

INSPECTION REPORT

HURST HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Coseley, Bilston

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103825

Headteacher: Mr E Tibble

Reporting inspector: Mrs Rosemary Saul
22526

Dates of inspection: 6th-9th March 2000

Inspection number: 195448

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Paul Street Hurst Hill Coseley Bilston West Midlands
Postcode:	WV14 9AJ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Davis
Date of previous inspection:	17 th June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Rosemary Saul	Registered inspector	Art Design and technology	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? Leadership and management What should the school do to improve further?
Michael Romano	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Curriculum: Personal development and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development How well is the school led and managed? Efficiency
Michael Best	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How well are pupils taught?
Trudy Cotton	Team inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language	
Richard Evans	Team inspector	Music Religious education	How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed? Staffing, accommodation and resources Equal opportunities
Sonja Oyen	Team inspector	Under fives Information technology Geography	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Margaret Palmer	Team inspector	Science History	Curriculum: learning opportunities

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hurst Hill Primary School is a popular, larger than average primary school situated in the Coseley area of Bilston. There are 485 pupils on the roll, 250 boys and 235 girls between the ages of 4 and 11 years. Although children's attainment on entry to the school varies, overall it is in line with that expected for their ages. The pupils are from a range of social backgrounds and come from the residential area of mixed housing surrounding the school. The numbers of pupils entering and leaving the school other than at the start of their time in compulsory education and when they leave to go to secondary school is low. Approximately 13 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average.

At the time of the inspection 22 of the children in the reception class had not reached their fifth birthday. About nine per cent of the pupils are from ethnic minority groups. The largest group of ethnic minority pupils are of Indian extraction. All pupils speak English proficiently and several also speak an additional language. About 17 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and this is below the national average. Over three-quarters of these are receiving support within the school through the provision of specially adapted work and adult help. Support for the other pupils involves outside specialists. These pupils' needs include dyslexia, moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech or communication difficulties and physical difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Standards are improving. Pupils attain above average standards in English and in mathematics. There is evidence that standards in science have improved to be satisfactory at the ends of both key stages during this academic year. The quality of teaching is good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team and the governing body are providing good leadership and management which is making an important contribution to the quality of education provided and the standards pupils achieve. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are above average.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been very well implemented.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The school makes good provision for the care of its pupils.
- The school is making very good use of all the available information to identify where improvements can be made and is taking effective action to improve the quality of education provided and to raise standards.

What could be improved

- Standards in science, especially for girls at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The accommodation for the class that is presently housed in an unsatisfactory classroom.
- The use of assessment information to inform planning in the foundation subjects and for children under five.

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 1996. The quality of the curricula for design and technology and for physical education has improved from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. More opportunities are being provided for pupils to develop their investigative skills, to generate ideas, to reflect on their experiences and to make choices. The teaching of writing in Key Stage 1 has been improved. The school now has consistent assessment procedures in place relating to pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress in other subjects are being developed. The school is continuing to develop procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work. In the case of teaching the school has already identified the mechanism through which this will occur but it has not yet been fully implemented.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	C	C	C
Mathematics	D	B	C	C
Science	D	C	D	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2 in statutory tests pupils' performance was average in English and in mathematics compared with all other schools and with similar schools. In science standards were below average compared with all other schools and well below average compared with similar schools. The method by which the performance of schools is compared takes into account the numbers of pupils achieving at levels higher and lower than the expected standard. Because the proportions of pupils achieving higher than the expected standard in science were well below average, when compared with all schools, the school's overall performance in the subject is below average. When it is compared with similar schools, it is well below average.

Since 1997, at the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English have improved in line with national trends. In mathematics standards have fluctuated. The dramatic improvement in mathematics between 1997 and 1998 can be accounted for by the fact that the school participated in the national numeracy project. In 1999 although the school maintained its own standards, attainment was close to the average as national standards had improved. In science there has been an improvement since 1997. The proportion of pupils achieving the standard expected for their age has steadily risen. However, schools are compared on the basis of average points scores¹ and, when this is done, the school's performance in science was below average compared with all schools in 1997 and 1999 and well below average compared with similar schools in 1999.

At the time of this inspection, standards in English and in mathematics are above average at the ends of both key stages. This improvement over the standards achieved by pupils in last summer's national tests can be accounted for by teachers' closer monitoring of pupils' work, which led to a detailed analysis of their strengths and weaknesses in learning in English and mathematics. The outcome of this analysis has led to very effective additional support being targeted to raise standards. Inspection findings indicate that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 in science are average. This is an improvement over the national test results in 1999 and is due to the introduction of a more effective assessment system that enables teachers to follow pupils' progress closely and to ensure that the more able pupils are appropriately challenged.

Children under five are achieving sound standards overall. In information technology, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and is above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in both key stages are meeting the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. The school is on track to meet its targets for improvement in standards in English and in mathematics for 2000.

¹ The average points score provides schools with a single statistic to compare the overall grades attained by their pupils with the grades attained by pupils in another school. At Key Stages 1 and 2 the level attained by each pupil, for example in mathematics, is given a score. A Level 1 = 9 points, a Level 2 = 15 points and so on. Therefore the average points score in mathematics is worked out by adding up all the points based on the level attained by pupils and then dividing by the number of pupils who took the test. Therefore a school whose average points score for mathematics in the end of Key Stage 1 tests is greater than 15.0 is one whose pupils are performing above the level expected for their age. The average points score for Level 4, the nationally expected level for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, is 27.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

This is a very good aspect of the work of the school.

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They work hard and have very good motivation and concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good inside and outside the classroom.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They are willing to accept responsibility and enjoy working independently.
Attendance	Attendance is good. No unauthorised absences this year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection teaching was excellent in one per cent of lessons seen. It was very good in 11 per cent of lessons and good in 57 per cent of lessons. It was satisfactory in 30 per cent of lessons and unsatisfactory in one per cent. It was good in both key stages but a higher proportion of good or better teaching was seen in Key Stage 2. Strengths in the teaching are the high quality of teachers' planning where they identify clearly what it is they want pupils to learn, and teachers' high expectations of what pupils will achieve. The quality of teaching in English and in mathematics is good. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been very well implemented. Skills of literacy and of numeracy are taught well. The quality of teaching in science is good. The school meets the needs of all its pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and those who have special educational needs, well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum for children under five is good overall. The well-planned curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 meets statutory requirements. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. They receive good, appropriate support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. They are fully integrated into the life and work of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Pupils have opportunities to reflect and to consider how their behaviour and attitudes affect the lives of others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Good procedures ensure pupils' welfare and safety. Information from assessing pupils' achievement in English and in mathematics is used well to help them to make progress. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress in other curriculum subjects are being developed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are strengths of the school. The school is well organised and there are good arrangements in place to ensure that all aspects of the school's work proceed efficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective. Its members are well informed and are aware of the school's strengths and shortcomings. The governing body plays a full role in shaping the future direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a good set of procedures to find out how well it is doing and how it can improve.
The strategic use of resources	The school is well staffed. Learning resources are satisfactory and are used well. One class in Key Stage 1 is housed in unsatisfactory accommodation. The school runs efficiently and does its best to ensure that it applies the principle of best value in all its operations.

There are many strengths to the management of the school. The governing body, headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff have a shared, clear vision for the school, which informs its everyday operation.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

260 questionnaires were returned and 17 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children like coming to school Progress made by children Pupils' behaviour Standard of teaching School's approachability if there is a problem The school's high expectations that pupils will make progress The way the school is led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about pupils' progress Speed with which the school responds to parents' concerns The range of activities outside lessons Access to the lavatories for some pupils in Year R and in Key Stage 1 Arrangements for homework The use of information and communications technology in lessons The time available for pupils to eat lunch The provision for more able pupils Opportunities to come in for assemblies Information about materials to buy to support pupils at home Inequality of opportunity arising from groupings within classes

The great majority of parents are highly supportive of the school. Some individual suggestions for improvement were made. Inspectors share parents' concerns about the access to the lavatories for some pupils. However, they do not share their concerns about the way the school works with parents, the scope of extra-curricular activities, homework, the use of information and communications technology, the length of time for pupils to eat their lunches or the provision for more able pupils, opportunities for parents to come into school for assemblies, information about materials to buy to support pupils at home or groupings of pupils within classes.

Inspectors agree with parents views on pupils' liking for school, the progress made by pupils, behaviour, the standards of teaching, the high expectations teachers have with respect to the progress pupils will make, the way in which the school is led and managed and the support received by pupils with special educational needs.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the end of Key Stage 1, in the National Curriculum tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard² in reading was above the national average and the proportion of pupils reaching higher standards was well above the national average. In comparison with similar schools in England, standards in reading were above average. In writing, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard and higher standards was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards in writing were average. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard and higher standards was above the national average. In science, where standards are judged using teacher assessment and not tests, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was in line with national averages. No information comparing the performance of pupils in this school with those in similar schools is available for science.
2. At the end of Key Stage 2, in the National Curriculum tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard³ and higher standards in English was close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools in England, standards in English were average. The proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard and higher standards in mathematics were close to the national average. In comparison with similar schools, standards in mathematics were average.
3. At the end of Key Stage 2, in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in science was close to the national average but the proportion of pupils reaching higher standards was well below the national average. The method by which the performance of schools is compared takes into account the numbers of pupils achieving higher than the expected standards. Because the proportions of pupils achieving higher than expected standards were well below average, when compared with all schools, the school's performance in science is below average. When it is compared with similar schools, it is well below average.
4. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading and in mathematics is above average. These judgements reflect standards reported at the time of the last National Curriculum assessment in 1999. Standards in writing at the time of this inspection are above average. This is better than the average standards indicated at the time of the last National Curriculum tests. Standards have improved during this academic year because pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are now benefiting from a more structured approach to the teaching of writing, which the school implemented in response to a key issue for action identified in the previous inspection. The school is now targeting individual pupils to help them to raise their standards. The school's very good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy in Key Stage 1 is also helping to improve standards. In science, at the end of Key Stage 1, standards are judged to be average and this reflects the standards indicated by teachers' formal assessment.

² The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, are expected to reach Level 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

³ At Key Stage 2 the nationally expected level for pupils to reach by the end of Year 6 is Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

5. At the end of Key Stage 2, inspection findings show that pupils' attainment in English and in mathematics is above average. In both subjects these are better standards than those indicated in the last National Curriculum assessment when they were judged to be average. A factor in the improvement in standards is the school's very good implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. Teachers also have generally high expectations of what pupils will achieve. In addition, the school has also undertaken detailed analysis of pupils' performance in these subjects at the end of Key Stage 1 and in non-statutory tests. The information gained has been used to identify weaknesses in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in order to remedy them. All of these factors are making an effective contribution to raising standards in these subjects at the end of Key Stage 2.
6. Inspection findings in science show that standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are average. This is better than the standards indicated in tests in the last National Curriculum assessment when they were below the national average and well below average when compared with similar schools. The improvement can be accounted for by the school's introduction of a systematic approach to assessing pupils' achievements in Key Stage 2. Teachers are now using the information collected to take action to remedy weakness in pupils' understanding and to ensure that the more able pupils are suitably challenged and extended.
7. When standards at the time of the last inspection in 1996 are compared with those noted in this inspection, the above average standards in English have been maintained. In the last inspection report, although standards in English were reported to be above average, weaknesses were identified and these have now been addressed. Standards in mathematics have risen from average to above average. Standards in science remain unchanged.
8. This is a school where standards are generally improving. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading have risen from being close to the national average in 1997 to being above average in 1999. In writing standards have consistently been above average, although there was a slight dip in 1998 but they rose again in 1999. In mathematics standards have risen from being below average in 1997 to be in line with average in 1998 and above average in 1999. The trend for improvement in the case of mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 is very clear. The school's participation in the national numeracy project has undoubtedly had a significant positive effect on standards.
9. Examination of the school's National Curriculum assessment results using a similar approach shows a more complex picture at the end of Key Stage 2. In English standards have risen in line with national trends. In mathematics standards have fluctuated. There was a dramatic improvement between 1997, when they were below average, and 1998, when they were above average. As in Key Stage 1, a contributory factor in this substantial improvement was the school's participation in the national numeracy project. In 1999 although the school maintained its own standards, attainment was close to the average as national standards had improved. The school is seeking to further improve standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 through taking action to support pupils based on information gained from analysis of assessment data.
10. In science there has been an improvement since 1997 when attainment was below average. In 1998 and in 1999 the proportions of pupils reaching the expected standard increased as a result of the school's efforts to improve performance in this subject. The below average score arises from the fact that the proportions of pupils achieving higher than the expected standard was low. Before September 1999 the school's arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in science did not satisfactorily identify more able pupils nor monitor them to ensure that they were achieving their full potential.

