that all elements of the National Curriculum receive appropriate attention. Most pupils of all levels of attainment in both key stages make satisfactory progress in the areas covered. Pupils make good progress in swimming because they benefit from expert teaching from trained instructors. Consequently, by the age of 11, almost all are attaining nationally expected standards.
113. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils respond to their teachers' instructions quickly. They work safely individually, in pairs and in small groups. Younger pupils in Year 1 throw and catch various pieces of small apparatus with reasonable control and this establishes an appropriate foundation for the development of games skills in later years. By Year 2, pupils are more confident. For example, they use their bodies energetically when they perform traditional country-dance steps, combining them into longer routines and

responding to the rhythm of the music. In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop greater accuracy and control. They pass and receive a ball briskly, entering fully into the competitive spirit of a passing game and showing a basic understanding of tactics. Pupils throughout the school understand the importance of exercise and the effects that it has on the body.

114. The majority of pupils respond well to the teaching of physical education. They enjoy their work and join in energetically. They are animated, yet give their attention, when required to do so. This was seen to good effect in a Years 3/4 games lesson and allowed the teacher to make good use of available time. Older pupils make constructive comments about the performance of others and respond positively to suggestions given by teachers or by their classmates. However, a small number of pupils behave badly during physical education lessons. They are noisy, sometimes disobedient and their movements lack discipline and control.
115. The teaching of physical education is sound. Teachers' planning identifies suitable objectives and when they are shared with pupils, they give a clear focus to teaching and learning that improves pupils' progress. Teachers give clear explanations and they monitor pupils' response satisfactorily. This ensures that all pupils are able to work confidently and to make progress as, for example, in the Year 2 dance lesson. Nevertheless, some teachers lack confidence and so give too little attention to coaching. They do not identify individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses or teach the techniques that pupils need in order to improve. Most teachers manage their pupils effectively and have successfully established positive patterns of behaviour and response by using an appropriate balance of praise and challenge. This was certainly the case in the Years 3/4 games lesson where the teacher kept the lesson proceeding briskly and effectively maintained the pace of learning as well as pupils' interest and involvement. Teachers are mainly successful in controlling poor behaviour when it occurs. However, in one lesson the teacher's failure to control inappropriate behaviour on the part of a few pupils was a contributory factor to unsatisfactory teaching because the quality of learning of individuals and of the whole class was diminished. A strength of teaching in physical education is the extent to which it successfully includes all pupils. Pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties take a full part in lessons and benefit from all that the school has to offer in this area of the curriculum and make sound progress alongside others in the class.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. Pupils' attainments are consistent with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language receive good support so that they participate well in lessons and make progress in line with the others in their class.
117. Younger pupils make sound progress. They develop self-awareness and understanding of issues such as, 'belonging', through topics such as 'My Family'. They are introduced to Bible stories, and know of characters in the Old Testament, including Moses and Noah. By the end of Year 2, pupils know the importance of some of the major festivals in the Christian calendar, including Christmas and Easter. They know that Jesus was a special person, who looked after the sick and taught people. They are also introduced to other world faiths, including Judaism and Islam. Following on from learning about the importance of messengers to the followers of Islam, Year 1 pupils consider the qualities needed in a messenger and make a sound start in considering moral issues and values. Year 2 pupils satisfactorily extend their knowledge of Christianity as they prepare to visit a Christian church and discuss what they will find both inside and out.
118. In Years 3 and 4, pupils learn about the Ten Commandments and concentrate well as they work in small groups to consider their personal response to particular rules. They consider festivals, such as Christmas, which is celebrated in a variety of ways in different countries,

and compare this with the Jewish celebration of Pesach. Year 5 pupils make good progress in extending their knowledge of aspects of Sikhism. For example, they learn about significant Sikh figures, such as Guru Nanak. By the end of Year 6, pupils know that the Bible is a special book for Christians. They are familiar with events in the life of Jesus. They also have a sound knowledge of the traditions and holy writings of major world religions, including Judaism, Islam and Sikhism.

119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers plan lessons soundly and often introduce sessions with well-directed questions. This ensures that all pupils are actively involved, promotes pupils' thinking and successfully engages their interest. However, although procedures have been developed, there are currently no arrangements for teachers to assess pupils' progress through topics as a basis for planning and preparation of further work. As a result links with previous lessons are not always clearly made and pupils do not consistently use and extend their previous learning. These factors limit pupils' progress. The local minister visits school regularly to lead assembly. He readily supports class teachers, for example, by enabling Year 6 pupils to examine a range of church vestments when considering how the colours used reflect the church's season. The subject makes a valuable contribution to the promotion of pupils' moral and social development.
120. Throughout the school, pupils are interested in the subject and readily talk about their current topics. They co-operate well in lessons and their work is carefully completed and neatly presented.
121. The co-ordinator for religious education provides sound leadership for the subject. She has worked hard to revise the policy document and involve teachers in adapting the scheme of work to incorporate the requirements of the agreed syllabus and national guidelines. Although she reviews teachers' plans, key aspects of her role are under-developed. She does not have opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning or to work alongside and support her colleagues in their classrooms. The co-ordinator has extended the range of books and has organised support materials into 'faith boxes' to assist teachers' planning and preparation for lessons. The existing resources are satisfactorily used, but pupils do not regularly use their information and communication technology skills in this subject.