

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLYOAKES FIELD FIRST SCHOOL

REDDITCH

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116724

Headteacher: Mr Patrick Burgoyne

Reporting inspector: Peter Lewis
21351

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st February 2002

Inspection number: 195607

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bridge Street Redditch Worcestershire
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Des Humphries
Date of previous inspection:	May 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21351	Peter Lewis	Registered inspector	Science Physical education English as an additional Language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (results and achievements) How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
8937	Howard Allen	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (attitudes, values, and personal development) How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30243	Anne Heakin	Team inspector	Foundation Stage English	
22058	Malcolm Padmore	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30128	Shirley Stanley	Team inspector	Geography History Music Religious education	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holyoakes Field First School is situated near the centre of Redditch, in Worcestershire, and takes pupils from the ages of 3 to 9. There are 194 pupils on roll, 117 boys and 76 girls, who are taught in eight classes. This is about average for schools of this type. In addition, there are 52 children who attend the nursery part time in either the morning or afternoon sessions. There are 57 pupils from homes where English is not the first language, all of whom receive specialist additional funding. Of these pupils, 45 are at an early stage of English language acquisition which is very high in comparison with other schools, although the number of pupils in receipt of free school meals (33) is about average. There is a broad ethnic mix within the school. Most pupils come from backgrounds with a range of social and economic disadvantage. There are 54 pupils on the school's register of special educational need this is broadly in line with the national average. The majority of these pupils have moderate learning difficulties. One pupil is in receipt of a statement of special educational needs, which is below the national average.

Children's attainment on entry to the nursery and the reception classes is on the whole below that usually found amongst children of this age. By the end of the Foundation Stage, at the start of Year 1, most children are achieving in line with national expectations and are well placed to begin the national curriculum.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Holyoakes Field First School is an effective school which is working hard to raise standards. The quality of teaching and the provision for children in the nursery and reception classes are good, and children are now achieving well from a below average base. This has a considerable impact on pupils' good attitudes to their work, their very good behaviour, and the very good relationships they develop with each other and with the adults whom they meet.

Standards, in the 2001 national tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 dropped markedly to well below average in reading, writing and science and below average in mathematics, in comparison with similar schools. This fall in standards can be explained in large measure by the impact of catchment area changes upon the school, and the continuing increase in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is not the first language. Additionally, erroneous information was supplied to the school about its budget which led to an extended period of considerable unsettlement and, ultimately, to the loss of an experienced teacher. Since then, the school has had success in raising standards such that attainment in English is average and in mathematics and science is slightly below average at the end of Key Stage 1. By Year 4, attainment continues to improve so that standards in English, mathematics and science are in line with what is expected nationally.

The Headteacher, supported by senior staff and governors is successful in driving the school forward. The school development plan contains appropriate priorities for improvement, which have begun to have a positive effect. Because of these features, the school offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching throughout the school is good, and in the nursery and reception classes is very good so that children receive a very good start to their education
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and make good progress
- Pupils behave well and act responsibly
- Procedures for promoting pupils' moral and social development are very good
- The school has close links with, and provides effective support, for parents who rightly have positive views of the school
- The Headteacher, staff, and governors are all very committed to raising standards

What could be improved

- The use of assessment in lessons to plan pupils future learning
- The role of co-ordinators in monitoring standards and improvement in their subjects
- The consistency and effectiveness of the targets set by teachers to develop pupils' learning, and the way in which these targets are monitored through marking and subject leadership
- The strategic role of the deputy Headteacher in relation to key priorities identified for educational improvement

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in May 1997. It has effectively addressed all the key issues, and clear plans are in place to continue and strengthen these improvements. The school is improving, and is well placed to improve further. The quality of teaching is good overall, and very good in the nursery and reception classes which has been brought about through the high quality of induction, and the systems introduced to monitor the quality of teaching and of pupils' learning. As a result of this, the low standards seen in the national tests and assessments for 2001 have improved, although they are still below the national average in mathematics and science. School development planning is focused upon the need for continuing improvement, and includes information that enables the school to monitor its progress towards the identified targets. Strategic management has improved with the establishment of a senior management team and work that has been undertaken to enable co-ordinators to be more effective in their work. The school recognises the need to strengthen these aspects of its work further, and appropriate plans are in place to achieve this.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	D	B	E	E*	well above average A above average B
Writing	C	A	D	D	average C below average D
Mathematics	E	B	D	E	well below average E

The Results in the 2001 National Curriculum assessments show that standards in writing and mathematics were below average, while the results in reading were well below. In comparison with those in similar schools, results were below average in writing, within the lowest 5 per cent nationally in reading and well below average in mathematics. Inspection findings show that, by the time pupils are seven, standards in reading and writing have improved, following a dip in the 2001 tests and assessments, and are average, while those in mathematics and science, although also improved, are below average. In all other subjects of the curriculum, standards are in line with those expected of 7 year olds, and pupils meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school is well on target to meet the standards it is setting itself.

At the end of Year 4, pupils attain the levels that are usually found amongst 9 year olds in English, mathematics, and science. Standards in all other subjects of the curriculum are in line with the expectations for pupils of this age and, in religious education, standards are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well and make good progress as a result of the good teaching and support that they receive from teachers and support assistants

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good – Pupils enjoy coming to school, are attentive, and work well
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good – Pupils behave well in lessons, and when moving around the school. They are very aware of the high standards expected of them.
Personal development and relationships	Good – Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming. They relate very well to each other and to the adults with whom they come into contact.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory – Attendance is below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Very 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.

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good overall and, in the Foundation Stage, was consistently very good. Good teaching has a positive impact on the improving standards achieved, and on pupils' positive attitudes to their learning. In 78 per cent of lessons, teaching was good, including an unusually high 40 per cent that was very good or excellent. No teaching that was unsatisfactory was seen during the inspection.

Strengths of the good, very good, and excellent teaching include high expectations of what pupils can achieve that are linked to detailed planning which meets the individual learning needs of all pupils. Teachers planning for and use of learning support assistants is generally well considered and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning, especially those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Successful management of pupils is a strong feature of teaching, which contributes well to pupils' positive attitudes to their learning.

The teaching of key skills, including literacy and numeracy, is good. Teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies and these are implemented effectively. Expectations are high, with the result that pupils achieve well.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs, and of those for whom English is an additional language, is good. In general, teachers work effectively, and in close partnership with the EMTAG (Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant) teachers and support staff to support pupils in their learning.

The teaching of children in the nursery and reception classes is a strength of the school. The secure knowledge that staff have of the ways in which young children learn enables them to plan a broad range of valuable experiences that strongly promote learning. This foundation gives young children a flying start into the national curriculum at Key Stage 1

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory: The curriculum is broad and balanced, and is enriched by the appropriate level of provision for extra-curricular activities. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. It provides well for the needs of these children, and focuses well on communication and social skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: Pupils' individual education plans contain clear, detailed and achievable targets. Their learning is supported by the effective partnership between the co-ordinator for special educational needs, class teachers, and support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good: Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well by the EMTAG teachers, who plan and liaise well with class teachers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: Pupils have appropriate opportunities for reflection in assemblies and aspects of the curriculum. Moral and social development are both very good, and these contribute positively to the good behaviour and positive attitudes. Cultural development is satisfactory, with appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about features of a range of cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory: The school has effective procedures for ensuring that pupils are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment. Assessment of pupils' academic performance is being developed, although weaknesses remain in the ways in which assessments are used to monitor pupils' progress against targets in their learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good: The Headteacher has a clear vision for the school. He is committed to raising standards achieved by pupils. Procedures have been put in place, and are being further developed, to enable co-ordinators manage their subjects effectively. The deputy headteacher has helped in raising standards through the quality of induction of new staff, but now needs to have a clearer strategic role in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory: All statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. Governors work hard to support the school and the Headteacher in moving the school forward.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory: The Headteacher and governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the actions that are needed in order to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Good: Resources, including funding for special educational needs and the EMTAG fund are used well to support pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The school has high expectations of their children • Their children make good progress at school • Teaching is good • There is good behaviour in the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework their children receive • Information about what their children are learning in different subjects • Information about the progress that their children are making in school • The degree to which the school works with parents in resolving difficulties

Nine parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection and a total of 107 questionnaires were returned. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school, but feels that the school does strive to resolve difficulties. Inspection findings confirm the school could do more to make parents aware of what their children are learning. Little curriculum information is provided for parents at the beginning of the academic year and pupils annual reports are of variable quality and often provide parents with insufficient information on the progress their children are making and what areas they should particularly be striving to improve. Except in reading, parents are also unclear as to the range and amount of homework their pupils can expect to be asked to do.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Levels of attainment on entry to the nursery are below those expected for this age group. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. The curriculum is soundly based on the six areas of learning for children of this age. An appropriate priority is given to communication and social development. This is very effective in preparing children for the next stage of their school life. The consistently very good teaching impacts on the range of children attending the school and overall progress is very good. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are achieving in line with national expectations.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

2. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were below the national average in reading, and below average in writing and in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, results were very low in reading, below average in writing, and well below average in mathematics. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading, well below average in mathematics, but close to the national average in writing and in the teacher assessments for science. These results show a considerable dip from tests and assessments undertaken in the previous year (2000), and conflict with the upward trend that was present at that time.

3. There are a number of factors that contribute to these low standards:

- there is an increasing proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs,
- a high, and increasing proportion of pupils have English as an additional language,
- the school's catchment area has changed, with the loss of all the privately owned housing near to the school with the result that attainment on entry to Year 1 falls below that seen at the end of the foundation stage
- instability in staffing caused, in part, by erroneous budgetary information provided to the school and leading to the resignation of a senior member of staff.

4. Inspection findings show that standards are improving, and are now broadly average in English and below average in mathematics and science. This improvement in standards is largely as a result of consistently good teaching, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The school is aware that still more needs to be done, and is putting appropriate programmes in place designed to raise attainment further.

