

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **MIDDLEMARCH SCHOOL**

College Street  
Nuneaton  
Warwickshire  
CV10 7BQ

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125761

Headteacher: Mrs A J Cole

Reporting inspector: Mrs P D Freund [2225]

Dates of inspection: 17 September – 20 September 2001

Inspection number: 195534

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Foundation
School category:	Junior
Age range of pupils:	7-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	College Street Nuneaton Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV10 7BQ
Telephone number:	024 7632 8009
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Johnson
Date of previous inspection:	21/04/1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2225	Mrs P D Freund	Registered inspector	Art and Design Geography History Modern Foreign Languages	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? School data and indicators Other specified features
13459	Mrs E Mills	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17919	Mrs J Deans	Team inspector	English Music Religious Education Equal Opportunities English as an additional language	How well does the school care for its pupils?
23976	Mr R J Iball	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical Education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
3548	Mr J G Hughes	Team inspector	Science Information and Communication Technology Design and Technology	
7327	Mr A Dunsbee	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Middlemarch is a 7-11 years junior school which was formerly grant-maintained and now has foundation status. It is situated on the outskirts of Nuneaton, in an area of high density, predominantly rented housing.

There are currently 219 pupils in the school and the roll is rising. The percentage of pupils for whom English is a second language is high. These pupils are mostly Indian and Pakistani. There are 43% of pupils with special educational needs, 15 of whom have statements. The school accommodates a speech and language resource base which is funded and managed by the local educational authority for 10 statemented pupils. There are currently seven pupils on roll. These pupils with specific learning difficulties are recommended to the base by the local education authority. They are on the school's roll and are fully integrated into its life and learning.

There are 22% of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, above the national average. This indicates that the area served by the school is economically disadvantaged.

The attainment on entry to the school in Year 3 is well below average.

Owing to instability in management, the school has undergone a turbulent few years since the last inspection. A temporary headteacher took up post in 1998, and was appointed to the permanent position in 1999. There has been a new management team since then.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very effective school. Pupils of all abilities achieve well. Although English is below the national average, reading and speaking and listening compare favourably with other similar schools. Writing is below average, but pupils make very good progress from the low base on entry to the school. Mathematics is now above the national average and science is above the national average. Standards in most of the other subjects are average, apart from art and design, and design and technology, which are below national expectations. Standards are good in music. Pupils with English as an additional language make progress equally as good as their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs do well. Those of average ability achieve well, as do those children who are gifted or talented. The quality of teaching is good. The leadership and management are very effective. The school gives good value for money. The school recently received an Achievement Award from the Department of Education and Skills in recognition of its improved standards.

#### **What the school does well**

- Very effective leadership and management.
- Good quality teaching.
- Pupils' welfare and guidance.
- A varied and broad curriculum.
- Personal development of pupils.
- Good provisions for pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs.
- Fostering very good relationships.

## What could be improved

- Standards in writing.
- Standards and progress in art and design and design and technology.
- The presentation of work in pupils' books.
- The acoustics in open-plan class bases.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in March 1997 the results achieved by 11 year olds in the national tests have gradually risen at a rate that reflects the rising attainment nationally. There is good quality of teaching and very effective leadership and management. Most of the action points from the last inspection have been tackled well, apart from the standards in art and design, and design and technology, which remain unsatisfactory. The management team and governors rightly chose to concentrate their efforts on improving standards in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT), and are now in a position to tackle the unsatisfactory standards in the two subjects previously mentioned. The school has the capacity to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

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

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

These results relate to pupils who took the tests in the year 2000. Comparative data for similar schools is not yet available for 2001.

Standards are improving; particularly in mathematics, where this year's results show above average standards. Standards in English have remained below average, similar to last year. In science standards are consistently above average, although this year they are average in the national tests. From the well-below average attainment on entry to the school, pupils make good progress to achieve the results they do. In spite of careful matching of work and good teaching, standards in writing remain stubbornly lower than average.

Standards in the foundation subjects and religious education meet national expectations; with the exception of art and design, and design and technology, which are below. Standards in music are good.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes; they enjoy school and work with interest and enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils respect and value each other. There is racial harmony. They are prepared to take responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average.

The attitudes, personal development and behaviour are strengths of the school and are testimony to the investment of teachers' time and commitment and that of all adults working in the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now good. This good teaching has played a large part in improving the standards in the school. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The content, planning and organisation of the curriculum are now good. The curriculum is enhanced by the teaching of French and a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very well targeted support for SEN pupils and those with speech and language difficulties. All make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and achieve as well as their classmates. This is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Lessons, which are interesting and exciting, make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development. There is good emphasis on pupils working together, contributing to their moral and social development. Cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a strength of the school. Its provision is excellent.

The school has maintained good relationships with parents, who value the commitment of staff in the education of their children.

Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection. The allocation of time to individual subjects is appropriate. Policies and schemes of work are kept under review.

The school provides exceptional personal support to pupils and creates a secure and happy environment, where all are valued.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very effectively led and managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors play an active role in supporting the school and in monitoring the curriculum.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The head, staff and governors are very good at identifying strengths and weaknesses and in acting upon them.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources.

There are adequate numbers of well-qualified staff to teach and support pupils. Learning resources are satisfactory and information and communication technology resources have improved to a good level. Accommodation is satisfactory and will improve further when plans to remove the outside classrooms are realised. The acoustics in the open-plan area need improving.

The new leadership and management team has had a significant impact on improving the school. The school gives good value for money.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They believe the school is well run.</li> <li>• Teachers have high expectations.</li> <li>• Their children are well taught.</li> <li>• Their children enjoy school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agreed with the positive views of parents.

