

INSPECTION REPORT

**OLDSWINFORD CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Oldswinford, Stourbridge

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103839

Headteacher: Mr Steve Pepper

Reporting inspector: Richard S Moseley
16886

Dates of inspection: 24th – 27th June 2002

Inspection number: 195382

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Field Lane Oldswinford Stourbridge West Midlands
Postcode:	DY8 2JQ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr E Gale
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16886	Richard Moseley	Registered inspector	Physical Education	Characteristics of school. The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well the school is led and managed
19443	N Walker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2893	J Manning	Team inspector	English History Religious Education Special Educational Needs	
32165	C Barsby	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and Technology Geography	
27591	M Campbell	Team Inspector	The Foundation Stage Art and Design Music	
20326	P Clark	Team Inspector	Science Information and Communication Technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oldswinford C of E Primary school is bigger than other primary schools, with 419 pupils, consisting of 190 girls and 229 boys. One per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well below the national average. Attainment on entry to the school is well above what is typical for four-year-olds. Four per cent of pupils are from minority ethnic groups and the school has seven pupils who have English as an additional language. None of these, however, require support and are integrated very well into the school. Six per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well below the national average. There are two pupils who have statements of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school, with some very good and excellent features. It has developed a very challenging climate for learning based on Christian values. Pupils attain very high standards in English and high standards in mathematics. The quality of teaching is mainly good with a substantial proportion of very good and sometimes excellent teaching. Pupils' attitudes to their work and their relationships are excellent. The school is very well led and managed and gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- It provides a very good climate for learning and pupils have developed outstanding attitudes to their work. This is resulting in very high standards in English and high standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, history, design and technology and music, by the time pupils leave the school.
- Teaching is mainly good or better. This is having a positive effect on pupils' learning.
- The school's provision for personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This has resulted in very good behaviour and excellent relationships throughout the school.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and has set an appropriate and clear educational direction for the school.

What could be improved

- The opportunities for pupils to strengthen their independent science investigational skills.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. It has overcome all of the weaknesses noted in the last report and has made many other improvements. For example, standards in design and technology have improved considerably and are now well above those expected for pupils' ages. Leadership and management are now a strength of the school with all staff working closely with the headteacher to develop their management roles. In addition to the items identified in the last inspection, there has been substantial investment in information and communication technology with the introduction of new computers and a computer suite, and the school has successfully introduced the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Most pupils now attain higher standards in most subjects since the last inspection, although many improvements have not been in place long enough to bring even higher standards by the time pupils leave the school.

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	A*	A*	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	A	B	B	C

Key	
Very high	A*
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
Very low	E*

The trend in the school's results over the last few years is broadly in line with the national trend.

The assessments carried out when children enter the school indicates that there is a wide spread of attainment. However, the overall standard of attainment is well above average in English and mathematics. In physical development, the attainment of children is average and in line with that expected for pupils' ages. Standards in the reception classes have risen with the improvement in provision since the last inspection, and most pupils are achieving soundly. Nevertheless, the school is anxious to consolidate this new learning and raise standards even further by the time pupils enter Year 1.

The inspection findings indicate that by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above those expected for pupils' ages and most pupils are achieving as they should and maintaining their well above average standards. By the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to maintain their standards. They achieve as they should in mathematics and science, with their attainment well above average. In English, pupils attain standards that are very high and pupils achieve well. The improvements in English are not only due to improved teaching but also to the implementation and consolidation of the National Literacy Strategy.

By the end of Year 6, attainment in design and technology, history, music and information and communication technology, are well above that expected for pupils' ages. Pupils are achieving soundly and maintaining their well above average standards. The standards in design and technology are particularly pleasing, as this was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. In religious education, geography and in art and design, although attainment is above that expected for pupils' ages and many pupils are achieving soundly, the school has recognised that the improvements in teaching have not yet had time to raise attainment and achievement to the levels of other subjects. In physical education, attainment in those areas where a judgement could be made, is above average and pupils are achieving well. Standards in literacy are very high by the time pupils leave the school and high in numeracy. Overall, attainment is well above that expected at the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils in Years 2 and 6 are achieving as they should and maintaining their high standards. The school has met, or exceeded, all the targets it has set.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Outstanding. Almost all pupils are very keen to learn. They are responsive and show excellent attitudes to all aspects of school life.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Outstanding. Relationships at all levels are excellent and make a major contribution to pupils' personal development.
Attendance	Very good. Well above the national average.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. They are proud of their school, care about each other and respect each other's views.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Very good

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

Just over three-quarters of the teaching is good or better. Nearly one-third is very good with some excellent teaching. This level of teaching shows a good improvement since the last inspection. Although good and very good teaching is to be found throughout the school, teaching is stronger in Years 3 to 6, where there is a slightly higher proportion of very good teaching and some that is excellent. This present level of teaching is ensuring that learning is mainly good, often very good in many areas as pupils successfully acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in all the subjects they are studying.

Particular strengths of the teaching, both in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school are the effectiveness of the methods and ideas teachers use. These interest pupils and motivate them to the end of the lesson. The management of pupils is excellent. Teachers demonstrate great skill and sensitivity and treat pupils with a great deal of respect. Part of the ethos of the school is to address pupils politely and in an adult fashion. Pupils respond very well to this and in lessons this ensures very good behaviour and pupils have developed outstanding attitudes to learning. Teachers make every effort to include all pupils in every aspect of the lesson. In this they are very successful. The pace of lessons is very good, resulting in pupils making a very good intellectual and creative effort. Where the teaching is excellent, teachers demonstrate outstanding subject knowledge, which enables them to pose very challenging questions to meet the needs of all abilities of pupils. This ensures all pupils respond with a great deal of enthusiasm and excitement and learning is intense and successful.

The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well throughout the school from the reception to Year 6. The assessment of pupils' abilities is used well to plan appropriate work for different pupils. Teachers have implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy very well, resulting in very high standards in English and high standards in mathematics by the time pupils leave the school.

On occasions, the lesson planning for science gives too few opportunities for pupils to practise independent learning and research, or to set up and devise their own investigations less directed by the teacher. Teachers' planning in the reception class has improved greatly since the last inspection and it now firmly based on the early learning goals. However, on occasions, apart from communication, language and literacy and in mathematics development, where it is done well, the short-term planning for some areas of learning is not always detailed, or linked consistently to the assessment of pupils' differing abilities. This means that progress for some pupils may be uneven at times. In Years 1 to 6, planning broadly meets the needs of all pupils well, especially in English

and mathematics. Homework is given to support learning. In the main, this is sound but occasionally inconsistent. The use of computers to support learning throughout the school is developing well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Educational visits out of school, extra-curricular activities and interesting visitors into school, enhance learning well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support staff work closely together. They are particularly well supported in literacy and numeracy lessons, where they make good progress in line with their abilities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Within this, the provision for spiritual and cultural development is very good. That for moral and social development is excellent. This provision results in very good behaviour and excellent relationships.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The educational and personal support and guidance given to pupils and the procedures for monitoring and promoting their behaviour is excellent.

Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress both in the Foundation Stage and throughout the school are now very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection where it was a weakness. There are very good links with parents and the quality of information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress, is also very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. Leadership and management by the headteacher are very good. He works closely with the deputy headteacher, senior management team and the school administrator, resulting in a successful management structure. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators are also developing their roles very well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors support the school very well. The chair works closely with the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher, staff and governors have a very good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. This has enabled them to plan well for the future.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. All money available to the school is used very wisely and carefully. The school applies the principles of getting best value for its pupils and succeeds well.

Staff are deployed well and are appropriately qualified. Resources are good. The accommodation is very good, although there is limited storage space in the foundation area, which limits the opportunities for children to develop their independence by selecting and replacing resources. A number of other governors support special educational needs and subjects such as literacy and numeracy well. All governors, including the curriculum governor, are working hard on projects to enhance the curriculum and enrich pupils' learning experiences.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their child likes the school. • Their child is making good progress • The teaching is good. • They can approach the staff with any problems. • Their child is expected to work hard and do their best. • The school is well managed. • The school helps their children to become more mature and responsible. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • Their child gets the right amount of work to do at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A very few parents felt that they were not well informed about how their child is getting on. • A very few parents felt that the school does not work closely with parents. • A very few parents felt that the school did not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. • A very few parents felt that their child did not get the right amount of work to do at home. • A very few parents felt that the emphasis on getting good test results is limiting other learning experiences.

All parents' views expressed at the parents' meeting and in the questionnaire were brought to the attention of the headteacher.

Inspectors support parents' positive views of the school. They judged that the general effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. They also judge that the school does give an appropriate amount of homework, although at times it is given inconsistently. The school does provide a good range of activities outside lessons. They agree with parents that school reports in the past have not given a clear picture of progress but feel that for this year a good improvement has been made. Inspectors are aware of examination pressures but feel that governors are trying to compensate for this by setting up a committee to look at ways of enriching the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds, in 2001, pupils' standards in reading and mathematics were well above average. In writing, they were very high, which put them in the top five per cent of all schools. In the tests for 11-year-olds, pupils' standards in science were above average and in English and mathematics well above average. When these results for 11-year-olds are compared to similar schools, they show similar well above average results in English and mathematics but only average results in science.
- 2 The assessments carried out when children enter the reception classes indicates that although there is a wide spread of attainment, the small number of very high attaining pupils results in the overall standard of attainment being well above average in English and mathematics. Pupils' level of attainment in physical development on entry to the school is in line with that expected for their ages. They achieve soundly in all the areas of learning. By the end of the reception year, most children have completed the early learning goals, many have exceeded them greatly and their attainment in most areas continues to be well above that expected nationally.
- 3 As pupils progress through the school, they continue to achieve soundly and maintain their very high standards. At the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6, their attainment in the majority of subjects is well above that expected for pupils' ages. In English, they attain very high standards by the time they leave the school.
- 4 However, it must be pointed out that these results indicate that, by the end of Year 6, pupils have made very good progress raising attainment in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and music, and excellent progress in English and design and technology since the last inspection, where attainment in most subjects was only average. They have made good progress in all other subjects apart from history and art and design, where they have maintained levels of attainment similar to the last inspection.
- 5 For this year's pupils, at the end of Year 2, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well above those expected for pupils' ages and pupils are achieving soundly and maintaining their high standards. For pupils at the end of Year 6, attainment in science and mathematics is well above that expected for pupils' ages and pupils continue to achieve soundly and maintain high standards. In English, pupils achieve even better and attain very high standards.
- 6 In English, pupils have very good speaking and listening skills throughout the school. By age 11, many have become very confident and skilled speakers. Reading is well above average and, although a small minority of parents have some concerns about the reading scheme, pupils obviously enjoy reading. Older pupils have very high standards and talk with interest about much-loved stories and authors. There is some very good writing by pupils in the younger classes where attainment is well above average. There are excellent examples of high quality extended and imaginative writing by the older pupils. Some of the writing grips the reader instantly, such as, "Passengers cried out in horror as the ground came surging towards them". The presentation of pupils' work both in handwriting and through the use of a word processor is often excellent. Standards in literacy are very high by the time pupils leave the school.