5. In literacy, pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds well and read with expression. They discuss characters and events from the books that they have read with knowledge and understanding. In their writing, they make use of a growing range of vocabulary in writing for a variety of purposes. In numeracy, pupils use mathematical vocabulary accurately in, for example, estimating the mass of different objects. With some help, they accurately name common two-dimensional shapes and are confident in their use of number. In their work in science, pupils describe the characteristics of different materials and compare natural and man made materials accurately.

6. Standards in information and communications technology meet national expectations, and this is the case in art, design and technology, geography, history, music, and physical education. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4)

7. By the age of nine, when pupils leave the school, standards in English, mathematics, and science meet those expected of pupils of this age. In their writing, older pupils take notes accurately and use story planners effectively to help with their creative writing. They use appropriate sentence structures and punctuate their work accurately. In mathematics, pupils show an appropriate understanding of numbers. Most use proper and improper fractions accurately, name common two and three dimensional shapes, and handle data using charts and graphs. Pupils' work in science shows that they have an appropriate understanding of the skeleton and of the major organs of the body. Higher attaining pupils accurately describe the function of organs such as the kidneys and the liver.

8. In information and communications technology, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age, and this is also the case in art, design and technology, geography, history, music, and physical education. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

9. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. They are supported effectively by their teachers and the high quality support they receive from learning support assistants. Pupils achieve well as measured against the targets that are set on their individual education plans.

10. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. Teachers and support assistants work together effectively to support these pupils. The support given by the teachers whom the school has recently been able to employ using its Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMTAG) is good and, they have a positive impact on pupils' learning, at an early stage and through the different stages of English language acquisition.

11. The school has set challenging but achievable targets to raise standards throughout the school. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has both the quality of teaching and the quality of leadership and management to enable it to secure improvement.

12. The school is effective in promoting the progress of pupils with special educational needs. In most cases special educational needs are identified early in a child's time in the school by the class teacher. If these are deemed to be of particular concern detailed individual education plans are drawn up by the SENCO in discussion with the class teacher. These documents clearly focus on areas for improvement. They contain clear and achievable targets that include either literacy, numeracy and behaviour or all three in some cases. They are regularly reviewed to make sure progress is being made by the individuals concerned.

13. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. They are supported effectively by teachers and support assistants who liaise very well with the teachers that the school has only recently been able to appoint using its Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMTAG) funds. This good support enables the pupils to progress rapidly from what is frequently an early stage of English language acquisition, to a point where they have full access to the curriculum.

14. The school has set challenging but achievable targets to raise standards throughout both key stages. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has the quality of teaching and the quality of leadership and management that will allow it to secure improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are positive. Pupil's personal development is satisfactory with older pupils demonstrating considerable initiative when given appropriate opportunities. However, levels of attendance compared to the national average for similar types of schools are unsatisfactory.

16. Levels of attendance have not improved since the period of the last inspection. Many pupils have attendance records well below the national average for similar types of schools and this poor attendance has an adverse affect on the standards that pupils are able to achieve. There is some evidence that attendance is adversely affected by pupils being withdrawn from school for extended holidays. However, pupils' attendance generally needs to be improved.

17. Since the period of the last inspection the school has worked hard to ensure pupils' attitudes to learning is good. In nearly all lessons pupils make progress in their learning and respond well to teachers and classroom assistants who try to ensure all pupils are engaged in lessons. Pupils are nearly always attentive and work well both individually and when given the opportunity of group work. The school is successful in enabling pupils who are less able to sustain concentration to contribute more fully to lessons by appropriate differentiation and classroom support. This helps all pupils to better enjoy learning and has a positive effect on standards. In the whole-school assemblies held during the period of the inspection all pupils sang very enthusiastically and this positive attitude provided a very good start to the day. The few incidents of less focused work during lessons usually occur where lessons are less well planned and objectives are not clearly understood by pupils. The many extra-curricula opportunities provided by the school that are enjoyed by pupils helps support positive attitudes to learning.

18. Pupils' behaviour since the period of the last inspection has remained very good. This is acknowledged by parents who generally consider the school to be a safe place where their children would not be subjected to any bullying or other oppressive behaviour. This was confirmed during the period of the inspection when behaviour was seen to be generally very good. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong and support each other by seeking adult help when inappropriate behaviour is witnessed. Staff at the school are very good role models and work hard in the classroom to ensure any improvement in pupils' behaviour or attitude to their work is acknowledged. This helps in raising pupils' self-esteem, enabling them to contribute more fully to lessons. Pupils with more challenging behaviours rarely disrupt others and any incidents that do occur are quickly and sensitively dealt with. This has a positive effect on the learning and personal development of all pupils.

19. Pupils' behaviour outside the classroom is also generally good. For example when moving around the school between lessons or outside during break the good behaviour has a significant impact on the success of other activities that may be taking place in the school. However, pupils' behaviour is less consistent at lunchtimes when fewer teachers are present.

20. Since the period of the last inspection the school has continued to be successful in supporting pupils' personal development. Pupils' social skills are well developed with pupils displaying great courtesy to each other, staff and visitors to the school. Senior pupils enjoy taking on extra duties such as being a playground pal looking after younger pupils during break and lunchtimes and perform these duties very well. However, these duties could be better acknowledged and celebrated by the school, for example by ensuring pupils wear appropriate badges at all times and their responsibilities are recorded in picture form displayed in the school. Pupils from all year groups are expected to collect their own meals at lunchtimes and clear away afterwards. Pupils are also given some opportunities to undertake responsibilities within the classroom but tasks such as putting out work sheets or tidying away are frequently done by teachers or their assistants instead of pupils themselves.

21. Such opportunities would all contribute further to raising pupils' self-confidence.
22. The school operates an effective inclusion policy in relation to special educational needs. The principal aim of the policy is the full integration of pupils with difficulties that inhibit learning so that they do not feel left out or excluded. As a consequence SEN pupils remain for the most part in classrooms with their peers and are only withdrawn in exceptional and carefully planned circumstances. They are positive about their time in school and show positive attitudes to the work they do. They develop good relationships with their classmates and are happy to accept support and advice from teachers and their assistants.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

23. The quality of teaching throughout the school is good overall. From the Foundation Stage to Year 4, 78 per cent of lessons are good or better, including 40 percent which are very good or excellent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. This shows a considerable improvement on the quality of teaching seen in the last inspection, and is having a positive impact upon the standards achieved by pupils and the rate at which they learn.

24. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently very good, and is a strength of the school. Staff have a very secure understanding of how young children learn and the importance of play and first hand experiences. The very good teaching is characterised by very effective teamwork between teachers and assistants. This has a positive effect in supporting children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals and provides a firm foundation for learning in Key Stage 1.

25. The quality of teaching in literacy is good overall. Teachers use the framework of the national literacy strategy for their lessons, but the effective implementation of the strategy is inconsistent, as is the use made of the information to plan for pupils individual needs. Where teaching is very good there is a brisk pace at the beginning of the lesson, lesson objectives are shared with pupils so they know what the purpose of the lesson is, and clear instructions leave pupils in no doubt about the expectations in the lesson. In the best lessons, pupils become fully aware of the knowledge and skills they have gained since the beginning of the lesson, and this is supported through good discussion and questioning that probes pupils' understanding fully. Teachers work well with support assistants, who are well prepared and make a valuable contribution to pupils' good progress.

26. Teaching in mathematics is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and, at Key stage 1, teaching is consistently good. The best lessons have a clear purpose and run at a good pace, capturing and holding pupils' attention. Most teachers have a good knowledge of mathematics, and it is never less than secure. They deliver the National Numeracy Strategy well and their planning is generally of a good quality. There is evidence of some variation between classes in the levels of challenge offered to pupils of the same age and the school recognises the need for teachers to share good practice in planning and, where appropriate, to plan together. Teachers carefully introduce the terminology associated with numeracy and this prepares pupils well to follow concepts as they unfold in lessons.

27. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and ensures that they make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. This is the result of effective planning in these curriculum areas for pupils with special educational needs by the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO), classroom teachers and classroom assistants. The SENCO plans well, and produces detailed individual education plans that set out the ways in which the curriculum is to be adapted to meet individual needs. The special needs co-ordinator and the classroom assistants work well together to provide a level of support that enables pupils to make good progress in relation to their individual needs. Though progress is good overall some teachers in a small proportion of lessons

do not make sufficient use of the available information about individual needs to offer a sufficiently broad range of work to match the needs of pupils of all abilities.

28. The contribution classroom assistants make to the progress of SEN children is good. They are experienced in dealing with pupils with special educational needs and are very capable. They know pupils well, are generally well informed as to the purpose of lessons and foster the trust that provides good conditions for learning.

29. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is consistently good. The school has only recently been able to appoint an appropriate number of experienced staff to this role, funded through the EMTAG grant, and they are beginning to make a positive impact on pupils' learning. Their timetable is carefully planned and a strength of their work is the effectiveness with which they work alongside the childrens' teachers, sharing the objectives of lessons and providing a good range of appropriate support to ensure the full inclusion of all pupils.

30. In the best lessons, teachers show a good subject knowledge which they pass on to their pupils with enthusiasm. In a science lesson with older pupils, for example, the teacher had the confidence to capitalise on a question asked by a pupil about the function of muscles by explaining how many muscles it took to create a smile. The pupils were captivated by this idea and, for the rest of the lesson could be seen quietly testing this for themselves by feeling the working of the muscles in their faces as they smiled. Lesson instructions are clear and, in the best examples, set very high expectations of what will be achieved, clearly communicated so that pupils and teacher share the target for the lesson. Lesson plans generally take in the needs of all pupils, and the planned use of learning support assistants or EMTAG staff. There are, however, a small number of lessons where teachers fail to plan appropriately for the full range of ability that is present and, as a result, pupils' progress is not as rapid as it should be.

31. Target-setting has been recently introduced in English and mathematics, but the school recognises that there are inconsistencies in the way that it is applied and monitored by individual teachers. Similarly, the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent. While there are examples of good marking which guides pupils forward in their learning, there are other examples where work is simply ticked, or not marked at all. Although the school has an appropriate range of assessment procedures, and is developing these further, they are inconsistently applied within lessons. As a result, although teachers know their pupils well, the school cannot be assured that teachers' planning always fully takes into account individual pupils' learning needs.

