

INSPECTION REPORT

HAWTHORN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: City of Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103214

Headteacher : Mr I Cassidy

Reporting inspector: Mr Colin Smith
25211

Dates of inspection: October 29th – November 1st 2001

Inspection number: 195636

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hawthorn Road Kingstanding Birmingham
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Poulton
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

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9952	Lillian Brock	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
18143	Bernice Magson	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equal opportunities English as an additional language The work of the Hearing Impaired Unit	Leadership and management
30724	Delia Hiscock		English Geography	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
18370	Kevin Johnson		Mathematics Art and design History	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hawthorn Primary School is average in size and serves the community of the Kingstanding area of Birmingham. Much of the area is socially deprived and movement into and out of the area is increasing. There are 212 pupils on roll, 98 boys and 114 girls. Eighty pupils have special educational needs (38 per cent), which is above average, and 23 pupils have statements. This high figure reflects the needs of the 20 pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit. Seventeen pupils are from families where English is an additional language of which sixteen are in the Hearing Impaired Unit. Since they suffer from profound hearing loss, they have no understanding of aural language and learn to recognise and use sign language from the moment they start school. Seventy-five pupils (36 per cent) are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. Three quarters of the class teachers have changed since the last inspection. It has taken been difficult to recruit replacements but, apart from Year 4, this has now been achieved. Children's attainment on entry to school is well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils and gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils enter school with well below average attainment and, in two of the last three years, they have left at the age of eleven attaining well below average standards in English, mathematics and science. Standards in English and mathematics were found to be well below average during the inspection, rather than very low, as the 2001 test results suggest. Pupils achieve steadily to reach the standards expected in most of the other subjects. The new teachers are settling in well and teaching is satisfactory overall. Pupils behave well and have satisfactory attitudes to learning. Leadership is satisfactory but the headteacher has had to spend time teaching classes instead of leading and managing the school. The school strives to include all of its pupils in all activities and this helps those with special educational needs and hearing impairment, including those with English as an additional language, to achieve well.

What the school does well

- Teachers manage pupils effectively, relationships are good and pupils behave well.
- Hearing impaired pupils, including those with English as an additional language, are very well supported and this enables them to make very good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the help provided by teachers and learning support assistants and this helps them to make good progress.
- The school is caring and very attentive to pupils' welfare.
- The provision made for pupils to develop spiritually, morally and socially is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in science, particularly with regard to pupils' skills of investigation, are too low.
- Pupils' mathematical skills of investigating and problem solving are weak in upper Key Stage 2.
- Standards in aspects of pupils' writing are lower than they should be.
- The quality of teaching and learning is not as good as it might be.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Some improvements have been made since the school was last inspected in June 1997. Standards improved consistently until 2000. Standards then fell to a very low level in 2001 but there were unusually high numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the cohort and mobility was particularly high in the year group. Standards are improving again this year and are close to the level recorded at the time of the last inspection. The weaknesses in information and communication technology and in the provision for children in the reception class have been remedied. Teaching was good at the time of the last inspection but since then the school has replaced most of the teachers. Teaching is satisfactory but not yet as good as it was with a settled and experienced staff.

Leadership and management are satisfactory but have been affected by the loss of experienced subject leaders. In particular, the headteacher has had to act as supply teacher on many occasions. This has impaired his ability to monitor teaching and learning. Now that staffing stability has been almost fully restored, the school has the capacity to move forward. Given the school's difficult circumstances, overall improvement is judged to be satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	B	D	E*	E	well above average A above average B
Mathematics	C	E	E*	E	average C below average D
Science	D	E	E*	E	well below average E lowest 5% nationally E*

The results attained by Year 6 pupils in 2001 were in the lowest five per cent nationally in English, mathematics and science. However, these results do not paint a fair picture of the school. Results had been improving faster than the national trend until 1999. In 2001, the results were adversely affected by an unusually high number of pupils with special educational needs, poor attendance and over half of the pupils had either joined or left the school within the last two years. If, for example, the 2001 results are calculated excluding those obtained by pupils with special educational needs, the school's results would match those of similar schools, in all three subjects, exactly. The attainment of current Year 6 pupils is more typical. On the basis of tests administered recently, standards in Year 6 now are 20 per cent higher in English and mathematics than they were in 2001. Standards in English are still well below average and are below average in mathematics. Pupils are achieving steadily through the junior key stage. The targets set last year were not reached by some margin but realistic targets have been set for 2002, which pupils are on course to achieve. Standards in writing are much lower than they are in reading. Improvements are being made but there are still weaknesses in factual writing, largely because writing is not strongly promoted in other subjects. Standards of handwriting and punctuation are also lower than they should be. In mathematics pupils acquire a secure understanding of how to calculate but struggle to apply these skills to solve mathematical problems. Standards in science in Key Stage 2, however, are too low and are not improving enough. This is because too little time is devoted to the subject and pupils' skills of investigation are inadequately taught.

Children enter school with well below average attainment and achieve steadily in the reception class. They are learning to read, write and handle numbers but by the end of the reception year, their attainment in language and literacy, mathematics, and all of the other areas of learning, remains well below average. Pupils achieve steadily through the infant key stage. At the age of seven their attainment is still well below average in reading and writing but matches standards in similar schools. Key Stage 1 pupils achieve well in mathematics and in science. Although standards are still below average, in mathematics, they are higher than in similar schools. Standards in information and communication technology are below average but pupils achieve steadily given their starting points for learning. Pupils achieve steadily in all other subjects to reach the standards expected by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils achieve well in religious education where standards meet the requirements set out for Birmingham schools. Pupils with special needs make good progress because they are supported well. Pupils with English as an additional language, who are mainly in the Hearing Impaired Unit, also benefit from good teaching and make good progress. Pupils in the Hearing Impaired Unit make very good progress because of the sensitive and highly organised provision. However, the good provision is not extended to the more able pupils who in most classes do not achieve as well as they could because they are not given sufficiently challenging work.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory; pupils concentrate well during whole class teaching sessions but older pupils do not work well enough on their own.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; pupils behave well in lessons, around school and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good; relationships between all members of the school community are harmonious and pupils learn to make reasoned decisions.
Attendance	Satisfactory; pupils are punctual and attendance has improved.

Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, mainly in the Hearing Impaired Unit, thoroughly enjoy school and develop very positive attitudes to learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is satisfactory in almost all lessons and is very good in Year 3. During the inspection, the teaching in six out of ten lessons was satisfactory, and good or better in four. The two unsatisfactory lessons were both in classes with supply teachers. Teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory. Reading skills are taught effectively. Pupils learn to blend letters to make new words and eventually learn to read with secure understanding. The teaching of writing is not as strong. Not enough attention is given to writing accounts in other subjects or to the skills of punctuation and handwriting. In mathematics, pupils' skills of calculating are taught well but teachers, particularly in the upper junior classes, are not as effective in teaching pupils how to apply their skills to solve mathematical problems. The teaching of investigative skills in science is weak. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with hearing impairment and those with English as an additional language, are well catered for and they learn effectively. Although teachers plan, organise and manage their lessons well, in some classes not enough is expected of the more able pupils. These pupils do not always receive work of sufficient challenge, which holds their learning back. Teachers engage pupils' interests well in whole class lessons and they often learn well when teachers explain new ideas and ask them questions. However, pupils do not learn as well, particularly in Years 5 and 6, when they are expected to work on their own. A succession of supply teachers in the past has not helped these pupils to settle into working routines.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory; apart from insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate in science and mathematics, subjects are adequately planned. However, the order in which pupils acquire skills is not clear enough to ensure that they can always build on earlier learning.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: their learning needs are identified early and they are well supported in lessons. This ensures that they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with hearing impairment and English as an additional language	Very good; the quality of teaching and the provision are recognised nationally. The majority of pupils with hearing impairment also have English as an additional language. They are fully integrated into lessons and always very well supported.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good in spiritual, moral and social areas and satisfactory in cultural areas. The pupils' own heritage is explored well but more could be done to help them to understand and explore cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A very caring school with a high regard for pupils' welfare. There are adequate procedures for finding out how much pupils have learnt but the information is not used sufficiently to plan the next learning steps.