Inspectors found that homework was sufficient and relevant. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

- 1 Since the last inspection standards in the school have been rising at a similar rate to improvements nationally. Nevertheless, results in the national tests for eleven-year-olds this year show that standards remain below the national average in English. There has been a significant improvement in results in mathematics this year; they are now above average. In science the national tests show that standards are at the national average. In spite of the slightly lower results in science this year attainment remains above average.
- 2 Inspection evidence confirms the rising standards of attainment. Pupils enter the school in Year 3 with well-below average levels of attainment in English, especially in writing, and despite the good teaching of English, especially in the literacy hour, the school has not yet managed to compensate for the low levels on entry. Nevertheless, progress is good in English, mathematics and science.
- 3 Comparisons with similar schools in the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds in English showed that Middlemarch School had achieved average standards. The number of pupils performing at a higher level was better than that of similar schools. There are no comparative figures available yet for this year. The school exceeded its target for English in 2001.
- 4 Boys and girls perform equally well in all aspects of English, as do those pupils for whom English is an additional language. These pupils make good progress and attain standards similar to their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress and some of those with statements of SEN improved by 3 levels to reach average standards in the national tests.
- 5 Standards in reading are improving and pupils make good progress because of the teachers' own interest in books, the good assessments and parents' involvement through the home-school link books. Standards and progress in speaking and listening are satisfactory by the time pupils are in Year 6, because of the many strategies that the teachers employ to encourage pupils in these aspects of English. In writing pupils are making satisfactory progress because the school has organised pupils into smaller sets with additional staffing to help with literacy.
- 6 Handwriting is unsatisfactory, despite regular lessons, and the skills learnt are not used in other subjects. The quality of presentation in books is not given enough emphasis.
- 7 In 2000 the performance in mathematics in the national tests of Middlemarch School when compared to similar schools was below average. There has been a significant improvement in mathematics and results in the national tests in 2001 show that standards are now above the national average. This improvement in standards, which exceeded the school's target, was a result of close analysis of past performance of pupils and changed emphasis in the teaching. There are no comparative figures for this year, but given the above average results, Middlemarch School should compare favourably with other similar schools.

- 8 Progress of pupils in mathematics is good, rising from the below-average standards on entry to the above-average standards on leaving at the end of Year 6. The setting arrangements for all abilities enables higher-attaining and average-attaining pupils to be sufficiently challenged, and the lower attainers and those with special educational needs (SEN) to be properly supported. Pupils with English as an additional language make equally good progress and attain standards similar to their classmates.
- 9 Standards in science are above average. The national test results in 2000 showed that Middlemarch School achieved results well above average when compared to similar schools. Results in the 2001 national tests show standards are at the national average. Pupils make good progress in lessons, because of challenging questioning, good planning and high expectations of teachers, who insist upon the correct scientific vocabulary. Higher-attaining pupils achieve well and their performance is better than their counterparts in similar schools.
- 10 Standards of attainment at the end of Year 6 in information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography and physical education are in line with national expectations. Pupils have good opportunities to develop ICT skills and apply them when working in other subjects. Teachers have been trained well and are now confident when using ICT and this has improved pupils' standards. In history, standards have been maintained because lessons are well prepared and there are good links with other subjects, which help pupils to understand historical events. It is difficult to see how the standards could be improved further until writing improves. In geography standards have improved since the last inspection. There is a good scheme of work, satisfactory coverage following the national guidelines and good teaching, all of which contribute to the good progress pupils make.
- 11 In physical education pupils achieve well, though progress is greater in those lessons taught by teachers who have some specialist knowledge and skills. In religious education standards are in line with those expected from the local agreed syllabus; the standards show an improvement from the previous inspection because there is now sufficient time allocated to the subject and a good scheme of work.
- 12 Standards in music have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now good. Despite no specialist musician on the school staff, the strategic use of local education authority staff to enhance provision and train teachers has had a huge impact on improved standards.
- 13 There are no national standards in French for Year 6 pupils, because it is not a compulsory National Curriculum subject in primary schools. Nevertheless Year 6 pupils make good progress because of the good teaching and varied activities in lessons, which hold their attention and give them confidence.
- 14 In design and technology and art and design standards remain below the national expectations. In these two subjects standards have not improved since the last inspection. The governors were initially slow to act because of the difficulties arising from instabilities in school management and since then the new headteacher and governors rightly considered literacy, numeracy and ICT as the priorities for improvement.
- 15 The school received recently an Achievement Award from the government's Department for Education and Skills in recognition of its improving standards.

## **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

- 16 Pupils have a positive attitude to their work, concentrate well and are keen to learn. Teachers and other staff set clear expectations, often praising their good work and good conduct, to which pupils respond well. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and to each other, working well alongside each other, in pairs and in groups when required. They are enthusiastic, interested and fully involved in lessons.
- 17 Relationships are particularly good and are a strength of the school. Teachers and support staff treat pupils with respect, listen to their views and value their opinions and contributions. Pupils of different ethnic backgrounds work and play harmoniously together.
- 18 Behaviour in and around school is good. Both teaching and support staff are effective in managing pupils and use the system of rewards well to maintain a calm and purposeful working environment. Pupils value this system, where points are awarded to individuals and to classes. They strive to do well and appreciate the recognition when awards are presented in assemblies.
- 19 The school has taken positive action to raise the self-esteem of pupils and to increase their confidence, both educationally and in social situations. A pastoral care worker has been appointed, who has a pivotal role in dealing with any problems encountered by pupils and effectively supports their education. Pupils are encouraged to think about the consequences of their actions and what impact these may have on others. A play leader is instrumental in developing social skills in the playground. Personal and social education, which includes 'Circle Time', further enhances pupils' understanding of each other and reinforces collective responsibility. The pupils respond well to this provision.
- 20 Pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility and they respond well. In all year groups pupils hold positions of responsibility and trust as monitors and School Council representatives. Older pupils act as house captains and 'peer mediators', who help to reconcile minor disagreements between pupils. These initiatives have had marked results, with a decrease in instances of anti-social behaviour and an increase in the self-discipline of pupils.
- 21 Attendance rates at the school are satisfactory. Figures are slightly below those achieved nationally and are affected by the extended holidays taken by some pupils during term-time to visit family abroad. The school makes every effort to encourage good attendance and to discourage parents from taking term-time holidays. Rates of unauthorised absence are low.
- 22 Pupils take pride in their school. The school has built on the positive attitudes described in the previous report, introducing measures to further improve the personal development of pupils. This has a significant impact on the educational standards achieved and on the level of maturity and confidence of pupils.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

- 23 The quality of teaching is good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection and the good teaching is a major contributor to the rising standards.