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

32. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good because it provides for all areas of learning and meets children's needs very well. It is planned well in accordance with the Early Learning Goals and promotes intellectual, physical and personal development and prepares children well for the next stage of their education in school. An appropriate focus is given to communication and social skills throughout the Foundation Stage.

33. For pupils in Years 1 to 4 the curriculum provision is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils including those with special educational needs. The time allocated to the teaching of the curriculum is broadly in line with national figures. The requirements of the National Curriculum are fulfilled. Religious Education schemes of work follow the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

34. Teachers' planning of the curriculum is satisfactory. All subjects have clear policies and schemes of work. Planning is led by subject co-ordinators and managers and this process ensures broad coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study while providing pupils with

pathways to build on their knowledge, understanding and skills in each area as they move through the school. Some of these however lack sufficient detail to provide a clear guide for teachers when they come to plan for specific lessons. Although teachers share the long term and the medium term plans the short term planning is left to individual teachers. In some cases this leads to work of different levels of challenge being set for pupils of the same year but in different classes. The school needs to review this practice so that pupils of the same age get the same provision. In design and technology, for example, this practice leads to most teachers placing an undue emphasis on making rather than achieving a balance between making and designing.

35. The school has successfully introduced effective literacy and numeracy strategies over the past few years and this has led to a general improvement in pupils' learning. The school's literacy and numeracy curricula follow national guidelines. The school misses some opportunities to extend the teaching of literacy and numeracy in the other subjects in the curriculum. There is an effective programme of personal, social and health education that is taught through the subjects of the curriculum, assemblies and in Circle Time.

36. The school has a comprehensive and appropriate special educational needs policy and fulfils it well. The school fully implements all the requirements of the code of practice. There is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils with special educational needs, and for those for whom English is an additional language. The school is largely successful in the way it adapts the curriculum to the individual needs of pupils. This gives them the platform they need to make progress. The co-ordinator writes clear and appropriate individual education plans that are shared with class teachers and classroom assistants. Effective planning and the effective use of resources help pupils to work towards their targets.

37. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities that are well attended by both girls and boys. There is a Computer Club that teaches skills as well as providing pupils with the opportunity to develop their problem solving skills with purposeful educational games software. There are skittle ball and basket ball clubs. The choir meets regularly and both boys and girls attend the weekly line and country dancing club. The art club extends the range of materials and techniques pupils encounter in the normal curriculum. Visits to places of local interest make an important contribution to the curriculum. Classes visit Forge Mill, Kenilworth Castle and other local resources. These make a valuable contribution to the school's curriculum and to pupils' personal development. There is also a popular homework club funded by New Opportunities money. Visitors to the school also make an important contribution to the curriculum. A group of Vikings recently visited the school to show the children how real Vikings lived and an Afro-Caribbean drummer came in to teach pupils the rhythms of his cultural heritage.

38. The school provides well for pupils' personal development. The high standards of moral and social development reported during the last inspection have been maintained and are very good and a strength of the school. Pupils quickly learn right from wrong as soon as they enter the nursery, and develop a strong sense of natural justice, supporting each other very well. School rules are reinforced through teachers' regular reminders and the high expectations that characterise lessons and playtimes. Pupils are encouraged to resolve their differences as soon as they arise, and social skills are well promoted through assemblies and circle-time sessions.

39. Provision for pupils' cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are introduced to the area's cultural heritage through visits and visitors supporting particular elements of the curriculum, particularly history and geography. Their knowledge and understanding of other cultures is effectively supported through opportunities to share the range of cultural traditions present within the school, as well as by visitors sharing elements of their own cultural heritage, for example, in music and costume. Although there are occasions when opportunities are missed to celebrate the cultural and spiritual diversity of the pupils represented at the school, in general pupils gain an appropriate understanding of Christianity and of other faiths through assemblies and religious

education and there are appropriate opportunities for them to reflect on their work, and on the work of others. There are examples of spiritual development being supported effectively through other subjects of the curriculum, such as science and English.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school continues to provide pupils with appropriate educational and personal support and guidance. All staff working in the school know their pupils well and offer them satisfactory levels of care. The school's procedures for assessing attainment and progress are satisfactory and are being well developed and implemented by the assessment co-ordinator. Similarly, the systems used to identify, assess, support and review pupils' special educational needs are good, as are the procedures for assessing and supporting pupils for whom English is an additional language. However, since the previous inspection, there has been insufficient progress in the use that the school makes of assessment information, particularly in subjects other than literacy and numeracy. Testing of pupils on entry to the school in the nursery is used well in planning appropriate work and in assisting effectively in the early identification of children with special educational needs. The school now uses the results of a range of appropriate tests in helping to assess attainment at the end of Years 2 and 4, and a good start has been made in collecting and analysing data from years 1 and 3.

41. Teachers' planning, particularly in English and mathematics sometimes reflects the information that is gained from assessment, but. Teachers' planning in English and mathematics reflects the information that is gained from the assessments and work in these subjects is generally well matched to the differing needs of pupils, although the school recognises that practice is inconsistent. Marking of pupils' work is usually undertaken but too frequently fails to indicate where improvement is required or how success may be achieved. Assessments have begun to lead to individual target-setting in English and mathematics which, although only recently established, is beginning to help pupils understand the small steps that are needed in order to make improvement. The lack of assessment information in the non-core subjects means that pupils' annual written reports identify less clearly the strengths and weaknesses as teachers do not have sufficiently detailed information other than their knowledge of the work that pupils have undertaken.

42. The planning of work for pupils with special educational needs is based well on assessment information, and is closely linked to the progress they make against targets. As individual education plans are reviewed, the special educational needs co-ordinator and staff evaluate pupils' success in reaching targets and set new ones that are accurately based on their progress.

43. The school provides a safe and caring environment where pupils feel secure which makes a positive contribution to their learning. Procedures for promoting good behaviour are consistently applied by classroom teachers and assistants and this accounts for the good behaviour displayed by pupils. This is less consistent during the lunchtime break when teachers are less likely to be present. The school recognises the need to ensure that lunchtime supervisors are appropriately trained to ensure consistency of practice. Attendance is unsatisfactory and the school's systems to monitor and respond to it are not sufficiently rigorous. These weaknesses have a negative impact upon pupils' standards of attainment.

44. Parents are pleased with the pastoral care provided for their children and most feel that they can approach the school if they have any concerns. Although a few feel that some bullying is not dealt with properly, the inspection team agree with the majority of parents who are very positive about the way in which any incidents are taken seriously and incidents dealt with effectively.

45. There are satisfactory arrangements in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils and adults. Child Protection Procedures are secure and, although training has not been updated for some time, staff have a clear understanding of the need to report any concerns about pupils'

welfare to the headteacher. Statutory health and safety checks are carried out following local education authority guidelines, by the Headteacher, caretaker and governing body representative. This ensures that health and safety have a high priority across the curriculum.

46. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are insufficiently rigorous, although the school is aware that attendance is below average. Registers remain in classrooms during the day and are not scrutinised on a sufficiently regular basis which hampers the school in following up on attendance issues as quickly as is necessary. The school secretary monitors attendance in the first instance, and this takes up a disproportionate amount of her time, particularly as the school does not use a computer programme to make the collection and tracking of data more efficient. Insufficient acknowledgement is made of pupils' good attendance and the school does not make sufficient effort to ensure parents are made aware of the importance of good attendance to their children's educational progress.

47. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour, and the procedures followed by the school in eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Staff have clear and consistent expectations and operate a broad range of effective systems to promote good behaviour and respect for others. Pupils are praised for their attitudes towards others and their efforts at personal improvement. Teachers provide very good role models in their attitudes towards pupils and each other, and pupils clearly follow their example. The school quickly identifies those pupils who have difficulties in controlling their behaviour and, through a combination of direct support from teachers and support assistants and individualised tasks that are planned, help them to concentrate and behave well in the classroom. Where some of these pupils have difficulties at lunchtime, midday supervisory staff are made aware of potential difficulties and generally work effectively in giving clear messages about what is and is not acceptable.

48. There are appropriate procedures in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development as they move through the school. Teaching and support staff know their pupils well, and use this information effectively to help them to develop and mature. Staff quickly identify where pupils may be having difficulties in their learning, behaviour, or social development and ensure that additional support is identified where necessary to help these pupils improve. The school involves parents well in these strategies and, as a result, pupils continue to make appropriate progress in their personal development. Good use is made of strategies such as group and individual awards and the recognition of achievement in raising pupils' self-esteem, although less is done to promote initiative and independence through, for example, seeking pupils' views about what works well for them in the school, or in enabling pupils to collect or return their own work or resources.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The effect of the schools links with parents is good. Since the previous inspection, the school has continued to develop its links with parents and, as a result, they have very good opinions of the school. In their responses at the pre-inspection meeting and to the parents questionnaire, parents were particularly positive about:

- the good teaching which helps their children make good progress;
- the high expectations the school has of their children;
- the fact that their children like coming to school.

50. They were particularly appreciative of the caring ethos of the school and felt welcome when visiting.

51. Some parents, however, were critical of:

- the information that they receive about their children's progress and the work with which they are involved;
- the amount of homework that they receive;
- the degree to which the school works with parents in resolving difficulties.

52. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views of the school. However it feels that teachers do make themselves available to speak with parents where possible, and work closely with parents who have concerns. Inspectors feel that the amount of homework that pupils receive is generally appropriate, but that the school should provide more information about what homework is required and how parents can best help their children to complete it. Linked to this, inspectors agree that the school provides insufficient information about what it is that pupils are going to learn and, subsequently, about how well they have succeeded, and what they need to do in order to improve.

53. The school is very conscious of the need to maintain good relationships with parents and all teachers make themselves accessible and available to talk to parents at the beginning and end of the school day. The head teacher is available to talk to parents throughout the day and clearly makes this a priority. The office staff share the vision of the school as being an extended family and take pride in the way they are able to support the school in this. The school secretary is an excellent ambassador for the school and uses all the resources at her disposal including the language skills of other members of staff.