- 7 In mathematics, pupils' number skills are well above average throughout the school. For example, by the end of Year 2, the more able and average pupils are beginning to understand place value and number sequences, such as odd and even. By the end of Year 6, most use all four operations to two places of decimals, including standard written methods for long multiplication and long division. They calculate fractions and percentages of quantities, in measure and money. Many understand and use formulae to calculate the area of rectangles and other shapes and the circumferences of circles. Standards in numeracy are well above average by the time pupils leave the school.
- 8 In science, attainment at the end of Year 2 is above that expected for pupils' ages in all aspects and at the end of Year 6, well above that expected. Pupils are achieving soundly by the time they leave the school. Throughout the school, pupils have a very good knowledge of the processes and living things, materials and their properties and in physical processes. In these areas, pupils are achieving soundly and maintaining their very high standards. Pupils' abilities to carry out investigations are good. They understand the need for a fair test and of predicting what the outcome of an investigation might be. Pupils' ability to develop their independent learning skills through research or to set up their own investigations less directed by the teacher is not as strong and pupils do not achieve relatively as well in this area, particularly in the infants and the younger juniors. However, the school has already recognised this and feels that this may be the reason for the relative lower results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests. Because of this, they have indicated in the School Improvement Plan that this is an area for further development.
- 9 In information and communication technology and in design and technology, pupils have made rapid progress in recent years. Attainment in information and communication technology is now above average at the end of Year 2 and well above at the end of Year 6. By the time pupils leave the school they have a secure range of skills and use computers very well to support their learning. Word processing skills are particularly strong. In design and technology, attainment is well above that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This level of attainment is particularly pleasing as this area was a weakness at the last inspection. Older pupils develop and communicate their designs very well. They use a good variety of materials to make their constructions and they evaluate and improve them well.
- 10 In religious education, attainment is above the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus throughout the school. This is a good improvement on the standards attained in the last inspection, mainly because of the improvement in the quality of teaching, although improvements have not been in place long enough for pupils to bring even higher standards and greater achievement by the time they leave the school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have a good understanding of Christianity and the rules of other faiths, such as Judaism. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 write with some sophistication about the leadership qualities of Jesus. They have a clear picture of the richness of a number of world religions. Pupils have very good debating skills which they use often. Most pupils achieve as expected and sustain good levels of ability.
- 11 Attainment in most of the remaining subjects is at least above that expected for pupils' ages and in the case of history, it is well above the expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Also, music is well above that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 6. They achieve as they should and maintain good or very good standards in a school that has a strong musical tradition.
- 12 In art and design, although a majority of pupils achieve soundly, the school wants to raise achievement even higher and the school has identified this area for further development in its

school improvement plan. Nevertheless, attainment is above that expected for pupils' ages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In geography, pupils' attainment is above that expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In a number of areas, such as the development of geographical and fieldwork skills using the school grounds and immediate locality, their attainment is well above that expected and pupils are achieving soundly. All levels of attainment in geography demonstrate a good improvement since the last inspection.

- 13 In physical education it was not possible to make a judgement on all aspects. However, from the lessons seen, attainment is above that expected in dance by the end of Year 6 and as levels of attainment in this area are average on entry to the school, this indicates that pupils achieve well. Teachers' records indicate that in other areas of physical education, pupils' attainment is as expected for pupils' ages and pupils are achieving soundly.
- 14 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school. Their needs are identified early and they receive small group tuition during literacy and numeracy sessions with clear personal targets. This gives them the confidence to take a full part in all other lessons. The majority of pupils with special educational needs achieve the expected levels in the National Curriculum tests at ages seven and eleven.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 15 Pupils have excellent attitudes. In lessons, they are extremely self-motivated and they apply themselves to their tasks immediately and waste no time. This is particularly evident in the juniors but even the youngest pupils show unusually high levels of perseverance and concentration for their age. Throughout the school, including in the Foundation Stage, pupils are clearly determined to work hard and to play a full and active part in all that the school has to offer. Pupils' excellent attitudes are further reflected in the school's very good attendance figures. Year on year for at least the past 3 years, the school has achieved well above the national average and this has increased since the last inspection to a figure of over 96 per cent. Punctuality is also very good, both at the start of the day and after recreation breaks and lessons start extremely promptly. Parents confirm that their children are very keen to come to school and thoroughly enjoy their experiences there. As a result of such excellent attitudes, pupils are able to take full advantage of their time in school and consequently they achieve successfully in many areas of their academic and personal development.
- 16 Standards of behaviour in lessons and throughout the school are very good. Pupils move around in a very orderly and sensible manner. They listen very carefully and follow instructions promptly and without question. They are very polite to adults and to each other and no pupil has been excluded, even for a short time, for very many years. Many of the pupils put 'friendships' at the top of their list of reasons for liking school so much. A pupil from a mixed race family commented to inspectors that she had never heard anyone in the school make any sort of racist remark. Others said they couldn't remember any occurrence of bullying anywhere. A very high percentage of parents are pleased with how well pupils behave.
- 17 Relationships and pupils' personal development are both excellent and this is an area which has improved even further on the very positive picture at the time of the last inspection. A particular feature of the school is how well everyone gets on together whether it be in lessons, at lunchtime, or during other activities such as after school clubs, including the care club known as The Fielders Out of School Care Club. There is an extremely high level of consideration and support for one another in whatever they do. This is a quality which has been instilled in these pupils from a young age and is consistently reinforced and so it comes almost naturally to most of them. All the pupils, even young children in the Foundation

Stage, learn very quickly how to conduct themselves and how to speak to their elders with confidence and courtesy. They use their initiative well and respond very well to being entrusted with responsibility. For example, older pupils know it is their duty to set an example to younger pupils and willingly help them whenever they need it. They are now very well prepared to take on more challenging areas of responsibility such as the School Council, which is to be created next term.

- 18 Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all lessons and activities in school, such as the dance club and the choir. They enjoy these activities. In the small group sessions they have very good relationships with classroom assistants and enjoy the tasks they are set. They try hard and do well in their work, especially with reading. In whole class sessions other pupils are keen to involve pupils with special educational needs in the work of the group.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 19 Just over three-quarters of the teaching is good or better. Nearly one third is very good, with some excellent teaching. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This level of teaching shows a good improvement since the last inspection. Although good and very good teaching is to be found throughout the school, teaching is stronger in Years 3 to 6, where there is a slightly higher proportion of very good teaching and some that is excellent. All teachers have worked hard to improve their teaching. They have had good support in this from the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The improvement in the quality of the teaching has resulted in improvements in attainment in almost all subjects.
- 20 The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall, with examples of very good teaching. There is also good teaching and support from classroom assistants and the nursery nurse. The good knowledge throughout the team of how young children learn is a strength of the provision in this part of the school. Medium term plans are thorough but weekly planning sometimes lacks detail of focused learning objectives in some areas of learning. In all lessons, the development of language and number are stressed at every opportunity. In a very good lesson, children learnt mathematical language about position by following instructions and placing articles where directed by the class teacher and then by each other. The quality of learning provided by opportunities like this for youngest children in the school is good and ensures they make sound progress.
- 21 The teaching of literacy has been a major focus for the school during the last two to three years and it is now firmly established. The quality of teaching in this area is mainly good with some very good teaching and, as a result, pupils make good or very good gains in learning. Teachers have mainly very good knowledge of English and this helps them to use a motivational style that challenges all pupils. For example, pupils in Year 6 were seen writing poetry. The teachers' very good knowledge helped her to select very appropriate material to stimulate a good response with lyrics from Queen and a Salmon Rushdie verse. All abilities were challenged to discuss the similarities and differences between the ranges, rhythms and emotions created by the material. This work helped pupils to raise the quality of their own writing. Another strength of the teaching is the way pupils are encouraged to express themselves, which results in very good standards in speaking and listening. The teaching of numeracy has received specific attention also and a very good format for lessons has been established. The quality of teaching is mainly good with some very good and excellent teaching. Teachers use challenging questions to promote thought and test out understanding. Teachers also relate mathematics well to examples in real life. For example, pupils in Year 3 had to relate their daily money problems to decimals and be able to distinguish between one pound and ten pence and one pound and one pence. One boy expressed a pound and a penny

as £1.1 instead of £1.01. The teacher used this mistake as a good teaching point. Pupils have individual targets in mathematics and English and teachers use these well to set appropriate work.

- 22 Particular strengths in the teaching are the effectiveness of the methods and ideas teachers use. These interest pupils and motivate them to the end of the lesson. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. All subjects have good schemes of work and policies to guide teachers. Teachers have undergone training in some subjects to improve their knowledge and develop confidence. In information and communication technology and in design and technology, for example, teachers have had good guidance, not only from outside agencies, but also from the deputy headteacher and others in the school. This has resulted in some good and very good teaching in these two areas, enabling the pupils to attain very good standards in design and technology and in information and communication technology. Teachers are also beginning to use computers well to support learning in a number of subjects. The school has identified this as an area for further development. However, during the inspection, many examples were seen where computers were used effectively in support of the lesson. For instance, some pupils in Year 4 used the computer well to help them with their work on equivalent fractions and Year 6 pupils were seen using a conversion chart on the computer where they were able to convert imperial measures to metric.
- 23 Teachers' planning is usually of high quality. The lesson objective is clear and it is shared with pupils. Most lessons have a good introduction with a question and answer session, which consolidates previous learning well and a good plenary session where both teacher and pupil ensures that they have gained knowledge and understood the learning objective. Work is usually planned to challenge pupils of all abilities, often based on the information obtained from assessment records. Teachers in the reception class are learning to use their good assessment records to plan future work. This procedure now needs to be strengthened in order to ensure even more appropriate work is provided for differing abilities of children. In science, however, the work planned does not always give sufficient opportunity for pupils to set up and devise their own investigations independently, less directed by the teacher. There are also fewer opportunities in science for pupils to carry out independent research into science topics. Homework is given and helps learning but sometimes it is given inconsistently.
- 24 Where the teaching is very good or excellent, lessons proceed at a very good pace and are highly motivating with very good planning, making learning exciting and effective. For example, pupils in Year 5 made outstanding progress in a numeracy lesson on interpreting data. This was mainly because the teacher had planned the lesson well in good logical learning steps, produced an excellent set of bar charts, bar line charts and pie charts, with stimulating questions attached. As the lesson developed, pupils extended their knowledge rapidly and by the end, most understood the value of displaying data in the form of diagrams rather than a list of figures.
- 25 Teachers work closely with classroom assistants and the nursery nurse to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are well prepared for their learning. There is close discussion to plan pupils' individual education plans and targets for improvement. These are simple and have clear steps for progression. In whole class lessons teachers are careful to phrase questions so that pupils with special educational needs can take a full part in discussions.

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

- 26 The school provides a rich, balanced and well-planned curriculum to which all pupils have equal access. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects, with particular strengths in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design technology, history and music. The standards being achieved today are far better than they were in 1997 in most subjects, and this particularly reflects the good planning within the curriculum. A comprehensive programme has been introduced for the regular monitoring and reviewing of all areas of the curriculum, resulting in well focused and appropriate action plans that have guided the very good improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is sound and a good improvement since the last inspection and enables them to make a sound start in their education. This now needs consolidating and strengthening in order to raise attainment even further.
- 27 The curriculum has been planned effectively to ensure that all subjects receive sufficient emphasis. Since the previous inspection, well-focused provision for information and communication technology and design and technology has had a dramatic effect on raising standards in these subjects throughout the school. Very good teachers' planning reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000 and is very well supported through the use of national guidelines in most subjects. The school's strategy for teaching literacy and numeracy has been very well implemented successfully throughout the school. The English curriculum is very rich, providing well planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills as observed during a Year 5 science lesson in which pupils discussed their investigations into plant root systems with confidence and clarity. The school's strategy for teaching numeracy is also very good, and has an impact in particular on pupils' numeracy skills, for example in a design and technology lesson, pupils in Year 3 had to accurately measure materials before cutting them out to make moving two-dimensional shapes operated by pneumatics. They did this well.
- 28 The school provides good equality of access and opportunity with no significant variations noted in the provision for boys and girls or between different ability groups during lessons observed. Some National Curriculum test results in the past indicated that boys were outperforming girls in English and mathematics. As a result of its very good assessment procedures, additional work in English has been undertaken to address this problem. Teachers within each year group plan together so that the content and purposes of learning are the same for all pupils.
- 29 A particular strength of the curriculum is the way in which all-round education of pupils is fostered. Recently the school governors have included a policy aimed directly at maintaining high standards in English and mathematics, whilst also ensuring that pupils receive a balanced, appropriate and enriched curriculum. During their time in school pupils become mature, pleasant people who think carefully about how their thoughts, words and actions affect other people. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the contribution made by artists, writers, musicians and other performers to their own and other societies.
- 30 The curriculum is suitably enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils to develop their abilities, particularly through sport, information and communication technology, drama and music. Visitors are welcomed to the school, and pupils take part in residential visits as well as field trips to local places of geographical and historical interest. The school enriches the curriculum by providing a good range of well planned opportunities for pupils to learn. There is a good personal health, safety and citizenship programme of work that provides a range of useful experiences for all pupils. There is an agreed policy for sex education and good provision for drugs awareness and the dangers of drug misuse.