The school has recently introduced a more appropriate assessment system. Improving standards in science is an action point for the school.

11. When they enter the school, children's attainment is in line with that expected for their age. By the age of five, the majority of children have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes⁴ in all the areas of learning, namely personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. By the time they leave the reception class, nearly all pupils have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes and a small minority are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum in reading, writing and number. In the last inspection no judgements were given about the attainment of children under five. Teachers' good management and the emphasis placed on developing children's self-confidence and ability to work in a group makes an important contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Teachers' effective use of the Literacy Hour and the Numeracy Hour contributes to standards achieved in these areas of learning.
12. There are strengths in all aspects of pupils' work in English. Teaching in both key stages is good. Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills of speaking and listening. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved. At the ends of both key stages pupils have good speaking and listening skills, read particularly well and have above average writing skills. Handwriting has improved since the last inspection. Standards in English make an important contribution to pupils' achievements in all areas of their work.
13. Strengths of pupils' work in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 lie in their good grasp of working with numbers. They have a good understanding of place value and use this to solve problems. They have a growing understanding of the significance of measures and units and solve simple money sums in their heads. A strength in the work of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 is their understanding of the principles of algebra. They are good at solving problems and handling data. Teaching in both key stages is good. Teachers are making good use of assessment information to support their planning in order to ensure that pupils' needs are met appropriately. This is helping pupils to achieve good standards.
14. A strength in pupils' work in science is their understanding of the need for systematic, methodical working in order to ensure that their investigations are valid. In Key Stage 1 they have good observational skills and make good records of their findings. In Key Stage 2 pupils are able to design fair tests to enable them to collect reliable data. They have a sound, logical approach to their work, are able to predict what they think will happen and refer to their predictions when discussing their findings. Teaching in both key stages is good. Teachers share the aims of the lessons with the pupils and give clear demonstrations and explanations. Pupils' contributions are valued and this helps to reinforce their learning. The emphasis placed on developing investigational and experimental work and helping pupils to record carefully and work logically is making an important contribution to the standards they achieve.
15. Pupils' attainment in literacy and numeracy is above average at the ends of both key stages. They make good use of their skills in their work in many areas of the curriculum. For example, they make good use of their literacy skills in history and in religious education. They make good use of their numeracy skills in science, design and technology, and in geography.

⁴ Desirable Learning Outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills. These will be replaced with the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.

16. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in information technology are in line with those expected. By the end of Key Stage 2, they are above those expected. Standards in information technology at the end of Key Stage 2 have risen from in line with expectations to above expectations since the last inspection. The school is participating in a local initiative to improve the use of information and communications technology to support learning and this is having a positive impact on standards achieved. A strength in pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 1 is their confidence and independence in their own capacity in operating equipment and in running simple programs. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are very confident and competent in using the computer. They have good word processing skills, they use multi-media programs to compile presentations, and they produce simple databases and present their results in spreadsheet form. They can conduct complex searches using the Internet.
17. At the ends of both key stages, standards achieved by pupils in religious education are meeting the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop sound knowledge and understanding of the importance of festivals, religious traditions and know a range of religious stories. In Key Stage 2 they develop satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, practices and important personalities in Christianity, Islam and Judaism and to a lesser extent in Hinduism and Sikhism. In Key Stage 2 work on discussing how people's inconsiderate behaviour affects others makes an important contribution to pupils' moral development.
18. Pupils are making satisfactory progress in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education in both key stages. In art, they make good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.
19. Pupils from ethnic minorities and those for whom English is an additional language are spread fairly evenly through the different pupil ability groups. They make good progress with their learning, particularly with their speaking and reading. They achieve similar standards to the other pupils in the school. Teachers have similar expectations to those for all pupils as to the progress they make and the standards they achieve. Pupils for whom English is an additional language speak English confidently and competently and join in freely with discussions. Younger pupils can ask and answer questions and contribute to learning in the classroom. Older pupils use well-constructed sentences and speak freely. Their contributions to class discussions are valued.
20. There is a wide range of needs amongst pupils identified as having special educational needs. The provision for these pupils is good and they make good progress when they are working in class lessons and when they are withdrawn for extra support. They show good motivation to learn. Work in lessons where pupils are withdrawn is well matched to their needs and reflects targets on their individual education plans. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving good standards relative to their prior attainment and are making good progress, especially in reading.
21. No gifted or talented pupils have been identified at present but teachers are aware of the need to provide suitable challenge for very able pupils in English and in mathematics.
22. Analysis of the results of National Curriculum assessment over recent years shows that at the end of Key Stage 1 there are only small differences between the performances of boys and girls. Girls are slightly better than boys in reading and writing. This is in line with national trends. At the end of Key Stage 2 there is little difference between the performance of boys and girls in English but boys are doing better than girls in mathematics and in science. The school has recorded that the differences in performance between boys and girls in mathematics is disappearing but that in science

remains. The improvement of the performance of girls in science has been identified as an action point for this inspection.

23. The school has set itself targets for improvement in English and in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. It exceeded its targets in 1999 and at the time of the inspection it was apparent that targets for 2000 would be easily met. At the time they were set, the targets were appropriate but the school's rate of improvement in these subjects has been greater than expected.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

24. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are very good. The school's caring, supportive ethos which provides a calm, purposeful place to learn makes a significant contribution to this.
25. Since the last inspection, pupils' attitudes and behaviour have continued to be a strength of the school. Parents value this aspect of the school's work highly.
26. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. In lessons, they concentrate very well. They listen very carefully, show good appreciation of each other's efforts and are keen and always interested in what the teachers say. Pupils say they enjoy lessons, and look forward to participating in the good range of extra-curricular clubs that take place at lunchtime and after school.
27. Pupils' behaviour is generally very good in lessons, the playground and dining hall. Since the last inspection the school has formalised and revised its behaviour policy. Staff and pupils are clear about the expectations of pupils' behaviour. There are rewards and sanctions that are consistently applied.
28. Pupils' personal and social development are very good. There are very good relationships within the school. There is a high level of mutual respect between pupils and between adults and pupils. Around the school pupils are polite, courteous to visitors and staff. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or sexist or racist behaviour. Pupils are keen to take responsibility and act as prefects, and as members of the school council, and carry out various tasks for teachers. They take advantage of opportunities to show a caring and responsible attitude towards those outside school, for example collecting for national children's charities as well as local hospices. Older pupils can participate in the Trust Club where they can use and develop their information technology skills in the computer suites. They take good care of the equipment and justify teachers' faith in trusting them to work independently.
29. Pupils say they enjoy coming to school, and they are proud when parents come in to assembly to see them receive achievement certificates, or they are given a sticker by the deputy headteacher for being the "best child in the class".
30. Attendance in the school is good. There were no exclusions last year. This school year to date attendance is above the national average, with no unauthorised absence. Pupils' enthusiasm to come to school is reflected in their good attendance and punctuality. Lessons generally start and finish on time throughout the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

31. Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching in the school is good. In 99 per cent of lessons observed during the inspection the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better. Teaching was good in 57 per cent of lessons, very good in 11 per

cent and excellent in one per cent of lessons. Teaching was unsatisfactory in less than one per cent of lessons. No poor or very poor lessons were seen. The proportion of good teaching is greater than that found nationally in primary schools by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools.

32. The quality of teaching in the school makes a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and the improvement in standards. Over two-thirds of lesson observations during the inspection were in English and mathematics. In both of these subjects, teaching was good or better in over three-quarters of the lessons seen. The school's very good implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has had a significant impact in raising teachers' expectations of the standards pupils can achieve. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding in these areas of the curriculum have benefited from quality in-service training. Good quality planning has been developed which clearly identifies what pupils are to learn in each lesson. In addition to English and mathematics, this approach to planning is also evident in other curriculum areas where there is good teaching, for example in science, information technology and religious education. Although the quality of teaching is not as strong in other subject areas, it has some good features, such as teachers' subject expertise in art at Key Stage 1.
33. Teaching is good overall for children under five. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught. Teachers' expectations of what children can achieve are good and learning is well managed. In Key Stage 1 teaching is also good; over half of lessons seen were good or better, with a small number of very good lessons seen. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen in this key stage. Strengths in this key stage include the effective use of a variety of teaching strategies, the good use of support staff, and the choice of activities that enthuse and interest pupils. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good. It was good in over three-quarters of the lessons observed and very good or better in a fifth of lessons. One excellent lesson was observed. Strengths in this key stage include very good planning, very good management and high expectations of what pupils can achieve.
34. Although the quality of teaching in the school as a whole is good and it is good in both key stages, there is a higher proportion of good or better quality teaching in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1. There is good practice in this key stage that is not at present being efficiently shared by the whole school.
35. Inspection findings indicate a very close match between the quality of teaching and the quality of pupils' learning in the school. The main exception to this is in Class 1W where, despite good teaching, the quality of learning is suppressed by the cramped teaching conditions and the regular interruptions by the youngest pupils visiting the toilet area which opens directly into the teaching space. This is unsatisfactory.
36. In the best lessons, what the pupils are to learn is clearly identified in planning, the work builds effectively on pupils' previous learning and objectives are shared with pupils at the start of lessons. As seen in numeracy lessons at both key stages, pupils are interested in the tasks set for them and they apply themselves well, making good use of the time available. When they are given the opportunity, they work closely together. As observed in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils are curious and eager to find things out for themselves. They ask questions of each other and of the teacher and make suggestions as to how learning can be developed. When, for example, discussing the consequences of their behaviour in a personal and social education lesson in Year 3, pupils are confident that what they have to say is valued and can reflect on what they have learnt.
37. Where teaching is good lessons are well introduced. Teachers' instructions are clear and steps in learning are carefully outlined. Learning proceeds at a good pace and opportunities are provided for pupils to ask and respond to questions, and discuss their

work. This is seen in the under-fives, in information technology, numeracy in Year 4 and in literacy in Year 1. In these lessons tasks are interesting, well matched to the skills being taught and successful in capturing the pupils' interest and enthusiasm. Good use is made of the concluding session of the lesson to focus on what has been achieved. This was particularly evident in a number of literacy and numeracy lessons where pupils' newly developed knowledge and understanding is related back to the learning objectives.

38. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. At regular times, pupils on Stages 2 – 5⁵ of the Code of Practice⁶ work in small groups outside the classroom. Work in these lessons is well matched to need and reflects the targets set in the pupils' individual education plans. These pupils are well motivated. Pupils with special educational needs are also well supported in their class lessons where work is well planned and activities are appropriately modified to meet their needs. They are encouraged to "have a go" and are well supported by adults in achieving the targets set for them. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also well supported.
39. Children under five in the reception class are given opportunities to make choices and decisions. Work in literacy and numeracy is appropriately challenging and this is helping them to achieve the expected standards in these areas of learning by the age of five.
40. Teaching was unsatisfactory in only one lesson observed during the inspection. In this lesson, teaching time was not well used. Pupils were not sufficiently challenged and a significant amount of time was devoted to correcting minor behavioural issues. Teaching time is not always used efficiently when the withdrawal of pupils for work on computers or for additional help with literacy is not synchronised. As a result, pupils' learning experiences can be interrupted on a regular basis. In a number of lessons there was insufficient time in the concluding part of the lesson for all that was planned. This is unsatisfactory.
41. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was reported to be a strength of the school even though 14 per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. Since then the quality of teaching has improved and there is a very much lower proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers' planning has developed well. There is a much greater emphasis on identifying learning objectives that are relevant to the pupils' needs. In literacy, numeracy and information technology in particular, national initiatives have been very successfully implemented and teachers' increased expectations of what pupils can achieve are improving standards.
42. More able pupils and those who have some difficulty with reading, writing and number work are well challenged by their class work. A contributory factor to this is that teachers take into account pupils' individual needs. In the best practice, tasks are challenging yet achievable and pupils' intellectual, physical and creative effort is fully stretched. The progress in learning made by pupils in these lessons is good because teachers have a good understanding of what they can achieve. This is evident, for example, in the algebraic work being undertaken by the higher achieving mathematicians in Year 6.
43. Pupils' own knowledge of their learning is good. Throughout the school, teachers make good use of praise and encouragement. Most communicate well with their pupils. Where teachers make detailed comments when marking pupils' work, pupils say they know how

⁵ Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

⁶ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

they can improve their work. In many classes, these constructive comments help pupils to advance their learning. However, not all teachers consistently follow the school's marking policy.