- 24 Literacy and numeracy are taught well because teachers have a good understanding of the national frameworks and the lessons are well structured. As a result, pupils are acquiring knowledge and learning skills step by step. Teachers use a variety of strategies to help pupils listen carefully, which they find difficult when they first enter the school in Year 3. For example, one teacher uses a furry puppet, which talks to both the children and the teacher, thereby capturing the children's attention. Another teacher encourages the children to count to five on their fingers with their hands up and praises them when they have her attention after two or three counts. By Year 6, pupils listen well and speak confidently. Teachers and support staff match work carefully to the needs of pupils through the setting arrangements and through precise assessments of what pupils know and can do.
- 25 Many teachers use the lesson structure of the literacy and numeracy hours for other lessons, sharing with pupils what they should know and be able to do by the end of the lesson. A short discussion towards the end of the lesson establishes if pupils have achieved all they should have. The teachers also encourage pupils to comment on each other's work, sharing and celebrating successes to which they respond well. In a history lesson a group with learning difficulties supported by a specialist teacher shared their work with the rest of the class. This gave them confidence because they could see the progress they were making. The higher-attaining pupils are asked very challenging questions. The high expectations that teachers have resulted in a significant number of pupils attaining the higher level 5 in the national tests in English.
- 26 The careful choice of books and the teachers' effective reading to whole classes help to capture pupils' interest enabling them to make good progress in reading. In one lesson pupils in Year 4 were enthralled by the teacher's reading of 'The Glass Cupboard' and 'The Mousehole Cat'. Consequently, although the text of 'The Mousehole Cat' was challenging, the teacher posed questions in such a way that higher-attaining pupils were beginning to understand the more complex structure of the story.
- 27 In mathematics teachers use time effectively, plan carefully and have high expectations, which has helped all pupils to succeed. This, and the well-targeted support for the lower-attaining pupils, together with the higher staffing ratio in Year 6, has resulted in the much needed improvements in standards.
- 28 The teaching of music is excellent. Specialist music teachers from the local education authority take lessons and have trained other teachers in the school. Lessons are lively and fun. Pupils clearly respond well by contributing enthusiastically. The very focused teaching of skills leads to good standards of performance, for example in the singing in assemblies. Fun and enthusiasm for teaching are a feature in other subjects, too.
- 29 Class management is good. Teachers know their pupils well and they have good working relationships. At this early stage in the term, classroom routines are being established well and pupils respond to the security this offers them.
- 30 There was very little unsatisfactory teaching. When this occurred it was in some aspects of teaching literacy and numeracy, mainly in capturing the attention of the newly-arrived Year 3 pupils. In a Year 4 class the overlong explanations of the text used, slowed the pace and led to pupils' inattention towards the end of the lesson.

Teachers need to strike a balance between covering the content of the literacy and numeracy strategies and using their knowledge and professional judgement of the rate at which their pupils learn. In these classes further support is needed for the lower-attaining pupils.

- 31 As a result of recent training in ICT lessons teachers are confident and enthusiastic in using the new technology. Consequently, pupils are highly motivated, competent and are becoming confident learners. The pupils' understanding of ICT and the skills they have acquired are good and there is evidence of increasing use in other subjects. For example, in literacy, the teacher's use of an interactive whiteboard to make teaching points and the shared text on disk, gave pupils immediate access to the reading material. Pupils were able to highlight the use of adverbs very quickly on the whiteboard. The use of good technical support in the ICT suite and in other lessons has contributed to the rapid progress that pupils have made. Some improvements are now needed in the aspects of modelling and control technology, and this is part of the new scheme of work.
- 32 There are gaps in teachers' knowledge and confidence in design and technology and in art and design, though there has been some improvement since the last inspection.
- 33 Teachers assess pupils' work in lessons well and provide them with feedback which enables them to make good progress. Some attention should be given to marking of written work to help pupils and parents understand what more pupils need to do to improve.

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

- 34 The school provides all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and meets all statutory requirements. Pupils take part in a daily act of worship and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education are met. French is well taught to older pupils, providing them with extra curriculum breadth at no loss to other areas of learning. It is appreciated by parents. Teaching time meets national recommendations. The allocation of time to individual subjects is appropriate; further gains are made by effective use of links across subjects.
- 35 There are effective strategies to teach literacy and numeracy. These national strategies have helped teachers focus on raising attainment. Extra funding is well used to reduce the size of teaching groups, and the setting arrangements in the upper school are very effective in supporting pupils' learning. The curriculum for numeracy, literacy and science is well planned, monitored and evaluated.
- 36 Relevant policies and schemes of work are in place. In foundation subjects, national guidelines for schemes of work are being implemented well. Curriculum planning has improved since the last inspection and policies and schemes of work are systematically kept under review.
- 37 Provision for pupils with SEN is good and meets all statutory requirements. A strong emphasis is placed on early identification of pupils' needs. This is consistent across the school. Individual education plans are detailed and helpful. Classroom support is used very well and is effective in helping individuals and groups. All staff are well informed and work is clearly targeted. Access to the curriculum for pupils

with SEN and speech and language difficulties is greatly enhanced by the expertise of staff in planning and delivery. The school is particularly successful in matching work to the varied needs of pupils.



- 38 All pupils have full access to the curriculum. The particular needs of gifted and talented pupils are beginning to receive attention. A policy has been written and pupils identified in each subject area. Some specialist teaching is being planned.
- 39 A comprehensive personal, social, health and citizenship education policy and scheme of work are now a very good part of the school's curriculum. Sex education is taught to Years 5 and 6, as agreed by the governors, and drugs education is taught throughout the school. In science and physical education there is a specific emphasis on a healthy lifestyle. Pupils have recently elected their representatives to the School Council, which allows pupils to contribute to developments in the school and practical experience of education for citizenship.
- 40 The provision of extra-curricular activities is very good. Equal opportunities are fully established and a good number of sporting competitions are open to pupils. Pupils take part in school productions. There are good opportunities for residential visits in Years 4 to 6. Plans are being made for one in Year 3. The programme includes visits to Kingswood, Osmington and France.
- 41 Full pupil inclusion is a strength of the school. It very effectively delivers its aim of providing a curriculum for pupils from diverse cultures. Pupils' progress is assessed in terms of gender and ethnicity and no significant differences emerge. All pupils feel positively about themselves and their achievements and have equal opportunities to learn. Pupils in the Speech and Language base are successfully integrated into main school life. Pupils of all abilities are sufficiently challenged in lessons. A small nurture group boosts the self-confidence of its members and improves their ability to relate to others. Pastoral support is very strong and behaviour problems are tackled constructively and positively.
- 42 The contribution of the community to learning is good. Positive links exist with the local hospice and a number of visitors, for example, the police and a Christian minister, benefit pupils' learning. Visits to places of interest are also a helpful part of school life.
- 43 Relations with partner institutions are satisfactory. Teachers from school visit the feeder infant schools, and detailed records are sent to secondary schools. Pupils tackle work which assists them in moving to the secondary school.
- 44 Provision for spiritual education is good, having improved since the previous inspection. Pupils have a reverence for religious ideas and opportunities exist in worship for quiet reflection. They were seen to experience moments of delight in various areas of the curriculum such as during stories and when considering Egyptian hieroglyphics.
- 45 The school provides pupils with a strong moral basis. The difference between right and wrong is constantly emphasised in classrooms and assemblies and is re-enforced by a well-planned rewards system. Pupils have a respect for honesty.
- 46 Provision for social education is very good. The school places a strong emphasis on good relationships. All pupils mix easily together. They are well mannered and effectively taught to respect each other and settle disputes peacefully. 'Circle Time' and peer mediation activities with older pupils are very helpful in building relationships. These are further enhanced by the very good work of the pastoral care worker. Pupils engage in a variety of charitable activities, often motivated by

the 'Knights of Middlemarch' system, which significantly promotes good relationships and thoughtful behaviour.