- 31 The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. The school's links with the community were reported as a strength in the previous inspection report and remain so. Links include music festivals, emergency services, local museums, senior citizens and St Mary's Church, all making a very valuable contribution to the curriculum. There are strong links with the church and local parish, and effective links with the secondary school to which most of the pupils transfer.
- 32 The school makes very good provision for the personal development of children in the foundation stage and for other pupils both through the curriculum and in assemblies. Boys and girls of all abilities are taught to work together and are given many opportunities to help each other. Pupils learn about the creation story in religious education and are given time to reflect about the vastness of the universe. They write poems about flowers and animals showing great sensitivity. There are also some quite moving poems describing the long wait for "mum" to come home and others revealing how much they love their parents and grandparents. Assemblies give pupils the chance to think about such wonders as how the tiniest of seeds can grow into an enormously beautiful poppy flower. Younger pupils consider how a bean knows to send its roots downwards. Spiritual education is very good.
- 33 Moral education is excellent. Pupils know how to behave and in many year groups they discuss rules for the school and draw up a simple code of conduct for themselves. Lessons involve pupils in debates on the way we treat animals and they read and respond sensitively to stories about war and disasters such as the tragedy of the twin towers in New York. They consider how pollution lays waste to rivers and they talk intelligently about ways to avoid it. Young children consider the rights and wrongs of fables such as the story of King Midas. Pupils raise a great deal of money for a variety of charity organisations and show feelings for those not as well off as themselves. The staff set very high standards and show great care for pupils' moral development.
- 34 Pupils relate excellently to others in class. Teachers encourage pupils to work in pairs from a very early age. Pupils in Year 2 have the skills to plan and rehearse complex role-play together without arguing. Older pupils work in groups planning a presentation using computers and whiteboards. In physical education and in most other subjects, pupils use opportunities to work in groups to good advantage. More able pupils help those who are less confident on the computers. Pupils from Year 6 have worked well with younger ones to research and write original stories for them. Provision for social education is excellent.
- 35 There is good provision for cultural education. In religious education and in geography pupils show a genuine interest in the lifestyles and beliefs of different people. They enjoy listening to music from Indonesia and North America. There is a delightful storyboard recounting a Chinese story in the words and pictures of pupils from Year 2. There are, however, opportunities to extend pupils' curiosity in multi-cultural issues. The school makes good use of local history sites to teach pupils about the development of the community around them. There are regular visits to museums and theatres and visits from musical and dramatic groups to enrich pupils' cultural experiences.
- 36 There are good individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs with simple targets in literacy, numeracy, and social skills that are frequently reviewed. The good planning between teachers and classroom assistants ensures that the work set for these boys and girls is matched carefully to their needs and is similar to what the rest of the class are doing in literacy and numeracy.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 37 Pupils are well cared for and some elements have improved since the last inspection. Parents are pleased with how well their children are looked after. The whole ethos of the school is one of caring for each other and of setting good examples. Indeed, the school motto is 'Caring and Sharing' and even the youngest children know it and staff are very consistent in their application of this principle. Staff and governors are constantly looking for ways of improving pupils' health and well-being. For example, every pupil in the school is provided with individual bottles of fresh water on their desks to drink throughout the day. Another initiative has been to provide a piece of fresh fruit for every pupil in reception and in Years 1 and 2 at every morning break, and, with the support of parents, at every afternoon break as well. There are regular inspections of the school site, not only to identify and remedy any health and safety hazards but to seek ways of improving the site with the health and comfort of the pupils in mind. For instance, funds raised by the parent teacher association have partly been used to create very attractive shaded seating areas for pupils in the grounds of the school. The Governing Body is currently in the process of refining how risk assessments are carried out in school in order to make them even more effective. The health and safety of pupils on visits out of school is seen as a priority and staff have a clear understanding of this. However, there is currently no formal system in place to ensure that what the Headteacher expects to be done, is done, before pupils are taken off the school site. Also, all adult helpers are not necessarily made aware of any potential hazards and procedures. The school's child protection arrangements are good. There is a very good policy document to guide staff and although there has been little recent training in this aspect, staff have a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and who to report to. Pupils themselves are taught valuable elements of keeping themselves safe through well-planned lessons in personal, social and health education. Virtually every member of staff has attended a first aid course and pupils are well-supervised at all times and receive good care should they become ill or injured at school.
- 38 Pupils receive an excellent level of educational and personal support. Routines are very well established. Expectations of behaviour, attendance, and personal application are consistently very high across the school. As a result, there is a very calm and orderly atmosphere where pupils feel welcome and free from any form of intimidation or worry and they thoroughly enjoy coming to school. Parents confirm this. There is a big emphasis in school on personal presentation and all staff present very good role models for pupils to respect and look up to. A lot of effort is put in to treating pupils as equals and staff speak to them as they would to an adult. Consequently, pupils learn how to conduct themselves in a very mature and well-mannered way. Staff value pupils' efforts. For example, virtually every pupil in the school will have helped to paint markings on the playground; many have helped to create a ceramic mosaic style mural as a lasting memento in school. Very recently, as part of the Queen's Golden Jubilee celebrations, an aerial photograph of pupils in formation making the name of the school and the year was taken to mark the occasion. Pupils are clearly very proud of the part they play and they have a great deal of self-esteem.
- 39 The high standards achieved by pupils in English and mathematics are a testimony to the very good educational guidance and support they receive from the school, based on very good procedures for assessment. Procedures and systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved considerably since the previous inspection. In English and mathematics, assessments are undertaken regularly. The results of tests and other assessments are carefully analysed, and the information is used to place pupils in appropriate ability groups for English and mathematics. The monitoring of pupils' progress is strengthened further in these subjects by setting individual targets shared with parents to help raise pupils' achievements further.

- 40 Pupils' progress is monitored closely as they move through the school to ensure that each reaches their own potential. However, individual profile books do not at present give a clear idea of attainment levels, with the exception of English and mathematics. For example in science, pupils are not aware of exactly what they need to do to improve. The best practice clearly demonstrates how pupils are assessed in all subject areas and how personal targets help them make very good progress. Some teachers make good use of assessment information to refine their teaching plans. For example in Year 3, part of a science lesson was repeated in response to the teacher's judgement that the pupils needed to consolidate their knowledge before moving on.
- 41 There is good support for pupils with special educational needs in lessons and in groups. Links between the co-ordinator for special educational needs, teachers and support staff are very good. These ensure that there is regular and detailed assessment of the progress of pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 42 Parents hold the school in very high regard. They are very pleased with much of what the school does and they support it very well indeed. For example, their fund raising efforts have paid for many improvements to the school grounds, which pupils thoroughly enjoy using, and the air conditioning in the computer suite was also funded in this way. Parents are very supportive of many of the school policies such as behaviour expectations, attendance and punctuality, uniform, and healthy eating at break times. Parents also help with homework, including reading at home on a very regular basis. A number of parents also help in school in a range of areas but particularly hearing pupils read where they are a valuable asset. Together, the school and parents are helping pupils to reach very high standards of reading across the school as well as in many areas of personal development.
- 43 A number of parents have expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of information the school provides for them and how closely the school works with parents. Inspectors have found that parents are not justified in their perceptions. The school provides very good information for parents. For example, there are regular and informative newsletters including dates of events in school and in Church and a list of award winners. There are letters about any visits out of school and their purpose, and they even include the day's detailed itinerary in some cases. Of particular note are the information sheets sent to parents at the start of each term. These tell parents what is going to be taught during the forthcoming term in English and mathematics and the topics to be covered. In addition, they make very sensible suggestions as to how parents can best help to reinforce their child's learning at home without being too onerous or prescriptive. It is however some time since the school held any curriculum workshops for parents and some are unsure of the methods to use in helping their child with English and mathematics. There are two open evenings for parents to view their children's work at leisure as well as two further opportunities to speak privately with teachers about their child's individual progress. Future learning targets are communicated at these meetings and recorded. Although reporting very well on pupils' personal development, the end of year reports have, in the past, been impersonal and not sufficiently individual in reporting progress in subjects, and parents have been right to criticise them. However, the Headteacher and his staff have themselves, not been happy about this and have been able to modify things so that reports for this current school year, which the parents have not yet seen, have improved. Some parents are dissatisfied with the amount of homework saying there is sometimes very little and then at other times far too much. Inspectors have found that homework is given inconsistently at times.
- 44 There are regular communications between the school and parents of pupils with special educational needs. These are being reviewed to ensure that parents are always clear about the specific needs of their children. Parents are invited to reviews and the large majority attend. Several parents commented on the care and skill of teachers in dealing with pupils who have a medical condition. The inspection confirmed that procedures to support these pupils are very good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 45 Leadership and management is very good. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection.
- 46 The headteacher gives very good leadership. He has developed a successful school, which is highly regarded by many parents. He has provided a clear vision, a distinct educational direction for the school and has been successful in encouraging all staff to develop their own leadership roles within an agreed sense of purpose. All of the key issues from the last inspection have been resolved and he has introduced many other improvements. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and the senior management team. He has ensured that the school's priorities for development are very appropriate. For example, the inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching and the curriculum weaknesses outlined in the last report, have been successfully addressed through rigorous monitoring. The quality of the teaching is at least good and often very good as is the quality of the learning opportunities provided.
- 47 The deputy headteacher works closely with the headteacher and the senior management team. He is not a class teacher and this enables him to give support when required in all parts of the school. He has also organised and led various improvements in the school as they have become a focus for development on the school improvement plan. For example, he has contributed greatly to very good developments in information and communication technology. He has helped to set up the new computer suite and organise training for the staff. He has also spent some time improving assessment procedures, especially in English and mathematics. These are of very good quality and are well used.
- 48 The co-ordinators for the infant and the juniors are effective leaders and work closely with the headteacher. The school has not appointed an Early Years co-ordinator, although a class teacher in reception acts as unofficial phase manager at present and has brought about many improvements since the last inspection.
- 49 The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is very good. The chair of the governing body is fully committed to the school. He is involved in the life of the school, visits often and engages in professional dialogue with the headteacher. A number of other governors visit the school and all support aspects of the curriculum. The support from the governors with a responsibility for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy is particularly good. The governor responsible for the curriculum is well informed and active and the governing body has set up a curriculum enhancement and enrichment group to ensure the development of further good learning opportunities. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are closely involved in the production and evaluation of the yearly School Improvement Plan. They also have a good longer-term vision for the school. For example, the governors are aware of future trends in the numbers of pupils needing to come to the school and the importance of maintaining the present pupil/teacher ratio. The governors have just agreed to produce a five-year plan to better ensure secure developments in the future.
- 50 The headteacher and deputy headteacher have been involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the teaching. There has been an agreed timetable of observation for all teachers, set against an established range of criteria. Written feedback has been provided and the outcome of the observation is discussed with teachers. This guidance has been effective, as the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers' planning is also examined on a regular basis and pupils' work is analysed.