54. The school appreciates the contribution parents can make to their children's learning. Parents have been encouraged to attend the SHARE project that provides training for parents to help pupils in school. However, more could be done to enable parents to assist both in school and at home. Parents have the opportunity to support the school by attending events organised by the parent teacher association that help raise funds used to improve the resources available to the school.

55. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of the progress their children make. They are involved where appropriate in the SEN review process though they do not often take the opportunity to consult the SENCO, with the result that they do not always share a full view of the good progress that their children are making and of ways in which they might be able to assist.

56. Parents welcome the opportunity of discussing their children's progress at parents' evenings and generally felt these were very beneficial. However, a significant number of parents expressed the view that the school did not provide enough information for them to help with their children's learning. The inspection findings confirm the school could do more to make parents aware of what their children were learning to better enable them to offer support at home. Little curriculum information is provided for parents at the beginning of the academic year and pupils annual reports are of variable quality and often provide parents with insufficient information on the progress their children are making and where improvement should be expected. Parents are also unclear as to the homework their pupils can expect to be asked to do as practice is inconsistent throughout the school. One exception to this is reading and most parents are aware that this is a priority of the school and pupils are expected to read regularly at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The Headteacher provides strong leadership and gives the school clear direction. Through a time of considerable change in, for example, the catchment area served by the school, and budgetary difficulties leading to staff changes, he has worked effectively at improving the quality of

education and the quality of the accommodation available to the school. The school is successful in its vision of providing a supportive environment in which staff, pupils, and parents foster and develop an enthusiasm for learning within a supportive environment. The school strives for continuous improvement in pupils' academic and personal development. These aims and values are well reflected in its work and in the school's plans for future development. The head is clearly dedicated to the welfare of pupils and the development of staff. Parents enthusiastically acknowledge his contribution to the welfare and development of their children.

58. The Headteacher, governors and staff have, overall, made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. They have effectively addressed most of the recommendations in the report and are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The pace of change has been reduced by the impact of staff changes and budgetary uncertainty, as well as by the need to manage the new priorities caused by changes in the school's catchment area. The late notification of specific grants that reflect the schools changing composition has also made accurate financial budgeting difficult. The school has reached a stable staffing position, and has been able to fully staff its provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Since the last inspection, it has recruited new teachers of high quality, who have been successfully inducted into the school so that they make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

59. The school's management structure includes a deputy Headteacher and two senior members of staff, the teacher in charge of the nursery, who is also working well to develop the school's assessment procedures, and the special needs co-ordinator. These three are acknowledged as accomplished teachers. They provide good role models for staff, particularly those new to the profession. The deputy Headteacher has been effective in leading the induction of new staff and in co-ordinating the school's successful Investors in People bid. Her role in strategic evaluation and management is, however, underdeveloped and the school rightly recognises the need to utilise her skills more effectively in leading key developments in evaluating and further improving standards of teaching and learning identified within its development planning.

60. The Headteacher has made some good strategic decisions which are now addressing the difficulties faced by the school over the past two years well. The role of subject co-ordinators has been clarified with the result that all staff with subject responsibilities are now reviewing planning and resources within their subjects and using this information to identify areas for development. While this monitoring does include the identification of standards attained, insufficient emphasis is placed upon this aspect. Improvements to the school's assessment procedures have meant that it is more able to identify areas of relative strength and weakness in pupils' achievements, and plans are in place to further embed target-setting so that it is consistently applied across the school. The introduction of monitoring to ascertain the overall quality of teaching, and its effect upon pupils' learning, has already achieved success in improving provision with the result that the quality of teaching is now good overall.

61. Governors have made appropriate use of training to acquaint themselves with their responsibilities. They are informed about the school's strengths and weaknesses through both formal and informal means. They maintain regular contact, sub-committees operate effectively, they scrutinise the results of national tests and other assessments, and play an active role within the school's performance management policy in setting targets for the head. Together with the good oversight of the Headteacher and the school secretary, they are involved well in financial planning and support the Headteacher in managing spending effectively. As a result of these activities, they are able to take an effective part in shaping the future direction of the school.

62. The Headteacher has undertaken appropriate appraisals and performance management is fully in place in the school. This, together with the systems now in place, and which are being further developed, for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning, is already having a good impact on the quality of teaching seen in the school and upon pupils' attainment.

63. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. There is a caring ethos that is shared by all those working with SEN children and which is underpinned by effective processes for the identification of special needs and for the generation of individual work programmes to meet those needs. The SENCO is well organised and has instituted effective systems for the management of all the information that is generated. She makes sure that teachers and classroom assistants are kept up to date on developments in SEN through attending relevant courses and through sharing information with them in staff meetings. Learning resources for SEN are sufficient to support the work that is done though there is a need for more IT resources to broaden pupils' ways of learning.

64. The school makes the best use that it can of the available accommodation. Although most classrooms are sufficient in size for all pupils to sit comfortably at their work, there is little space available for the full range of practical activities that are planned. The nursery does not have separate toilets and nursery children have to share with older children. This impacts on personal development and confidence as many children coming into nursery need to use toilets quickly and are sometimes nervous of older pupils. Governors are actively seeking ways in which the accommodation may be improved. The school makes good use of display to inform and to celebrate pupils' work, and is successful in creating an attractive and stimulating environment.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

65. To improve the standards achieved and the quality of education for all pupils, the Headteacher, staff, and governors should:

- (1) Improve the use made of assessment in lessons so that teachers have a clear view of standards achieved in all subjects and by all pupils in order that they can ensure that planning is appropriate
- (2) Establish and agree the role of subject co-ordinators in order that they are able to make use of a clear view of standards in their subjects, and of features that promote or hamper those standards, in planning for improvement
- (3) Ensure, through rigorous monitoring and evaluation, that all teachers are setting clear targets for pupils' learning and that these are supported through careful marking of pupils' work that helps pupils understand what they need to do in order to succeed
- (4) Expand the role of the deputy headteacher to include
 - i) leadership in the further development of target-setting and analysis of its impact on the standards achieved
 - ii) development and overview of the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures

66. In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- improve the school's procedures for monitoring attendance and responding to issues that are raised
- improve the quality and range of information supplied to parents about the work in which their children are involved and their success in achieving targets that are set
- continue to research ways in which space within the school to support practical activities and to promote younger children's personal development can be improved

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2.5	37.5	37.5	22.5	0	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 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	194
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		33

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y1 – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	54

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	57

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.8	School data	0.2
National comparative data	5.6	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
	2001	18	17	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	13	17
	Girls	13	15	15
	Total	25	28	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (97)	80 (94)	91 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	14
	Girls	14	15	13
	Total	26	30	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (97)	86 (97)	77 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	35
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	
White	144
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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 – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.6
Average class size	24.4

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	11.6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	164.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	494278
Total expenditure	480372
Expenditure per pupil	2189
Balance brought forward from previous year	1592
Balance carried forward to next year	12314

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 44%

Number of questionnaires sent out	244
Number of questionnaires returned	107

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	36	4	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	54	38	5	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	44	7	1	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	40	17	2	3
The teaching is good.	60	32	4	3	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	37	10	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	28	6	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	34	8	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	39	12	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	57	35	3	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	43	3	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	39	7	2	7

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

67. The provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good and is a strength of the school. This is because the consistently high quality of teaching combines with very effective support from assistants working in the classrooms, so children are encouraged to learn. The atmosphere in the nursery and reception classes is vibrant and exciting. This produces a very good climate for learning, and prepares children well for their formal education. A noticeable feature of this very good provision is the effort the school has made in adjusting to the boundary changes made by the local authority. An appropriate initial priority is now given to developing children's social and communication skills. The impact of this decision is that children, despite their low level of skills on entering nursery are able to benefit from the very good learning opportunities provided in the Foundation Stage. This means that though children enter the school with low levels of attainment, the majority make very good progress and are on course to reach nationally accepted levels in all six areas of learning by the time they leave the reception classes.

68. The children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the nursery and two reception classes. Nursery places are part-time morning or afternoon sessions for 52 children who are four years old. The two reception classes offer 45 full-time places for children at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Three teachers and a team of nursery nurses, teaching assistants and childcare students provide very good support that is well organised to meet children's educational needs. Children who have special educational needs or for whom English is their second language receive good support and make good progress in the nursery and reception classes.

69. There is an effective induction programme. Parents accompany their children on the first visit to nursery and there are staggered starts so that staff can make sure children are happy and secure in their new surroundings. Formal meetings are held on a termly basis but the school works hard to maintain regular informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of the school day. A well-presented notice board keeps parents fully informed about nursery activities, and is supplemented by regular newsletters.

70. Since the last inspection the school has successfully introduced the new Foundation Stage curriculum for children of this age. The very good curriculum is broad and balanced. The school provides a wide range of challenging and focused activities to promote personal, social, and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Baseline assessment and its use have been established in the reception classes. Portfolios of work are collected in the nursery indicating the progress children make. Teachers make good use of the assessment information in planning appropriate work and challenges for children. Improvement since the last inspection is good. This is because the school has worked conscientiously to meet children's educational and social needs and continues to provide consistently very good teaching for children in this part of the school. The issue raised in the last report about the lack of an outdoor play area for reception children has been resolved.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. Most children are in line to reach the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. This represents very good achievement and reflects the very good teaching and extra focus placed on this area of learning. Adults foster children's personal and social development at every opportunity. They frequently interact and intervene in the learning and this has a positive impact on the development of children's confidence and attitudes to learning and to each other. For example

nursery children feel confident to take on the challenges of painting, working with three-dimensional shapes or experimenting with glue and spices, because their teacher is so positive and convinces them they are capable of success in these challenging activities. Adult led activities during outdoor play encourage children to work well together as for example they dress up as witches and happily march around the play area complete with cauldron and wands. Reception children continue to build on these earlier opportunities and increase their levels of independence, they willingly tidy up their toys and equipment and show an increasing ability to persist with activities until they are completed. Noticeably a minority of children in nursery still drink their milk and hold out the carton in expectation that an adult will remove and dispose of it, however adults are firm and make encourage children to take every appropriate opportunity to become more independent. Children conform to routine expectations to use aprons for messy activities, and in nursery respond well when they hear the 'tidy up' music. Children in the three classes are very keen to please their teachers, this means they take advantage of the very good opportunities for working collaboratively, being courteous and behaving well. The result is that children enjoy themselves, learning is fun and very good progress is made against children's prior attainment when they enter nursery. Significantly adults are all very good role models, happy and courteous, children emulate them and gain a good foundation in building very good relationships with each other. Children enjoy coming to school and happily leave their parents and carers at the start of lessons.