44. Children under five and pupils at both key stages are very well managed. This is a strength of the school's provision because it provides a well-organised and effective working environment where the children are able to work productively and at a good pace, successfully maintaining their interest and concentration. The management of pupils at Key Stage 2 is particularly successful because the pupils know exactly what is expected of them. The purposeful working atmosphere established in lessons is the direct result of clear direction, well-organised activities and the insistence on proper work habits. This is a key factor in raising standards at the end of the key stage.
45. In the majority of lessons learning resources are effectively and efficiently used. The expertise of support staff is well used. Information technology skills are being successfully developed and introduced across the curriculum. Teachers and support staff have worked hard to master new skills in this area of the curriculum in order that they may effectively support pupils' learning.
46. The school makes good use of homework. Pupils take reading books home on a regular basis and older pupils have regular tasks to do at home. Many pupils voluntarily undertake additional research at home. The vast majority of parents feel that their children receive the right amount of homework.

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

47. The school has maintained the standards of curriculum provision observed at the time of the last inspection. Improvements have also been made. Notably, weaknesses identified in the curriculum for design and technology and physical education have been satisfactorily addressed. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, with appropriate reviews taking place in the light of the requirements of Curriculum 2000.
48. The curriculum for children under five is satisfactory. It places a strong emphasis on developing their language and literacy skills and their mathematical understanding. There is less emphasis on provision for creative development and for generally developing their independence and initiative. The quality of the curriculum is good for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. There are strengths in the well structured planning and the use of topics to link subjects. Strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information technology are very good and pupils are offered a broad range of extra-curricular activities.
49. The curriculum is broad and relevant to pupils' needs. It is generally well balanced given the high priority afforded to English and mathematics. It successfully "fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum, recognises wider curricular issues and responds to the needs of the under-fives" and "delivers a curriculum in which children learn and progress through the use of a variety of approaches and resources, including the latest technology", as stated in the school's aims. The school also satisfactorily meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
50. Throughout the school, teachers in parallel classes plan together, with subject managers and phase co-ordinators providing an overview, to ensure that pupils' work builds effectively on that done previously. The full curriculum is open to all pupils, boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. However, when pupils are withdrawn from the classroom and

regularly miss parts of lessons, for example for special educational needs support or peripatetic music tuition, this can compromise their entitlement to the full curriculum. Links with the local secondary schools are satisfactory and ensure that pupils are well prepared for their work in Key Stage 3.

51. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been very effectively introduced for the benefit of all pupils. This has positively contributed to the standards now being attained by pupils in English and mathematics. All pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 also have well planned opportunities to benefit from the information technology suites established in the school. During the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy the school has successfully maintained all foundation subjects and religious education as quality learning experiences, despite limitations of time.
52. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Through activities such as circle time, a discussion period which provides pupils with opportunities to talk over issues that face them as part of everyday life, pupils learn about themselves and their relationships with others. For example, classes address themes such as 'problem solving' at an appropriate level. Parents of pupils in Year 6 are invited to discuss the school's approach to sex education. There is also an appropriate drugs awareness education programme in place. The school regularly promotes initiatives, such as 'Healthy Eating Week' and 'Walk to School Week', and is proud to have been designated as a Health Promoting School as part of a Dudley Initiative in 1999.
53. Occasional visitors and a programme of visits enrich the curriculum and successfully promote pupils' interest and learning. For example, visits to the Selly Oak Museum and the Black Country Museum reinforce pupils' understanding of history, whilst trips to Bridgnorth and the River Stour further pupils' progress in geography. The school offers a broad range of opportunities for extra-curricular activities, including a very wide range of sports and participation in competitions, leagues and galas. The school has taken advantage of the Sports Link initiative and has formed valuable links with the wider community to enable pupils to benefit from opportunities for specialist coaching in a range of sports throughout the year, including basketball, cricket and football. Additional opportunities are offered for drama, design and technology and French. There are no extra-curricular music groups but peripatetic instrumental music tuition is available.
54. Overall the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. The school has maintained the very high standard of provision in this area reported at the last inspection. An improvement made since the last inspection is the introduction of increased opportunities for reflection, particularly in assemblies.
55. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural framework provided for the pupils by the school's teaching is very effective in providing them with the confidence, self-esteem and knowledge of expected standards from themselves and other people. This is a fundamental part of the ethos of the school and is a very good basis for achievement.
56. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. There is an appropriate daily opportunity for pupils to engage in collective worship. Arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements. Good examples were seen of class, whole school and phase assemblies where pupils were encouraged to think about having confidence in themselves, negotiating the way out of potential conflict and the difference between speaking and listening. Time is given for pupils to think through the issues raised. Good use is made of recordings of contemporary music to aid their reflection, and to provide a calm start to the assembly. A good quality whole-school assembly was seen where pupils from various religious faiths participated. Acts of collective worship make an

important contribution to the provision for pupils' spiritual development. Pupils have further opportunities to reflect in their work in art, literature and music.

57. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. Moral issues are very well dealt with as a fundamental part of the personal and social education programme. The school uses these lessons and circle time very well to address moral issues, such as bullying, caring, friendship and sharing. Pupils say they are taught right from wrong.
58. The provision for social development is very good. Adults in the school show respect for each other and for pupils and are excellent role models in their behaviour. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent, and foster a constructive environment for learning. All within the school community are equally valued, praised and recognised. This is very much part of the school ethos which encourages "hard work, care, commitment and responsibility". Pupils have opportunities to contribute to life in the school through the school council. Pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem are successfully fostered. The school's clearly understood behaviour policies make an important contribution to their social development. The Hurst Hill Charter scheme, which sets personal targets to support pupils' social and academic development, and the school's behaviour policy are particularly valued by parents for the contribution they make to pupils' social development.
59. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils are given many opportunities to learn about their own cultures and those of other times, particularly in art, history and geography lessons. There are very good examples of displays around the school about the local coal-mining heritage and other industries. Pupils visit the Black Country museum, Walsall Art Gallery, Wolverhampton Wanderers Football Club, a pantomime and a residential centre in Shrewsbury. Visitors to the school include theatre groups, magicians and sports coaches. After school clubs also contribute to the good cultural experience for the pupils.
60. The presence of pupils from a range of ethnic groups in the school makes a significant, positive contribution to the pupils' knowledge of other cultures. Asian parents come in to demonstrate cooking and painting from their own cultures. The reception class celebrated Chinese New Year. Other classes celebrate festivals such as Eid and Divali. Cultural and multi-cultural provision is good.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

61. This is an area of strength sustained since the last inspection. Parents see and value the school as a caring, family community and inspectors support this view. All teaching and non-teaching staff show a good level of care and concern for the pupils and this contributes significantly to the ethos of the school.
62. There are strengths in the care shown for pupils' personal and academic development. However, the limited use of assessment information to inform teachers' planning for children under five and in the foundation curriculum subjects for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 results in this aspect not being as effective as it might be. The attainment of children under five in the six areas of learning is recorded at the end of their pre-school term and the reception class teachers use the local education authority's baseline assessment procedures to record and analyse achievement on entry to school. However, there is no systematic recording of their progress in achieving the Desirable Learning Outcomes or recording of formal observations to help decide what children should learn next. The school is in the early stages of developing assessment systems for the foundation curriculum subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2.

63. From “starting school” in the pre-school class, pupils benefit from a caring environment that effectively supports their personal and social development. The headteacher knows each pupil and all teaching and non-teaching staff are interested in pupils as individuals. Informal chats add to the quality of support and guidance. The support for pupils with special educational needs is good. The Code of Practice is fully implemented. The school monitors the progress of pupils with special educational needs regularly. Contact with outside specialists ensures that additional help and equipment is requested when needed for these pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well supported. Their needs are assessed and their progress is monitored.
64. There are effective, good procedures in place for child protection and promoting pupils’ well being, health and safety. The school has a policy for child protection in line with local education authority guidelines and all teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of their responsibilities. New members of staff are informed about the policy as part of the induction process and there are suitable arrangements to ensure that all staff are kept up to date with child protection issues.
65. The governors and senior management team place high store on ensuring the health and safety of all who work in the school. Much is unobtrusive and central to the working of the school but there are several good features. Not least is the full-time presence of the site manager and the medical supervisor who contribute significantly to this area of the school’s work. The medical supervisor deals with all medical concerns and acts as a “friendly ear” for pupils with worries and concerns. Parents are kept well informed of all incidents and treatments and there are appropriate procedures in place to deal with medical emergencies. The site manager, in addition to ensuring the overall cleanliness and safety of the school, manages and maintains a high level of supervision of pupils at lunchtime. This adds considerably to the effectiveness of the procedures to ensure the good welfare of the pupils and also to the school’s overall care and protection measures. Effective day-to-day working practices ensure that pupils and staff are in a safe environment and all necessary checks are conducted. The school won an award as a health promoting school and there are occasional events to reinforce this, such as ‘Healthy Eating Week’.
66. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are good. The school tracks pupils’ attendance and incidences of lateness and alerts parents to the importance of the positive impact of their child’s regular attendance on their progress. Year group attendance targets are part of the Charter cards shared with parents. Pupils who have no absences are rewarded and their achievement is celebrated.
67. There are good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. The headteacher and deputy headteacher set the standard and hold high expectations of pupils’ behaviour including their respect for the school buildings and grounds. Parents have been consulted in the compilation of the behaviour policy, which provides guidelines on good and bad behaviour. Pupils are quickly reminded when they are not behaving well but the main emphasis is placed on the use of praise and acknowledgement of good behaviour. The good effect of this can be seen in the very good standard of behaviour, especially in the reception classes and at Key Stage 2, and the fact that pupils enjoy an environment predominantly free from bullying and other forms of oppressive behaviour. Incidents are dealt with promptly and are fairly and properly recorded. Pupils discuss incidents and issues in circle time as part of the personal, social and health education programme.
68. Procedures to assess pupils’ attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science are good and meet statutory National Curriculum requirements. Since the last inspection, the school has developed a systematic whole school approach to assessment and recording in these subjects, which is playing a vital part in raising standards. The

recently compiled policy gives comprehensive guidance to teachers about managing assessment and its role in helping to improve teaching and learning. Senior managers are now monitoring more rigorously the progress of different groups of pupils, such as those with special educational needs. The major focus is on the assessment of English and mathematics. Arrangements for assessing in science are only now in the process of implementation. This is an issue given that the school's standards in science as measured by performance in National Curriculum assessment at the end of Key Stage 2 is below average.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

69. The previous report found that the high quality of the school's partnership with parents made a clear contribution to the standards achieved. This included all aspects of the school's contacts with the parents: in information, reporting, activities and meetings. Since that time, the school has worked very hard to maintain and even improve its partnership with parents in the education of their children. The provision of information, close working relationships, variety of school/parent activities and easy access of parents to consult with staff at all levels, is very good. For example, before school the headteacher makes a point every morning of going out to greet pupils and to talk informally with parents. Discussions with parents in the playground indicate that the school is held in high esteem by many.
70. Parents are very supportive and appreciative of the school's aims and policies for promoting pupils' academic, social and personal progress. This was clearly shown in the response to the inspection questionnaire and in the meeting with parents prior to the inspection. For example, in the large number of questionnaires analysed, well over 90 per cent of parents said that their children liked school and made good progress. A similar number indicated that they thought that behaviour was good, and the vast majority felt that they were well informed about pupils' progress. A very small minority of parents raised issues such as the provision of homework and out-of-school activities. Evidence found during the inspection does not support these, but strongly endorses the positive views expressed by most parents.
71. The school organises a very good programme for pre-school children and their parents. A mothers and toddlers group and a playgroup meet on some afternoons each week, involving over 40 children. Children who have obtained a place at the school together with their parents attend several pre-school days before the commencement of their first term. The school's intention is to bring these activities together in a foundation "package". The school organises successful clubs for pupils to work before and after school. A breakfast snack is available at the former.
72. Good links with parents contribute well to pupils' learning. Workshop activities are organised to help parents understand what their children are learning and the way they are taught. These have included English, reading, numeracy and early years' education. Good curriculum information is sent out at the beginning of the year, and to support particular initiatives. Parents have open access to textbooks, videos and other material to help them assist in their children's learning. Parents are asked to regularly hear their children read and to fill in their reading diaries. There are three formal meetings each year when parents can discuss their children's work and progress with the staff. Parents can always arrange to meet teachers by appointment. The school organises meetings with parents whose children are particularly targeted towards raising their standards of attainment. Parents of pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English, participate as appropriate in the reviews of their education plans and progress. The school consults well with parents on matters of policy such as the home/school agreement, behaviour and homework.