The partnership between home and school is satisfactory and parents are involved in supporting the good range of extra curricular activities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory; The headteacher is hard working and dedicated to the pupils' best interests. He has a clear vision for the school but has found this difficult to achieve during a period of extensive staff changes. The new deputy headteacher has made a positive start.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory; governors fulfil their responsibilities and are involved in strategic planning but they rely too much on the headteacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory but improving now that pupils' progress is tracked and results are analysed. Monitoring of teaching and learning is weak.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory; the finances available are put to good use. Parents and are consulted when changes are pending and the school is beginning to compare itself with others in order to ensure that it gives best value.

Recruitment of teachers has created severe problems over the last two years. Support staff play a very important part in pupils' learning. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

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, behave well and are making good progress. • The school is well managed and the teaching is good • Pupils are expected to work hard and develop responsible attitudes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents feel that the school does not keep them well informed or work closely with them. • A few parents are unsure about the amount of homework and extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views, although teaching, leadership and progress are satisfactory rather than good and older pupils could be more persevering when they are asked to work on their own. Parents' concerns about homework, access to information and extra-curricular activities are not supported by the team. There are many avenues open to parents to find out about their children's learning. Suitable homework is provided and there is good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter school with well below average attainment and leave at the age of eleven with attainment still well below average in English and below average in mathematics. This was broadly the picture at the time of the last inspection. However, many changes have occurred since 1997. Initially, standards rose at a quicker rate than national trends until 1999 when results levelled off. Standards fell to a very low level in 2001 in English, mathematics and science and were well below those of similar schools. Results are prone to fluctuate because very different cohorts of pupils move through the school. This is exacerbated by increasing and decreasing numbers of pupils with statements of special educational needs in the hearing impairment unit. In 2001, several factors coincided to bring the results down. Over a third of the pupils had special educational needs, over a half of the group only joined the school in the later junior years and attendance of this group was almost ten per cent lower than any other. The attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is more typical. Assessments undertaken just before they moved into Year 6 show standards to be at least 20 per cent higher than they had been in 2001 in English and mathematics, much as they have been in previous years. Results are now rising again. Although the troughs in performance occurred at a time when three-quarters of the teaching staff changed, the new teachers are having a positive impact on pupils' learning, apart from in Year 4 where there is still no regular teacher.
2. Standards in Key Stage 1 have also fluctuated but to a lesser extent. Standards in reading and writing are well below the national average but match those of similar schools. Standards in mathematics are higher than in similar schools. All of the Key Stage 1 teachers have been appointed within the last year but they have settled in quickly and are an effective team.
3. Children enter school with well below average attainment. They achieve steadily in the reception class but very few children reach the standards expected by the end of their reception year. Children's speaking and listening improves steadily and their interest and enjoyment in reading develops well. However, too little is expected of their capacity to experiment with writing letters and words and progress in this area is too slow. From a low starting point children make sound progress in learning to recognise numbers and to begin counting. Slowly, they learn new words to describe shape and size. In other areas, including knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development pupils achieve steadily. They learn to describe their surroundings, use computers, paint and draw and gain control when climbing, running and jumping. However, the balance between learning with the teacher and learning through structured play is not equal. This is because children are sometimes told exactly what to do rather than being encouraged to find out for themselves. This holds back their creative and personal development.
4. Pupils achieve steadily in English, although standards in writing are considerably lower than in reading. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn their letter sounds and most of

them are able to read smoothly and accurately by the age of seven. In Key Stage 2, they learn to read with understanding. By the age of eleven they tackle different reading tasks, such as stories and factual accounts, with confidence and they know how to use the library. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are not so far behind the national average. However, standards in some aspects of writing are too low. Pupils learn to express their ideas and many write imaginatively and descriptively. However, they have little understanding of how to write reports and accounts, largely because writing in other subjects is not as prominent as it should be. In addition, pupils' handwriting and use of punctuation are problem areas. These weaknesses have arisen because the work in pupils' books has not been monitored during the period of staffing changes. Analysing assessment results and examining pupils' written work to identify and remedy the weaknesses are only just beginning. Pupils speaking and listening skills are below average but progressing well enough. In most lessons, teachers generate good class discussions through which pupils can extend their vocabulary and improve their spoken language.

5. Pupils achieve well in mathematics in Key Stage 1 and, by the age of seven, most pupils know their numbers to 100 and understand tens and units well enough to add and subtract correctly. Pupils achieve steadily through Key Stage 2 overall but their progress is particularly good in Year 3, weaker in Year 4, owing to a string of supply teachers, and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Pupils make good progress during the whole class teaching time where they have good opportunities to discuss their ideas and learn new skills. However, in Years 5 and 6 particularly, the follow up work provided is not always precisely matched to pupils' different learning needs and in some cases it is not challenging enough. As a result, although by the age of eleven most pupils have gained the important skills of adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing, using whole numbers and decimals, they struggle to apply these skills to solve mathematical problems.
6. Standards in science are a concern. They are high enough in Key Stage 1 and pupils achieve well, given their low starting points. However, in Key Stage 2, pupils underachieve and do not reach the standards of which they are capable. The skills of investigation and experimentation are not taught well. Not enough time is devoted to the subject and all pupils receive the same level of work regardless of their different abilities. For these reasons, standards are very low by the time that pupils reach the age of eleven and well below those of similar schools. Whereas results in English and mathematics are beginning to rise, results in science are not improving at all.
7. Standards in information and communication technology are below average but they have moved on since the last inspection. Pupils achieve well in religious education to reach the standards expected in Birmingham schools. Pupils achieve steadily in art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education to reach the standards expected at the age of seven and eleven.
8. The school has a Hearing Impaired Unit. These pupils are fully integrated into normal lessons and into the life of the school. Well-trained and very effective specialist teachers and support assistants work closely with these pupils in class lessons. Their learning needs are very well provided for and they make very good progress. In addition to being able to access normal lessons, the extra help they receive enables

them to consider new ideas in depth. As a result, they sometimes make better progress than their hearing classmates. Many of the hearing impaired pupils travel to school from outlying areas where there are more pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, almost all of the pupils with English as an additional language also have hearing impairment. Their needs are also effectively met because the specialist teachers ensure that they fully understand new learning.