Communication, language and literacy

72. Children achieve very well and the majority are on course to attain the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. This is because of the consistently very good teaching and the very good learning opportunities provided. The majority of children joining the nursery have immature speaking and listening skills. A few children communicate with single words or gesture. Throughout the day nursery staff work very hard to encourage children to discuss their games and activities, they carefully question children as they experiment with water and the wide range of interesting materials in the room. This encourages children to become more confident in talking as they move to independent play in the dressing up area or as they play imaginatively with construction toys and floor games. When children sit in on the carpet they respond politely as their teacher calls the register, they know they have to be quiet and listen carefully for their names. In a good discussion about the daily weather chart, nursery children decided which symbols best represented the windy day. Children enjoyed the opportunity to suggest items to be included in a witches brew and because their teacher was so positive about their ideas children gained confidence and were able to decide on a concoction of lizards, spiders, cats, doors and even more spiders. Reception children continue to improve their speaking and listening skills because of the lively and interesting activities provided for them. In discussing *The Enormous Turnip*, children were eager to answer questions and show they recalled the story well. The very well planned lesson encouraged children to think carefully as they planted turnip seeds, and to consider how they might grow an enormous turnip. Answers included making sure that there was enough space for the seed to grow big, and possibly putting a lot of seeds together to make one big turnip. In a discussion about gardens children eagerly offered ideas about what could be found in gardens including bikes, balls, swings and slides. Good questioning by the teacher prompted children to remember that grass and flowers are also garden features.

73. Effective emphasis is placed on the development of reading and writing. Nursery children are learning to recognise their names as they self-register their name cards each session. They use laminated name cards to help them to learn to write their names and the portfolios of work clearly show progression from overwriting to independently writing their names. Children are able to use the listening station and books are readily available for children to take home and share with their parents. As children progress through the reception classes they learn that words are associated with stories. They enjoy sharing the Big Book, joining in enthusiastically with 'they pull and pull but they can't pull up the enormous turnip'. Children are determined to please their teacher and be 'super readers'. Higher attaining children recall the author writes the story and the illustrator draws

the pictures and all children enjoy counting and checking the number of characters in the story. The majority of children know that capital letters are used for people's names. Reception children improve their mark making skills so they can print letters and copy sentences. One child proudly remarked to the inspector 'Look I've left my spaces'. Lower attaining children receive effective support so they are able to make good progress in understanding the significance of letters and words. Appropriate elements of the literacy strategy are implemented extremely well. During independent activities more able children choose to enjoy known storybooks. Learning to communicate through talking, reading and writing is fun and has a positive effect on the children's achievements and attitudes to learning. Children who dictated their story to their assistant who word-processed it were pleased with their achievement, proudly reading their sentences to the rest of the class. A strength of the teaching is the teachers' ability to give very clear instructions so the children are in no doubt as to what is expected of them. Teachers are adept in making children feel confident that they can be successful in completing the challenges set for them. The very good provision for communication, language and literacy allows children to make a confident transition to Year 1.

Mathematical development

74. The majority of children are on target to attain the expected standards by the end of the Reception Year. The very good progress is the result of the wide range of mathematical experiences provided for children, combined with very good teaching and additional support from the assistants. The tasks in this area of learning are well planned and interesting for the children, and teaching is characterised by a lively and challenging pace. For example in nursery the children worked well with their teacher to lay a place setting, sorting items by colour. The activity was then extended to teach children positional language such as behind, in front of, on, and for children to remember to say please and thank you as they passed cups and other items around the group. Children develop their awareness of shape. In a full class session children were able to explain that a circle 'has no corners' a triangle has three sides and a square has four sides 'all the same size'. The children sat in a circle for this activity but one observant child remarked it was 'an egg shape not a circle'. Adults take every opportunity to encourage children to count, for example counting how many children are in the line as they come in from outdoor play, the majority of children were able to count with their teacher up to sixteen. Reception children learn to sort two and three-dimensional shapes into groups. They start to develop a sense of time as they sequence daily routines such as getting up and having breakfast. They form their numbers correctly and the more able can add two numbers under ten. Reception children enjoy counting forwards and backwards to twenty. They gain a satisfactory understanding of one more or one less than as preparation for addition and subtraction calculations. All children are developing an awareness of measurement as they sort items according to size and benefit from using well-chosen computer programmes that help them to consolidate this knowledge. More able children can apply the knowledge of bigger and smaller than, to single digits. Children in the three classes enjoy giving instructions to 'PIXI' the programmable toy; this experience further supports their developing knowledge of space and shape.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children achieve very well and the majority are in line to attain standards that are in line with national expectations by the time they reach the end of the Reception Year. Children have limited experiences when they arrive at school but the very well planned teaching combined with stimulating opportunities to explore and investigate objects, materials and events means the children make very good progress. Children learn about the passage of time as they talk about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. They start to understand the need to celebrate special events such as family birthdays and festivals such as Christmas, Hanukkah and Divali. Children made Eid cards, designed mendhi patterns and used modelling clay to make diva lights. Children play competently with a range of construction and modelling materials. In the

nursery they explore the texture of water and rice as they play, and compare the features of cooked and uncooked pasta. After making a baked potato snack children were able to recall the potato was raw when they started but became soft and edible once it was cooked. In all classes children show a keen interest in seeds and plants, bean seeds are grown so children can see the roots as well as the leaves. Reception children carefully record the results of their cress seed experiment and discover that seeds need water, heat and light to grow properly. Reception children are also aware of the physical changes that occur as they grow up, they know they no longer play with baby toys and are able to handle items like remote controls that babies are unable to use. In the nursery class the adults make very good use of the outdoor play area to generate enthusiastic investigation. A wide range of resources is available and the adults are constantly vigilant as they interact with children. Children make very good use of the large magnets as they check to see which metal items in their play area are made from metal. Other children go on a discovery expedition to match bark, leaves, moss and twigs with those provided by their teacher. Reception children enjoyed their opportunities to use modelling clay as they created their own dragons; one child imaginatively and resourcefully used the spatulas as legs for her model. In all these investigative activities children are encouraged to develop their speaking, listening and social skills. Each classroom is supplied with a computer and children are happy to use the mouse to locate items on the screen. Reception children work well on the computer, taking turns with a partner as they practise their mathematical skills; one boy was thrilled as he succeeded in printing off a ruler to practise measuring at home.

Physical development

76. Children make good progress in this area of learning as a result of the good quality of teaching, and the majority are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children's natural exuberance is catered for through lessons and outdoor play. Good use is made of the secure play ground for children in this age group. Children enjoy the adult led activities during playtime. They play happily with a range of wheeled toys, balls and space hoppers and as a result improve their co-ordination and control. It was not possible during the inspection to see a formal physical education lesson but teachers' planning shows appropriate opportunities to experiment with walking, jogging and skipping, and to control movement. Adults are careful to explain the basics of hygiene and children in both year groups know the importance of hand washing so germs do not spread. After making cheesy baked potato nursery children described in detail how to make this snack and were very keen to tell the inspector that they had to wash their hands before they started cooking. Adults are enthusiastic helping to promote children's co-ordination and dexterity. Adults in class show children how to hold pencils, glue spreaders and brushes correctly. This is effective in helping them to develop their writing and cutting skills. During a nursery session based on the theme of Food, children tried to pick up grapes with chopsticks, improving their dexterity as well as gaining an awareness of different customs.

Creative development

77. Teaching is consistently very good and children make very good progress in this area of learning and the majority are on course to achieve the levels described by the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. Nursery children learn to sort items by colour. The vibrant classroom display shows that inspired by Vincent Van Gogh, nursery children made their own sunflower paintings as well as a large sunflower collage from a mixture of seeds. In making a spring display of blossom branches children used twigs to paint instead of brushes, adding tissue blossoms to complete their pictures. Daffodils are made from egg boxes and out side the classroom is a special container for parents to put boxes and cartons so children can continue with their creative work. Reception children listened attentively as their teacher read a familiar book about Jasper (a cat) and when their teacher demonstrated how to paint Jasper, the children were most complementary about her efforts. In turn the children created their own paintings, trying hard to get the head and body in proportion, make whiskers and add a pink nose to their black and white cat. Children are given regular opportunities to use their imagination in role play though a significant

number need adult intervention to develop make-believe games. In developing an awareness of rhythm and sound nursery children listened well and tried hard to copy clapping rhythms, the children were delighted because their teacher was so amazed at their skills. It was not possible to see a formal music session for reception children but teacher planning shows a progression from skills learned in nursery and opportunities for children to express feeling and moods through movement and to realise that music can describe pictures and events.

ENGLISH

78. At the end of Year 4, standards are in line with national expectations, and they are in line with the national average at the end of Year 2. In 2001, the results of the National Curriculum tests showed that the proportion of children in Year 2 who gained the expected level 2 and above was well below the national average in reading, and below the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, they were well below national averages. The percentage of pupils who gained the higher level 3 was well below average in reading and, but was average in writing. Since the time of the last inspection test results have fluctuated with Year 2000 results showing pupils to be above the national standard in reading and well above in writing. This apparent anomaly can be explained initially by the impact of boundary changes on the school which resulted in a reduction to the level of attainment on entry. Other factors are staff changes, the proportion of Year 2 pupils in 2001 who had special educational needs and pupil absence through extended holidays. Inspection evidence shows the school is working hard to combat these difficulties and standards of work show that the majority of pupils in the present Year 2 are in line to attain nationally expected standards.

79. Pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills. This was evident in a Year 2 science lesson. The teacher posed challenging questions about the texture of materials and after careful thought pupils were able to describe the similarities and differences between, for example, waterproof and transparent materials. Pupils listen well when group instructions are given and move quickly to their activities without wasting any time. Year 3 pupils enjoyed the opportunities to prepare and read poems to the rest of their class and were a good supportive audience for each other. This allowed all the pupils to become more confident in their own abilities to use expression and tone as they perform for an audience. Four pupils chose independently to extend their skills by learning their rhyming couplets by heart before performing. Year 1 pupils are able to listen carefully to taped instructions and enjoyed a sense of achievement as they successfully completed their worksheet based on following the instructions. The strong emphasis placed on developing communication skills for children in the nursery and reception classes has a positive impact in making them feel confident when they arrive in Year 1. Considering the high proportion of pupils for whom English is a second language, pupils are achieving well.

80. At the end of Year 4, pupils' standard of reading is in line with national expectations. Pupils enjoy the opportunities to share books such as *The Hobbit* and discuss knowledgeably the characters and events in the story. When provided with newspaper articles such as *Roman Chronicles*, pupils are aware that an editor puts a newspaper together and enjoy suggesting alternative headlines for *Blues Blaze to Victory*. The higher attaining pupils read fluently, and are able to state their preferred choices in reading. They use their knowledge of the alphabet competently to locate books and information. Year 2 pupils use their phonic knowledge well as they read with expression from well-chosen storybooks. Higher attaining pupils can predict what might happen next in a story. Pupils are familiar with the library and are happy to find non-fiction books and confidently use the contents or index pages to locate information.

81. The standard of writing seen is in line with national expectations in both Year 4 and Year 2. In Year 4 pupils have fun with words and rhymes as they create haiku and telescope poems. They use the words *Christmas* and *reindeer* as a basis for acrostics. Using the popular *Harry Potter* stories, pupils develop their knowledge of adjectives as they think of words to describe the

character of *Hagrid*. In writing for different audiences pupils are able to correctly sequence clear instructions so the reader could make spicy biscuits. Pupils learn how to record essential information in note form and use story planners to help with their creative writing. In comparing *Macavity the Mystery Cat* and *Cats Can*, pupils are able to analyse rhyme content and language before deciding on their personal preferences. The majority of pupils in Year 4 write neatly in joined style. Pupils consolidate their understanding of sentence structure and learn to use appropriate punctuation including speech marks and apostrophes.

82. In Year 2 pupils increase their range of vocabulary when they suggest compound words such as sunset, sunrise and sunburn. They write for a variety of purposes, for example retelling the story of Goldilocks from the viewpoint of Mother Bear, writing an observational account of a visit to St Stephen's Church, and writing a letter from Mother Goat to the Big Bad Wolf. Pupils review a non-fiction text and are able to choose their favourite part, giving reasons for the choice. Pupils' writing is legible; they use capital letters and full stops to show complete sentences. A high proportion of pupils are developing their handwriting, changing from print to joined style.

83. Written work makes a significant contribution to other subjects. For example, in religious education, pupils write poems to celebrate Divali, Ramadan and Shrove Tuesday. However there are many subjects such as science, history and geography, in which pupils' writing could be further used to record and comment. This would assist in raising overall standards in writing. There are a number of computer programs to support spelling, during inspection the youngest pupils used these. Display of work shows that pupils in Year 4 word-process their Jamaican poems and, within the theme of traditional stories, pupils from Year 2 word-processed their versions of *The Gingerbread Man*.

84. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of English. The very good progress in the nursery and reception classes provides a sound basis for pupils when they transfer into the main part of the school. However because of local admission regulations, not all children who benefit from the nursery are able to continue through reception and into Year 1. This results in an overall reduction in the proportion of pupils achieving as expected at the start of Year 1. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. This is because the school has provided good quality additional support for these pupils. Average and lower attaining pupils achieve well but insufficient pupils attain the higher levels. The school recognises that more attention needs to be directed to extending the skills of the higher attaining pupils, in order for standards overall to improve.

85. Pupils enjoy their work in English. Year 1 pupils spontaneously applauded when they completed reading the Big Book *Mamba and the Crocodile Bird*, this enthusiasm continued throughout the lesson giving pupils the motivation to work hard writing their own stories. Year 4 pupils who have the benefit of additional support in small groups were very positive and enjoyed the games that reinforced their knowledge of phonics and spelling. Pupils left the lesson feeling confident in their own ability to use *ow* or *ou* correctly and feeling pleased with their achievements. Pupils work very hard on tasks set and try very hard from Year 1 onwards to work independently. They are keen to do well and to please their teachers; as a result they achieve well.

86. The quality of teaching is consistently very good in Key Stage 1 and ranges between satisfactory and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan carefully and adjust their lesson plans according to the progress pupils make in previous lessons. However despite assessment information being available, insufficient use is made of the information to plan for pupils individual needs. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have personal targets for English but there is little evidence that pupils are aware of their targets or that the targets are reviewed by teachers when they mark work. Overall teachers use the framework of the national literacy strategy effectively in their lessons, although there are some inconsistencies which the school is aware of, and seeking to address, through its monitoring. Where teaching is very good there is a brisk pace at the beginning of the lesson, lesson

objectives are shared with pupils so they know what the purpose of the lesson is, and clear instructions leave pupils in no doubt about the expectations in the lesson. The majority of teachers use the final plenary well for pupils to share their new learning and in the best lessons, pupils become fully aware of the knowledge and skills they gained since the beginning of the lesson. All teachers have good relationships with pupils, are reassuring and encourage them to succeed. The assistants who work alongside teachers are well prepared for lessons and make a valuable contribution to pupils' good progress. Good teaching is characterised by a busy working atmosphere and the ability of teachers to organise their classes so that all pupils receive personal attention at some stage in the lesson.

87. The management of English is satisfactory. The English co-ordinator recently left the school and the deputy head teacher has taken on the responsibility for English. An action plan is in place to move the subject forward. Assessment information is collated, however the subject will benefit when the assessment information is used to plan effectively by involving pupils in target setting and monitoring pupils' progress against their individual targets. This process should also allow the school to extend the skills of higher attaining pupils and will impact favourably on the results achieved.

MATHEMATICS

88. In the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards in mathematics were below the national average. Though an average number of pupils attained the lower level, few pupils were able to progress beyond this. Results in the national tests have varied considerably in recent years though it is clear that overall the school is not keeping up with the national trends of improvement in mathematics. This can be explained largely as a consequence of changes in the intake to the school caused by rearrangement by the local education authority of the catchment area.

89. Standards in Year 2 are below national expectations. This represents a decline in the standards for Year 2 that were reported in the last inspection report. However there is one factor that can explain this apparent decline. The present Year 2 class is not typical of the school in that roughly half of the pupils are on the register for special needs for extra support for numeracy. They achieve well as a result of the good quality of teaching and support that is provided. Nevertheless there is a suitable range of attainment in the class with some pupils attaining above national expectations and good teaching by the newly appointed class teacher is leading to pupils achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. Around half of pupils are confident in their understanding and use of number up to 100. Most can identify odd and even numbers. Higher attaining pupils tackle simple problems using money up to and beyond one pound and most can measure using centimetres and metres. Lower attaining pupils find difficulty with simple addition and subtraction. Most pupils are beginning to use mathematical terms such as estimation appropriately when they guess the weight of common objects. Most pupils are operating at least at a basic level in their work with shapes. Most can name with some prompting the common 2D shapes. Higher attaining pupils can name both 2D and 3D shapes

90. By Year 4 most pupils are attaining standards that are in line with national expectations and some are exceeding them. Most pupils have a sound understanding of number and place value to 1000. They enjoy the challenge of mental maths problems and are successfully tackling the addition and subtraction of two digit numbers up to and beyond 100. Their exercise books show they are successfully tackling addition and subtraction of 3 digit numbers. They show a satisfactory understanding of simple sequences of numbers and the majority of pupils are able to make general statements about the patterns they discover in sequences given by the teacher. They demonstrate their understanding by developing sequences of their own, some of which are more challenging than the examples given. Most are working well with proper and improper fractions and can work out equivalents. They are able to name the common 2D and 3D shapes and are using metric units

competently in a range of contexts. Most know the function of bar charts and line graphs to order and communicate information.

91. The teaching of mathematics is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. The management of pupils' behaviour is a strength and this leads to lessons that are purposeful and in which little time is lost in dealing with inappropriate behaviour. All teachers have at least a secure knowledge of mathematics. They deliver the National Numeracy Strategy well and their planning is mostly good. There is evidence of some variation between classes in the levels of challenge offered to pupils of the same age. There is a need for teachers to share good practice in planning and, where appropriate, to plan together. Teachers carefully introduce the terminology associated with numeracy and this prepares pupils well to follow concepts as they unfold in lessons. This is a positive contribution to pupils' development of their literacy skills particularly of listening and speaking. Teachers effectively identify the needs of pupils and provide work that is appropriate for the wide range of ability they have in each class. There is some variation in the quality of the range of work offered with some teachers giving work that only broadly matches pupils' ability. Teachers are well supported by classroom assistants who have a good knowledge of the pupils and also the expertise to help them make progress.

92. Lessons normally begin with clear introductions that share the lesson objectives with the pupils. This gives pupils a sense of responsibility for their own learning. In the best teaching introductions prepare for and lead well into the main activities. Lessons feature a good range of activities including mental mathematics. Pupils respond well to the challenge of mental mathematics and enjoy what is often an entertaining and competitive approach to number work. Challenge is generally good and this promotes good learning. Activities are generally well prepared and this means that pupils lose little time for their learning. Concentration is good in lessons.

93. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are well supported and they make good progress overall. They are fully included in classroom activities.

94. The school does not make full use of opportunities to reinforce numeracy in the other subjects of the curriculum for example, in design technology where there are many opportunities to measure and produce drawings to scale. The use of information technology to reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding is sound and pupils are provided with a number of opportunities to reinforce number skills through programmes which present problems at pupils' levels of attainment. Some older pupils are beginning to use spreadsheets well when they use simple formulae to add and subtract amounts.