- 51 The role of the curriculum co-ordinators is developing well. For example, the two co-ordinators for English are providing good leadership. They have a clear overview of standards and provision within relevant targets for development. All subject co-ordinators have to produce a development plan, which is submitted for approval to the headteacher and governors. It is then attached to the yearly plan.
- 52 The aims of the school, set out in the mission statement, its values and policies are implemented well. However, one statutory item is missing from the school prospectus. This has been pointed out to the headteacher. The headteacher has developed an excellent ethos in the school, based on Christian values. This recognises the individual strengths of each pupil and his approach is one of talking to and treating each pupil with a great deal of respect. Pupils respond to this very well and grow in self-confidence and respect for other pupils. They have developed outstanding attitudes to their work. There are excellent relationships. There is a commitment by the leadership to raise educational standards for all and to provide equal opportunities within a climate of including all pupils within all aspects of school life.
- 53 The yearly School Improvement Plan effectively supports management. It is carefully costed. Funding is well linked to educational priorities. It is always discussed and evaluated at governors meetings.
- 54 All staff are appropriately qualified and there is a range of experience within the school. There are sufficient teachers in the school to match the demands of the curriculum. There are classroom assistants throughout the school who support teaching and learning very well. All staff undergo an annual professional development interview with the Headteacher where roles, responsibilities and professional development issues are identified. All teaching staff have job descriptions and these are reviewed annually in the staff development meeting. The governing body is supporting the Foundation Stage Nursery Nurse in her part-time initial teacher training course. Members of the non-teaching staff play an important part in the life of the school. All support staff have undertaken nationally recognised training in information and communication technology. Lunchtime supervisors have attended courses on play and first-aid and all administration staff are appropriately trained.
- 55 The accommodation is very good. The buildings are clean and in a state of good repair, with refurbishment of toilets currently taking place. There is no vandalism. Displays in school are attractive, stimulating and support learning well. A computer suite has been created since the time of the last inspection and this can accommodate a whole class: there are also computers in shared areas and in classrooms so that pupils have access to them during all their lessons. The school grounds are outstanding, with hard playgrounds and a sports field, seating and tables, an out door theatre, flower beds and a willow arbour. This supports effective teaching of the curriculum, such as in science for habitat studies, for physical education and orienteering. Classrooms for Years 1 and 2 pupils provide very good facilities. The size of rooms for children in the Foundation Stage is restrictive in the spring and summer terms when the numbers of children rise, and at those times there is some overcrowding.
- 56 Learning resources are good throughout the school and impact well on teaching and learning. There is generally good storage space for learning resources throughout the school, except in the foundation stage classrooms, where this is limited and has the effect of inhibiting children's independence.
- 57 The special educational needs co-ordinator has a good overview of school provision, and communication with external agencies is good. A nominated governor meets regularly with the special educational needs co-ordinator and senior management team to review the

progress of pupils with special educational needs. Good provision has been made to introduce the new Code of Practice in September, including training for all staff.

- 58 Very careful financial planning supports educational priorities very well and the school uses any specific grant money it gets very well. For example, a lottery grant entitled “Awards for all” was used to obtain the specific services of sports coaches in football and basketball. Money has been spent very wisely on establishing a computer suite, which has resulted in improved standards in information and communication technology. The school uses all the money at its disposal very carefully and wisely and has little money as a surplus. The headteacher, school administrator and governors are very aware of the need to get best value for pupils. In this they are effective and the quality of financial control through the chair of the governors’ financial committee is excellent. School administration by the deputy headteacher, school administrator and secretary is very effective and efficient. The management systems now in place, including the very effective leadership of the headteacher, the support and contribution made by the deputy headteacher, dedicated team of teachers, support staff and governors, have ensured a large number of improvements since the last inspection. The management of the school has a very good capability to maintain an effective school, give good value for money and introduce further improvements.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 59 To maintain the quality of education and promote further development, the governing body, headteacher and staff should address the following issue:

- (1) Continue to raise pupils’ science skills even further by:
- Increasing opportunities for pupils to take a greater responsibility for their own learning, through their own research work;
 - Increasing opportunities for pupils to set up and devise their own investigations less directed by the teacher

(these are indicated in paragraphs 8, 23, 97 and 102)

This issue has already been identified by the school as an area for further development

60 In addition to the above issues, the following more minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the Action Plan:

- Continue to build on the good quality of learning already established in the reception classes, by strengthening the quality of aspects of the daily planning, so that each area of learning has clear and detailed learning objectives linked closely to the existing good individual assessment records. Also, by maintaining a good level of appropriately qualified staff with a clear line of responsibility for all aspects of Foundation Stage provision.
- Increase the use of the library so pupils have more opportunities to carry out individual research.
- Further development of the use of computers to support learning in some subjects.

(these are indicated in paragraphs 20, 22, 61, 62, 63, 84, 97, 104 and 135)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	5	17	35	15	0	0	0
Percentage	7	24	49	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	419
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	5
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.76
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.02
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	31	31	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	31	31
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	100	100	100
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	100 (93)	100 (98)	100 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	31	31
	Girls	30	31	30
	Total	59	62	62
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	95 (95)	100 (98)	98 (95)
	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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	27	32	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	24	25	26
	Girls	28	25	30
	Total	52	50	56
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	88 (93)	85 (85)	95 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	26	24
	Girls	30	29	29
	Total	55	55	53
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	93 (92)	93 (97)	91 (92)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	10
Indian	6
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	401
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	250

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.5
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	760,963
Total expenditure	788,105
Expenditure per pupil	1,876.44
Balance brought forward from previous year	48,701
Balance carried forward to next year	21,559

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	400
Number of questionnaires returned	227

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	39	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	43	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	49	14	3	0
The teaching is good.	50	46	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	49	19	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	41	7	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	43	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	25	52	17	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	37	53	6	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	51	4	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	43	13	3	10

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

- 61 The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Children are working on the six areas of learning appropriate for this phase of education, which was not the case at the last inspection. Children are now accommodated in a new Early Years building. There is a secure area for outside practical activities although this is somewhat lacking in interesting features. Many of the considerable improvements are fairly new and the staff are keen to consolidate and strengthen the provision for these children.
- 62 Children enter school in September and January and currently 60 children are in the two classes. Children come from 26 providers of some kind of pre-school group but there is limited liaison with these providers. There is a planned induction programme that helps children settle into school life and parents are welcomed to meetings before and after their child's admission. Assessment of children on entry to Reception shows that there is a wide spread of attainment. However, the presence of a number of very high attaining children results in the overall standard of attainment being well above average in English and mathematics. Children's achievement is monitored using the Dudley Monitoring Profile. This informs the next step for each individual child. However, these records are not always used to plan work to meet the needs of the individual children, apart from in literacy and numeracy. By the time children move into Year 1, most children achieve the early learning goals and many are above and some well above this level. Scores in tests undertaken during the children's first half term in school are monitored and by using analysis predications for future National Curriculum test scores are made.
- 63 The curriculum in the Foundation Stage meets all the recommendations of the six areas of learning. There is appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Children are provided with appropriate, worthwhile activities in all areas of learning, although the limited space and lack of appropriate storage does limit certain areas of learning. There is very good team work by all staff members in the Foundation Stage. The Key Stage 1 co-ordinator has responsibility for Foundation. However, one of the reception class teachers acts as unofficial phase manager, for there is no Early Years co-ordinator.
- 64 Teaching in the Foundation Stage is mainly good. Over two thirds of all teaching observed during inspection week was good or very good. The quality of the teaching makes a positive impact on the achievement that these young children make. Where teaching is very good, teachers understand the way in which young children learn and they plan appropriate activities which the children enjoy and which develop their language as well as their learning in all areas. The classroom assistants and nursery nurse give a high standard of support to all children. Staff have high expectations of all children in areas of learning as well as in behaviour and co-operation. Medium term planning is detailed but daily planning lacks clear learning objectives and does not always show different tasks for different levels of ability apart from in literacy and numeracy. All staff are involved in planning and support staff are well briefed. The classrooms are well organised although both are somewhat cramped for the number of children.

Personal, social and emotional development

65 Children's attainment is well above that expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching in this area is good and all staff are sensitive to the language needs of young children. Induction procedures try to ensure new children settle quickly and routines are established early on in their school lives. Most children listen well in whole class and small group activities. Children are given many opportunities to make choices and, by the end of Reception, get fully involved in the range of activities on offer. Children easily develop the ability to tidy up at the end of the sessions but this is difficult at times because of inappropriate storage facilities. This hampers the development of children's independence. All children have snack time every day and are given opportunity to eat healthy foods. A variety of fresh fruit and vegetables are prepared by staff and children are expected to use 'please' and 'thank you' when requesting and receiving their snack and drink. Children develop the confidence to talk in large or small groups and enjoy active participation in lessons. In a numeracy lesson, children placed items of holiday clothing from a suitcase in various places following positional instructions. During Collective Worship, the headteacher asked questions of some Reception children who answered with confidence and clarity. On 'Sharing Afternoon,' the two Reception classes merge and children and staff work with other class groups on a wide range of tasks including creative, physical and information and communication technology activities. When working with the programmable floor robot, children took turns in programming and recording the route of the equipment. The small class role play area is well used by the children and there is photographic evidence of other personal and social activities, including a teddy bear's picnic, posting Christmas cards, making pancakes together and taking part in the Harvest Festival service.

Communication, language and literacy

66 Pupils' attainment is well above that expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good and is always well focused on extending children's vocabulary and understanding. Stories play an important part in the curriculum and many activities are based on popular stories. Displays showed children had listened to and worked on 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and 'The Greedy Zebra' and during the inspection period, children were working with 'Handa's Surprise.' This was linked to the topic of 'Animals'. In a literacy lesson, the teacher used real fruit to reinforce the language in the story. Later that day, the fruit were cut up and the children tasted it. During 'Sharing Afternoon', children helped mix and prepare salt dough which they modelled into some of the fruit from 'Handa's Surprise'. Children enjoy listening to stories, join in with repeated chorus work and make good attempts to sequence stories, with a beginning, middle and end.

67 Most pupils in the reception make good progress at learning to read. Children know what an author and illustrator does and also what the 'ISBN' number means. The range of language used is wide, with most children being articulate. Children in reception do make use of the role play areas, a puppet theatre and café. However, in both classrooms, space for such activity is quite limited and this impacts on the scope of learning offered in this area of the curriculum. During a literacy lesson, children shared a big book, were supported by an adult to read or used the writing table and listened to stories on tape. During National Book Week, Year 6 pupils read stories to reception children. Children with special educational needs work with classroom assistants on similar tasks which are planned according to their individual needs. All pupils are well included in all activities in this area of learning.

Mathematical development

68 Children's attainment is well above that expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching in this area is good overall and sometimes very good. Children are given many mathematical experiences and every opportunity is taken to count, for example, counting the caterpillar's

legs and counting up with teddies. During the week of inspection, children were working on position such as top, inside, beneath, in front of and behind. Holiday clothing from a suitcase was used and children positioned articles, according to directions given at first, by the class teacher and then, other children. Photographic evidence records activities concerned with pattern, capacity and sorting. Information and communication technology is used for matching numbers to pictures and also shape work with triangles and rectangles. Children with special educational needs have similar activities but at a lower level of demand. Large mathematical displays include the giant from Jack and the Beanstalk, counting his belongings and money and another is 'Singing in the Rain', counting umbrellas.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 69 Children's attainment in this area of learning is well above that expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching is good and children are given a wide range of experiences from which to learn. They explore and investigate change using various materials. They mix flour, water and salt by hand to make salt dough for modelling fruit, they have made sandwiches and Easter and Christmas cakes. In the classroom, seeds are growing and children studied what they needed to grow. Children have compared and contrasted a range of everyday materials, classifying them as rough or smooth. Reception children have studied snails and slugs, looking at similarities and differences and have held their own snail races.
- 70 The development of information and communication technology is sound in the Foundation Stage and it is used at every opportunity to further the children's experiences in this area of learning. Children use a tape recorder and headphones in the listening area and all have times in the new computer suite to develop information and communication technology skills. During the inspection period, the very capable nursery nurse took groups of children in the outside area to work with 'Roamer the Robot'. Children worked in pairs, one child having responsibility for sequencing the machine using a prompt card, whilst the other chalked the programmed route on the playground, so they could begin to relate the programming to distance travelled. On this day, all children working outside had to wear sunhats. During choice time in the classroom, children use 'Paint Box' program to draw minibeasts as part of their animal topic. They draw snails, spiders and butterflies.
- 71 As part of their activities in this area of learning, a visit was made to school by members of the local fire service, bringing a fire engine with them. Children watched firemen practise with water hoses and were allowed to wear their hats and sit in the cab of the fire engine.
- 72 Design and technology activities include dough mixing to make snails and the making and using of paper bag hand puppets. During this activity, children considered and discussed the facial attributes of animals and added features such as whiskers and ears to their puppets. They also make jointed puppets with moving arms and legs. Children are given opportunities to experience a wide variety of construction equipment in the classroom. These include wooden blocks to make a castle, Octagon to create a spaceship, Duplo to build a city and Reo-click to design and make a car. Children are taken on educational visits to broaden their knowledge of the world about them. These include a farm visit and a trip to the Sea Life Centre, Birmingham.