9. The school also caters for pupils with special educational needs other than hearing impairment. These pupils also make good progress. They are often grouped with the hearing impaired pupils when their learning needs coincide. During most lessons, they have the advantage of working in small groups with specialist support. Pupils with special educational needs, those with hearing impairment, including those with English as a second language, work well towards the targets set for them.
10. Although there is no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls, more able pupils and those who are gifted and talented do not make as much progress as they should. This is partly because they are not yet identified and placed on a register to alert all teachers to their specific needs. In many lessons, the work provided is well matched to their learning needs. However, this is not always the case, particularly in the upper junior classes. In these classes, teachers do not expect enough from them and seldom set challenging tasks, such as mathematical and scientific investigations. This is largely why they do not reach the higher levels at the age of eleven.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal development are satisfactory and their behaviour is good. Relationships across the school are good. This was broadly the picture at the time of the last inspection. Attendance levels have fluctuated since the previous inspection but they have improved recently and now compare satisfactorily with those found nationally.
12. From their early days in school, children in the foundation years need time to become accustomed to the routines of school life and some find this difficult. They are now benefiting from an ordered environment and are developing positive attitudes to learning. They are learning to relate to others in the school community and to understand the standards of behaviour expected of them.
13. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good in Key Stage 1 and very good in the Hearing Impaired Unit. For example, at the end of a Year 1 literacy lesson on rhyming words, pupils with a hearing impairment readily volunteered to present their work and one gave a clear rendition of a favourite rhyme. Attitudes to learning in Key Stage 2 are good when the teacher is presenting the lesson; pupils are attentive, co-operative and keen to learn. However, their attitudes are not as good when they are asked to work on their own, particularly in the afternoon sessions. As a result, their work is not always well presented. Pupils in Year 4 are not yet conforming to the school's expectations of good attitudes to learning mainly due to the long succession of temporary teachers they have experienced. They have not yet had the opportunity to form relationships with one teacher and unsatisfactory attitudes to learning occur in some lessons. Pupils

with special educational needs, including those with hearing impairment and those for whom English is an additional language, demonstrate good attitudes to learning and to school life generally.

14. There is an orderly atmosphere in the school and this reflects the good standards of behaviour. In class, the behaviour of the majority of pupils is rarely less than good and often very good. There are a small number of pupils whose behaviour is not as good as the school would like. Teachers generally manage such occasions well and are able to minimise any disruption to lessons. When behaviour is particularly challenging, effective use is made of the school's disciplinary procedures. The orderly behaviour that predominates makes a good contribution to learning in the classroom. For example, Year 6 pupils behaved well when refining gymnastic movements in a physical education lesson. They supported their hearing-impaired partners well, guiding and helping them through the various movements. When not in lessons, most pupils play purposefully and sensibly and have a range of play resources to keep them occupied. They are generally courteous and polite with each other and move about the school in a calm, purposeful manner. When reported, occasional incidents of bullying are dealt with well. There have been four fixed period exclusions during the last year reflecting the school's determination to maintain an orderly school environment.
15. The school is characterised by good relationships amongst all members of the school community. Pupils from different social and cultural backgrounds work and play well together. They learn to take responsibility for their actions and to recognise that their actions affect others. Pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and pupils with hearing difficulties are fully included in all lessons and in extra curricular activities. A graphic example of this was seen in the Junior Communication Club when thirty pupils were learning to 'sign' in order to help their classmates in lessons and around the school. Older pupils accept responsibility for younger ones. They act as their 'buddies' in the playground, sell snacks at playtime and are supportive during lunchtime. There are some opportunities for independent learning but these are not fully utilised in all lessons. In their relationships, pupils learn much from the example of adult members of staff who work together harmoniously and constructively.
16. Attendance has improved and now compares satisfactorily with schools nationally. The school works hard to encourage the regular attendance of pupils from a few families who do not appreciate the effect that poor attendance has on their achievements. Pupils appreciate the rewards for good attendance and approximately a fifth of all pupils regularly achieve 100 per cent attendance. Year 6 pupils confirm that they enjoy their time in school and will be sorry to leave at the end of the year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. Teaching was judged to be good at the time of the last inspection. Over the last two years three quarters of the teachers have changed and recruitment has been difficult. Teachers in reception, Year 1, 2 and 3 have all been appointed within the last year. In Year 4, a supply teacher started on the morning of the inspection. The headteacher has handpicked his new teachers and the evidence suggests that his efforts are being well rewarded. The new teachers have adjusted quickly to the needs of the school and the

pupils. The new deputy headteacher, particularly, has made a significant impact and teaches very well in all subjects. Teaching is satisfactory at this time as the new teachers settle into the school. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory in six lessons out of ten and good or better in four. Just two lessons were unsatisfactory when supply teachers struggled to identify the needs of the pupils and manage them successfully through the lesson.

18. Apart from the Year 4 class, which has had seven supply teachers this term, teachers manage pupils well and discipline is fair and effective. Teachers work hard on their relationships with pupils, show patience and give lots of praise. This is usually fully justified but there are occasions in Year 5 and 6 when praise is given too easily and pupils take this a sign that they do not need to work harder to give of their very best, particularly in the presentation of their work. Despite these lapses, a calm and purposeful atmosphere for learning is almost always established in which pupils listen carefully and work without distraction.
19. Teaching in the reception class is satisfactory. Teachers and classroom assistants work well together to provide a structured, varied and interesting day. The basic skills of reading and number work are taught soundly and plenty of worthwhile learning opportunities are provided to increase children's knowledge and understanding of themselves and the world around them. However, children are sometimes told what to do when it would be better to encourage them to explore and find out for themselves. When they are directed in this way, their creative talents are not developed and their independence is held back.
20. The planning of lessons is satisfactory. Teachers always know exactly what they expect pupils to learn and usually share the learning goals with the pupils at the start of the lesson. As a result, pupils fully understand what the task ahead requires of them. However, in the planning of lessons, too little attention is paid to the needs of the more able pupils. This is partly because some teachers do not expect enough of them. In English and mathematics, the work for each different ability group is usually spelt out but the tasks are not always sufficiently challenging. This is more noticeable in the work completed in pupils' books than it was in the lessons taught during the week of the inspection. This suggests that for much of the year the learning of the more able pupils is not extended enough and largely explains why they fail to reach the higher levels in sufficient numbers.
21. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are soundly taught. Reading skills are taught well. This ensures that pupils learn to break down unfamiliar words, gain an understanding of the text and are able to locate information in a book. The teaching of writing skills is successful in some areas. Although pupils are given the tools to express their ideas in narrative and imaginative writing, punctuation and handwriting skills are not taught consistently and this is reflected in pupils' written work. Number skills are effectively taught and pupils gain confidence and understanding of processes such as addition and division. However, they are not given enough opportunities to investigate mathematical problems, therefore their ability to apply their skills develops only slowly.