95. The subject is well managed and the numeracy strategy has been successfully introduced to the school. Teachers have been well prepared for the changes in teaching styles that are required. The assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding is developing, through the introduction of target-setting, but its use is, as yet, inconsistent. Marking seldom gives pupils a clear idea of what they need to do in order to improve their work. Suitable plans are in place to improve teachers' knowledge of how well their pupils are performing and their ability to set consistently appropriate targets.

SCIENCE

96. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below the national average although, at the end of Year 4, standards are in line with national expectations. These results demonstrate improvement from the assessments undertaken in 2001 when, teachers' assessments showed that the proportion of children in Year 2 who gained the expected level 2 and above was well below the national average. When compared with similar schools, they were also well below national averages. The percentage of pupils who gained the higher level 3 was average. Pupils with special educational needs and

those with English as an additional language are well supported in all lessons and, as a result, make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. The dip in standards can be explained initially by changes to the school's catchment area which have resulted in a fall in baseline attainment on entry to Year 1. Other factors are changes in staff, the proportion of Year 2 pupils in 2001 who had special educational needs and the relatively high level of pupil absence through extended holidays. Inspection evidence shows the school is working effectively to combat these difficulties.

97. Year 1 and 2 pupils investigate materials and, although some show a degree of uncertainty when comparing natural and man-made materials, most make appropriate classifications of common materials. They describe the characteristics of the materials that they are investigating accurately, although lower attaining and Year 1 pupils are unsure of more complex descriptors, such as "transparent". They have some knowledge of themselves and of keeping healthy and describe, for example, the way in which they become tired and out of breath after exercise. Most, however, struggle when asked to describe the effect of exercise on their bodies.

98. Year 3 and 4 pupils accurately describe the major bones of the human skeleton, such as ribs, knee-cap, arm and leg 'bones'. Older and higher attaining pupils have a good awareness of the body's internal organs, and accurately place the heart, brain, lungs and kidneys. Some pupils describe the function of these organs accurately. Most recall key features of their work on electricity and use appropriate vocabulary, such as circuit, switch, and power source without prompting. They Pupils in Year 4 and higher attaining pupils in Year 3 correctly identify the characteristics of materials that are good conductors. Pupils in both Year 3 and 4 recall their work on food chains and habitats and describe, for example, that a food chain always begins with a plant that gives food to animals. They have some understanding of 'fair testing' although only the higher attaining pupils refer to this in terms of changing one variable at a time in order to investigate differences. This reflects the fact that investigative science has relatively recently begun to be emphasised within the school.

99. Pupils at both key stages enjoy their work in science. They listen attentively to instructions, use materials carefully, and collaborate effectively when working in groups. Many, however are reticent when asked to describe why they think something is happening as, for example, when pupils noticed that some materials allowed light to pass through.

100. The quality of teaching, at both key stages, is good, although examples of satisfactory teaching were seen during the inspection. In the more effective lessons, teachers plan appropriate tasks and link these well to previous work. Good lesson structures balance instruction and discussion well, with questioning being well linked to different pupils' knowledge of the subject. In these lessons, teachers take care to describe the objectives planned within each lesson. Resources are used effectively, and appropriate scientific vocabulary used consistently. All of these features enable pupils to learn well and support good progress in the acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and understanding. In the small proportion of lessons where teaching was satisfactory, at Key Stage 2, a weakness was that planned activities failed to support the learning objectives that were set. In these lessons, pupils were interested in the work that was set but had too little opportunity to predict, discuss or to record their findings. As a result, the pace of learning was slower than it could have been, and particularly so for higher attainers. In all lessons, teachers and learning support assistants work well together, supporting identified groups well through a clear knowledge of planning and what is to be learned.

101. The assessment of pupils' knowledge, skills, and understanding is developing, but the use of assessment to give teachers a clear view of what has been learned and what should be taught next, is underdeveloped.. While teachers have a clear awareness of what has previously been taught, there are inconsistencies in their understanding of what has been learned. Marking rewards pupils' efforts, but rarely helps them to understand what they need to do in order to improve their

work. As a result, pupils are not always sufficiently challenged at appropriate levels, particularly in investigation, prediction, and recording. This is an area that the school has recognised as a priority for improvement, and plans are in place to improve teachers' knowledge of how well their pupils are performing and their ability to set consistently appropriate targets.

102. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. It is well balanced and makes an effective contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding in English in, for example, the good use made of 'Big Books' to research materials, and in mathematics. In contrast, although some opportunities are planned for pupils to use information and communications technology (ICT) in their work, there is little evidence that this takes place consistently or with sufficient frequency for pupils to benefit fully.

103. The co-ordinator is keen to see standards and provision in the subject improve further and, following an evaluation of the subject, has drawn up an action plan which identifies an appropriate range of actions designed to improve provision. She has observed colleagues teaching and used this information, as well as that gained from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and a review of resources, to inform development needs. She is aware that a clearer understanding of standards in science across the school would be appropriate in evaluating the effectiveness of the subject and, to this end, has begun to analyse available data in line with priorities identified within the school development plan. She uses the allocated budget wisely in identifying and rectifying resource needs and has been active in promoting science, particularly those aspects relating to investigations, throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

104. Standards in art are in line with national expectations across the school. Standards have been maintained at this level over recent years. In Year 2 pupils successfully experiment with a style of painting used in one of Picasso's self-portraits. They show they are open to new ideas as they investigate and use a sound range of materials and processes. They also demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of proportion when applied to drawing faces. They use their sketch books well to explore and experiment with techniques. The reactions of Year 1 pupils to Picasso's 'Weeping Woman' are thoughtful and show observation and understanding of a complex and challenging image. With minimal prompting most are able to identify the signs of grief and shock in her face. Some observe that faces change with mood and realise that they will have to look closely at paintings to discover what they offer.

105. Year 4 pupils make satisfactory progress developing their observational skills. In a topic that involves designing chairs for wizards they investigate photographs and drawings of various designs. Their discussion with the teacher demonstrates sound attention to detail. They talk about how various effects are achieved and describe the appearance of various fantastic designs successfully in a question and answer session that contributes well to literacy. They have explored the work of Klee and of the pre-Raphaelites and have produced their own paintings after the masters which demonstrate a sound understanding of the techniques these artists used to achieve what they did. They confidently sketch from photographs of chairs in an exercise in which they explore the designs of others in order to develop their own. They successfully discuss the differences between their designs and others.

106. Teaching and learning in art are good. Teachers are good at setting out for the pupils what is to be done in lessons. Their introductions are clear, informative and stimulate interest in learning. Pupils are given just what they need to get on with the work. Question and answer is highly skilled and makes a good contribution to literacy. The better teaching features an animated approach that holds pupils' attention completely. Pupils are encouraged to offer extended responses to questions about images and artefacts. All pupils are encouraged to voice their responses. Behaviour management is good and learning is rarely disrupted by inappropriate activity. Teachers are well

aware of the need to support lower attaining pupils and while pupils are engaged in their tasks, teachers and classroom assistants are continually moving around to make sure progress and learning is maintained. This awareness helps to make sure that concentration and application to the task in hand is good throughout lessons. Relationships are good and this promotes learning well. Discussions are genuine interchanges of ideas. The ideas that come from pupils are valued and respected by the teacher and this encourages participation through boosting pupils' confidence in their own thinking. Subject knowledge is satisfactory though on occasion the choice of medium to use is inappropriate for example using pencil to colour in large areas that can be filled easily and more effectively with paint.

107. The co-ordination of art is good. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has enthusiasm and commitment. At present she co-ordinates two other subjects and this does not allow her to drive forward elements of the various subjects with the force she would like and which is needed. She has no time allocation at present to conduct classroom observations so that she can achieve an overview of standards in the rest of the school. Assessment is not well developed in art and it is left to individual teachers to record progress. This means that there are inconsistencies throughout the school in teachers' expectations.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. It was not possible during the inspection to observe any design technology lessons. Nevertheless it is clear from discussion with teachers and from analysis of display and design books that standards for all pupils including those with special educational needs in design technology are around national expectations. Standards have been maintained in the subject over recent years.

109. The range of materials pupils use is satisfactory and includes food, card and textiles. The children in Reception start well when they model gardens in miniature using dried flowers, card and other materials. They are taught to draw plans for what they intend to construct. In this class they explore cultural differences when they make food from around the world. Year 1 pupils achieve satisfactory standards when they research and then make glove puppets using pre-cut felt and thread. They successfully use simple stitching to make their artefacts. Year 2 pupils successfully complete a similar task and also list the component parts. In Year 2 pupils explore the built environment when they model buildings. Though the design process is largely followed and pupils do design, make and evaluate their work, this is not recorded by pupils in detail. There is also an emphasis on making rather than design.

110. In Year 4 pupils are making musical instruments for homework. They produce a good variety of outcomes using reclaimed materials. They design and make their own sandwiches and are beginning to use labelled drawings that communicate their intentions. They learn about aspects of the commercial and industrial world when they research, design and make packaging. They design logos to help 'sell' their designs. Design technology supports other topics well. For example Year 3 pupils make models of Viking ships in a history topic. The musical instruments support their work in music on percussion.

111. There is satisfactory co-ordination of the subject and learning resources are sound. Though there is an outline scheme of work for the subject there is a need for a more detailed document that gives greater guidance to teachers particularly in ways to promote aspects of design technology such as planning, the use of drawings to design and to communicate designs and the recording of the elements which make up the design process. The co-ordinator is considering the introduction of design booklets that guide pupils' through the design process in each task and which also provide a record which can be used to assess individual progress in a project.

112. This will provide a valuable record for teachers and for pupils alike of the progress that has been made.

GEOGRAPHY

113. It was only possible to see one lesson in Years 3 and 4 but discussion with pupils and scrutiny of work show that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and 4 and have satisfactorily improved since the previous inspection.