Creative development

- 73 Children's levels of attainment in this area of learning are well above that expected by the end of the reception year. Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. All children in the Foundation Stage carry out a wide range of creative activities. Children paint folding

pictures to represent butterflies, they make snails and slugs using green play dough and spiders in webs using clay and paper plates.

- 74 Reception children continue to develop their creative capabilities using a variety of materials and skills. They make colour displays and depict story characters such as Elmer the elephant using a variety of materials. They paint and draw pictures of themselves and they use glue, chalk, pencil, crayons, pastels, wax crayons and metallic paints. They practice using simple tools like scissors and rolling pins and create a variety of patterns on clay with chop sticks, forks and potato mashers. Children are able to use the secure outside area for chalking and for ‘painting’ with water on a hot day. Musical abilities are also developed. Children sing well and with enthusiasm during Collective Worship, they beat rhythms and are able to clap out their names.

Physical development

- 75 Children enter the reception class with only average attainment in physical development. They attain the ‘early learning goals’ in this area by the end of the year. Children enjoy the physical activity, they learn soundly and the teaching is satisfactory. Most children are able to change themselves for physical education, all wearing shorts and T-shirts. They are able to find spaces in the hall and most are able to participate in simple physical activity such as hopping and skipping. They are aware of safety rules such as looking where they are going during inside and outside activities. Using the secure outside area, children use small apparatus and the new basket ball frame. Other large play equipment includes bikes and a scooter, a car, as well as space hoppers, soft tunnels and a tent. Children use large bricks and big construction kits when outside. Although reception children do have many opportunities for physical development now they have a secure outside area, because it lacks any cover, its use is limited during inclement weather.

ENGLISH

- 76 Standards in reading and writing for seven year olds have been consistently well above the national averages for the last four years. In 2001, standards in writing were very high, and standards in reading and writing were well above similar schools. Boys have done particularly well in writing over recent years, standards being well above those seen in most schools. At the age of eleven results have been even better. Results show attainment in English is always at least well above the national averages. In 1999 and 2000 standards were very high. In 2001 results were well above similar schools. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels at age seven and at age eleven is high and has improved since the last inspection. At the age of eleven the proportion attaining above the expected level has almost doubled since 1997.
- 77 Standards seen during the inspection reflect this excellent picture in both infant and juniors. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Pupils of all abilities are enthusiastic because of the interesting lessons and skilful teaching that occur. Pupils come into the school with well above average skills in language and they continue to sustain these high levels in reading and writing in Years 1 and 2 and achieve as they should. By the end of Year 6, they have made even better progress and reach very high standards and are achieving well.
- 78 By the age of seven pupils have very good speaking and listening skills. They engage in sophisticated discussions in class and use a range of mature vocabulary. After a reading of a story about “Greenpeace” they speculated about how whales lived and offered logical reasoning, often at length, about why they could never be found in ponds in farmers’ fields. These skills of reasoning were applied equally well in history when they discussed the

different materials used in the production of bicycle wheels over the ages. Teachers have excellent relationships with pupils and this encourages ambitious lessons such as drama work on constructing a “freeze-frame” tableau to depict the story of Midas. In this lesson pupils were able to plan independently in small groups and carry out the task, showing more than a basic understanding of dramatic conventions. They know that a freeze-frame is a “statue pose.” This is a great improvement on the last inspection where the lack of drama was a weakness.

- 79 Reading is well above average. Although a small minority of parents have some concerns about the reading scheme, pupils obviously enjoy reading and talk with interest about much-loved stories and authors. They relate their favourite incidents, often laughing as they do so, and they help each other when they get into difficulty over words and phrases. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in their reading because they have regular teaching from classroom assistants individually and in small groups. The teaching is structured and enables pupils to build up their confidence in small steps by aiming for clear targets.
- 80 There is some very good writing by pupils in the younger classes where standards are well above average. Pupils write for a variety of purposes. They often use very striking phrases such as: “The wind blows on their trumpets” in a poem on daffodils. They are prepared to try out unusual compound words like “moltery-colored” for multicoloured when describing the ugly troll. Spelling is good as pupils learn to sound out letters for new words. Even pupils with special educational needs can write at some length. Pupils give clear accounts of their favourite fairy stories and show skills in adapting them to the present day. Teachers make increasing challenges on the many higher ability pupils by urging them to use more similes and metaphors and to include speech marks.
- 81 By the age of eleven pupils are very confident and skilled speakers. They listen well and are gaining valuable skills in evaluating their own work as well as the work of others. The teachers frequently use information and communication technology to encourage pupils to think about new ways of presenting ideas both orally and visually. In a lesson on “Danny, Champion of the World” there were some very clear presentations by groups of pupils from Year 5 using computers to highlight their character profiles of the hero’s father. In Year 4, teachers gave pupils a good demonstration of how advertisers use a variety of techniques to manipulate their audiences by showing television extracts and by playing radio jingles. Pupils spot the use of slogans and different accents to capture attention. Groups of pupils then produce their own advertising posters showing very good understanding of the techniques. The more able pupils delivered an excellent rendition of a radio script using a range of different voices and intonation to depict different characters. These lessons give pupils of all abilities opportunities to practise reading and writing as well as speaking and listening. Pupils with special educational needs are included through skilful questions by the teachers and classroom assistants, and also because other pupils involve them fully in the group work. In other lessons pupils show good skills in sustaining high levels of debate. For example, in mathematics many pupils show excellent understanding of equivalent fractions in their group and whole class discussions.
- 82 There are excellent examples of extended imaginative writing that grips the reader from the start: “Passengers cried out in horror as the ground came surging towards them”. Pupils use a range of different stylistic devices such as repeated questions and lively imagery. The most able produce beautifully ironic author profiles to accompany their stories. “The author is single and currently lives in Stourbridge with his parents and brothers. This is his second book, the first being about King Arthur, written during Year 4.” The presentation of pupils’ work both in handwriting and using a word processor is often excellent. Spelling is usually accurate.

- 83 The quality of the teaching overall is very good with some particularly strong teaching in the juniors:
- Lessons are well planned, and marking challenges pupils to think of even more imaginative ideas in their writing;
 - Relationships in classes are often excellent and nearly all pupils are keen to work hard as is shown in the many examples of very long and very entertaining stories;
 - Teaching is very varied and often exciting to pupils as different resources are used, such as record players, televisions and computers;
 - There are high expectations of pupils but the very good guidelines teachers provide, such as writing frames encourage pupils to try out new ideas;
 - Support staff are well deployed and are flexible enough to help pupils with different needs both in the classroom and in withdrawal groups.
- 84 There is only one aspect to improve:
- The library is still under-used, as was reported in the last inspection, so that pupils do not have enough practice in undertaking individual research using books.
- 85 The teaching of the literacy hour is good. It includes all the elements required by the strategy and, in addition, teachers plan tasks for other subjects to consolidate pupils' literacy skills. In Year 3 there is an excellent project where pupils write an extended story using skills learned in history, geography and information and communication technology. In lessons teachers constantly refer pupils back to words used elsewhere. In English, they were asked to think how the word "permeated" was used in science. Also in English they were asked whether the homophone "current" could be used in geography or when talking about food.
- 86 The leadership and management of English are very good. The co-ordinators have worked hard with other teachers to raise standards in English from average at the time since the last inspection to very high standards. This has been the result of a systematic analysis of pupils' achievement and progress over time. Pupils have clear targets which they understand. There is very good planning of lessons based on the literacy strategy and the school is therefore able to meet its high targets for attainment in English at the end of Year 6.

MATHEMATICS

- 87 Standards attained by pupils currently are well above what is expected nationally. This was also the case at the time of the school's last inspection at the end of Year 6, but pupils at the end of Year 2 were in line with the national average, and the number of pupils attaining above the expected level was well below that. The National Curriculum test results for 2001 show that pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 attained well above national average with an increase in the number of pupils attaining above the expected levels for their ages. Three pupils attained well above the expected level for Year 6 pupils in the National Curriculum tests in 2001 and twelve were entered for the higher level paper in 2002. Pupils achieve well and have made good progress and maintained their high standards, due to the school's very good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the challenge that is offered to more able pupils in lessons. There is no significant difference in boys' and girls' attainment, and pupils with special education needs are well supported in lessons, which enables them to make good progress.
- 88 By the end of Year 2, more able and average pupils are beginning to understand place value to 1000. They solve number, money and measure problems using mental calculations, including multiplication and division. All groups of pupils recognise number sequences such as odd and even numbers and use standard units of measure in length mass and capacity.

Less able pupils are beginning to understand place value to 100. They sequence numbers to 100 and add and subtract numbers within 20. All groups of pupils use mathematical names for common 2D and 3D shapes, and classify them according to their properties.

- 89 By the end of Year 6 more able and average pupils use addition, subtraction, multiplication and division to two places of decimals, including standard written methods for long multiplication and long division. They check answers using approximation, inverse operations and simple calculators. They calculate fractions and percentages of quantities, in measures and money. Year 6 pupils were able to explain a mental method for working out VAT at 17.5 percent, by finding 10 percent, halving that amount to get 5 percent and halving that to get 2.5 percent, and they also knew the standard written method and a calculator method. They solve simple problems which involve ratio and proportion, and are beginning to solve simple linear equations. They understand and use the mean of separate data. They know the angle sum of a triangle, and understand and use formulae to calculate the area of rectangles, and for finding areas and circumferences of circles. Less able Year 6 pupils are confident with long multiplication using a variety of written methods, approximating the answer as a check, or using an alternative calculation or a simple calculator. They are less confident with division of 3 digit by 2 digit numbers. They construct and interpret simple line graphs. They find perimeters of shapes and draw shapes, measuring and drawing angles to the nearest degree and use language applicable to angles.
- 90 The quality of teaching is mainly good, with a significant number of very good and excellent lessons particularly in the juniors. Pupils are taught in 'sets' according to their ability from Year 2 onwards, with both classes in each year group split into two sets, except for the two Year 2 classes, which are taught in three sets. This has had a notable positive impact on standards.
- 91 In all lessons seen:
- good planning, based on assessment of pupils learning, identifies what will happen in each section of the three-part lesson. Plans include teacher questions, pupil and teacher activity, activities suitable for all groups of pupils, ensuring appropriate challenge;
 - there is a high proportion of direct teaching, with learning objectives shared with and explained to pupils. These are written on the board and reiterated frequently during lesson, so that pupils are reminded of the purpose of the lesson;
 - teachers point out key vocabulary to be learned and used at the start of the lesson. This is demonstrated by teachers, which helps pupils to talk about their learning conveying precise meaning;
 - activities are well matched to learning objectives, so that all pupils are challenged and motivated;
 - pupils talk to the teacher and each other throughout the lesson, explaining, discussing and sharing ideas, so that teachers can monitor learning and pupils can support each other's learning;
 - teachers assess pupils' responses and adjust teaching accordingly;
 - well planned plenary sessions enable teachers to clear up misconceptions, correct errors, recap on learning and evaluate it, and give pupils the chance to ask questions or make statements about their learning;
 - good behaviour management ensures that pupils concentrate well and work well together.
- 92 The use of numeracy and mathematics across the curriculum, and the teaching of key skills, is very good. When opportunities for using computers in mathematics teaching are identified in planning they are used effectively to support the teaching of mathematics, for example, Year 6 pupils described how they used a spreadsheet to explore number patterns. From the time of entry to school, pupils are encouraged to talk about their work, explain their methods

and ways of working, which they do with increasing confidence and the use of precise, appropriate mathematical vocabulary, which is very well modelled by teachers. They develop a range of mental calculation skills, and are able to apply them in a range of contexts, communicating their methods clearly. In one Year 2 lesson, the pupils role-played buying items from a toyshop, with the teacher as shopkeeper. One child bought three balls at 30p each and worked out change from £1.00 and explained her method thus: "I know that three plus three plus three is nine, so thirty plus thirty plus thirty is ninety, then 90p plus 10p equals £1.00, so there is 10p change". This was done confidently and fluently with no prompting from the teacher.