73. The quality and range of information available for parents is good. Newsletters advise parents of school activities and developments, as well as celebrating achievement. The individual reports to parents give a very detailed account of the pupil's achievement and progress in learning as well as personal development and behaviour. Interim progress reports are also sent to the parents of children who are deemed to need them at a particular time.
74. A number of parents help in the classroom on a regular basis. Some of the school's trained support staff began their careers in this way. Parental support of out-of-school activities such as concerts, visits and open days is very strong. Parents are also very involved in fund-raising activities and have raised considerable sums both for the school's benefit and for its charitable work.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

75. At the time of the last inspection the quality of leadership and management was judged to be of a high standard. Good quality leadership and management remains a strength of the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision for the school, which is shared by all members of its staff and the governing body. The pupil is at the heart of this and everything the school does or plans to do is focused on improving academic standards and the quality of education provided. The school has an appropriate set of aims to guide it in its work which emphasises the development of self-esteem, respect for others and independence. The school is well on track to fulfilling its aims for its pupils.
76. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively. It manages its affairs very efficiently and there is an appropriate committee structure that ensures that everyone is kept informed. Members have been designated to take a special interest in aspects of the school's work such as the provision for pupils with special educational needs and the implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The governing body is satisfactorily informed about the curriculum through reports from subject managers. Generally all members of the governing body are well informed about the school, are aware of its strengths and shortcomings, and play a full role in shaping its future direction. The governing body is fulfilling its statutory duties.
77. The school has a good, systematic approach to planning for future development. It makes very good use of the information it gains through monitoring its own performance to help it to decide on priorities and targets for development. The plans for improvement are clear and indicate how each target will be addressed. The school has devised a good set of procedures to help it to monitor and evaluate its activities and the effectiveness of the actions taken. The analysis of available information from assessment data and from other sources is rigorous and the outcomes are used very effectively to help to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. The school has carefully analysed its performance in comparison with schools nationally. For example, it is aware of the fact that the rate of improvement in standards in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 will need to increase if standards are to remain above average and are taking appropriate steps to ensure this. This analytical approach is a strong feature in the management of the school. Good use is being made of new technology to help it in this work, for example in tracking pupils' progress in English and in mathematics.
78. An appropriate management structure has been put in place to enable all members of the school staff to share responsibility for ensuring that the school provides the highest quality of education possible and is prudently managed. Generally this structure works well. However, subject managers in key areas such as English, mathematics and

science, rely on the deputy headteacher for analysis of pupil attainment and identification of strengths and weaknesses in the subjects. Arrangements to ensure that information flows smoothly at this level have not yet been developed.

79. The school runs smoothly on a daily basis. There are clear routines, which are well understood and respected by all. The management of the provision for pupils, including those with special educational needs, who are withdrawn from their classes during lessons raises some issues. Sometimes they are withdrawn on a regular basis and this means that the class work in that lesson is missed. Although planned for, at the present time there are no arrangements for monitoring the effect of this on continuity in pupils' learning and the progress they make.
80. Arrangements for the systematic monitoring, evaluating and development of teaching are in the process of being implemented. The headteacher and the deputy headteacher have visited every classroom to monitor the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, arrangements for rigorously monitoring teaching through the school to secure uniformly high standards of teaching in every class in both key stages have not yet been systematically implemented. There is good practice in the school that is not being sufficiently shared.
81. The school is well staffed. In the previous report it was described as "favourable". There are 17 class teachers and the headteacher, his deputy and the special educational needs co-ordinator who are not class-based. Teaching staff qualifications satisfactorily match the requirements of the curriculum. There is a good mixture of experienced and more recently qualified teachers. The school has a very good induction policy, which offers full support from a mentor and the school's senior management. There is good linkage between the new teacher's training record and his/her programme of development within the school. The school also makes use of the local education authority's training programme for newly qualified teachers. Good documentation of procedures, aims and policies is available to assist teachers new to the school. All staff have appropriate job descriptions.
82. There are 12 support staff. The total hours per week for the support staff as a whole is well above the national average. A number of them have gained appropriate extra qualifications. Support staff work mostly with lower attaining pupils, supporting their learning well, particularly in group work.
83. There is a well thought out programme of staff development for teachers with a co-ordinator appointed for this purpose. Teachers' individual needs are identified and appropriate arrangements are made for them to receive in-service training. Staff development arrangements include non-teaching staff. There is a comprehensive programme for their needs. The policy for the appraisal of teachers is currently in abeyance, but is again under consideration by the governing body. Most subjects have managers, though religious education awaits a replacement appointment, and the music subject manager is on long-term absence.
84. The school is housed in a modern building, which is meticulously maintained by the site manager and his staff. There are many good features such as the large rooms used to house the community activities and the principal computer suite. Additional rooms are allocated to art, science, the library and a Key Stage 1 computer room. The expanses of wall space are very well used to display pupils' work to create an attractive and stimulating environment, except in the hall. The playgrounds are small and do not allow for ball games. The school has access to an adjoining public playing field, which has to be cleared before use. There is a small conservation area with a pond that is used for work in science.

85. The school has given considerable thought to the use of the available accommodation and has discussed the situation with the local education authority. However, there are unsatisfactory aspects to the accommodation. Currently the hall is too small to house the whole school comfortably, especially to allow parents to be present. Withdrawal rooms in Key Stage 1 are too small to allow for anything other than very small groups or one-to-one teaching. Some classrooms are small for the numbers of pupils in them and this inhibits practical work. A specially created classroom in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory for the purpose it currently serves as a class base. The room is very small and this has an adverse effect on pupils' learning. There is very little circulation space for pupils or adults. Pupils from Year R and Key Stage 1 have to pass across one end of this classroom in order to gain access to a toilet area. This disturbs the teaching and affects learning. On occasion, the smell from the lavatories is quite unpleasant and makes this room a less than attractive learning environment.
86. The quality of the provision of resources overall has a significant positive impact on pupils' learning. The school spends a good proportion of its budget on material resources. Recently it has greatly benefited from the local information technology initiative "The Dudley Grid for Learning " as part of the national programme. The provision of computers, software and associated electronic apparatus is a most valuable and well-used asset in the school. Resource provision is good in English, science, history and music, and satisfactory in all other subjects. The library is well stocked with a good range of fiction and non-fiction books. Despite also housing part of the computer suite, pupils are able to pursue their individual research there. Resources are accessible and well used to promote learning.
87. The school manages its financial affairs well. Financial control is good. There is a finance committee of governors which monitors spending regularly. It meets at least termly to consider the latest spending information against forecast. Financial planning is good. The budget takes account of the short-term priorities, mainly concerned with staffing, premises and resources as well as the longer term funding issues contained in the school improvement plan. This budget is discussed and confirmed by the full governing body. The School Improvement Plan is a well thought out document, which is costed and prioritised. Priority areas are funded from the residual once the basic staff and resources costs are allocated. The school's total income per pupil is around the national average for primary schools. This is very well used to maintain and improve the standards achieved by the school.
88. The expenditure on teachers is much lower than similar schools; expenditure on support staff is very much higher than average. This is the result of a positive decision by the school two years ago to provide a high level of classroom support, particularly in Key Stage 1 to raise standards. Key Stage 1 classes have the services of a trained nursery nurse or classroom assistant all morning. During the literacy and numeracy lessons classes in the information technology suites are supervised by classroom assistants who provide effective literacy and numeracy support for groups of six to eight pupils from each class. The school has not yet fully evaluated the effectiveness of these arrangements.
89. Special educational needs funding is well used to provide specialist input from the local education authority support service and to employ support staff. The school also employs additional special educational needs support staff from its own finances. This contributes to the high spend on support staff.
90. The school is acutely aware of the need to get "value for money" from its purchases. Grounds maintenance costs, for example, are lower than average because the school employs a person to do this rather than pay a much higher cost for "contracting out".

Buildings maintenance is very effectively carried out by the site manager, sometimes in conjunction with the grounds maintenance person. The building was observed to be very well maintained at a lower than average cost. Staff are generally well deployed. The school has maintained the effectiveness of its financial planning and control observed during the last inspection. Taking into account the attainment of pupils on entry, the standards achieved and the quality of education provided in relation to its context, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

91. In order to further raise standards and improve the good quality of education provided the governing body, senior management team and staff should:

- i) raise standards in science, especially those achieved by girls at the end of Key Stage 2;
(paragraphs 3, 10, 22 and 126-8)
- ii) make appropriate arrangements for the class that is currently housed in unsatisfactory accommodation;
(paragraphs 35 and 85)
- iii) make better use of assessment information to inform planning for children under five, in science and in the foundation curriculum subjects in Key Stages 1 and 2.
(paragraphs 62, 68, 133, 146, 154, 165, 175 and 194)

In addition, the school should also:

- ensure that the quality of teaching is of a uniformly good or better standard throughout the school (paragraph 34);
- ensure a smooth flow of information between the subject managers and the senior management team (paragraph 78);
- ensure that pupils who are withdrawn from classes receive their full curriculum entitlement and do not suffer disruption to their learning (paragraphs 40 and 50).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	131
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	11	57	31	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	485
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	79

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	43

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	39	37	76

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	34	31	36
	Girls	35	35	35
	Total	69	66	71
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	91 (80)	87 (85)	93 (90)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	30	34	34
	Girls	34	34	35
	Total	64	68	69
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	84 (83)	89 (84)	91 (83)
	National	82 (80)	80 (79)	86 (85)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	34	26	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	29
	Girls	21	19	19
	Total	43	42	48
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	72 (64)	70 (67)	80 (64)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	14	23	18
	Girls	19	19	17
	Total	33	42	35
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	55 (59)	70 (72)	58 (65)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	6
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	19
Pakistani	4
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	446
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	20
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.25
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	397

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a

Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

N/a = not applicable

Financial information

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	812,857
Total expenditure	818,506
Expenditure per pupil	1,654
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,339
Balance carried forward to next year	30,690

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 56%

Number of questionnaires sent out	462
Number of questionnaires returned	260

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	35	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	45	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	48	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	52	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	56	41	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	44	13	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	37	4	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	40	46	10	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	56	39	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	44	3	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	38	14	1	15

Other issues raised by parents

- Lack of opportunities to come in for assemblies
- Not enough time available for eating lunch
- Opportunities to use the lavatory being restricted for some Key Stage 1 pupils
- Inequality of opportunity arising from groupings on tables within the class
- Use of information technology in class lessons
- Insufficient information about materials to buy to support pupils at home
- School sometimes slow to respond to parents' concerns

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

92. At the time of the inspection, 22 children in the reception classes were under the age of five. The reception year children start school either at the beginning of the autumn or the spring term having spent time in the pre-school class in the term before. This prepares them well for the reception class. Although attainment varies on entry, it is generally in line with that expected for the children's age.
93. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good and the children make sound progress. By the age of five, the majority of children have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes in all six areas of learning. By the end of the reception year, nearly all have attained them and a small minority are working towards Level 1 of the National Curriculum in reading, writing and number. In the last inspection, no judgements were given about the children's attainment.
94. The early years policy primarily addresses the pre-school class with little to indicate the curriculum for the reception year. As noted in the last inspection, the provision is planned in line with Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. High priority is given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and less emphasis is placed on provision in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Opportunities are sometimes missed for promoting learning through independent activities, including play, and through encouraging children to use and apply their knowledge, for example of language and literacy and of numeracy, in everyday classroom routines and activities. Teachers make insufficient use of assessment of pupils' progress to help them to plan for future learning.