22. The teaching methods used are also satisfactory but there are strengths and weaknesses in this area as well. Teachers explain new learning effectively and draw pupils into interesting and productive discussions about their work. Pupils often ask their own questions showing that they are curious and interested in the lesson. This is particularly noticeable in religious education, where teaching is good. Teachers also use questioning well to make them think and to find out how much pupils have understood. When whole class teaching takes place, pupils learn at a good rate and are fully involved in the lesson. However, in upper junior classes, when the teacher sets the work for pupils to complete individually or in small groups, the interest and perseverance of a few pupils wanes. Teachers have to remind them to settle down and most do but the quality of their learning is not as good as it was during the whole class part of the lesson. Teaching methods in the upper Key Stage 2 classes are sometimes too narrow. Pupils are told what to do but there are too few opportunities for them to experiment and find out for themselves. This is most noticeable in problem solving in mathematics and investigating in science where pupils achieve least well. However, in Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 pupils have good opportunities to make their own discoveries.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is consistently good. They are encouraged by their teachers to take an active part in lessons and support staff help them to understand and talk about their work. Teachers' planning invariably takes account of their learning needs and the tasks provided are exactly at the right level. These factors help them to make good progress.
24. Twenty pupils have varying degrees of hearing impairment. They are taught with normal classes for 70 per cent of the time and withdrawn for the remainder. When they are integrated with hearing pupils, they are very well supported. Specialist teachers use signing and draw illustrations on white boards when the class teacher is addressing the class. Hearing impaired pupils answer just as many questions as other pupils and on some occasions make more progress in the lesson because of the very good support they receive. For example, in mathematics lesson about symmetry, their completed mirror diagrams were more accurate than those produced by many of their hearing classmates. The quality of support provided by specialist teachers and learning assistants is very good throughout the school and makes a major contribution to pupils' learning.
25. Teachers suitably assess pupils' learning from day to day. They take note of pupils' answers to their questions and draw lessons together effectively through discussion sessions. These measures help teachers to know whether they can move to something new the next day or need to reinforce some aspect of learning that pupils are unsure of. In an English lesson, for example, the teacher reminded pupils to use their knowledge of how to structure and organise the writing of a story before tackling biographies. The marking of pupils' work is thorough and accurate but it does not always point the way forward in helping pupils to improve. Most pupils complete the English and mathematics homework provided and this makes a useful contribution to their learning.

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

26. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, except in aspects of science. All subjects are taught to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum, as was the case at the time of the previous inspection. However, because a number of subjects such as history, art and design and technology are combined in the form of a general topic, the specific skills within each subject are not as logically sequenced as they might be. This makes it harder for pupils to build on what they learn from one year to the next. For example, although pupils can explain features and events of different historical periods, they find difficulty in placing periods, such as Romans and Tudors in the correct chronological order. The school is right to review these topics by identifying the key skills in each subject and placing them in a clear teaching sequence.
27. The Foundation Stage of the curriculum is similar to that in most reception classes. It is based on the early learning goals recommended for children of this age. Planning in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and the provision made prepares children adequately for the next stage in their learning. However, opportunities for children to explore and investigate through play are insufficient.
28. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. Recent improvements in methods of teaching are having a marked effect on pupils' reading and writing and are starting to accelerate their learning. A significant amount of time is used for extra English lessons to improve pupils' language skills. For example, additional writing sessions are arranged for pupils to improve their descriptive and imaginative writing. However, there are not enough opportunities in a number of subjects for pupils to write factually, such as writing reports in design and technology.
29. The effect of the National Numeracy Strategy ensures that pupils' number skills develop well. However, there is too little emphasis on applying these skills to solve problems or to investigate other areas of mathematics, such as measurement and shape.
30. Provision for science is weak. Insufficient time is allocated to the subject and the skills of investigation are insufficiently taught. Suitable provision is made for the other subjects.
31. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The very effective programme of work outlines what needs to be taught each year to enable pupils to understand the principles of citizenship and health education. If there is a problem, with behaviour for example, planning is modified to respond to any such pressing needs. Good provision is made to guide pupils in the areas of sex education and drug awareness. In Year 2, for example, drugs education is provided for through health education lessons and as a result, pupils are well aware of the effects of drugs and the link with medicine.
32. For the most part, pupils have equal opportunity and access to all aspects of the curriculum. Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are good, including those with a statement. Their individual needs are clearly identified and written into carefully constructed education programmes and sensitive support is provided in lessons. All of the pupils integrate successfully because of the care that goes into building relationships. Provision for hearing impaired children is very good. Their needs are very thoroughly assessed and the teaching is of high quality. The

learning that takes place is inspirational because strong leadership sets a demanding level of challenge that reaches across into classrooms as pupils and staff work alongside each other. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported in all classes. These pupils, with the exception of one, also suffer from hearing impairment. Thus, their learning of English is made doubly difficult. However, careful account is taken of their additional language needs and well-trained staff ensure that they fully understand new learning and the tasks set. These factors ensure that they make good progress.

33. Despite the very positive features which benefit the disadvantaged children, pupils who are more able are not as well provided for, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. These pupils, and those who are gifted and talented, are not identified and included on a register of specific needs. In addition, the information obtained from assessing their progress is not used sufficiently to plan more demanding work for them. Consequently, they do not reach the higher levels of which they are capable.
34. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities that enrich the curriculum. These are well supported by pupils and appreciated by parents, who help to coach cricket, for example. The school goes out of its way to involve as many pupils as possible, especially hearing impaired children. For example, the art and the communications clubs have a rich experience of making pictures, singing and using sign language together. 'Working together, whatever the differences between us', is the strong message in the school's curriculum. It demonstrates the commitment to equal opportunities for all pupils. The school arranges many visits to places of interest and encourages visitors to talk to pupils. These arrangements successfully broaden and extend pupils' learning and provide experiences that would not otherwise be possible, such as visiting Symphony Hall.
35. The 'Raising Achievement in Kingstanding Schools' is now part of a Small Education Action Zone. It unites the schools in providing expertise in Basketball, Music and writing workshops. For example, Year 3 pupils have very high quality experiences of drama that nourish creative expression, social skills and sheer delight. It demonstrates how the extra funding that comes into the school community, is improving the experience of learning.
36. The school continues to make good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development and satisfactory provision for their cultural development. It aims to give priority to valuing individuals, promoting self-esteem and fostering good relationships and this is reflected in all aspects of school life.
37. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to grow spiritually especially in assemblies and religious education. Assemblies are carefully organised through well thought out themes and they provide time for pupils to reflect on their lives at home, at school and in the wider community. For instance, in an infant assembly, children were invited to wear the 'confidence hat' and magically, they were able to present a nursery rhyme or poem. The enjoyment of these young children and the mature way they spontaneously applauded other children was very spiritual in its intensity. During a Key Stage 2 hymn practice, pupils made the link with the current world crisis with the words in the

song 'Peace will come to be'. In religious education lessons, children learn about the nature of religious belief and consider people's relationship with their God.