- 93 The teaching of problem solving skills is done systematically throughout the school, and opportunities for solving real life problems are planned into mathematics lessons. Pupils are taught how to identify and understand problems, emphasising key words, to plan their methods carefully, monitor progress and review solutions. Carefully planned plenary sessions give pupils the chance to reflect on and evaluate the work that they have been doing during the lesson, and to think about what has helped them to learn and what they might do to improve. Their social skills are developed through discussion in whole class work, paired work and collaborative group work. Classroom assistants are deployed well, giving well planned support to targeted pupils with special educational needs and small groups of less able pupils: as a result, they are able to make good progress.
- 94 Leadership and management of the subject are very good and ensure clear direction for mathematics. There are two mathematics subject leaders, one for the infants and one for the juniors. Both have attended extensive, locally provided National Numeracy Strategy training and used this to influence teaching and learning throughout the school. This has resulted in improvements in the teaching and learning of mathematics and a rise in standards. The opportunity to attend this highly regarded training will be extended to as many teachers in the school as possible. Together with the senior management team, the subject leaders have analysed data to target particular pupils for extra teaching, which has raised standards. There are regular meetings with the member of the school's governing body with responsibility for numeracy. The subject is well resourced and this has a positive impact on teaching and learning, for instance, the use of whiteboards enables teachers to easily and quickly assess all pupils' responses and correct any mistakes quickly without necessarily singling a pupil out. Assessment of pupils' work and comparing it to other pupils' work has improved since the last inspection, due to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. A portfolio of pupils' work exemplifies the Key Objectives, rather than National Curriculum levels, as national guidance for this has been provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Areas for development are:
- develop medium term planning and strengthen links with information and communication technology in plans and links with other subjects;
 - review the marking policy in mathematics so that pupils become aware of what they need to do to improve.
- 95 These are identified in the current mathematics action plan.

SCIENCE

- 96 In 2001, the National Curriculum tests indicated standards above average compared with schools nationally and average when compared with similar schools. Standards have continued to rise broadly in line with the national trend over the last four years. The teacher assessments of Year 2 pupils last year show that they have achieved standards above the national average.

- 97 Scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and discussions with pupils indicate levels of attainment at the end of Year 2 to be above average. Levels of attainment are well above average at the end of Year 6, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, and achieve appropriate levels in relation to their prior attainment. During the inspection no discernible differences to the progress of boys and girls was observed. Pupils enter full time education with attainment well above the national average and, by Year 6, achieve similar standards. However, more especially in Years 1 and 2 but also on occasions throughout Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, the achievement of some of the pupils is not as high on occasions as it could be, as in some lessons they get only limited opportunities to investigate science independently, or to do their own research using computers or books. Also, the more able pupils get very few opportunities to set up and devise their own investigations less directed by the teacher. The school has already recognised this as an area for further development and addressed this issue in the school improvement plan.
- 98 Since the previous inspection there has been an increased emphasis on learning through enquiry and practical investigation. This means that all pupils, including those who are less confident in reading and writing, have the same opportunities to learn science. A particular strength of the subject is the amount of planned time given to the teaching of science throughout the school. As observed in Year 3, pupils have a very confident spoken language, for example talking about the classification of animals without backbones. Pupils have a good understanding of how to turn ideas into a form that can be investigated, and the need for a fair test when comparing results. Pupils confidently make hypotheses about how additional weight applied to a sinking object will have the effect of making the object fall faster from a given height. Well prepared tasks are very successfully aimed at developing pupils' understanding, knowledge and skills across all areas of the science curriculum. This is suitably enhanced by the teacher's high quality, challenging questions, as observed in Year 5 that very successfully developed pupils' scientific vocabulary and deeper understanding of specific scientific ideas.
- 99 Most pupils' writing accurately records simple facts and experimental occurrences in precise detail. Scientific explanations about why events occur are less well developed. Pupils draw on good general knowledge to suggest lines of investigation and carry out detailed observations at regular intervals. However, methods of recording are usually indicated by the class teacher, which restricts the development of individual recording skills.
- 100 Teaching in Year 1 and Year 2 is sound overall with some good aspects. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were finding out about forces. They were enthusiastic and keen to contribute, a feature of all lessons observed. Skilfully guided by the class teacher, they suggested ways in which a piece of flat card could be shaped in order to assist faster propulsion across the classroom when thrown. They were quick to point out how the test could be made fairer by ensuring all the shaped pieces of card started from the same position. Pupils' good understanding and skills in cutting, measuring and recording were evident during subsequent group work. Pupils concentrated throughout, and a scientific approach encouraged by the teacher insisting that pupils recorded their results carefully.
- 101 Teaching in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is good overall with some excellent teaching. Two lessons observed in these year groups were of very good quality, and led to pupils learning very effectively. In each case, the teacher's own knowledge of underlying scientific principles meant they could respond to pupils' questions confidently, and move their learning forward at a rapid rate. As a result of this consistently effective teaching, pupils worked at a high level, and learned much about key scientific ideas and processes. During a carefully

structured lesson in Year 4, pupils offered lots of ideas about the direct relationship between the shapes of objects of equal weight and their speed of sinking. Prompted skilfully by the teacher, they refined their ideas and devised their own tests. Throughout the lesson, the teacher gave pupils time to think and rephrase their suggestions. They displayed a very good understanding of fair testing; suggesting factors should be constant to allow only one aspect of the test to vary.

- 102 An excellent lesson in Year 5 produced a real 'buzz' of enjoyment and outstanding learning for all pupils. Using her excellent motivational skills, the teacher enabled learning to move very briskly as pupils working in groups studied plants and their need for light and water. The tasks were well adapted to pupils' existing levels of knowledge and understanding, and some pupils received good additional support from well directed additional adult support. Pupils showed very good understanding as the lesson progressed. The teacher skilfully challenged pupils for ideas for an experiment to compare the light and warmth needs of a plant. Pupils discussed possibilities with an excellent level of maturity. Subtle differences in the task or the reference material meant all pupils could tackle the investigations at their own level. The pupils' very good level of understanding of how the principles they were investigating applied to real life was illustrated by comments such as "in rain forests, roots need to grow above ground to collect water". The use of sensors to log changes in temperature, light and a digital microscope to observe root systems and the access to research information via the internet had a dramatic effect on the high quality of learning achieved by all pupils. There is a developing confidence in the understanding and experimental and investigative work, as observed in the medium term planning. Teaching is very good when learning objectives are specific and shared with the pupils. Revisiting the lesson objectives at the end of the lesson, consolidates the knowledge gained. Where teachers' subject knowledge is less secure, pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to change suggestions into a form of their own investigation, and all preparation, including experimental procedures, is undertaken by the class teacher.
- 103 Pupils' work books contain a wide variety of well presented work, and the quality of presentation, particularly their drawings, is very good throughout the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise and consolidate literacy and numeracy skills in science. They record using charts and frequently use specific scientific terms in their spoken and written language. They use a range of measuring instruments such as rulers, scales and Newton meters, and understand the need for reading measurements accurately.
- 104 The subject is well managed by enthusiastic co-ordinators, who work hard to support teaching throughout the school. Since the previous inspection, time has been allocated for the co-ordinators to review planning and prepare a new policy for staff discussion and approval. The use of computers to support learning in science is limited. The subject action plan is appropriate, and meets the need to support and improve standards of achievement to higher levels. The quality and range of scientific displays in most classrooms effectively reflects the subject's developing ethos.

ART AND DESIGN

- 105 By the end of the infants and the juniors, attainment is above the national expectation, with a considerable number of pupils attaining even higher standards and these pupils are achieving as they should. However, the subject leader is aware that achievement of some pupils could be higher and the school had identified art and design on its school improvement plan as an area requiring more professional development, including a stronger use of sketch books and more outside visits. The good displays throughout the school indicate the level of art work which is produced, which staff exhibit with care and creativity.

- 106 Year 1 pupils use a range of techniques, which continue to develop the creative foundations laid in Reception. They undertake observational drawing of natural and man-made objects, from shells to teddy bears. They work with paint, colour mixing secondary colours and experimenting with brush strokes. Pupils in Year 1 also study William Morris, using press printing techniques to produce flower prints and designs. Clay work and textile weaving is also on display. Year 2 pupils concentrate on the work of Georges Seurat and Robert Delaunay. Both Year 2 classrooms have exciting displays of pupil's work based on Seurat's pictures 'A Sunday afternoon on La Grande Tatte' and 'Bathers at Asnieres' and, during the inspection period, both classes produced complementary colour studies based on Delaunay's work. Pencil work is emphasised in Year 2 and pupils do observational drawings from memory, black and white pencil patterns as well as pencil and paint studies of leaves.
- 107 Standards in paint work are further developed with colour mixing and depictions of facial expression whilst collage work with pasta, card and metallic materials extends the range of media used.
- 108 In the juniors, Year 3 study the works of Jean Miro and create colourful studies based on his work, using similar colours, shapes, figures and paint techniques. They continue the development of drawing techniques, using a variety of mark-making tools whilst work with paint progresses into studies of hints and shades of one hue. Year 4 pupils undertake extensive studies of 'Plant Art', using a range of media and techniques including paint, crayon, felt pen, as well as enlargement and observational drawing. These pupils study the works of Van Gogh and develop still life painting techniques using toys as models. Year 5 pupils undertake further studies of artists and designers, namely Picasso and William Morris and make good use of information and communication technology to research background knowledge of the artists. They also use Word's 'Draw' tool and Microsoft 'Publisher' to create good art works. By the end of Year 6, pupils have studied Bridget Riley, screen printing and are using various clay techniques with confidence, using a good vocabulary such as slip, firing, coil and thumb pots.
- 109 In Year 2, pupils combine Art and Literacy to retell stories and legends in paint and crayon, such as the 'Yim Sung' story and the tale of 'The turtle who danced with a crane' and further developing techniques acquired earlier. Year 5 pupils were able to make connections with their history topics, depicting Tudor kings in textile collage, whilst also developing printing techniques, using string designs based on Egyptology.
- 110 In the one lesson observation that took place during the inspection period, pupils were keen to participate and share their existing knowledge. They were attentive and responsive to instructions and moved from listening to practical work smoothly. There was a good ethos of co-operation in the class, all pupils wearing protective shirts and helping each other to button up the back. All pupils were supported well by the class teacher and the classroom assistant.
- 111 From the limited observation but as a result of scrutiny of displays, portfolios and sketch books, teaching was judged to be good. Planning was good and the teacher had high expectations of the pupils in terms of behaviour and skill development. Resources provision was well managed and pupils were delighted with their finished work.
- 112 The co-ordinator has had responsibility for the subject for two years. She can see that 2D and 3D work has improved since the last inspection. She feels that Art has a large impact on the school. This can be evidenced for the attractive displays throughout all buildings. The comprehensive policy and scheme of work is about to be revised. This will be implemented from September. The existing policy supports staff by explaining art techniques, listing

resources including useful books and posters that are available in school, addresses the needs of able children, gives health and safety guidelines and clearly details progress in skills and vocabulary in areas of art.