Personal and social development

95. All children make satisfactory gains in their personal and social skills and by the time they are five, most have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning. They settle quickly into the routines and structure of the day and show a mature attitude to school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with strengths in the management of the children and in the development of the children's self-confidence and ability to work as part of a group. The adults' encouragement and interest ensures that the children feel secure and at ease. Apart from circle time plans, a weakness is the minimal reference in planning as to how particular activities and tasks may promote the development of pupils' skills in this area. The teachers do not systematically record the children's progress in achieving particular personal and social skills. All adults in the reception classes have high expectations of the children's behaviour and the children respond positively and behave very well. They sit still during class discussions and many concentrate hard on their work. Staff encourage the children to speak out and to become independent, for example when undressing and dressing for a physical education lesson and when tidying away resources.

Language and Literacy

96. All children make satisfactory progress and by the time they are five, most have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The children are encouraged to talk about their experiences and often talk at length about what they have been doing. In the daily Literacy Hour and other sessions, the teachers place high emphasis on developing the children's awareness of

books, words and letters. Parents support their children at home in learning words and sharing books and, by the age of five, many children are reading the first books in the reading scheme. They know the characters, recognise key words and know the names of letters and their sounds; for example, they correctly identify objects beginning with “n” and are able to sequence the events in the story of “Kipper’s birthday”. The children recognise their name and learn to copy it and then write it independently. The teachers adopt a formal approach to the teaching of writing. They teach handwriting systematically and the children develop a neat style. As well as expecting the children to copy the adults’ writing, the teachers encourage the children to “have a go” at writing stories and messages. At five, a small number are beginning to use their knowledge of sounds to spell simple words and write for themselves.

Mathematics

97. All children make satisfactory progress and by the time they are five, most have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning. The children make satisfactory progress in mathematics overall and good progress in number. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers have successfully introduced the Numeracy Hour and the good use of practical activities such as counting spots on dice, games and counting rhymes is promoting the children’s awareness and understanding of number. The children count to 10 and work confidently with number to five. Higher attaining children cope well with higher numbers and are beginning to record their work using addition and equivalence signs. The children know the names of basic shapes and have an awareness of pattern, sequence and length. The assessment and recording of the children’s progress in all aspects of mathematics is limited.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

98. All children make satisfactory progress and by the time they are five, most have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning. The children develop an awareness of their environment. They acquire some knowledge of geography, history, science and design and technology through topics such as “Special Days”. Many children have a sound level of general knowledge and show much curiosity and interest in new things. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers prepare well and often provide a wide range of activities. They encourage the children to observe and to explore. The children feel, describe and sort different materials and on a winter walk look at the trees and plants. They celebrate St David’s Day and learn how to say “Good morning” in Welsh. Younger children fill and smooth sand pies to make ‘birthday cakes’. They operate the tape recorder and headphones to listen to stories and are confident in using the mouse and interactive whiteboard connected to the computer. They know the layout of the school and compile their own simple maps such as that of Red Riding Hood’s journey.

Physical development

99. Overall, children’s physical skills develop satisfactorily and by the time they are five most children have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. A strength of the provision is the range of activities to develop the children’s fine motor skills. By five, most use scissors, pencils and crayons with a good level of skill and control. They cope with buttons and zips and confidently manipulate jigsaw pieces and fiddly items from construction kits. In making houses for the three bears, the children persevere in fitting bricks together and several children showed great care in their moulding of dough to form the three bears. In formal movement lessons in the hall, the teachers generally show secure subject knowledge. The children begin to understand the need to warm up and cool down when

exercising. The children tend to wait to be told how to move and make little use of the space but respond well to the teachers' instructions and demonstrations by others. In hall sessions, classroom and playground, they show a good level of co-ordination and agility. No evidence was seen of pupils using the large wheeled toys and other equipment in the playground and other parts of the school during the inspection.

Creative development

100. All children make satisfactory progress and by the time they are five, most have attained the Desirable Learning Outcomes for this area of learning. The quality of provision, teaching and learning is satisfactory. The teachers plan sessions to teach particular skills including colour mixing and blow painting. Having looked at work by Kandinsky, the children used the same colours and produced creditable versions of his painting. The children enjoy singing and making music. They were keen to be one of the six children chosen to play a percussion instrument and to develop a musical response to accompany the animals in their song. In their play with puppets the children fall easily into role and create interesting scenarios.

ENGLISH

101. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading was better than in writing in the 1999 national tests. Pupils achieved above average results in reading, with the proportions of pupils who gained above the expected standard well above levels found nationally. Standards in reading were above average compared with all schools and with similar schools. Attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 and in English as a whole at the end of Key Stage 2 was average compared with all schools and with similar schools.
102. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment exceeded national standards at the ends of both key stages, but it was judged that some aspects of English needed improving. In response, the school has developed experimental writing in Key Stage 1. Handwriting is now taught more consistently at both key stages and drafting and editing writing is started early in Key Stage 1. This is helping to raise standards in writing. Pupils are more confident when experimenting with ideas, shaping and editing their work and spelling words independently. Clearer and more legible handwriting also makes for easier reading and editing of work for both writer and reader.
103. Although attainment in English at the ends of both key stages was average at the time of the last National Curriculum assessment, at the time of this inspection attainment is above average at the ends of both key stages. All pupils, in both key stages, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, successfully build on previous learning. Standards have improved at the end of Key Stage 2 during the current academic year. This is due to higher expectation of the level of attainment of pupils who achieve 'just below average' with their reading and writing. Teachers are setting clearer, planned 'targets' in order to improve pupils' learning.
104. The school is implementing the literacy strategy in a successful way and the structure for whole class work and feedback in plenary time is a consistent and good feature of lessons in each year group. In guided group work, pupils with difficulty with their reading and spelling regularly work in small groups outside the classroom using programmed lessons on the computer. These pupils make good progress with spelling and reading.
105. At the ends of both key stages speaking and listening skills are good and an asset to learning. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are making good progress and speak confidently and competently in English. Younger pupils listen carefully and

ask and answer questions clearly. For instance, at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils communicate confidently with visiting paramedics and ask questions about their role and expertise. Older pupils can explain their work in greater depth, offer their own opinions and express their ideas and feelings freely. They draw on experience from research and put forward clear arguments. An example is when pupils study factual evidence about eye tests and offer, in well constructed English, reasons for the benefit of regular testing.

106. Reading is a strength within the school. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, maintain good standards. Pupils of all ages show a genuine enjoyment of sharing and exploring books at home and in school. Both younger and older pupils are making choices about the books they read and more pupils than usual visit the local library voluntarily and collect books by their favourite authors. For instance, a seven year old reading 'Winnie the Pooh', explained why he enjoys reading A. A. Milne's books and how he would like the bear to be his friend. Older pupils show a growing interest in different types of books and provide evidence of reading a wide range for themselves. An example is an 11 year old who enjoys 'horror books', especially by R. S. Stine, but also can explain the more frightening parts of 'Great Expectations' by Dickens.
107. Reading skills are well developed in both key stages and successfully build upon previous learning. This supports the good progress pupils make. In Key Stage1, younger pupils use a range of reading strategies, such as recalling words by sight and sounding out letters in words. By seven years of age, reading is accurate, fluent and meaningful. By the end of Key Stage2, pupils read with greater depth of meaning. They can refer to the text to justify their opinion and explore characters and plot at greater length. Pupils readily access non-fiction books and the computer to retrieve information in English lessons and in other subjects, such as history. They use skills of skimming and scanning for information well.
108. Although attainment in writing at the ends of both key stages was average at the time of the last National Curriculum assessment, at the time of this inspection attainment is above average at the ends of both key stages. In all year groups pupils write competently for a range of different purposes, including reports, poems and play scripts. Standards have improved during the year because pupils are now benefiting from the school's more structured approach to the teaching of writing which has been implemented in response to a key issue for action identified at the time of the last inspection. The school's provision for extra time for 'imaginative' writing is being used well to help pupils, especially in Key Stage 2, to structure their story writing. Most pupils in Key Stage1 identify a beginning, middle and end to their narrative writing. Sentences are generally well constructed and spelling and punctuation are used consistently. Handwriting has improved since the last inspection and pupils develop greater control over letter size and shape as they practise writing in cursive style. Although younger pupils experiment with their emergent writing skills in literacy lessons, opportunities are missed in free choice and in play to practise writing independently. In Key Stage 2, older pupils explore writing for different purposes. They study the layout of texts and use bold print, bullet points and headings in their own work. Throughout the key stage, pupils make wider choices of vocabulary and explain and use imagery for greater effect. In Year 3, pupils achieve well as they develop their understanding and use adverbs and adjectives to enliven imaginative writing. From the scrutiny of pupils' written work, many pieces of writing, although well presented, clearly punctuated and spelt, are limited in length. Expectations of the amount of extended writing produced are low.
109. During class and group activities pupils concentrate well. Pupils are well behaved and collaborate well in different social groups. Younger pupils can be relied on to share reading and learn spellings at home. Older pupils show initiative and undertake personal

study, such as researching topics related to the Victorians. Throughout the school pupils are confident to try out new learning.

- 110. Teaching in both key stages is good and this is having a direct influence on raising standards. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and identify clearly what is to be taught and learned in lesson plans. The basic skills in literacy are well taught throughout the school and help to support good standards in reading. The use of questioning as part of everyday assessment is used well to move individual learning on.
- 111. The two subject managers, one for each key stage, work well together. They have the expertise and commitment to move the subject forward. At present the monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom is not firmly in place. Further evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of working outside the classroom on computers during guided group work times for other members of the class is needed in order to ensure pupils receive the best possible support.
- 112. Resources have improved since the last inspection and a wide range of texts are accessible in lessons. The library, also used for computer work, is at present appropriately resourced. Learning resources for the subject are good.

MATHEMATICS

- 113. Standards in the 1999 National Curriculum tests were above average at the end of Key Stage 1. They have risen steadily since 1996. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards have also risen over time. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 they were similar to the national average. In fact, the school's results in 1999 were similar to those obtained in 1998 when they were above average. Standards have not declined but the national standard has risen. In 1999 the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1 was above that found nationally; at the end of Key Stage 2 it was similar to that found nationally. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 were average.
- 114. Evidence from this inspection indicates that at the ends of both key stages the proportions of pupils gaining the standards expected are above the current national averages. All pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in their lessons. Test results at the end of Key Stage 2 over the last four years show that, on average, boys have performed better than girls. The gap has been closing in recent years and the findings of this inspection indicate that there are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls at present.
- 115. The school was a pilot school for the numeracy project. This experience has enabled teachers to get a firm hold on the strategy. It is being implemented very well and teachers are confident with the framework. The quality of teachers' planning for numeracy is very good and this makes a significant contribution to improving standards. Oral work and mental mathematics are identified clearly in planning, and plenary sessions are used effectively to consolidate and share learning. Scrutiny of pupils' work shows clear evidence of pupils using different ways to record their work. There are good opportunities for pupils to make decisions, solve problems and to use and apply their mathematical skills in real life situations. For example, pupils in Year 2 successfully select items that are more expensive or less expensive when working with money. In Year 6 pupils quickly convert imperial to metric measures, such as miles to kilometres when planning a journey.

116. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 add on and count back with confidence. They use mathematical language such as 'more than' and 'less than' and recognise every day shapes. Year 1 pupils accurately undertake simple calculations in addition and in subtraction and successfully recognise patterns in number. Higher attaining pupils recognise that $5+5+1$ is the same as $10+1$ and use this information to help them with their calculations and to solve problems. By the end of the key stage, many pupils have a better knowledge of place value than is expected for pupils of this age. They know, for example, that 100 is two lots of 50 or four lots of 25. They can successfully order numbers, partition numbers into fives, deal with time using analogue and digital clocks, estimate and measure length, read scales and produce bar charts to show the different weights of a variety of items. They work on "grocery store" problems involving money, and calculate costs and change in their heads.
117. In Key Stage 2 younger pupils add two or three two-digit numbers together quickly and accurately. They begin to extend and link their knowledge of number patterns to count forwards and backwards in steps of two, four and five and also three and six. They work with addition, subtraction and multiplication as they develop mental strategies to help them to solve problems. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 increase the speed of their mental recall when using the three and four times tables. They calculate a quarter of 80 and then check their answer by the inverse calculation of $20 \times 4 = 80$. Other pupils in this year group successfully develop a number sequence in constant steps, recognizing that below zero is a negative number.
118. Year 5 pupils have a good visual recognition of acute, obtuse and right angles. They work well with two-dimensional shapes and calculate areas, applying these skills to everyday experiences as, for example, calculating the area of a newspaper advertisement in order to work out its cost. In Year 6 pupils successfully work with fractions, three-dimensional shapes and co-ordinates. They work particularly well with problems, for example when using timetables to plan journeys and when handling data. Work in algebra is of a higher standard than is expected of pupils of this age. Pupils represent information they collect on graphs and interpret information presented to them in graphical form.
119. Through participating in the numeracy project, the school has been able to undertake regular external assessments of pupils' work. It has received detailed analyses from which strengths and weaknesses have been identified and addressed. Since the last inspection, when standards were reported to be rising, the school has extended setting by ability to all year groups in Key Stage 2. The school has identified a target group of pupils in Year 6 who, with additional help, are likely to achieve the expected standard at the end of the year. The school has more recently identified target groups in each class in Key Stage 1 and the other year groups in Key Stage 2. These pupils leave their timetabled numeracy lessons for computer-based intensive learning. Although this has only recently been put in place, teachers report that pupils' skills in numeracy and other areas of mathematics are being successfully developed. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress.
120. The report of the previous inspection recommended that the school should increase investigational and problem-solving activities. This it has successfully done through the implementation of the numeracy strategy and by a conscious effort to relate numeracy to everyday life. There is a good emphasis on mental and oral work throughout the school.
121. In the vast majority of classes pupils present their work very well. Pencil and paper skills and neat, clear layout help pupils to make accurate calculations at both key stages. Ordering and place value are clearly and progressively taught, building successfully upon previous skills and understanding. Pupils in both key stages can explain the strategies

they use to solve problems. Numeracy is used well in subjects such as science, design and technology and geography. Information technology is widely used to help pupils develop skills and understanding.

122. Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy mathematics, collaborate well in lessons and are well motivated. Behaviour is good; pupils listen attentively and work hard. Pupils are keen to try out new ideas and are not worried about making mistakes.
123. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages with some very good practice observed in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan thoroughly to meet the learning objectives of the numeracy strategy. In the majority of lessons, oral and mental work is challenging and is conducted at a good pace, keeping pupils on their toes and making them think on their feet. However, in some lessons, the pace is sometimes slower than desirable and the challenge is reduced. The good teaching draws well on teachers' expertise and subject knowledge. Good use is made of assessment information to identify the next steps in learning and, especially with pupils who learn at a slower rate, small steps are clearly identified. A weakness in teaching is that the withdrawal and return of pupils who work in the information technology rooms does not always run smoothly, resulting in some pupils missing important parts of class lessons.
124. Overall, the marking of pupils' work is used effectively to show pupils how to improve. However, practice does vary from very good to only satisfactory; the school's marking policy is not consistently followed. Homework is regularly set and makes a positive contribution to standards.
125. The subject manager has recently taken over this area of the curriculum and is about to start monitoring its planning and delivery. Through participating in the numeracy project, the school has a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. This is making an important contribution to raising standards. Targets agreed with the local education authority for last year were exceeded and the school is aware that future targets will need to be reviewed in order to ensure that they are suitably challenging.

SCIENCE

126. The results of statutory teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show that pupils' attainments were broadly in line with the national average. The results of statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected standard was in line with the national average but the proportion of pupils attaining above the expected standard was well below the national average. However, comparisons between schools are based on the National Curriculum levels pupils achieve and not just the proportions of pupils achieving certain standards. As a result, when compared with all schools, the school's performance in science at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average and it was well below the average for similar schools. A contributory factor to the number of pupils achieving higher than the expected standards being well below average was that the school's assessment procedures for science last year did not indicate that the progress being made by the higher achieving pupils was insufficient for them to achieve their full potential and that they were insufficiently challenged.
127. This year the school has taken action to remedy this unsatisfactory situation. The school has analysed these test results and has sought to improve pupils' overall attainment in science. Standardised assessments have been put in place in Key Stage 2, enabling work to be set which is appropriately challenging for all pupils, including the higher attainers. These assessments are currently being drawn up for Key Stage 1. The school is also providing a well-balanced coverage of the National Curriculum. Investigational

and experimental work has been developed and improved since the last inspection. It is being taught thoroughly and progressively across the school, through a good range of work focusing on life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes. More able pupils are being appropriately challenged and extended. Nevertheless, improving standards in science remains a key issue for action. Current inspection findings, based on both observations of pupils working in lessons and the scrutiny of work already completed, indicate that pupils' attainments by the ages of seven and eleven are in line with the national averages. These judgements reflect those of the previous inspection.

128. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are given good support by their class teachers and other learning support staff and are well integrated into scientific activities. Most learn well, in line with others in their classes, and successfully develop their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts as they progress through the school. There is no significant difference in the attainment and progress of pupils of different background or ethnicity. In recent years there has been a marked difference in the attainment of pupils of different gender, with girls' results in science below the national average whilst boys' performances were close to the national average. The school has identified this issue and there is a heightened awareness of the need to promote girls' attainment and progress, particularly in Key Stage 2.
129. In Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in learning in all aspects of the science curriculum and acquire the basic skills of scientific enquiry through good first-hand experiences. They learn to carry out and record simple experiments and investigations well. For example, pupils in Year 1 conduct experiments to discover which basic conditions are necessary for plant survival. They also test materials to find out which would keep them dry in the rain. Pupils make progress in their knowledge and understanding of electricity and make an electrical circuit. They compare and classify in a range of contexts. For example, they sort machines into those that use electricity and those that do not. They successfully demonstrate the development of these skills when comparing dinosaurs. They accurately identify similarities and differences between them, such as the length of their necks or the number of legs they walked on, and record their findings simply by drawings or on charts. In Year 2, pupils steadily build on what they have learned. They broaden their knowledge of the properties of materials and learn to classify 'living' and 'non-living' objects and to identify such qualities as 'magnetism' and 'transparency'. They extend their knowledge of living things and how they grow and learn about the foods which "keep us healthy", "make us grow" and "give us energy". Pupils often make good progress in the course of lessons, for example when they identified their five senses and the associated organs and explored how their senses gave information about the environment.
130. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve an increasingly broad and secure level of understanding as they plan and carry out investigations that are reliable and fair. In Year 3, for example, pupils experiment with electrical circuits to discover the effect of different kinds of switches. They extend their knowledge of forces, including 'pushing', 'pulling' and 'magnetism'. They learn how force is measured and conduct a range of experiments. They predict which magnet will attract the most paper clips before conducting the experiment and recording their findings. They successfully reinforce and extend their knowledge of living things, focusing on growth and reproduction, including learning about the life cycle of the frog. As part of their work on materials in Year 4, pupils test for properties such as hardness and strength. They also explore whether changes are reversible or not, as in frozen water or a boiled egg. As part of a topic on the weather, pupils were observed collaborating effectively in planning an investigation to discover the conditions which would affect the rate of water evaporation. Pupils demonstrated a grasp

of the principles of fair testing for the results to be accurate, as they decided which conditions to alter in the tests planned. Work on forces in the books of Year 5 pupils indicates an increasing ability to explain the application of a fair test when they report their testing to see which size of parachute canopy descended most slowly. In an introductory lesson to a topic on 'sound', pupils engaged actively in a good range of practical activities before recording on charts their findings of the various ways in which sounds can be produced. A minority of pupils also demonstrated their understanding that sound is a result of vibration.

131. By Year 6, pupils' completed work indicates a secure knowledge and understanding of the differences between the properties of a range of materials, which they classify appropriately into solids, liquids or gases. In activities linked to their topic on health, pupils acquire a secure knowledge of major organs of the human body. They conduct experiments to reinforce their learning, for example measuring the effects of exercise on their pulse rate. In an observed lesson, pupils confidently approached the planning of an investigation into jumping, linked to their work in a topic on "Health". They determined the requirements for a fair test competently and were logical and systematic in framing a simple prediction and referring to it during their discussions.
132. The overall quality of teaching is good, resulting in good learning in a significant proportion of lessons seen and sound progress in pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills over time. Moreover, teachers' well planned and lively presentation of science leads to pupils' positive approach to the subject; they demonstrate a high level of interest and curiosity and clearly enjoy setting up and conducting tests. During the period of the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching of science was seen. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, which is reflected in all aspects of their planning. Long- and medium-term plans ensure a broad, well-balanced and relevant science curriculum, with the subject often at the heart of pupils' half-term topics. In lessons, teachers usually share the aims of the lesson with the pupils, with clear explanations and demonstrations forming the introductions to sessions. Teachers establish good relationships, which encourage pupils to confidently make contributions they know will be valued. Teaching points are well reinforced in the course of the lesson and pupils' learning is well promoted.
133. Procedures for regular, formal assessment and recording of pupils' progress have been introduced at Key Stage 2, too recently for their impact to be evident. Arrangements for Key Stage 1 assessment are currently being prepared. However, teachers effectively assess pupils' understanding in lessons through asking well-targeted questions and listening to pupils' responses.
134. In the lessons seen, tasks were appropriately matched to groups of pupils of differing prior attainment. However, the highest attainers were not consistently well challenged. Effective plenary sessions successfully consolidate pupils' learning. The most effective lessons were marked by teachers' high expectations of pupils' interest and involvement, which resulted in pupils' consistent use of correct terminology and careful presentation of their findings. For example, in Year 1 pupils confidently referred to and recorded the 'similarities' and 'differences' they identified when looking closely at illustrations of dinosaurs. This emphasis on developing pupils' vocabulary and the range of methods employed in describing their findings, both orally and in written formats, make a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills.
135. Teachers manage pupils and their activities very successfully and promote high standards of behaviour and a very purposeful approach to their work in science. They also promote pupils' social development successfully, as collaborative work in small and larger groups is a routine feature of science lessons throughout the school.

136. Learning resources for the subject are good. They are used well as a source of information and as a basis for investigative work, for example the wide range of bottles, lidded jars and boxes with elastic bands stretched over them, which successfully stimulated Year 5's interest as they embarked on their 'sound' topic. The school conservation area and its pond are used effectively in the course of the year for such activities as 'pond dipping', to promote pupils' delight and excitement in scientific enquiry as well as extending their learning.