114. Pupils in Year 3 and 4 are able to define climate and find the typical weather of various countries of the world. In the lesson seen they considered how different climates effect peoples' choice of holiday. Higher attaining pupils were able to use travel brochures to find out the length of flights and rail journeys and one pupil spoke fluently about one country and the temperature at the time of travel. Lower attaining pupils make a satisfactory contribution to discussion but had produced very little written work by the end of the lesson. In work seen, Year 2 pupils are learning about important buildings in their local environment including shops, library, offices and local transport interchanges. Year 4 pupils are learning the subject vocabulary, for example, thermometer. There are opportunities for pupils to describe the journey of a river. One more able pupil, imagining she was a raindrop, had described her journey from the sky to the sea. Most pupils are familiar with the cycle of water and how rivers affect the landscape. In work seen, Year 4 pupils with special educational needs produce a low volume of written work.

115. In the lesson seen, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory. The lesson was well planned and pupils were given the opportunity to find out ways of travel and how long the journey would take. However, there was no map of the world displayed in the classroom to help pupils to put their chosen holiday destinations in context and tasks were not well differentiated to match the needs of all pupils. In work seen, teachers' marking was generally unhelpful and although writing frames were prepared, spaces are often too big for pupils to fill.

116. The geography curriculum is enhanced by the opportunity for some pupils to take part in a three-day field trip to Malvern. Nineteen pupils will be going this year.

117. The subject is managed effectively. Schemes of work are thorough and fully cover the requirements of the national curriculum. The coordinator recognises the need for monitoring the teaching and learning in the subject and of the need for pupils to be more aware of their learning and of individual targets in order to raise standards.

HISTORY

118. It was only possible to see one lesson in Years 3 and 4, but discussion with pupils and a scrutiny of the work they have undertaken show that standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in all years. Standards of work have improved over recent years. This is largely due to the good quality leadership of the person responsible for the subject.

119. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 recognise different periods in history. For example they have written about and are able to talk about life in Victorian times. Displays produced by the pupils are vibrant and illustrate Victorian clothes, furniture and utensils. They include a wide variety of writing styles ranging from extended writing and descriptions to poetry. For example, one piece of writing described the differences between the life of a rich person and the lifestyle of a poor person in Victorian times.

120. In the one lesson observed, the quality of teaching and learning was good because the questioning and tasks matched the needs of all pupils including those with special educational

needs and those for whom English is an additional language. In work seen, there is an inconsistency in the quality of marking of pupils' work. There is often a lack of help and guidance for pupils with special educational needs and no evidence of extended challenge for the higher attaining pupils. However, where the teacher differentiates tasks, pupils achieve more, and work is completed.

121. Leadership and management of the subject is good. The teacher with special responsibility for the area is looking at a range of pupils' work in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision and in learning, and has correctly identified the need for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject in order to raise standards further in all years.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122. Due to timetabling restrictions it was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection and therefore no judgements on teaching and learning in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can be made. Nevertheless it is clear from discussion with the co-ordinator and from an analysis of the bank of evidence kept by the school of pupils' work in each year that standards for all pupils including those with special educational needs are in line with those expected nationally. The school provides a suitably wide range of activities that complies with National Curriculum Programmes of Study. It has developed an impressive library of software that offers increasingly more challenging ICT tasks as pupils progress through the school. Though pupils do not at present use sensors in their work, heat and light sensors have been purchased and a range of activities using sensors is planned for next term.

123. At this time in Year 2 pupils are attaining average standards when they use word processors to produce a variety of text including word banks that help their spelling. They combine text and graphics successfully when they produce invitations and greetings cards. They generate charts using the computer to communicate the findings of a survey they conduct on birthdays. They know how to ask the right questions to gain information from the Internet when they research pets and other topics. They model information developing weather forecasts when they use a programme that allows them to construct simple weather charts. They satisfactorily develop their numeracy skills as well as ICT skills when they use simple spreadsheets for addition and subtraction problems. They learn simple programming when they control the movements of a robotic vehicle. This exercise also makes links with numeracy as they learn about angles.

124. By Year 4 pupils attain average standards when they produce their own illustrated books using word processing and graphics programmes. They communicate information successfully when they generate charts that give details of patterns of weather. They make increasing use of the Internet for research into a wide variety of topics including pollution. They find a lot out about clocks in a project concerning time. Their spreadsheet work shows sound progress on previous years' work when they model financial information from a Christmas party. They model information using a good range of educational adventure games which are designed to promote problem solving skills. Pupils of all ages use programmes that help with aspects of literacy and numeracy such as spelling and number work. These programmes make a sound contribution to pupils' learning.

125. The co-ordination by the headteacher is effective. He has developed ICT well but also recognises that an ICT co-ordinator needs to be appointed so that the subject can receive the time it requires to develop further. There are satisfactory resources for ICT but the lack of space in the school means that equipment in the library cannot always be used as the room is often occupied for other purposes.

MUSIC

126. Pupils throughout the school reach standards expected for their age in singing and responding to music. In other areas of music (playing and composing) standards are below those normally seen and heard. However, pupils are making better progress and achieving more than they did because of recent improvements in the resources available, which are beginning to raise standards. A small minority of pupils are achieving higher levels. These pupils are supported in their learning by music tuition on the clarinet and opportunities to play and perform in school and in the community.

127. The quality of teaching is good in both the lessons observed because of teachers' general teaching skills. Learning in these lessons was satisfactory overall because the pupils did not have the experience of learning by playing instruments and composing using the elements that they are familiar with. The tuition provided by the recently appointed coordinator is strength of the subject in all years. Initiatives such as the choir, which sing well in parts, the recorder ensemble and performances in assemblies, are raising the profile of music within the school and beyond. In one Year 2 listening lesson, over half of the pupils were able to identify fast/slow and one pupil described the music correctly as a sunrise. The remainder of the class were unclear as to what to listen for and some answers were inappropriate. In one Year 4 lesson, pupils made satisfactory gains in their knowledge of the two elements of pitch and dynamics. They were able to identify sounds that were suddenly loud and soft and sounds that became gradually softer and louder. Pupils' learning would be enhanced by the further use of instruments in all lessons.

128. The subject is well led and the work of the teacher with responsibility for music is having a positive impact on the quality of learning for all pupils in the school. Schemes of work are being revised in line with planned developments in music. However, at present, insufficient links are maintained with class teachers to allow them to extend pupils' learning between each weekly lesson, and to gain more confidence themselves in teaching music. ICT is used effectively by the teacher and pupils in many lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. By the age of seven, at the end of Key Stage 1, and by Year 4, pupils achieve standards that meet expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, play a full part in lessons and achieve appropriately in relation to their prior attainment. During the inspection, lessons were observed in Gymnastics and games. Pupils are taught swimming when they are in Year 3.

130. By the end of Year 2 pupils know the importance of regular exercise to keep fit and healthy. They know why lessons begin with a 'warm up', although their awareness of the importance of 'cooling down' is less well developed. In most lessons, pupils understand the importance of the teachers' 'stop' command, and they use space well and considerately, reflecting the importance placed by the school on health and safety. Pupils perform a range of balances and put these together appropriately to create simple sequences. They control their bodies effectively and are imaginative in the balances they create and in the ways in which they move from one balance to another. By Year 4, pupils' use of space has improved so that they can avoid each other while, for example, practising different throwing and catching techniques. Older pupils throw different balls and bean bags with reasonable accuracy and an awareness of the needs of their partner who is catching. They move with assurance and many show a good understanding of pace and direction by varying these in their work. Older pupils show an appropriate knowledge of the rules of different games and apply this effectively in, for example, in knowing when passes can be 'blocked' in a basketball coaching session.

131. Teaching, overall is satisfactory and makes an effective contribution to pupils' progress. Most lessons begin with a warm up, although cooling down at the end of lessons is less consistent. Teachers make sure that pupils know what they are going to learn, as well as what they are going to do which has a positive effect on pupils' readiness to take part in the lessons. Appropriate advice is given during lessons when teachers move around the hall or the playground supporting individuals or groups in improving skills or techniques. Pupils are used effectively to 'model' good work, and sufficient time is allowed for pupils to practice what they have seen in order to improve their own work.

132. There have been sound improvements in the curriculum and in resources since the previous inspection. The co-ordination of the subject has helped teachers to increase their expertise and become more confident through appropriately targeted training. A clear plan for development of PE has been drawn up following a review of some of the teaching and of the resources that are available. At present, evaluation of the subject is insufficiently focused upon the standards attained by pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. It was only possible to observe two religious knowledge lessons in Year 2 and 3 during the inspection. However, discussion with pupils, scrutiny of work and assemblies show that standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 4.

134. In Year 3, pupils have a satisfactory range of knowledge of Christianity and other religions. They explained that the Old Testament was known and used by Christians and Jews and that the Gospel books of the New Testament were written after the death of Jesus. In work seen, more able pupils are able to describe the customs of Muslims during Divali. For example, the drawing of rangoli at the entrance of the home. All pupils are familiar with the events in the life of Jesus since birth. In work seen, tasks were set that matched the needs of all pupils.

135. Year 2 pupils have studied the life of famous people for example, Anne Frank and Margaret Haughey.

136. In one excellent lesson seen in Year 2, pupils made very good progress consolidating their knowledge of the inside of a Church. They had previously visited the local church and were enthused when recalling information. Most pupils had remembered the names of the font, pulpit, lectern and altar. They were able to explain the purpose of each and identify their location within the church.

137. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. Where teaching is excellent, the pace of the lesson is good and leads to better learning by all pupils including the high proportion of those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Questioning is differentiated in these lessons and the teacher ensures that all pupils are listening by varying the pace and dynamics of her voice. Where teaching is less effective, the pace lesson is slower and the balance is on teacher input resulting in limited opportunities for pupils to have responsibility for their own learning. In work seen, there are too many folded work sheets and work of the less able pupils is often unfinished because the tasks are not carefully matched to their special educational needs. Marking often fails to identify what has been done well, or what pupils need to do in order to improve.

138. The school has an appropriately planned curriculum which effectively covers the requirements of the agreed syllabus. The coordinator is aware of the need to monitor the quality of teaching and learning of the subject and use the information to guide future planning, although assessment has not been developed in order to accurately measure pupils' attainment and the effectiveness of the curriculum.