- 47 Opportunities for culture development are satisfactory. Pupils have a sound understanding of their own culture and are introduced well to French by language teaching and a residential visit. Visits to places like Coventry Cathedral and the theatre also enhance learning. Curriculum subjects, such as music and literature, provide some cultural experiences.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

- 48 The school provides exceptional personal support for pupils and creates a secure and happy environment in which all are valued. Staff know individual pupils well and have a very good understanding of their cultural, social and learning needs. Relationships are very positive and all pupils, including those new to the school and those for whom English is an additional language, appear confident and happy. The involvement of the pastoral care worker in lessons, in extra-curricular activities and in play is invaluable.
- 49 Staff with responsibility for child protection are very experienced and have received relevant training; procedures are clearly defined and understood by all adults on site. Expectations of pupil conduct are very high and there are very effective procedures to promote good behaviour. Pupils receiving awards for especially good conduct show a real sense of pride and are sincerely applauded by the whole school. To become a 'Knight of Middlemarch' is recognised as a great achievement and this provides a very motivating target as pupils move through the school. Harassment of any kind is not tolerated and racial harmony is very successfully promoted.
- 50 Attendance is monitored consistently and parents are actively, yet sensitively, encouraged not to take extended holidays during term time.
- 51 Assessment procedures, especially in English, mathematics and science, have improved significantly since the previous inspection and are now very good. Analysis of information from assessments is used to identify any curriculum area which requires reinforcement, and to help teachers plan for the specific needs of individuals and groups. Pupils are regularly informed about how they are doing and are actively involved in setting targets for improvement. Assessment of performance in other subjects is less formal but, nevertheless, teachers have a good understanding of what pupils know and what they can do.
- 52 Pupils who have special educational needs are identified at a very early stage and work is carefully planned to match their needs. This process is now being extended to meet the needs of gifted and talented pupils. Progress of SEN pupils is frequently reviewed and information is shared with parents.
- 53 The personal development of pupils is monitored well and is documented in an individual Record of Achievement. The way in which this schools cares for its pupils enables them all to grow in self-esteem and to get on well with other people. The result is confident learners.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

- 54 Parents are very supportive of the school and its work. The school has maintained good relationships with parents, who value the commitment of staff in the education of their children.
- 55 Parents are very happy with the majority of aspects of the school. They feel that their children enjoy school, are taught well and make good progress. They believe that the school is well run and that teachers have high expectations, helping their children to become responsible. Some parents have reservations about the amount of homework set and the extra-curricular activities provided. Inspectors agreed with the positive views of parents. They also found homework to be sufficient and relevant. The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons.
- 56 Communication between home and school is very effective. All teachers and most parents make good use of the home-school link book to exchange information. All parents are well informed about the school and the curriculum. However, although the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents have been revised and improved since the last inspection, they both lack sufficient details of the school's provision for pupils with special needs.
- 57 Parents are welcome in school and there are ample opportunities for informal contact with staff. The parents of children in Year 3 are invited into school every Friday morning to share books with them. Consultation evenings are well attended. Annual written reports are detailed and individual to each child, giving parents and pupils an opportunity to comment and be involved in setting targets for improvement.
- 58 The school is committed to maintaining an effective partnership with parents, which has a beneficial effect on the educational standards achieved.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

- 59 The headteacher provides very effective leadership for the school. She has been successful since her arrival in September 1998 in gaining the confidence and trust of governors, staff and parents in her pursuit of high standards and good-quality teaching. She has created a school in which every child and every member of staff is equally valued.
- 60 The governors were initially slow to act on the previous inspection report because, in a short period of time immediately after the last inspection, the school had massive changes in management, which led eventually to a new senior management team. This team has been working together since 1999.
- 61 The headteacher and governors have worked on a school improvement plan which has placed the quality of teaching and learning in literacy and numeracy high on the agenda. The rising standards in both English and mathematics and the improvements in teaching bear testimony to the very good leadership and management of the school. The thorough review of the curriculum and its organisation, together with the new policies and revised schemes of work, have contributed to the effectiveness of teaching.

- 62 The headteacher has a clear vision of what she wants for all the pupils, both academically and socially, and this is shared by staff. This vision of high achievement and a caring environment in which all pupils feel secure, permeates all classes.
- 63 The headteacher and senior staff have carefully analysed the school's strengths and weaknesses and have decided what needs to be done to improve. They have been supported in this by the governing body, who know what is happening in the school and can make informed judgements on priorities. This has resulted in a school improvement plan which is effective and manageable. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
- 64 All the staff share responsibility for curriculum leadership, and they provide effective support in the subjects and aspects, such as personal and social education. Not all co-ordinators have yet observed the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects, although this aspect is part of a rolling programme of improvement.
- 65 The school has sufficient teachers and support staff. The head and governors have made good strategic decisions with the budget in order to reduce class sizes in Years 3 and 4, and to put more support in the larger classes in Years 5 and 6. The arrangements for setting pupils for literacy and numeracy, ensure that pupils, whatever their ability, make the progress they should. There is well-targeted support by the speech and language teacher and assistant, and the SEN teacher and assistants for those pupils with difficulties in learning. The Code of Practice for SEN is adhered to. Pupils whose first language is not English also receive the appropriate support, with the result that they make good progress.
- 66 Performance management has been implemented well. The professional development of staff is very well managed and specific funds have been used well. For example, the use of the grant to improve teachers' ICT skills has had a beneficial effect on pupils' learning, and given teachers much more confidence in using ICT in teaching. Staff new to the school are well supported and managed. The school has the potential to be a provider of initial teacher training.
- 68 The accommodation provides sufficient space because there are some re-locatable classrooms in the school grounds. There is a substantial budget surplus which governors have set aside to build additional classroom space in order to dispense with the need for outside classrooms. The working noise and bustle, which travels easily across the open-plan classrooms, sometimes has a detrimental effect on learning, particularly for those pupils whose concentration is limited. The head and governors should explore ways of improving this environment to make it more conducive to learning.
- 69 Learning resources are adequate, of good quality and are used well to support learning. The new computer suite has had a beneficial impact on learning. Teachers have a good range of books and materials to support the literacy and numeracy hours. In order to improve the presentation of pupils' work, the school should define what standards it expects to achieve this consistency.
- 70 The senior management team and governors have made careful plans based on the effective analysis of strengths and weaknesses. They have used resources strategically and prudently to improve the quality of education in order to raise standards. Although standards in art and design, and design and technology are

still below the national expectations, and there is much to do in assessing the foundation subjects, the school is in a good position to improve further. The management team has acted upon the most pressing needs and is giving good value for money. The school has achieved much in a short time under the new leadership.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education the headteacher and governors should:

- **Continue to use the strategies identified in the school improvement plan to raise the standards in writing.**

- **Raise the standards in art and design by:**

- 1 providing in-service training for teachers linked to the units in the scheme of work;
- 2 specifying which aspects in the scheme of work are to be assessed and how this will be done.