38. The school provides good guidance for the pupils' moral development and sets high expectations of behaviour. Rules are on display in all classes and make pupils aware of their rights and responsibilities. Moral development is reinforced in personal and social education lessons. Good behaviour and caring attitudes as well as academic standards are celebrated in assemblies. The school constantly seeks to reinforce pupils' self esteem as seen when they are praised and encouraged when they persevere with tasks. In all classes, pupils are taught to be fair when sharing equipment and in taking turns.
39. Good provision is made for the development of social skills. The school sets a good example for inclusive education, as all individuals are valued and all have their particular place. Pupils in Year 6 are expected to demonstrate good behaviour and take responsibility for various tasks around the school. They take responsibility for setting up resources in assembly, acting as librarians and 'buddies' to younger children. Personal, social and health education lessons explore social issues and provide a forum for debate. Relationships throughout the school are good and the staff exhibit positive attitudes. Pupils learn to treat each other with respect. For example, in a Year 5/6 literacy lesson for pupils with learning and hearing difficulties, pupils worked very well together to identify where an author has used effective language to make a powerful poem. They quickly identified the 'wow' words applauding each other's successful contribution.
40. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Music enriches pupils' lives and experiencing the work of artists helps them to appreciate literature and drama. The visits to museums and other places of interest as well as projects on the history and geography of the local community give pupils an insight into local cultures and traditions. Whilst there are examples of pupils learning about world faiths in religious education and an awareness of some of the festivals within the ethnic communities, the school does not build sufficiently on this in all other aspects of the curriculum. Some good examples like children learning a Hebrew song and African drumming are not reflected in schemes of work in all other subjects. There is a richness in the diversity of the school community which is not fully appreciated or recorded in the school's multicultural policy. Pupils need more opportunities to reflect on the traditions and beliefs of a range of cultures represented in society today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school continues to provide the safe and supportive environment noted at the time of the previous inspection. There is good provision for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Effective child protection procedures are in place. The overall quality of educational and personal support and guidance is satisfactory. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of those in their charge and work hard to ensure their welfare. The trusting relationships that pupils enjoy with their teachers give them the confidence to cope with the problems that arise in everyday life. Pupils with learning, hearing or language difficulties are fully included in all aspects of lessons. Teachers who support

and encourage them in their efforts appreciate their unique qualities. Their success is the teachers' success and the two cannot be separated.

42. The school has a responsible attitude towards health and safety matters. There is a clear and detailed policy with appropriate systems in place for regular, documented risk assessments and for the routine maintenance of fire and electrical equipment. The school complies fully with child protection procedures and staff are aware of their role in the early identification of concerns. Along with the new sex education programme and the school's very good personal, social and health education programme, knowledge of healthy living and personal health and safety is contributing positively to the self-confidence of pupils. The staff are conscious of the special needs of pupils with medical problems and they work closely and sympathetically with parents, carers and support agencies in the community.
43. The school's good procedures for monitoring and supporting behaviour are seen in the impact that they have on pupils. The strength of the procedures lies in the consistency of their application and the support that teachers receive from the behaviour co-ordinator. Pupils have a clear idea of the standards expected of them and know that bullying or any form of harassment will not be tolerated. They appreciate the system of rewards and understand the sanctions for poor behaviour. The exhilaration and excitement of the pupils who won the cup for the most house points was evident during an assembly. Any incidents of misbehaviour that do occur are dealt with promptly and effectively. Through the questionnaire, parents unanimously agree that behaviour in the school is good.
44. The caring approach is reflected in the school's efforts to encourage regular attendance. Records of attendance are carefully analysed and evaluated and prompt action is taken to investigate any unauthorised or unexplained absence. This has resulted in an improvement this term and overall attendance is now almost at the national average. Registration periods are efficient and lessons start on time. Most pupils are punctual despite the long distances that some of them have to travel.
45. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils for whom English is an additional language. The very good support for pupils with hearing difficulties is mirrored in the very good progress that they make.
46. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Assessment of the hearing impaired and of the pupils with special educational needs is very good. This enables accurate work to be set and high quality teaching delivered that is very specific to the needs of individual pupils. Good systems are in place to assess pupils against national standards in annual tests for English, mathematics and science. All other subjects of the National Curriculum are tested throughout the school year, at the end of each unit of work. These assessments are well established and provide valuable information. However, much assessment is focussed on knowledge acquired rather than actual skills developed. Consequently the tests do not fully measure the quality of learning that has taken place. Assessment at the short term, such as through marking, is invariably positive but is not consistent in helping pupils to learn from their errors.

47. The use of assessment to inform and guide planning in the curriculum is unsatisfactory. However, it is very good for pupils with hearing impairment or with special educational needs. The school has begun to set targets for specific groups to raise levels of attainment. For example, standards in reading have improved significantly as a result of such targeted interventions. However, assessment is not being sufficiently used to identify and extend the more able pupils. Consequently, they are sometimes given work to complete that lacks challenge and does not meet their needs in a number of subjects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents have indicated that they are well satisfied with what the school provides for their children. Most parents view the school as successful and one which their children enjoy attending. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. The school's documentation is satisfactory and together with the opportunities for personal contact with teachers, ensures that parents are given regular information about events and developments at the school and about the progress of their children. The school's links with parents continue to make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Parents of pupils with special educational needs or a hearing impairment are properly involved in their children's individual education plans. The school provides them with the opportunities to participate in review meetings and as a result, these pupils make very good progress.
49. The parents' questionnaires prompted a positive response. A few parents do not feel that they are well informed about how their children are getting on and about the amount of work they do at home. A few also feel uncomfortable about approaching the school with questions or concerns. Inspection findings are that the amount of homework is sufficient, that teachers are approachable and that the school listens to parents' concerns and takes action to deal with them. These concerns indicate that the system for communicating with parents is not always successful. The headteacher is aware of parents' concerns and is actively seeking new ways of taking parents' views into account. Parents are unhappy about the effect on their children's learning of the number of temporary teachers who have worked in the school.
50. The information which parents receive is satisfactory. The prospectus and annual report of the governing body are well presented and comply fully with statutory requirements. Parents' consultation evenings are held each term and are successful in attracting a significant number of parents. There are induction meetings for parents of children new to the school. Annual reports to parents on children's progress are informative, give specific details of what children know and can do but do not set any targets for pupils' future development. There are regular newsletters about events in the school and letters home informing parents of the attendance of their children and of their successes. The school does not provide specific information on what pupils will learn each term.
51. Overall, the school's links with parents make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home. Parents of children new to the school are made to feel welcome. Teachers discuss with parents their children's capabilities and provide good advice and guidance on how they can best support them. As pupils move through

school, some parents continue to play an important part by hearing their children read and helping them with spellings and number facts. The Friends' Association is not just a fund raising body. It provides the opportunities for many social occasions in the school like summer and Christmas fairs. A few parents help in the library and with sporting activities. The school provides a satisfactory range of opportunities for parental involvement in children's learning but it has yet to persuade parents to take full advantage of them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher is caring and dedicated to development of the whole child through what the school offers. He celebrates the unique qualities of each pupil, works consistently towards their inclusion in every activity and is committed to raising standards overall. He has a clear vision for the future and is actively involved in many aspects of the school's life. However, the school has suffered a period of turbulence in its' staffing during the last two years. Three quarters of the experienced teachers have left the school for promotion, long-term illness, or personal reasons. Following on from the recruitment difficulties which have occurred, the headteacher has taken on many additional responsibilities, including providing supply cover for some classes. He has spent time observing applicants for posts in the school teaching in their own schools, and he has monitored and guided new teachers and supply teachers closely. However, the time available to monitor the teaching and learning generally, particularly the work in pupils' books, has been seriously affected. There have been only limited opportunities to delegate responsibilities. One class teaching vacancy still remains and the class teachers in reception and Years 1, 2 and 3 have worked in school for less than one year.
53. Despite these far reaching changes, a shared commitment to succeed is building among the staff, although at present the capacity to succeed is temporarily held back by inexperience. During 2001 a new deputy headteacher has been appointed after a long vacancy. She is gradually taking responsibility for some of the management roles and is already effective in helping the headteacher to recommence a programme of monitoring teaching in the school. A close link has been established between the headteacher and the senior management team. They are working co-operatively and together are accurately identifying the priorities for improvement. These targets are incorporated into the school development plan. This is a satisfactory document with the right priorities itemised and costs considered. However, its use as a working tool is limited because the criteria used to measure success refer to resources or a policy being provided, rather than to resulting improvements in standards. National strategies and identified priorities of the Neighbourhood Action Zone have been incorporated satisfactorily in the school development plan and good advantages from these initiatives are now developing. Within the Hearing Impaired Unit the head of the section, the specialist teachers and the support assistants have a clear vision for their work with the hearing impaired pupils. Their work considerably enhances the provision of the school. Management systems within the Hearing Impaired Unit are rigorous. Importance is attached to a close working relationship between class teachers, specialist teachers and support staff. Together, they engender a positive ethos for learning which benefits the hearing impaired pupils