- 113 The co-ordinator monitors mid-term planning and sketch books throughout the school but, as yet, does not support staff in classrooms. Art and Design is identified on the School Improvement Plan for 2002/03 and it is hoped further professional development will be held as part of this. All pupils in school contributed well to the playground art and the corridor ceramic mural of Noah's Ark, being undertaken with students from Newman College.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 114 Pupils' attainment at the time of the last inspection was in line with what is expected for pupils at the end of Year 2, but at the end of Year 6, standards were below national average and progress was unsatisfactory. The improvement of design and technology was a key issue in the last inspection report. Standards throughout the school have risen significantly since then and are currently well above those expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs are now achieving soundly. This represents a very good improvement. This is due to the guidance from teachers on what should be taught and the very good leadership and management of the subject leader, who has ensured that this subject has a high profile in school. Two lessons were seen: one in Year 1 and the other in Year 5, therefore judgements are also based on the analysis of pupils' work in books and on display, and through discussion with pupils, teachers and the subject leader. In both lessons seen, the teaching was good.
- 115 During Years 1 and 2, pupils generate and develop ideas through talking about what they want their design to achieve, handling materials and drawing their designs. They work with a variety of materials and components: paper, textiles, construction kits, clay and food. They try out different ideas and use various techniques such as measuring, cutting with scissors, and joining materials and components. They investigate and evaluate everyday tools and objects, matching the materials used to the needs of the users. By the end of Year 2 they are able to reflect on their work and suggest improvements. Year 2 pupils had made wheeled land yachts using reclaimed materials and were to evaluate them to establish whether they fulfilled the design brief, using various tests. There are beautiful displays in infant classrooms and shared areas demonstrating the links between subjects identified in planning. For example, prints made in art lessons had been developed into designs for clay tiles; in another classroom, where pupils are studying Judaism, decorated mezuzah cases demonstrated how pupils fold and join card.
- 116 By the end of Year 6 pupils use a variety of information sources, including the Internet, for research and are able to clarify their ideas through drawing and discussing. They explore, develop and communicate their designs, modelling ideas in a variety of ways. They have a clear idea of the design process as a cycle, which enables improvement of their designs. In a Year 5 classroom, the design cycle was displayed, illustrated by pupils' extremely attractive drawn designs, and photographs of pupils working at the various stages, which helped them to reflect on their work. They understand how structures can be strengthened and how simple mechanisms are used to produce different types of movement. Pneumatic models employing syringes were on display in a Year 3 classroom, which when combined with simple levers, produced models, which moved in interesting ways. Pupils use an increasing variety of materials, components and techniques such as more accurate measuring and marking out, cutting using a variety of tools and applying finishes. They evaluate their designs using appropriate tests.

- 117 There is an extra curricular club called "Design Challenge", organised by the deputy headteacher who is the subject leader, which requires pupils to accept the challenge of designing an item with given specifications. The aim is to provide an enjoyable learning experience for pupils, which can be shared with friends and families, and which stretches the more able pupils. At the time of the inspection, pupils of all ages had brought to school, string puppets, which they had made at home, with or without help. The brief had been to make a string puppet, which could perform several movements. The designers, who in some cases were pairs of pupils, demonstrated each puppet. Pupils were required to talk about their puppets and their main features. Each one was valued and received a round of applause while photographs were taken. Each pupil will receive a certificate for entering. The models ranged from simple card models joined with spit pins, to those with complex joints and sophisticated movement, and were all very different from one another. There was a very lively atmosphere, with pupils taking a great deal of interest in each other's work. Other design challenges have included designing and making a robot which can lift a mince pie to a height of 20 centimetres, a device that can push an opponent out of a Sumo ring, and a machine that can pick up a spoon and place it in a mug 15 centimetres away. On a wall of the corridor between the schools infant and junior departments, there is a beautiful ceramic relief of Noah's Ark, which is an ongoing work assisted by students from a local college of education. Pupils design and make ceramic mosaic tiles, which depict the animal and the ark. The aim is that every pupil in the school is directly involved in working on this relief, leaving a permanent record of their contribution
- 118 Leadership and management of design and technology are very good. The subject has a very high profile in school, which abounds with high quality pupils' work. The energetic and very effective subject leader describes the improvements in the subject as a "revolution". This situation has been brought about and is maintained by:
- support for planning and teaching by the subject leader;
 - support from the local education authority adviser for staff in design and technology "surgeries";
 - the subject leader is a resident expert to coach teachers in the more challenging areas of the design and technology curriculum;
 - regular monitoring and evaluation of teaching, pupils' work;
 - support for teachers through team teaching;
 - the deputy headteacher's passion for the subject and the way he has inspired class teachers and pupils to work for improvement.
- 119 Teachers know, because of the guidance provided, what to expect of more able, average and less able pupils in each year group. Also, pupils with exceptional ability in design and technology have been identified. A portfolio of pupils' work and photographs of pupils working at each level, effectively enable moderation. Assessment of design and technology, and the development of planning and teaching which challenges higher attaining pupils, are areas for development: these have been identified in the current action plan.

GEOGRAPHY

- 120 At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment, at the end of Years 2 and 6, was in line with the national average. Currently, standards are above those expected nationally. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection. This is mainly due to an improvement in the quality of teaching. This has not yet had time to give even higher standards by the time pupils leave the school and pupils' achievements, on occasions, are not as high as they could be. The school has recognised this and the subject leader is planning to set up assessment procedures to ensure that different abilities of pupils are always

challenged. However, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are attaining very well and achieving soundly in a number of areas by the time they leave the school. For example, in the very good use they make of the school grounds and their immediate locality to develop pupils' very good geographical and fieldwork skills, laying firm foundations for the study of localities elsewhere.

- 121 No lessons were observed in the infants, so judgements are based on observations of the pupils' work and an interview with the subject leaders. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge of the immediate locality, and are demonstrating growing awareness of places beyond their own locality, with the help of "Swin the Duck". Swin is a toy, which accompanies the pupils when they go on holiday and return with a photograph of him at the destination, which is then marked on a map of Europe and a world map. This helps pupils to appreciate different environments, which they describe. They find out about living on the imaginary island of Struay, learning that other people have a very different way of life than themselves. They use information and communication technology well to create imaginary towns of their own, using and applying geographical skills and knowledge.
- 122 By the end of Year 6, pupils' use of geographical terminology has developed well. This is a result of effective demonstrations by teachers. Pupils are able to describe human and physical processes and more able pupils are beginning to offer explanations for these in response to teacher questions. There are good opportunities in lessons for links with other subjects, for example, in one very good lesson about land use, the pupils spontaneously used knowledge from history lessons to help them with research; they also used computers to get information from the Internet. During the same lesson, a pupil realised that his grandfather had some local knowledge which could help the research and the teacher seized the opportunity to further strengthen home school relationships by suggesting that he might consider coming into school to talk to the class. Pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 use a variety of secondary sources for research, including Ordnance Survey maps, aerial photographs and historical and other documents. Pupils use their geographical knowledge in an extended writing project to describe landscapes and environments, which as a result, though fictitious, were realistic and exciting. Teaching in geography enables development of pupils' skills of citizenship. For example, a discussion was started by a pupil in a Year 3 class, who expressed deep concern about the fate of the local River Stour, and what would happen if pollution of it was allowed to continue. The teacher explained what might be done to remedy it. In this way, it was illustrated to the pupils how people can both damage and improve the environment.
- 123 In the three lessons seen, teaching was very good, starting with a recap on previous lessons, and sharing and explaining the learning objectives, so that the pupils were clear about what was expected, and could see how the lesson would build on prior learning. Lessons are often based on first hand experience, with teachers organising visits in order to enable pupils to study a range of places, and allow comparisons with pupils' own locality. There is increasing use of secondary information for research, with the more able pupils being challenged by more complex texts, which is enabled by their very good reading skills. Pupils work collaboratively, allocating tasks, discussing evidence with each other and asking the teacher for clarification and listening intently. This develops their social skills. Throughout the school, work in geography is enhanced by very attractive displays, which support pupils' learning and value the work they have done. In a Year 6 classroom there was a very good display of a world map showing events taking place this year, such as the world football cup, the British queen's jubilee and the winter Olympics.
- 124 Two subject leaders lead and manage developments in geography well. They are enthusiastic about the subject and have ideas for further development, which have been formulated into a

development plan. Some of the work has started and a review of the current guidance for teachers on what should be taught is almost complete. Areas for development are:

- set up a system for assessing and tracking pupils' progress in geography to further ensure that all groups of pupils are appropriately challenged;
- develop a portfolio of pupils' work so that assessment of pupils is supported;
- establish procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning;
- strengthen links with information and communication technology to improve pupils' research capability.

125 These are identified in the current geography action plan.

HISTORY

126 Standards have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' attainment is now well above average at the ages of seven and 11 and pupils are achieving as they should and maintaining their high standards throughout. The support given to pupils with special educational needs by classroom assistants helps them to take an equal part in lessons. Teachers help pupils to develop their historical writing by linking it very closely to their literacy lessons. Pupils learn how to use different types of reference material to plan their writing from a young age. In Year 2 they are very interested in looking at pictures and descriptions of old bicycles. Through discussion in lessons with the teacher and by further reading and talking in groups they are able to place different models accurately on a time line from 1790 to the present day. This also reinforces their understanding of large numbers. They use appropriate vocabulary like "mechanism" and "freewheel" and describe why a reflector is used now but not when bicycles were first invented.

127 The writing of pupils in the infants reveals good knowledge of the changes that occur over time. Pupils with special educational needs manage to write simple sentences but mainly they show their understanding through illustrations. In looking for clues about the age of an egg-timer pupils surmise that it is old "because of all the scratches on it." Pupils use time lines to trace historical events such as the Great Fire of London and the sequence of events from the building of the pyramids to the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamun. Pupils have a good understanding of how materials have become more durable and flexible as technology develops. Teachers provide good visual stimulus. For example in the information and communication technology room there is an excellent series of murals depicting inventions through the ages from a Morse code signaller to a satellite dish. Pupils also visit the local church to undertake an investigation into local history as part of their religious education.

128 Younger pupils in the juniors related the key historical features of a recent local trail around the school in a lesson observed. The teacher elicited good information about the buildings they had seen and their historical significance. She used their answers to draw in others so that pupils of all abilities could be involved in the lesson. Pupils asked pertinent questions themselves such as, "What is a boarding school?" Many understood the difference in status between a headmaster and a headmistress at that time. During the course of the lesson pupils learned several new technical terms relating to the period.

129 Older pupils sustain their interest in history. This is encouraged through visits to local museums and by participation in practical events like a Tudor Day. Teachers organise their own "living history" events in school where pupils take part in role-play to help them understand more about the ancient Greeks. This helps them to gain a greater sense of historical perspective for the clothes they wore and the food they might eat. More able pupils write very thoughtfully about the ideas of some of the great philosophers.