[paragraphs 98, 99]

- **Raise standards in design and technology by:**

- 1 identifying which skills and knowledge are to be taught and built upon from year group to year group;
- 2 providing in-service training linked to the scheme of work;
- 3 visiting a feeder secondary school design and technology department to see what pupils are expected to do in Year 7.

[paragraph 103]

- **Without losing the very good teamwork and ethos of sharing by teachers and pupils in the open-plan area, find ways to deaden the noise in the classroom bases, for example by carpeting the floors or building some walls, if necessary.**

[paragraph 68]

- **Improve the way pupils present work in their books by ensuring that:**

- 1 they know the difference between a draft and final piece of work;
- 2 exercise books or files are suitable for the purpose;
- 3 the school has agreed formats for presenting work.

[paragraphs 69, 76]

- **Improve handwriting.**

[paragraph 76]

- **Improve the SEN section in the prospectus and governors' report to parents, by commenting on the effectiveness of the policy.**

[paragraph 56]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	21	17	3	0	0
Percentage	4	20	39	31	6	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y3– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	---	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	---	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	---	15
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	---	95

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	18

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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 2 (Year 6)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	29	29	58

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	16	28
	Girls	20	15	26
	Total	39	31	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 [71]	53 [81]	93 [88]
	National	75 [70]	72 [69]	85 [78]

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	17	24
	Girls	18	16	23
	Total	33	33	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 [68]	57 [81]	81 [85]
	National	70 [68]	72 [69]	79 [75]

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	19
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	194
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	157

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	459859
Total expenditure	428867
Expenditure per pupil	2211
Balance brought forward from previous year	82625
Balance carried forward to next year	113617



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	86

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	37	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	42	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	48	5	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	45	26	5	1
The teaching is good.	58	39	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	31	8	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	22	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	30	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	38	49	6	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	52	41	1	3	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	47	0	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	43	20	8	5

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **ENGLISH**

- 72 Standards in English are below average in all year groups. In the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds results were below the national average. In 2000 performance was also below the national average, but when compared with that of similar schools it was average. Attainment in writing is not as good as in speaking and listening and in reading. However, pupils enter the school in Year 3 performing at well below average levels, especially in writing, and the school enables them to make good progress. Over the past four years standards have improved in line with national trends.
- 73 The school provides well for its more-able pupils so that in 2000 the number of pupils attaining at the higher level 5 was close to the national average and above the average of similar schools. Boys and girls perform equally well in all aspects of the subject. Pupils with special needs make good progress through the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress and their attainment is in line with that of their peers by the time they leave the school.
- 74 Speaking and listening are satisfactory. Younger pupils, new to the school, are sometimes impatient when listening, and their understanding and use of vocabulary are below average. By Year 6, however, pupils listen well and many speak confidently and articulately, using a wide range of technical terms in all subjects. Standards of reading are improving as a result of the consistent use of a graded scheme, the teachers' own enthusiasm for books and the involvement of parents through the home-school link book. Pupils thoroughly enjoy the well-chosen texts used in literacy lessons and reading diaries show that they are eager to read at home. They talk about authors, character, plot and genre with increasing confidence.
- 75 Very few of the younger pupils can write at length and many have difficulty structuring and punctuating sentences. Spelling is often inaccurate, although it does show that pupils can match letters to sounds satisfactorily. An imaginative and effective approach to drafting, using individual whiteboards, is beginning to have a beneficial impact on pupils' confidence in writing in Year 3 and resulting in improved standards. Older pupils do write at length and some imaginative and well-structured writing was seen, including poetry writing. The additional staffing for literacy in Years 5 and 6 and the very focused teaching, which the setting arrangement allows, is having a positive effect on the rate of progress of pupils of all abilities.
- 76 Handwriting throughout the school is unsatisfactory, as is the presentation of finished work. Although there are regular handwriting lessons, the skills are not yet applied well to writing at other times. There is often little difference between the appearance of a first draft and final version and pupils are not sufficiently clear about the importance of presentation to the reader. Presentation of a higher standard was seen when pupils had used ICT to draft, edit and present their work.
- 77 Teaching in all year groups is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and planning ensures that knowledge and skills are built step by step. Lessons are well structured and teachers take frequent opportunities

to review the learning and assess the performance of individuals. The texts used interest and motivate the pupils and the teachers provide a very good model of effective reading to an audience. One Year 4 class was absolutely enthralled by the teachers' reading of 'The Glass Cupboard'. Teachers ask a good range of questions and make sure that pupils of all abilities have opportunities to respond. Very occasionally lessons are too directed by the teacher and pupils have little opportunity to contribute. This is often as a result of the planning of too much content for the time allowed. Purposeful links are made with other subjects. For example, a Year 6 class reading 'Goodnight Mr Tom' understood the concept of evacuation and many of the technical terms used in the book as a result of studying the Second World War in history. Other adults in the classroom, for example special needs assistants, make a very positive contribution to the teaching and learning.