ART

137. All pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in developing their skills of investigating and making, and in developing their knowledge and understanding in art. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.
138. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were judged to be making good progress in Key Stage 1 and this has been maintained. However, the rate of progress in Key Stage 2, which at that time was very good, has not been maintained. A contributory factor in this is that the subject manager, who taught in Key Stage 2 at the time of the last inspection, now works in Key Stage 1.
139. At the current time, in both key stages, pupils' work in art is making a significant contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils' spiritual development is supported through the opportunities provided for them to reflect and for them to evaluate their own work and the work of other artists. Pupils' cultural development is supported through studies of the work of well-known artists and the art associated with people of other times.
140. In Key Stage 1 pupils make a good start. They experiment with colour and line. They learn to mix colours and understand about shades of colour. They use pencil, charcoal, pastels and paint. They experiment with simple printing techniques and produce three-dimensional work in clay. The quality of their work is generally above that expected for pupils of their ages. There is good evidence that pupils are systematically acquiring and practising a range of techniques and using a wide variety of materials.
141. A particular strength of the work in Key Stage 1 is the development of pupils' appreciation of the work of other artists. A very good example of this was seen in Year 2 in pupils' studies of Paul Klee. They make good use of opportunities to evaluate the artist's work and to develop their own responses. A very good feature of this is pupils' critical evaluations of their own work which they have recorded in poetry and prose and shared with others. This has made a good contribution to their work in literacy.
142. Pupils consolidate their development of skills in Key Stage 2 although the progress they make is not as good as in Key Stage 1. Through the key stage there is evidence that pupils' skills of observation and drawing are developing. In Year 3 their drawings of trainers are detailed and well proportioned and there is evidence that these skills are applied and refined as they move through the school, for example in work on peacocks' feathers in Year 5. Work on other artists in Key Stage 2 includes a study of William Morris in Year 6 where pupils have had opportunities to consider his work and to design and print their own textiles.
143. Pupils enjoy their art lessons. In the majority of lessons their attitudes and behaviour are at least good. They apply themselves to their work, concentrate on what they are doing and help each other where needed.

144. The quality of teaching in art is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In the lessons seen in Key Stage 1 pupils were working on portraits and were experimenting with images. This work was developing their understanding of facial expressions as the key to feelings. In both lessons pupils were given good access to resources to help them to experiment with images and they had opportunities to evaluate their own work. In one of these lessons, the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and this had a significant positive impact on the standards achieved. Very good use was made of resources and several images by a range of artists from different times were used to initiate pupils' thinking. The teacher used correct technical vocabulary and was able to support pupils' learning through adopting a flexible approach that took their thinking into account as the lesson proceeded. This reinforced their learning. A range of activities was provided on a single theme and adult support in the classroom was effectively deployed to ensure that all pupils had opportunities to learn and to make progress.
145. In the lessons observed in Key Stage 2 pupils were studying the art of earlier civilisations. Two classes were working on Ancient Greek art and the other two on Roman art. The quality of teaching overall was satisfactory in these lessons and there were some good features. These included good introductions, setting the work in context, the use of pictures from posters and from books to stimulate pupils' thinking and the attention given to the development of pupils' practical skills in handling clay. These good features combined to ensure that pupils were able to get on and to make progress in their learning. Shortcomings in the teaching included the lack of opportunity provided for pupils to make choices and to select materials for themselves and insufficient emphasis being placed on the development of drawing skills.
146. The subject manager is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and this makes an important contribution to the quality of work in the key stage in which she teaches. Her influence does not at present extend to the other key stage and this has an impact on the progress made by pupils. There is a clearly set out scheme of work for the subject, which provides a good basis for planning. Arrangements for monitoring how the subject is being taught and for helping teachers to assess pupils' progress through the preparation of portfolios for year groups are at an early stage. Resources are satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

147. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are making satisfactory progress in developing their skills of designing and making in both key stages.
148. This is a subject area in which there have been improvements since the last inspection. The satisfactory progress made by pupils in Key Stage 1 has been maintained. However, the rate of progress in Key Stage 2, which at that time was unsatisfactory, is now satisfactory. An established scheme of work is now in place and an appropriate, balanced curriculum is offered.
149. Opportunities for pupils to record their work in design and technology contribute to the development of their literacy skills and, at the end of Key Stage 2, to their numeracy skills. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work critically and this develops a reflective, thoughtful approach, which makes an important contribution to their attitude to the subject.
150. In Key Stage 1 pupils have opportunities to work with a range of materials including paper and card, clay and construction toys. They undertake short tasks, which help them to

understand how things work, for example in Year 2 where they build cardboard mock-ups of lever systems. They also embark on longer projects, such as designing and making a bird feeder. This allows them the opportunity to think about and to record how something is going to be used and the features they need to incorporate before embarking on making it. They explain what they are doing and to give reasons for their actions.

151. In Key Stage 2 pupils undertake more complex projects and develop and refine their practical skills, for example in cutting and joining wood. There is increasing precision in their work; for example, in Year 6 pupils do not only record their ideas in drawings, they also include dimensions. The work is generally carefully executed and finished appropriately.
152. Pupils generally have good attitudes to the subject and this contributes to the quality of the learning that takes place. They enjoy their work and handle materials carefully. They work well together and help each other.
153. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, but taking all the evidence, including examination of pupils' work, into account, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers plan appropriately, they are well prepared and the necessary resources are to hand during the lesson. Ample opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss their thinking and to try things out for themselves. Teachers' focused questioning enables all pupils to make progress during the lesson. In one lesson seen where the teaching was good there were many strong features. Role-play was used effectively to help the pupils understand the significance of the work they were embarking upon. The teacher emphasised the use of correct vocabulary and encouraged pupils to use a rich variety of terms to describe what they were observing. This made a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and the progress they made. Teachers are conscious of the need to stress hygiene issues when working with food and take appropriate action to ensure that pupils work safely during lessons.
154. The subject manager has only recently been identified. She is enthusiastic and has received in-service training and is ready to embark on reviewing the curriculum, how the subject is taught, and identifying procedures for assessing pupils' progress. The subject is adequately resourced.

GEOGRAPHY

155. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are making satisfactory progress in both key stages. In the last inspection pupils' progress was judged to be good.
156. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop an awareness of different environments, such as town and country, and how the weather affects people's lives. They study their own locality, compile simple plans and map their route to school. They locate streets on local maps and plot the position of the shops and street furniture. In studying animal habitats, pupils use the globe and atlas to locate different parts of the world such as the Arctic. Pupils' knowledge and awareness are enhanced by visits in the local area and by visitors. During the inspection, members of the ambulance service came as part of the Year 2 study of "People who help in the community". This gave pupils a good opportunity to ask questions about the work of the paramedic and nurse and to see how a cardiac monitor works.
157. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their geographical knowledge and increase their skills in using and compiling maps. As part of fieldwork in Kinver, Arley and Bridgnorth, Year 4 and 5 pupils learn to read Ordnance Survey maps and to observe geographical features.

Year 5 pupils conduct shopping and traffic surveys and use their findings and experiences to compile a tourist leaflet. Such opportunities are useful in developing and applying pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Occasionally there is useful carry-over of geographical themes into other subjects. Year 5 pupils discuss how the local environment is despoiled and how it could be improved as part of their work in religious education. Year 6 pupils study environmental issues in relation to the world's rainforests, and as part of their work on "Our changing environment", look at evidence from a range of sources including photographs, maps and the internet. Year 6 pupils remember well what they have learnt in previous years but their knowledge of places, locations and features could be improved.

158. Pupils enjoy geography, particularly the trips and practical work. Older pupils talked animatedly about their fieldwork and some of the problems they encountered interviewing shoppers and conducting a traffic survey.
159. No teaching of geography was observed at Key Stages 1 or 2 during the inspection. A scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work shows that units are conscientiously planned and lessons have a clear focus. Pupils with special educational needs cover the same topics but not always at the same level of challenge as other pupils.
160. In response to the action points raised in the last inspection, the subject manager has drafted learning outcomes for the units in the geography scheme and also improved the range of maps and resources. She has a sound overview of the subject, has already looked at possible adaptations in line with the revised National Curriculum, and is aware of the need to strengthen the use of information technology in pupils' learning. Whilst she monitors curriculum planning to ensure the policy is being put into practice, she has not had opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning to identify what works well and why. Learning resources for the subject are satisfactory.

HISTORY

161. During the inspection, no history lessons were observed. Sufficient evidence is available from pupils' completed work, displays in classrooms and around the school and talking to pupils to form the judgement that pupils are making satisfactory progress. In aspects of investigation in Key Stage 2 pupils exceed expectations for their ages. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are making similar progress. These findings broadly reflect those of the last inspection. Issues raised in the last report have been successfully addressed: a scheme of work has been drawn up and is now fully established and the school has invested in a range of historical artefacts, which support work on topics throughout the school.
162. The youngest children use everyday language, such as 'today' and 'yesterday' and learn to order the days of the week and the months of the year. They are appropriately introduced to history through broadly based topics, such as "Myself". Looking at photographs, they talk about themselves and their lives so far, with reference to special people, events and objects. In both key stages pupils make sound progress over time in acquiring historical knowledge and understanding. In Key Stage 1, they distinguish between aspects of the past and present, and of old and new; for example, Year 1 pupils sequence machines of the past and the present day and suggest those of the future. Year 2 pupils consider how milk delivery and posting letters has changed over the years when they study local shops. Pupils demonstrate an emerging awareness of the passage of time, with reference to their own lives and the lives of their parents and grandparents, when they use photographs in presenting their family trees. They also gain knowledge of historical figures. They are introduced to such characters as Guy Fawkes at the appropriate time of the year.

163. In Key Stage 2, pupils sustain their progress as they increase their knowledge of people and societies of the past, including Ancient Greece, Invaders and Settlers, Tudors and Victorians. Pupils successfully extend their knowledge of a range of significant characters from the periods they study. For example, they know about the Tudor monarchs and Sir Thomas More, Queen Victoria and Lord Shaftesbury. Pupils' extend their sense of chronology by their use of timelines. These vary from class to class according to the topic being studied. For example, Year 5's Tudor timeline highlights the dates of significant events of the period, such as the Battle of Bosworth, whilst the timeline in Year 6 spans the years from 0 to 2000, from the viewpoint of "Health through History".
164. Throughout Key Stage 2 an increasingly high priority is given to the progressive development of the skills that enable pupils to investigate the past. By Year 6, pupils competently examine a range of sources of historical information, including artefacts and books to draw comparisons between Victorian and modern kitchens. Pupils also consistently use their information technology research skills to successfully extend their knowledge and understanding of historical topics.
165. As no teaching was observed, it is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching in history. However, from examination of planning and subject documentation, as well as talking to pupils about their work, it is evident that teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is secure. Planning is thorough. However, there are no procedures in place for assessing and recording pupils' progress in history. Carefully thought out links with other subjects, such as literacy, art and design and technology, successfully reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, as in Year 3 pupils' study of Greek myths and legends, Year 4 pupils' letters 'home' to Rome from the perspective of a Roman soldier approaching the Celts, and Year 6 pupils make models of Victorian dioramas. The introduction of a good range of historical artefacts supports pupils' topic work very effectively and promotes their learning at both key stages. Also, the regularly changing display of artefacts in cabinets adjacent to the school hall heightens pupils' awareness of history throughout the school.
166. Teachers successfully promote pupils' interest in the subject. Pupils evidently enjoy history and readily discuss topics they have studied. Their work is carefully completed and illustrated, particularly for display. The classroom walls and stimulating displays around the school reflect their interest and the enthusiasm of the staff. Visits are planned which further motivate pupils' involvement in their history topics. These include local trips to examine buildings and churches and visits farther afield, for example to the Blist Hill Industrial Museum. Occasional visitors to school, such as a 'Viking', significantly enhance pupils' knowledge, understanding and progress. Learning resources for the subject are good.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

167. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and above expectations at the end of Key Stage 2.
168. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2.
169. Standards have risen since the last inspection and reflect the school's continuing high commitment to teaching pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to use information and communications technologies. The school has access to the Dudley Grid

for Learning and is taking part in several initiatives such as using integrated learning systems to teach literacy and numeracy, and using interactive whiteboards as teaching and learning tools in classrooms.