- 130 There are stimulating displays of resource material illustrating the history of the local village, and pupils themselves had produced very good material during their work on World War II in Year 6. Pupils had obviously gained a lot of factual knowledge about events during this period from local visitors and books and artefacts. They were able to use this to provide material for their own writing of diaries of evacuees. There were also good, detailed accounts of such events as the D.Day Landings and the Blitz, resulting from careful research.
- 131 It was not possible to make a judgement on teaching. The long and medium term planning is good and there is evidence in pupils' books that coverage of the National Curriculum is fulfilled. The leadership and management of the subject are good and teachers have an enthusiasm for the subject which is reflected by the pupils and shown in their work and when they talk about history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 132 Standards are rising quickly in information and communication technology, and are now above average for pupils at the end of Year 2, and well above average at the end of Year 6. Many of the improvements are new and have not yet had time to raise standards even higher by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Information and communication technology is at the heart of a great deal of learning in the school. Since the previous inspection when standards were judged as satisfactory, improvement has been very good. Much of this improvement has come in the last two years when developing provision in information and communication technology has been a main priority for the school, successfully linking government grants and parents' fund raising events, culminating in the establishment of a computer suite.
- 133 By the end of Year 2 most pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards expected for their ages. The majority of pupils have access to a computer at home; therefore the youngest pupils already know how to operate computers. They confidently work in pairs and are very keen to reinforce their knowledge and understanding. Pupils confidently use the mouse and keyboard accurately and quickly, acquiring a new range of skills at a rapid rate. Appropriate links are made with mathematics, for example when Year 1 pupils extracted information from data, confidently comparing information using their keyboard skills to write and answer suitable questions to information gained. Pupils in Year 2 continued to develop basic skills well, viewing a range of posters with a variety of generated print styles related to an invitation to a 'Street Party', and comparing these to a similar series of hand-written posters. Effective links are made with geography when pupils continued to reinforce keyboard skills by manufacturing an advertising poster for a holiday at Tenby.
- 134 By the end of Year 6, most pupils make significant gains in confidence and very good progress in their learning, developing a secure range of skills, well above the average age related expectations. Overall, the quality of teaching observed in the computer suite ranged from satisfactory to excellent and was mainly good. Very effective teaching was observed in Year 5, where most pupils confidently created a colourful poster using a range of digitally stored photographs. Very good questioning techniques contributed to pupils' very good progress, and they were encouraged to relate new learning to what they had learned previously. Brisk pace and excellent management of pupils resulted in pupils responding very well, working with great enthusiasm and confidence. Pupils saved their work to disc and used appropriate instructions to print their work and, once finished, they closed down computers correctly. Pupils use word processing and desktop publishing packages effectively to present work of very good quality. Clip art programs were well used to design covers for topic books such as 'The Invasion'. While designing their topic covers, pupils

confidently used desktop publishing techniques to adapt pictures to suit their own purpose. They accurately edit their own work and adapt the style to show they are aware of different audiences by using a variety of typefaces and layouts. The use of electronic mail is well developed. Scrutiny of work in pupils' workbooks indicates that they confidently use databases and some examples of graphs were seen where pupils had represented data in different forms such as two and three-dimensional graphs. In control technology pupils programmed apparatus to travel pathways as required, responding to a pre-set traffic light system. As observed in a Year 5 science lesson, pupils successfully used a CD-ROM to find out information about trees and plants and their respective root systems.

- 135 All pupils were successfully challenged to extend existing skills, and there were some exemplary examples of behaviour in the computer suite. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress against prior levels of attainment due to the good support provided when paired with higher attaining pupils. They are proud of their achievements and enjoy learning which is fun. Most teachers are committed to improving provision in the subject. However, a few still lack confidence and knowledge to teach whole class lessons single handed, and still rely on additional adult support. Teachers are always very supportive and encouraging, qualities that have a good effect on pupils' learning and attitude. The subject co-ordinator has developed very good strategies for teaching information and communication technology skills in whole class groups in the computer suite, and very good use is made of time and resources in these sessions. However, insufficient use is made of the computers in classrooms, particularly to extend skills to link with other subjects. The school is aware of this and the subject action plan appropriately reflects this intended development.
- 136 The subject is very well managed by a highly skilled, enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has overseen, with consistent support from colleagues, major improvements in resources, an improvement in the breadth of the curriculum, increased subject knowledge and the corresponding rapid progress in pupils' understanding. The well attended lunchtime computer club has a very positive effect on the high standards being achieved, with many pupils confidently designing their own website. New monitoring and assessment procedures are at an advanced stage of development, and soon to be used to monitor pupils' progress. The subject co-ordinator is very aware of the strengths and weaknesses within the subject. The school's capacity for continued further improvement is very good. All these factors have had a very good effect on raising pupils' standards.

MUSIC

- 137 The school has a strong musical tradition and since the last inspection much has been done to improve the quality of teaching and learning of music throughout the school. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment is above that expected. By the end of Year 6, the standard of music is well above the nationally expected level. Pupils, including those with special educational needs are developing their skills well throughout the school, achieving as they should and maintaining good and very good standards.
- 138 By the end of Year 2, pupils have opportunity to listen to and appreciate a wide variety of music from all over the world. Good use is made of regular collective worship times to promote pupils' musical awareness. An example of this was listening to Handel's 'Water Music' during an assembly on Water. They are able to recognise many instruments of the orchestra, are familiar with the much improved instruments in the school and are aware that they can use their voices as instruments. Singing has developed significantly throughout the school since the last inspection and during assemblies, pupils in Year 2 sing clearly and with high levels of enthusiasm. Pupils have many opportunities to use the wide range of musical instruments during their time in the infants and are introduced to simple musical terms.

- 139 By the end of Year 6, pupils have continued to improve their musical skills. They listen to excerpts of music before and after collective worship and background knowledge about the composer is displayed in classrooms. Pupils are given opportunity to listen to music from different cultures. For example, Year 4 pupils heard rain dance music created by North American Indians and Year 6 pupils listened to Gamelan music from Indonesia. Pupils understand the meaning of vocabulary and notation such as minim, quaver and crochet and understand the role of a conductor in a musical performance. In a lesson spent composing scores, pupils listened to music, named instruments and then recorded their composition using what they considered to be appropriate symbols. Year 3 pupils have been studying the music of Greig's 'Peer Gynt Suite', contrasting 'Morning Mood' and 'Death of Ase'. A Year 6 class, using a variety of tuned and untuned instruments, replicated the Gamelan music, effectively and competently, interweaving four layers of music. Pupils were able to constructively evaluate their performances and suggested how it might be improved using building up and fading out of their playing. Although no information and communication technology was seen in music lessons during the inspection week, display evidence indicates that 'Music Explorer' is used in Years 3 and 5 for composition work. This is an area which the co-ordinator wishes to develop further.
- 140 During the inspection, relatively little teaching was observed and the standard of this varied from satisfactory to very good. The school makes great use of peripatetic music staff who visit the school daily, teaching pupils on a wide variety of instruments. Good use is made of the Music hut for most of this teaching. There is also a school band. Other visiting musicians include a wind band, a string orchestra and Dudley Live Music, a jazz group who also sang and told stories. Class teachers adhere to a policy and scheme of work that is recent and relevant and provides help to non specialist teachers. Transition between the Foundation and Years 1 to 6 is addressed using the Dudley Framework. As yet, pupils are not assessed for their musical abilities. However, procedures are in place for this to start shortly.
- 141 Resources have greatly improved since the last inspection. The school has an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator supported by an infant music co-ordinator. Staff meetings have been held to discuss the music curriculum, and the development of music across the school is monitored to ensure breadth and balance. The co-ordinator is given curriculum time and this has been used to support and monitor teaching in some classes. The school takes an active part in musical occasions in the community. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 participate in an annual music festival, whilst older pupils take part in Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Summer celebrations. The school choir is open to all pupils from years 4 – 6 and there is also an auditioned Chamber Choir. Both are very active and have sung in many festivals and church services including one in Worcester Cathedral. The quality of extra-curricular music is a strength of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 142 It was not possible to observe lessons in all aspects of physical education. However, teachers' plans indicate that the full range of activities takes place and the statutory programmes of study are taught. A broad and balanced programme has been devised that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- 143 In all the lessons seen, where dance took place, attainment was judged to be above that expected for pupils' ages. As pupils' level of attainment in physical education on entry to the school is in line with that expected for their ages, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are therefore achieving well in dance. Pupils are able to create and

perform activities well using a range of movement patterns. They are able to practise and refine their performances as the lesson proceeds. Many pupils interpret the theme and the music provided with a strong element of individual flair. For example, this was seen to good effect in a lesson for pupils in Year 2. Pupils were depicting life in the sea. They worked together well, taking appropriate dance steps, as they imitated the flow and movement of a shoal of fish. When the shark was in the vicinity, pupils demonstrated fear and anxiety not only in their movements but also with facial expressions. All enjoyed their individual contributions.

- 144 Attainment in games is in line with that expected for pupils' ages and pupils are achieving soundly. Teachers' records indicate that most pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school and some much further indicating that their attainment is in line with that expected.
- 145 The teaching seen was mainly good and occasionally excellent. Teachers have very good class management skills, they inspire pupils to give of their best and improve their performance. Teachers are also able to demonstrate techniques well and get pupils to analyse and discuss each other's work. For example, this was seen to very good effect in a dance lesson for pupils in Year 5. Pupils worked in groups, demonstrating the emotions of conflict and opposition by enacting the animosity between the two families in Romeo and Juliet. Pupils demonstrated an analytical sense above that expected for their age, as they confidently explained the strengths and weaknesses in a demonstration given by another group. Teachers plan well, ensuring that lessons have an appropriate warming up activity and a good warming down activity at the end.
- 146 The subject leader has ensured that the subject has a good policy and scheme of work. She has developed the subject well and supported other teachers by setting up training opportunities in dance and games. For example, she has enabled two teachers to become football coaches, others have been on local courses to gain skills in dance and orienteering. She has developed extra-curricular activities in football, basketball, judo, netball, cricket, athletics and cross-country. She has raised money and obtained grants and awards to ensure that some of these activities get the support of a professional coach. The pupils participate in a good number of competitive activities against other schools. For example, in football, netball and athletics, they have recently become league winners in football in the Stourbridge area and have received the West Midlands Fair Play Award. A good range of outdoor and adventurous activities are provided for pupils in Year 6 during their annual residential visit, where they participate in abseiling and canoeing. Orienteering takes place on the school grounds.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 147 Work observed in lessons and in pupils' books show that they are attaining higher standards than that expected with the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and the higher ability pupils do very well in their writing. Throughout the school, pupils are maintaining good standards. This is a good improvement on the standards attained in the last inspection. This is mainly because of an improvement in the quality of the teaching. For example, it was reported in the last inspection that in a number of lessons pace was not vigorous, tasks not sufficiently demanding and pupils made limited progress. This is not the case now. However, the improvements have not been in place long enough to bring even higher standards and even greater achievement by the time pupils leave the school. All pupils show confidence and fluency in discussing ideas about religion in their lessons. In a discussion on Bible stories they had recently heard pupils in Year 2 were able to discuss how people show their love for

God. They are able to understand ideas such as “material possessions” and they have opinions on the best ways to worship God. Prompted by the teacher’s questions they engaged in a good level of debate during which they reflected on the school motto, “Share and care.” Pupils with special educational needs were able to participate in the discussion aided by classroom assistants.

- 148 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 express their rules for a Christian in brief but accurate sentences. They similarly show a good understanding of the rules of other faiths such as Judaism, using correct terminology. Pupils show a clear sense of understanding the moral codes necessary to live a good life. They devise their own expressions to describe God’s gifts to the world. “If I were a butterfly I would thank God for my beautiful patterned wings.” They write about famous people who have cared for others, such as Doctor Barnardo.
- 149 Pupils in Years 3 to 6 write with some sophistication about the leadership qualities of Jesus and are able to put their ideas into modern phraseology. “He is never too busy to see anyone.” Their presentation of written work is often very good such as when they set out their ideas for love and respect in the home within the frame of a heart. The study of different faiths throughout the school helps pupils to understand the variety and richness of world religions. In Year 6 there is some very thoughtful writing about the different views of God that exist in different faiths.
- 150 Pupils in all year groups show very good debating skills which they sustain over long periods. They have good attitudes to learning and they listen to others during group work, often modifying their ideas as a result. Teachers keep pupils with special educational needs involved by prompting them in lessons with suitable questions and by providing them with helpful work sheets.
- 151 The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6. Not enough lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 to make a judgement. Learning intentions are very clear to the pupils who like to be involved in discussions. Teachers are good at using experiences close to pupils’ own understanding to relate difficult ideas. For instance, the teacher used the example of a recent visit from a large bee to the classroom to illustrate the dilemma of protecting creatures that are often intimidating. Teachers also provide good resource material such as posters and artefacts to engage pupils in discussion about the symbols important to Sikhs. Teachers skilfully use the ideas generated by pupils to lead them on to deeper thoughts. The only weakness in teaching is that a lack of structure in some tasks. If this occurs towards the end of a long lesson, pupils lose direction and impetus after a very good start.
- 152 The leadership and management of religious education are good. The scheme of work is good but assessment is at an early stage of development. There is only limited use of computers to support learning. There are good links with personal, social and health education, and this helps pupils to develop their skills in decision-making based on good moral understanding. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils’ personal development. There have been good improvements since the last inspection.