- 78 Attitudes to learning are good. Although some inappropriate behaviour was observed, pupils responded well to the positive strategies used to eliminate disruption. Pupils enjoy the literacy hour and work well in pairs and small groups. They are developing the ability to evaluate their own performance during lessons and respond well when the teacher tells them how to improve their work.
- 79 The school analyses information from assessment and understands in detail where it needs to improve. There is a good plan to improve standards of writing and the newly appointed co-ordinator has the knowledge and expertise to support colleagues in its effective implementation.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 80 Standards in mathematics are above the national average by the time pupils leave school at eleven-years old.
- 81 In 2001 standards rose at a much higher rate than the national average. The overall trend since the previous inspection is upwards. Standards being attained are confirmed by inspection evidence.
- 82 This improvement in standards is directly due to the school undertaking a thorough analysis of all test data which has led to changed teaching priorities. Teachers know in detail the abilities of their pupils and group tasks are accurately matched to needs, so that pupils are working at levels appropriate for them. Teacher assessment of pupils' expected results at eleven are very accurate. Targets for progress are set twice a year and agreed between teachers, pupils and parents. These targets are appropriately challenging, manageable and kept under review.
- 83 Setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6 are very effective so that pupils are suitably challenged. Specific grant money is used to make teaching classes smaller. Both high attainers and low attainers are well supported, enabling them to achieve well for their ability level. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys or different ethnic groups. Pupils with special educational needs attain satisfactorily; those with English as an additional language do well and gifted and talented pupils also achieve good standards.
- 84 Pupils enter the school with well below average standards. Some have a very weak mathematical vocabulary and limited skills. Some Year 3 pupils were unable to add together two single digit numbers without using apparatus and were unsure about

the symbol for subtraction and alternative words for addition. The majority found it difficult to count back accurately and explain what they were doing. However, a few pupils were able to explain how to add nine in more than one way and add numbers of tens together to total 100. In Year 4 the high attainers could carry out subtractions involving numbers greater than one hundred. The high attainers in Year 5 could multiply hundreds by tens. Very early in the school year, higher attaining Year 6 pupils were working towards the levels necessary to attain level 5. Teaching adds very significant value to the pupils' learning. Some pupils achieved good progress to attain the higher level 5 from low attainment on entry.

- 85 Pupils of average and above-average ability levels are able to explain a variety of methods of calculation as teachers place an emphasis on the use of mental strategies. Pupils have a good understanding of the full mathematics curriculum.
- 86 Teaching is mostly good, although a small proportion was unsatisfactory. Most lessons are characterised by effective use of time, very good planning and high teacher expectations. Lower-attaining Year 6 pupils are very well taught and challenged and are supported by a high staff ratio. For example, these pupils used money and language accurately when playing a mathematical 'At the Fair' game.
- 87 ICT is insufficiently used to support pupils' learning. Not all work is marked and the standard of presentation is unsatisfactory. Teachers stress the use of appropriate subject vocabulary and that needs continuing emphasis. A few low-attaining pupils need more classroom support in Year 3.
- 88 Pupils were enthusiastic, highly motivated, polite and confident. Most pupils have an enthusiasm for the subject which teachers have brought about.
- 89 The subject is well managed. There is a good policy and the National Numeracy Strategy is being used effectively to raise standards. The co-ordinator is well trained and a very good teaching role model. She has a good grasp of where improvements are needed. She monitors and evaluates teachers by lesson observations. In open plan areas, some pupils find it hard to hear their teachers and learning is adversely affected.

## **SCIENCE**

- 90 The school has maintained above average standards in science since the last inspection. National test results at the end of Key Stage 2 have been consistently good over the past four years and above the national average. This year's test results, published for 2001, show standards in line with the national average. Pupils show a good level of subject knowledge in their science lessons by the time they reach Year 6. This is due mainly to the well-planned lessons and the good level of confidence that teachers show in teaching the subject. Additionally, pupils in Year 6 are well prepared for the end of the key stage tests.
- 91 Pupils make good progress in lessons to achieve their tasks and improve their knowledge of the subject. They know how to carry out experiments and can recognise the features of a fair test and understand its purpose. They carry out tests planned for them with a good level of care and due regard for health and safety. They also show a sound science vocabulary in the work done in Year 6.

- 92 The quality of teaching is good. There is a good level of consistency in lesson planning because staff work together and have the support of the subject co-ordinator, if required. This process is soundly based on the school's scheme of work for science. Teachers make good use of questioning to involve pupils in lessons and achieve a good response. Where teaching is good, pupils are being challenged through questioning to explain and give reasons for their predictions. This was the case in the Year 6 lesson on forces where the teacher set high expectations for accuracy in measurement and the correct use of vocabulary. In Year 4, good practice in carrying out an experiment is being established through measuring and recording the temperature of different samples of water in a topic on 'Keeping Warm'. Pupils' understanding of health and safety is also well covered here. In Year 3, pupils are being introduced to the importance of understanding a healthy approach to eating, with the specialist help provided by the school nurse. The range of work covered meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. In all classes the lesson's objectives are being shared with pupils, teaching is well focused in lessons to achieve these objectives and progress is reviewed at the end.
- 93 The assessment of pupils' progress through the key stage is done systematically and records are readily available to staff. Planning makes effective use of this assessment data. Feedback to pupils about their progress during lessons is good and works well to motivate them and to develop their self-esteem and confidence. In marking pupils' work there is little evidence of feedback which helps pupils to know how to improve further. The standards of presentation achieved by pupils in their workbooks do not reflect the good quality achieved in teaching.
- 94 Pupils show good attitudes in science lessons; they are well motivated and can concentrate. Their interest in science could be stimulated further by providing additional opportunities for them to carry out some experiments they have planned themselves. This would also support the school's current objective to improve investigative work.
- 95 The subject co-ordinator is new to the role this term and has the specialist knowledge required. Early indications suggest that the school is well placed to maintain its current strengths in science and to identify areas where standards could be improved further. The school's development planning process places the review of science policy in 2003. However, the annual review of the scheme of work should enable opportunities to further enrich the current content to be identified. This should provide the opportunities needed to link some aspects of work in science with other subjects such as mathematics, design and technology, and in particular, ICT.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 96 Only a few lessons in art and design were observed during the week of the inspection, consequently judgements on standards and progress are therefore, mostly based on scrutiny of past work across year groups.
- 97 Standards in art and design are below those expected at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in drawing are better than those in painting, and are more in line with national expectations, but on the whole, the average and higher attainers could do better. There is some evidence that pupils are acquiring the knowledge and understanding of the way artists and designers work. After a visit to Coventry Cathedral the higher-attaining pupils could talk with some confidence about the

work of John Hutton. They applied their understanding when making drawings of angels and saints, exploring the qualities of line and texture, in a similar way to those found in the engravings on the West Window in the cathedral. Their good progress was helped by the teacher's careful choice of materials and photographs to support and reinforce their understanding.