170. During 1999, a new computer network was installed but pupils were not able to use the system until this year due to many 'teething' problems. The school has only just become able to deliver fully its planned programme as some parts of the system have yet to become fully operational. This is not hindering pupils' progress unduly and pupils' learning was good in all the lessons seen during the inspection. Pupils are excited and very enthusiastic about using the computers. They behave extremely well and most become totally absorbed in what they are doing. They are quick to grasp new skills and have little difficulty in remembering what they did in the previous week's lesson. This is having a highly positive effect on their learning and in both key stages. Pupils make good progress not only in learning skills but also in using them in activities in other subjects such as science presentations and carrying out historical enquiries. This also contributes to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
171. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know how to log on, open up their folder, locate files, save their work and close down the computer. When typing information about people's jobs, Year 2 pupils showed a developing familiarity with the keyboard and basic word processing functions such as font size, style and how to enhance print through the use of italics and underlining. They use the mouse to click on icons and know how to use the simple functions of a graphics program to create pictures using different colour shades and line effects.
172. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are extremely confident and competent in using the computer. Year 6 pupils roam through the toolbars and use the mouse and keyboard with ease. They are very familiar with word processing functions and apply their knowledge when publishing their work. In compiling professional presentations about themselves, they use a multimedia program, insert clip-art pictures, import scanned photographs and add sound effects. They know how to produce simple tabular databases and have presented the results of their science investigations in spreadsheet form. When showing the data, pupils know how to display different graphs using a range of colour and shading effects. Pupils know how to conduct a complex search using the Internet and CD-Rom encyclopaedias, and use appropriate technical terms when explaining how they do this.
173. In both key stages, the quality of teaching is good and on occasions very good at Key Stage 2. To ensure that pupils have one-to-one access to computers, several support staff supervise and assist groups of pupils who may be working in four different rooms. The guidance from teachers for the support staff is good and the shared good level of expertise in using the equipment and in explaining to pupils is highly influential in ensuring that all pupils make optimal progress in the time available. The work is graduated to take account of pupils' differing attainment and higher attaining pupils are encouraged to extend their skills. The staff support well pupils with special educational needs and ensure they acquire the basic skills.
174. In both key stages, the teachers are confident in what they are doing. They take time to familiarise themselves with the software and they structure lessons so that they take pupils step by step through new processes. A shared strength of the teaching throughout the school is the lesson format. This includes review of previous work, introduction to new features and a concluding review of pupils' work in the lesson to highlight common areas of progress and individual success. Teachers use the interactive whiteboard effectively to demonstrate what happens on screen but occasionally the class sessions take up too much time and pupils have limited hands-on experience. In one very good

lesson, a Year 4 teacher's brisk pace and high expectations set a purposeful tone. This accelerated the pupils' enthusiasm and keenness to explore further the graphics program and to prepare a picture to be made into a birthday card in the next session. As pupils worked, the teacher's comments prompted a few to be more adventurous with repeating images and to try to insert text into their picture. Pupils picked up on her advice to use the 'undo' and 'redo' functions. Pupils responded well to her timed challenge of saving their work in the class folder and, in the plenary session, the teacher's close questioning of pupils clarified what they had learnt and how others could do the same.

175. In the last inspection, the school was acknowledged as having a strength in information technology. The headteacher and information technology subject manager intend that the school will become a centre of excellence and are looking to projects such as the information and communications challenge to publicise more widely what the pupils can do. They continue to give much time to sorting out problems with the installation and operation of the network and to advising staff on how to use new equipment. The subject manager is monitoring curriculum coverage through teachers' planning. He has yet to evaluate the quality of the teaching and the effective use of resources such as the classroom computers. The scheme of work follows national guidance closely and all National Curriculum requirements are met. Each year group is working at an appropriate level but there are no formal systems to assess and record individual pupil's progress and attainment. This was also identified as an action point in the last inspection and is a particular area of concern as so many pupils work with adults other than the class teacher.
176. The school has a very good range of good quality hardware and software to suit all ages of pupil and to allow staff to exchange administrative material. The use of video-conferencing, e-mail and the Internet is often thwarted by access problems. At least twice during the inspection pupils were unable to gain access to the Internet and teachers' plans had to be changed. Although the school makes use of other equipment, for example a digital camera and tape recorder when pupils conduct shopping surveys as part of work in geography, these aspects are currently limited. Opportunities are missed to develop, extend and refine pupils' skills in using these and other available items as part of their learning across the curriculum. Trusted Year 6 pupils have access to the computers outside their weekly lesson time, but other pupils have little opportunity to practise their skills and try out what they have learnt.

MUSIC

177. All pupils, in both key stages, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress in music in both key stages. This is similar to the finding of the previous report.
178. In Key Stage 1 pupils correctly classify classroom instruments as tuned and untuned. They also correctly identify a number of orchestral instruments. They show a good understanding of rhythm as they improvise rhythmic patterns using untuned instruments. Working in pairs one accurately echoes a rhythm played by the other. Pupils successfully read simple rhythmic patterns from written symbols. Younger pupils enthusiastically devise sound effects to accompany a poem about a dinosaur. They discuss key words in the poem and identify suitable sounds to represent them. At the end of the lesson pupils successfully combine their sounds to provide a background for the first part of the poem.
179. In Key Stage 2 pupils listen carefully to recorded music and show sound knowledge of how tempo, volume and use of different instrumental sounds influence the character of the music. They interpret the mood of the music well and clearly express their own feelings and responses. This work extends their speaking and listening skills. For

example, describing Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition" they use words like "majestic" and "ceremonial", showing an understanding of the character of the music. Younger pupils in the key stage compose an instrumental background to a poem "Wind Song". They explore the poem's images deciding what appropriate sounds they can produce both on instruments and using their voices. They make good suggestions as to the choice of instruments and method of playing to produce the desired sounds. At the end of the lesson the pupils successfully record the poem and its accompaniment. Pupils show sensitivity in playing instruments with control and responding to musical ideas of long and short, loud and soft sounds.

180. Pupils enjoy their music lessons. They appreciate the opportunities to experiment. Pupils work together in groups enthusiastically and productively. They listen carefully to each other's performance and appreciate others' efforts. Pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations and respond well to instruction. Their behaviour is always good. Pupils with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English participate fully in activities and often make a good individual contribution to group work.
181. Teaching was good in 50 per cent of the lessons observed and satisfactory in the rest. Teachers plan their lessons well drawing on the detailed scheme of work. The best lessons were well organised and paced, with a good balance of activities. They maintained a good impact on pupils' interest and response. A strong feature of these lessons was the stimulation of pupils' imagination and creativity. Pupils remained absorbed in listening to music or performing it. Some lessons, although satisfactory overall, did not offer sufficient variety of experience to pupils, so that their interest waned towards the end. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to sing in lessons either unaccompanied or to a taped accompaniment.
182. The subject manager for music is currently on long-term absence. No extra-curricular activities are organised. About 20 pupils receive tuition on guitar, violin, woodwind, brass and keyboard instruments. The school makes insufficient use of their musical skills.
183. The school's provision of instrumental and other resources is good and used well across the curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

184. A limited number of lessons were observed. These included outdoor games and gymnastics. All aspects of physical education, including swimming, are covered through the school's scheme of work. Pupils in both key stages, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, successfully build on previous learning and make satisfactory progress. There is appropriate increase in the challenge of learning as pupils move through the school. Progress in swimming is also satisfactory; the school reports that the majority of pupils achieve a 25 metres award by the time they leave the school, in line with the end of key stage requirements.
185. In Key Stage 1 pupils move well in a confined space. They rock forwards, sideways and backwards on different body parts and achieve appropriate balances. They are aware of safety factors and handle equipment carefully and responsibly. Pupils in both key stages demonstrate satisfactory ball skills and apply these effectively to team games. Using hands, feet, rackets and sticks, they pass, control and receive a ball with increasing accuracy. Passing skills are effectively developed. Many are well co-ordinated and move with sustained effort, but limited evidence was seen of pupils dodging and weaving to receive a pass. A weakness is that pupils have too little opportunity to evaluate and improve their performance. There is little evidence of information and communication

technology skills being used; for example, pupils' do not video-record their performances in order to help them to improve.

186. Pupils' response is good overall. They enjoy physical education. Pupils and teachers dress appropriately for lessons. Pupils actively participate in warm-up sessions and in the majority of games lessons, work enthusiastically, concentrating and following instructions carefully. In games, the majority of pupils co-operate well, taking turns and understanding rules and fair play. Boys and girls work well together, with a good sense of purpose. In one class, pupils lacked concentration and application. This was exacerbated by the slow pace of the lesson.
187. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. One unsatisfactory lesson was seen at Key Stage 1. Skills are carefully taught and systematically developed although, in some lessons, too much time is taken up with explanations. Weaknesses in teaching, particularly a slow pace, affect the progress pupils make.
188. The subject manager has recently taken over the co-ordination of the subject. Some areas, dance in particular, have been identified for development. The accommodation is satisfactory, with a general-purpose hall and hard surface provision. The school has use of the adjacent public playing field. Learning resources have been improved since the time of the last inspection and are generally satisfactory, although a greater range of balls is still required. A good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, including football, netball and basketball, enhances the school's provision. Pupils participate in inter-school competitions and leagues and these activities are well supported by teachers and parents.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

189. By the ends of both key stages, standards are in line with the attainment targets of the Dudley Agreed Syllabus. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall. There are good features in the breadth of pupils' writing.
190. In Key Stage 1 only one lesson could be observed but scrutiny of pupils' books, teachers' planning and talking to pupils give a satisfactory picture of sound development across the key stage. Pupils' work shows that they understand the importance of festivals in religious traditions. They draw good pictures and write about Advent and Christmas celebrations, as well as the Jewish celebration of Shabbat. This contributes to pupils' literacy development, particularly for higher attaining pupils who write more extended descriptions using well-constructed sentences. Pupils also show knowledge of a range of religious stories. For example, they accurately tell the Christian stories of The Good Samaritan, the Parable of the Sower and his Seed and the Hindu story of Rama and Sita. In the lesson seen younger pupils discussed the story of the boy Jesus lost in the Temple. They related this well to their own experiences of being lost. They used words such as "terrified", "anxious" and "lonely" to describe their feelings.
191. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils write original work in a variety of styles making a good contribution to their literacy development. Over the key stage their books show a satisfactory development in knowledge embracing the beliefs, practices and important personalities in Christianity, Islam, Judaism and some references to Hinduism and Sikhism. Pupils show sound understanding of religious ideas as they discuss the rules of different religious communities. For example, they consider the Christian Ten Commandments and the Muslim observance of Ramadan. They compose thoughtful prayers and write good extended stories such as that of the Jewish/Christian account of

Esther's courage in saving the Jews from Persian persecution. Younger pupils discuss the architecture and furnishings of a church they visited. They show satisfactory understanding of the symbolism of features such as the altar, pulpit, font and cross. Other pupils examine the school's setting in its own environment. They recognise how pollution, litter and graffiti spoil the natural outlook and amenities. They discuss how thoughtless and inconsiderate behaviour affects other people. This work contributes well to pupils' understanding of wider moral issues.

192. In discussion and in lessons pupils show a good response to religious education. They are interested in learning about different religious traditions and cultures. At all levels pupils are keen to express their own ideas and feelings. They listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. When asked to discuss topics in pairs or groups they do so sensibly and productively. Their attitude and behaviour, for example in the walk outside to study the environment, are good.
193. In all lessons observed teaching was good. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge, supported by a well-produced, comprehensive scheme of work in accordance with the Dudley Agreed Syllabus. They plan their lessons well and challenge the pupils to think individually as well as extending their knowledge. Teachers prepare and use resources well, for example using enlarged photographs taken on a church visit to discuss the symbolism of articles which pupils had seen. Sometimes teachers insufficiently emphasise the spiritual content of their lessons. This occurred when a teacher discussing environmental pollution missed the opportunity to link it with the world as God's creation. Lessons are stimulating and interesting holding pupils' attention and maintaining their concentration. Teachers often organise groups so that higher attaining pupils help lower attainers, for instance in acting as 'scribes'. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is satisfactory, containing comments that are helpful and thought provoking to pupils.
194. Currently, further progress in the development of the subject is limited by the lack of a subject manager. The headteacher oversees planning, but there is no overall monitoring of teaching or of pupils' learning. There is no regular system of formal assessment and recording of pupils' achievement. The school makes good use of visits to local Christian churches but there are no comparable visits to places of worship of other communities. Visits to school by religious leaders are presently infrequent. Learning resources for the subject are satisfactory.