54. The role of the governing body in assisting to shape the direction of the school is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are all in place and the governors have a satisfactory understanding of the workings of the school. Some governors visit school regularly. They see the school in operation and often work with children. Although these visits are not formally recorded as part of the monitoring process, the information gathered is shared and discussed with other governors. Collectively the governing body relies heavily on the headteacher to formulate policies and prepare the documents for them to endorse. There is scope for governors to play a more active part in monitoring the school's effectiveness.
55. All statutory responsibilities for special educational needs are in place. The headteacher, special needs co-ordinator and link governor review provision regularly to ensure that the school meets the requirements of the Code of Practice for special needs. On a daily basis the special needs' provision is organised and managed very effectively by a capable co-ordinator.
56. All subjects and aspects of the curriculum reflect satisfactorily the aims and objectives of the school. Many of the curriculum issues of the last inspection have been achieved. Apart from in Year 4, there are now sufficient teachers to deliver the National Curriculum and they are well supported in their work by a good team of classroom assistants. Responsibilities for curriculum areas are allocated among many of the new teaching staff and they are working to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the teaching and learning in their subjects, and to implement their roles and responsibilities. Each year the subject leaders are expected to prepare an annual action plan of suggested improvements in their subject for consideration as part of the school development plan. Subject leaders are already supervising resourcing, replacing consumables and updating policies when required. However, with the exception of English, their monitoring roles are not as clear as they should be. Tracking pupils' progress through their assessment results has begun and the system adopted is clear and effective. This innovation is too recent to have any impact on learning as yet. However, the main weakness lies in the evaluation of pupils' work. Pupils' work completed in a number of subjects is combined in one book. In some instances pupils' work is not recorded and samples of pupils' work are not kept for future reference. This makes it difficult for subject leaders, class teacher and the pupils themselves to see the progress made. The fact that pupils' work in their books is not as productive as the learning in the discussion part of lessons illustrates the need to look more carefully at the work they produce. This is an important issue for improvement. The new deputy headteacher is already monitoring the teaching and learning of the children in the Foundation Stage and, together with the newly appointed class teacher, they have begun to address the curriculum and assessment issues for the younger children as identified in the last inspection report.
57. The arrangements for establishing performance management and appraisal in school are developing satisfactorily and teachers newly appointed to the school receive satisfactory induction. The deputy headteacher acts as mentor and provides regular, practical advice on all aspects of school life. This is a welcoming, friendly school where, as one of the new teachers explained, 'You get very good support from everyone.'

58. Administrative staff give good support to the efficient management of the school and free the headteacher from administrative chores. Financial planning to meet the school's priorities is satisfactory. Good use is made of specific grants to raise standards in the school. In particular, those used to fund the Hearing Impairment Unit deliver very high quality provision. Booster classes to raise standards have proved successful. A range of outside specialists, such as the Drum Voice Club leaders and the coaches of various local sporting clubs, have extended opportunities for the pupils and have raised their levels of self-esteem. Strategic decisions are now considered within a three-year programme of action. The governors' finance committee fulfils an increasing role in decision making, with regular analyses of the school's budget. An eight per cent budget surplus has arisen during the change of staff because the new appointments are lower on the pay scale. Governors are fully aware of this and have plans in place to use these funds in the near future. Spending decisions are reviewed to assess their effectiveness. For example, the positive impact of the new learning assistants on pupils' learning has been measured. As a result the initiative is to be extended. However, spending priorities, aimed at improving standards, are not always identified with such precision. The school is only just beginning to analyse results and compare the pupils' performance to that of other schools. The school consults parents and outside agencies to gain a perspective on its progress and is starting to seek best value for the money it spends.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The headteacher, governors and staff should now:
- a) Improve standards in science by;
- providing sufficient time for the subject within the curriculum;
 - identifying the key skills within each topic and teaching them in a clear sequence;
 - ensuring that pupils have sufficient opportunities to acquire the skills of scientific investigation.

(Paragraphs 6, 30, 91, 93, 94 and 95)

- b) Improve pupils' mathematical skills of investigating and problem solving in upper Key Stage 2 classes by:
- providing more time for investigations;
 - match the work provided more closely to the pupils' different learning needs;
 - encourage pupils to concentrate harder and produce a greater quantity of work.

(Paragraphs 5, 29, 87 and 89)

- c) Raise standards in writing by;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to write reports and evaluations in other subjects;
 - teaching pupils how to structure their writing of factual accounts;
 - demanding more of pupils in punctuating their work correctly and presenting it more carefully.

(Paragraphs 4, 18, 21, 28 and 80)

- d) Raise the quality of teaching and learning from satisfactory to good to boost the low standards by:

- raising teacher's expectations of what pupils can achieve;
- using the information gathered from assessing pupils' learning to set demanding work for the more able pupils;
- encouraging pupils to find out more for themselves and to take more responsibility for their own learning;
- overseeing the task elements of lessons so that upper junior pupils develop more positive attitudes to working on their own;
- marking pupils' work more consistently to help pupils to improve;
- in reception, expect more of children's ability to develop writing skills and provide more opportunities for children to learn through exploration;
- monitoring teaching and learning closely and providing feedback for teachers and pupils on how they can improve.

(Paragraphs 3, 10, 13, 19, 20, 22, 25, 33, 46, 47, 52, 56, 71, 74, 102, 110 and 113)

THE WORK OF THE HEARING IMPAIRED UNIT

60. The school incorporates a unit for pupils who are profoundly deaf or with hearing impairment. Twenty profoundly deaf and hearing-impaired pupils attend the unit, drawn from the City of Birmingham and in need of specialist provision. The majority of these pupils are also learning English as an additional language. The school is proud of the inclusion and integration of these pupils within the school family and has established an excellent ethos of caring, sharing, and respect between adults and pupils. Pupils within the unit from both key stages are encouraged to participate fully in all school activities. The specialist provision and education provided on site is a strength of the school, having been recently acknowledged as a centre of good practice nationally by the Royal National Institute for Deaf People. This followed a careful appraisal and evaluation of their practice by the University of Birmingham. The pupils are taught through a mixture of specialist input in the unit, and also in whole class activities as an integral part of the school, alongside all other pupils in their year group. For 70 per cent of the teaching week the hearing impaired and profoundly deaf pupils are supported in the classrooms by specially trained teachers and support assistants who work alongside the class teachers so that they are able to access the curriculum successfully. At other times, they work within the unit in two class groups

made up of Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils, when they are assisted to develop their communication skills in a program of 'total communication'. Often, on these occasions, other pupils from the school who are in need of more extensive language work join them in these smaller group situations, so that social relationships are maintained during the intensive teaching times.