- 98 Standards in painting are below the national expectation because pupils are not taught systematically or regularly enough in Years 3 and 4 the skills of colour mixing, matching and applying paint. From the scrutiny of previous work, it would appear that teachers' knowledge of painting techniques and their understanding of how to teach pupils to progress further are limited. Nevertheless, there have been some improvements since the last inspection, although they have not yet had much impact on raising standards. There is now a good scheme of work and guidelines for teachers, and a wider range of materials and experiences are offered to pupils in art and design, including ICT and three-dimensional work based on Andy Goldsworthy's sculptures. The range of experiences and the carefully planned lessons are having a beneficial impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, which were very good in all the lessons seen. Assessment is not yet well developed. It needs to be closely linked to aspects in the scheme of work.
- 99 The subject is managed by a co-ordinator new to the school, who has good subject knowledge and understanding of future developments. The school is therefore, well placed to improve standards when the subject becomes a priority for development.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 100 The range of evidence available for design and technology during this inspection was based on two lessons observed and samples of pupils' work. It is evident that since the last inspection the school has made some improvement in the organisation and content for the subject. However, the standards achieved by pupils are not yet satisfactory across the key stage, and are below what is expected nationally.
- 101 The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. Teachers plan their work well in response to the school's scheme of work. Learning objectives are clear and shared with pupils in lessons. In Year 3 this works well to involve and motivate pupils in sharing ideas. For example, when sampling different kinds of bread, pupils could record their findings, evaluate them and share their conclusions. Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to work on designing and making objects for a specific context, in this case, shelters in the Second World War. This does provide the experience of designing shelters for a purpose and also involves them in testing a full size shelter made with adult help. Pupils' modelling skills are being developed successfully when planning ideas to scale using art straws in preparation for making their own shelter. However, the range of skills they show needs to be extended, especially in terms of drawing and communication skills when developing ideas in more detail. Additionally the current scheme of work does not provide pupils with the opportunity to be involved in designing and making mechanisms using control systems, nor are there sufficient opportunities for the use of ICT.
- 102 Pupils show a good attitude to work in their lessons. They are enthusiastic and keen to contribute their ideas. They respond well when teachers use visual materials to stimulate discussion, illustrate production processes or extend their technical vocabulary.
- 103 The current approach to subject co-ordination is soundly based and working well to develop a more structured approach to the school's scheme of work. Development is well managed and focused through the school improvement plan. Good progress has been achieved in planning a block of time in each year for the subject and in the content to be covered in each unit of work. This progress now needs to be

reinforced further by giving attention to the progression in skills, knowledge and understanding for pupils through the key stage. This calls for effective co-ordination of what is taught, some further opportunities for staff development in the key stage and increased awareness of the requirements for pupils when they move on to Year 7 in the secondary schools.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 104 Standards in geography are in line with national expectations. These standards were judged by a scrutiny of the work of last year's Year 3 to Year 6 pupils and by lesson observations of the present Year 3. It was not possible to observe geography lessons of the older pupils because of the way the timetable was organised. The work scrutinised suggested that pupils have satisfactory geographical knowledge and skills, but are let down by written work. The presentation in the books was also untidy and inconsistent. In the Year 3 classes observed the majority of pupils could understand simple grid references to find places on a map of the local area, and could follow a plan of the school. In Year 6 pupils applied well their knowledge of physical geography during their history lesson to locate towns and cities that suffered from bombing attacks during the Second World War.
- 105 In the lessons observed, pupils made good progress because the lessons were well planned. Teachers at this early stage in the term were successfully adjusting their teaching strategies by providing work at different levels of difficulty so that pupils of all abilities could follow the work. Pupils with SEN and those with speech and language difficulties were well supported by a specialist teacher, which enabled them to make good progress. The use by the classteacher of a furry glove puppet, whom the pupils had named Nigel, helped pupils to listen carefully and made learning fun. The work in the Year 3 classes was challenging enough to maintain the interest of the higher-attaining pupils, who made good progress. The quality of teaching was good.
- 106 The standards have improved since the last inspection. Geography is given satisfactory coverage over the key stage and the policy and scheme of work to support the subject are good. The subject is well managed. In-service training has been undertaken and the school is in a good position to make further improvements, particularly in assessment and in the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning.

## **HISTORY**

- 107 Standards are in line with national expectations by the end of Year 6. The higher-attaining pupils make good progress and are knowledgeable about events in the Second World War. They make good connections with what they have learnt in literature and geography to give them a better understanding of historical events. The average-attaining pupils have good subject knowledge and satisfactory skills of enquiry, and standards for them are satisfactory. The lower-attaining pupils and those with SEN make satisfactory progress because they have been given work matched to their abilities and they benefit from additional support from teachers and assistants. The research skills and knowledge of some pupils are enhanced by their confident use of ICT.



108 Pupils' learning is good. In Year 6 pupils interviewing a visitor who had been a wartime evacuee, sustained discussion well by drawing upon knowledge of what they had learned in previous lessons.

- 109 Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They answered questions enthusiastically in Year 4, when discussing what they had discovered about the Egyptians and were enthralled by hieroglyphics and Egyptian artefacts, some of which had been provided by the pupils themselves.
- 110 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned, and carefully resourced and the teachers make the subject exciting, so pupils respond with enthusiasm. Good links are made to other subjects to help pupils' understanding. Work is carefully matched to pupils' abilities to enable them to succeed. Pupils work hard to complete tasks in response to teachers' expectations.
- 111 The policy and the scheme of work are good, and although the co-ordinator has only been in post a short time, she has lots of ideas for developing the subject. The school has maintained the standards since the previous inspection and is now in a good position to improve them further.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 112 Standards achieved by pupils in ICT are consistent with national expectations. Good progress has been achieved since the last inspection and pupils now have well-planned access to a much improved curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their ICT skills and to apply these when working in other subjects. There is still room for improvement in the areas of modelling and control but this is now part of the revised scheme of work.
- 113 One of the lessons observed illustrated a good use of ICT in teaching literacy. The quality of planning was very good and staff used the interactive whiteboard with confidence. The shared text, stored on disk, gave pupils immediate access to good quality text for reading. They highlighted the use of adjectives in the text very quickly, and applied their skills and knowledge well in accessing their own files, editing and adding further text as well as saving their work at the end of the lesson. The lesson was most efficient in terms of time and motivation for pupils since they were fully responsible for managing their own files. In one art lesson in Year 5 the teacher made good use of clipart images as a resource for pupils to add their own descriptive text to the images they selected. In both lessons, the teachers showed both confidence and enthusiasm for the use of ICT in their subject.
- 114 Pupils are highly motivated in using ICT. Having access to the new computer suite has made a difference to the progress they can now make. Additionally, the school's technician is invaluable in providing both technical and classroom support for teachers. Pupils in Year 6 showed confidence in using Powerpoint to create notices for the school's breakfast club. They can manipulate both text and images to amend their ideas. Pupils work well in pairs and learn from each other through collaborating sensibly and purposefully. There is a good sense of sharing knowledge and skills in the teaching of ICT. Good use is made of ICT in displays around the school to create clear images of high quality. Equally, pupils have used text, graphics, digital cameras and the internet to present their projects on rivers, a school visit to France, and Coventry Cathedral. An additional application this year was the use of the school's webcam to locate the position of the school party on their visit to the Eiffel Tower. This experience helped pupils to understand the applications of ICT in the world outside school. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 experience word processing, data collection and presentation. Some good examples were seen in the form of letter writing, poetry, posters and newsletters.