61. Pupils enter the Hearing Impaired Unit with statements of provision already in place. They each have an education plan, which sets targets for their stages of progress. Most achieve very well in relation to their capabilities and planned programme of objectives. At least three times each week pupils have individual tuition times, when their progress is recorded in personal profiles. Assessment is on going and thorough, and forms the basis of the weekly meetings to plan the progress of each pupil. The curriculum provision for pupils is very good and they have full access to the National Curriculum. All pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and are making very good progress. With good levels of support, by the end of both key stages, most pupils are achieving very well even though their attainment is below the national average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

62. The quality of teaching of the hearing impaired pupils is good. Teaching is often very good and occasionally excellent. Teachers have developed a series of carefully constructed measures so that the pupils undertake a mixture of activities, which promote visual and auditory senses, and physical skills. The learning environment is bright, visually pleasing, and acoustically sound. It offers many good opportunities for pupils to learn through sight and touch as well as sound. Teachers and support assistants are highly trained specialists, constantly taking positive steps to extend their own professional skills and regularly sharing their knowledge among colleagues. Good attention is given to the needs of pupils from the Asian sub-continent. Planning takes place within the unit and also with class teachers so that the challenges made of pupils are appropriate. Additional work is provided for pupils when they take extended holidays and good re-integration takes place when they return. Teachers have high expectations and demand very high standards, whilst always ensuring that the pupils have the means to succeed and are regularly praised for outstanding achievement. Successes are shared and celebrated, while problems are noted, considered with pupils, and methods of overcoming the difficulties are developed. For example during the inspection a pupil in Year 4 became confused about the meaning of the words 'meet' and 'meat' created by the different spellings of these words. The teacher gave very good attention to this comprehension confusion, which had developed, and by the end of the lesson the pupil could cue into the differences in meaning between many commonly pronounced words with different meanings. Teachers manage pupils well and, although pupils are constantly involved in various teaching situations around the school, they maintain good standards of behaviour. Organisation of lessons is given a high priority, with teachers consistently looking for opportunities to strengthen the pupils' abilities to operate independently. During lessons younger pupils are taught how and when to switch on and off their hearing aids, and to help each other in the classroom. Older pupils are encouraged to be self-sufficient, operating independently around school. They take on various roles and responsibilities alongside other members of the school. For example at playtimes and lunchtimes they undertake school roles of 'buddy helpers' to help younger pupils in the school.

63. Teachers are keen to develop social links and extra curricular clubs are organised during the lunch hour and after school so that friendships can develop. The school operates a 'Communication Club' made up of adults and pupils from all areas of the school. During these sessions communication skills are enriched in an engaging and relaxed atmosphere. Reflection and animated discussion is promoted on a range of issues. During the inspection the focus of the session was 'feelings,' and following reflection on the effects of various feelings and emotions, the pupils sang together the song 'Tears in Heaven' creating a wonderful feeling of togetherness as they shared the moment. Residential and day visits take place, wherever possible offering hearing impaired pupils and class groups or individuals the opportunity to accompany their friends.
64. Good links are made with the home through a diary communication system to ensure that important events in home and at school are recorded. Parents are invited into school to take part in meetings about their children, to share in social events and to assist in the classrooms. They value the opportunity to participate in school activities, and appreciate the opportunity to enhance the learning experiences for their children through their involvement. Following extended holidays to Pakistan and Bangladesh many pupils bring photographs, toys and pictures to school to share their experiences with friends. Some parents are keen to improve their signing skills and with the help of the school are taking examinations, which acknowledge their developing expertise.
65. The unit is managed very effectively. The head of the unit has a clear vision and through her enthusiasm has built a very good staff team. Together they are able to develop good innovative ideas which they trial and evaluate. They are committed to providing an enriched curriculum and exciting learning environment for the pupils.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	2	17	26	2	0	0
Percentage	2	4	35	55	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		212
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		75

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		23
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		80

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	17

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	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	19	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	6	9
	Girls	16	18	19
	Total	28	24	28
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	82 (75)	86 (69)	100 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	7	7
	Girls	15	19	17
	Total	21	26	24
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	75 (69)	98 (72)	86 (66)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	20	12	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	13
	Girls	3	1	4
	Total	14	13	18
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	44 (71)	41 (55)	56 (68)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	14	13
	Girls	3	4	4
	Total	16	18	17
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	50 (74)	56 (65)	53 (74)
	National	72 (74)	74 (65)	82 (74)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	6
Pakistani	8
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	147
Any other minority ethnic group	12

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.36
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.4
Average class size	30.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	173

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	683,808
Total expenditure	665,213
Expenditure per pupil	3,095
Balance brought forward from previous year	41179
Balance carried forward to next year	59774

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	217
Number of questionnaires returned	31

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	39	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	29	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	48	0	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	39	13	3	10
The teaching is good.	62	32	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	32	10	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	13	10	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	16	6	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	55	26	6	10	3
The school is well led and managed.	53	35	6	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	35	3	0	13
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	35	6	10	13

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

66. Before entering school most children have attended nurseries and playgroups. Following a short induction programme, children start school in the year they reach the age of five. Parents are encouraged to come into school so that a partnership can be established.
67. When children enter the reception class, their knowledge, skills and understanding are well below average in all the areas of learning. This is particularly noticeable in their understanding and use of language, their social skills and mathematical awareness. All children make at least satisfactory progress, although by the end of the reception year, only a small number reach the standard expected for children of this age in any of the areas of learning. Good attention is given to ensuring that the needs of children with English as an additional language in the Hearing Impaired Unit are well met. This enables them to make good progress.
68. The provision for the children in the reception year is satisfactory. The curriculum has been improved in response to the last inspection. The curriculum is now planned effectively around the nationally prescribed learning goals with a strong emphasis on learning experiences in communication language and literacy, mathematical and creative development and in the knowledge and understanding of the world. The classroom has limited space and there is little provision for a wet area, or play area for large toys or bricks. The outdoor provision is adequate and has improved since the last inspection, but there is insufficient equipment. As a result, in this area of learning, children are not able to build as well on the skills learnt earlier.
69. The class teacher and support assistant have developed a good team partnership and work effectively together to support all children, including those children with English as an additional language. Additional specialist provision from teachers and specialist assistants is allocated to the children who are hearing impaired. The class teacher maintains good links with the Hearing Impaired Unit, so that a continuously progressive curriculum is offered to these children both in the classroom and in the Hearing Impaired Unit. The deputy headteacher acts as co-ordinator for this area of the school and monitors the teaching and learning of all the children well.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Teachers and assistants provide a caring atmosphere and encourage children to take some responsibility for their own learning. Over time, children develop some independence and learn to play together harmoniously. A small number of children find settling into school difficult. They have had little experience in the past of playing together. Many children lack confidence and need constant teacher encouragement and support. At first, they find it difficult to follow class rules or to take turns. Some find it difficult to dress and undress independently for physical education lessons, but most can visit the cloakroom by themselves. Over time, the children learn acceptable standards of behaviour. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Children are

taught how to move around school and the classroom, and shown how to treat resources respectfully. By the end of the year they have made satisfactory progress. Hearing impaired children make good progress in developing personal, social, and emotional skills. They are encouraged to understand how to communicate and mix with others and to confidently move around the school between the classroom and the Hearing Impaired Unit. They learn to use their hearing aids correctly. Those children with English as an additional language are considered carefully to ensure that any misunderstandings do not occur and that they are able to participate fully in class activities.