- 115 The co-ordination of the subject is good. There is a clear vision for developing ICT, which is now being guided through a well-structured development plan.
- 116 Staff development is being managed in a sensitive way and all staff are now showing confidence in their own use of computers. National funding for ICT has been beneficial and enabled the school to plan for the replacement of out-dated computer resources, standardise the operating systems and provide a computer suite. ICT resources are now reliable and have been up-dated. The tasks of providing pupils with secure access to the internet and e-mail facilities are currently in hand. The school is well placed for the next phase of development to achieve its vision for ICT.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

- 117 The last inspection reported on the good progress that pupils make in French. This continues to be the case. All Year 6 pupils are taught French by a competent linguist, who co-ordinates the subject very well. The quality of teaching is good and, as a result, pupils participate enthusiastically and confidently. The good teaching strategies and varied activities in lessons, with good emphasis on listening and speaking, ensure that all pupils make sound progress. The pupils with English as an additional language make particularly good progress because they listen carefully to the language and repeat sounds and intonation well. The higher-attaining pupils remember the vocabulary quickly and attempt more complex words. The average attainers respond well, though they are a little more hesitant in the role-play about introductions and finding out about each other. The lower attainers found listening and understanding the French song about months of the year more difficult until the teacher helped them with a good strategy of identifying those words which sounded similar to English ones. The French curriculum is enhanced by an annual visit to France which contributes well to pupils' cultural understanding.

## **MUSIC**

- 118 Standards in music are good. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils in all year groups perform confidently and are making good progress in composing and in their knowledge and understanding of music.
- 119 Although there is still no music specialist on the staff of the school, the provision made to compensate for this is very good indeed. The headteacher manages the subject and works in partnership with an associate teacher from the Warwickshire County Music Service. The specialist teacher leads lessons throughout the school and also provides regular in-service training for all class teachers. Staff are developing the confidence and expertise to teach music well; indeed, a lesson taken by two Year 5 teachers was excellent. Pupils made very good progress when using signing to compose in pairs and their thorough enjoyment of the session led to a high standard of singing by the end of the lesson.
- 120 The school uses the national guidelines as the basis for planning. It is also part of the County Music Service Choral Singing Project. Coverage of the whole curriculum is well documented and there is good evidence of skills being built on from year to year. A few pupils are taught to play an instrument by a visiting teacher and the headteacher is determined to extend this provision to more children in the future.

- 121 The teaching of music is excellent. The very lively, enthusiastic and interactive approach results in very positive attitudes to the subject. Explanations are very clear; lessons are well paced, varied and fun. Subject specific language is consistently used and, as a result, pupils are developing a good understanding of such words as rhythm, pulse, composer and conductor. The very focused teaching of skills in class lessons leads to good standards of performance by the whole school, for example in assemblies. Pupils have opportunities to listen to a range of music, not only in music lessons but in other subjects and in assembly.
- 122 Music makes a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. In music lessons they learn to listen well, to reflect, to persevere and to work as part of a team; these skills are then applied in other areas. Above all, a real love of music and of performing together is being promoted.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 123 Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations.
- 124 Some pupils demonstrate high levels of attainment. Year 6 pupils showed hockey skills at a good level after only two lessons and others showed the beginning of fluency and precision in their gymnastics. From Year 3 all pupils know the importance of exercise for healthy bodies and the importance of warming up before strenuous activity. In Year 4 the higher attainers are starting to develop some understanding of football tactics.
- 125 Progress is evident throughout the school; the rate dependent on teachers' knowledge and subject understanding. Where those with specialist knowledge and greater skills are teaching progress is faster as teachers intervene more effectively to improve pupils' performances and move lessons on briskly. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson where pupils responded very well to firm time limits for the practising of skills. All teaching is satisfactory and some is very good. All teachers use praise well and value each pupil's efforts. A scheme of work which has appropriate subject coverage is being well introduced. All lessons have clear, suitable objectives and end with a review of progress. Pupils are well managed and teachers rightly emphasise the importance of good behaviour and safe practices.
- 126 Almost all pupils pay attention in lessons, are dressed appropriately and show enthusiasm for the subject. They are eager to demonstrate their skills and by Year 6, many are clear about their own achievements and progress and make observations on others' work, helping them to improve. They are able to work individually, in pairs and in small groups.
- 127 Pupils experience a good, well balanced range of activities in the subject. Time allowances are satisfactory. There are equal opportunities for boys and girls, ethnic groups and ability levels. Physical education makes a very good contribution to pupils' social development. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and inter-school competitions which enhance the curriculum.
- 128 The co-ordinator checks all planning sheets, but there is no monitoring and evaluation of teaching or formal assessment of pupils' attainments yet because of the rolling programme of school improvements. The school has a spacious hall, a good field and a hard play area, which are used for a wide variety of sports.

Resources and equipment are adequate and of good quality. Progress since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 129 Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is an improvement on standards reported at the previous inspection. Sufficient teaching time is now allocated and the scheme of work ensures full curriculum coverage.
- 130 Pupils make satisfactory progress in the study of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism. They have a positive attitude to learning about different faiths and are confident in answering questions and offering ideas. Year 3 pupils are developing a good understanding of Christian Baptism as a result of their visit to a local church and investigation of associated artefacts. They described how Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan and discussed how that differed from the baptism they had enacted in the church. Throughout the school pupils have a good understanding of the meaning of worship and they openly share feelings on values, beliefs and experiences.
- 131 Teaching is good. Lessons are well prepared and teachers show a sound grasp of the subject. Children learn from first-hand experiences and from clear explanations by teachers. The knowledge gained from the cultural and religious diversity of the pupils makes a very positive contribution. Two Year 4 pupils, for example, were very happy to share their personal experiences within the Muslim faith with their teacher and classmates. Artefacts and other visual resources are sensitively used to promote greater understanding of the concepts being taught. Pupils who have special educational needs are provided with resources and tasks which help them to be fully involved in the learning.
- 132 The subject contributes greatly to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It draws positively on their own family and religious backgrounds and teaches them to respect differences. Visits to the local mosque, church and hospital chaplaincy further enhance pupils' spiritual growth. Collective worship, both in the whole-school assembly and in class prayer, makes a positive contribution to religious education.
- 133 Assessment is not systematic and procedures need to be improved when the subject next becomes a priority for development.