Language, literacy and communication

71. For some children communication through the spoken word is difficult. Several children already receive speech therapy and many children answer the teacher's questions with single word responses. Teachers are aware of these difficulties and try to improve their vocabulary by sharing news, for example, although opportunities are sometimes missed to engage children in conversation. The Literacy Strategy framework is used as a basis for literacy lessons and children love listening to stories. During the inspection they enjoyed reading and acting out the story of Red Riding Hood. They made a good attempt to repeat the voices of the different characters in the story. Overall skills of recall are limited but with help many children can remember the story plot. Most children begin school without any pre-reading skills and progress is steady. Children are encouraged to choose from the good supply of reading and picture books. Some children know how to turn the pages and a few children are beginning to recognise some key words. In writing activities, progress is slow but steady. About half of the class can recognise and write their name independently. Some children struggle to hold a pencil correctly and they are just beginning to make marks on paper. By the age of six, although the children have made considerable improvement in speaking and listening, reading and writing, their attainment is remains well below expected levels. The quality of teaching of communication language and literacy is satisfactory. The teacher has satisfactory subject knowledge and creates many good links across all areas of learning. However the teacher's expectations of children's achievements in writing is not high enough. As a result, children's progress in early writing skills is too slow. There are no chubby pencils and crayons available for children who are still experiencing difficulties with pencil control. Opportunities for writing are rarely available for children to explore as part of independent play.

Mathematical development

72. Children's development in mathematics is steady. They begin to count how many children are present each day. Children enjoy working with numbers and enjoy singing and acting number songs together. Most children can count to six, and understand the concept of numbers to 3. More able children are beginning to understand the term 'one more, or one less' and recognise numbers to 8. Most are beginning to use mathematical vocabulary such as 'big, small' to describe objects. Hearing impaired children can distinguish shapes, describe them by gesture but not yet name them. Teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. The teacher creates many links across the curriculum to extend and consolidate children's knowledge of number and

shape. For example in a discussion on fireworks the teacher used the opportunity to remind children about the names and properties of shapes. As they looked at rockets and Catherine wheels, they searched for triangles, circles rectangles and squares. Many children have poor observational skills and without this help, very few of them would notice numbers and shapes around them in their everyday life.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Only a few children can speak with confidence about their home or about places they have visited. The teacher is aware of this and she encourages children to observe and talk about their surroundings. Teaching of this area of learning is satisfactory. Visits into the locality are arranged to help to improve children's knowledge and observation skills. A suitable range of activities is provided in the classroom to engage children's interests. Each day the children talk about the weather, they name the days of the week and discuss with their teacher the topical events of the day. At the time of the inspection they talked about the clothes we would wear at a bonfire party and understood what keeping safe means. In music and movement lessons children learnt new vocabulary about the stars and planets. They have regular opportunities to develop their use of computers, although many have poor hand and eye co-ordination.

Creative development

74. Children have had limited opportunities to use tools and equipment creatively. Their creative development is well below average for their age. There are not enough opportunities in the classroom for children to experiment with materials, largely because there is no wet area. Sand and water play is provided occasionally. Children find it difficult to use paintbrushes to control the marks they make on paper. All children find cutting and sticking tasks difficult, but they persevere well, and make satisfactory progress. Teaching of creative development is satisfactory. During the inspection, children worked outdoors on a splatter paint picture of the patterned effects of fireworks in the sky. They gained a lot from this activity but on some occasions the teacher tells children what to paint and how to achieve the effect rather than encourage them to experiment and find out for themselves. There are some opportunities for children to improve their musical knowledge through weekly singing lessons but there are few musical instruments available to use.

Physical development

75. Very few children are on course to reach the expected levels by the end of the reception year. Although many can run and some can jump, only a few can hop or skip. For many, control over their body movements is uncertain and hand and eye co-ordination skills are just developing. When playing with balls and quoits many children find it difficult to control a ball or direct the throw of a ball or beanbag. Children have some opportunity to improve their skills with larger equipment, although suitable equipment for the youngest children is in short supply. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Weekly activities are provided in the hall for dance, small games skills, and with larger apparatus. The outdoor play area is small with little equipment and offers only limited experiences for the young child. The teacher and support assistant ensure that children are able to improve their skills, although there are not enough opportunities for exploratory play. Attention is given to safety and through good management and organisation, the children are taught class rules which apply in these new settings. Good attention is given to the needs of the children who are hearing impaired so that they can participate along with other members of their class.

ENGLISH

76. Standards English were improving quickly up to 1999 but results tailed off in 2000 and dropped to a very low level in 2001. This was largely because a quarter of the pupils had special education needs, half of the year group joined the school during Key Stage 2 and a significant number of pupils had poor levels of attendance. These factors resulted in standards being well below those of similar schools. Standards in English in the current Year 6 group are higher. However, they are still well below the national average in reading and writing and below average in speaking and listening. Standards in listening are improving because pupils learn alongside those who are hearing impaired and this offers many good opportunities to communicate. There is no significant difference in the achievement of girls and boys. Pupils start school with well below average attainment and standards in reading and writing match those of similar schools and by the time that pupils reach the age of seven.
77. In Year 3, pupils are achieving rapidly in their reading and writing as a direct result of very good teaching. The school has recognised to need to improve standards in writing and has used the expertise from the Small Education Action Zone for drama and writing workshops. This has been built on effectively by the subject leader, who has shown pupils how to draft out their ideas and explore the best ways to write. However, there is still some way to go. For example, assessment does not sufficiently identify the needs of the more able pupils to ensure that they fulfil their potential.
78. Most pupils achieve steadily in speaking and listening but achieve well in Year 3, where drama lessons accelerate their achievement. In both key stages, teachers use the start and ends of lessons for pupils to discuss their ideas and to say what they think and how they feel about each other's work. This is effective in raising achievement in speaking and listening. Teachers ask searching questions to encourage pupils to reflect on their work. Most of the pupils with hearing impairment also have English as an additional language. They make very good progress because specialist teachers work with them and enable them to express their ideas. Pupils with special educational needs also achieve well because they are given tasks which are well matched to their learning needs. They benefit from working in small groups with hearing impaired pupils and gain from the good levels of support.
79. Pupils achieve steadily in reading through both key stages. In Key Stage 1, much attention is given to letter sounds and blends, rhymes and word patterns. These are closely linked to correct letter formation for writing. The school has recognised that pupils are less confident in reading words with vowel blends, such as 'ai.' A structured programme to remedy these gaps called 'reading recovery' has been implemented successfully. In the daily shared reading parts of lessons, Year 2 pupils check each others words to see if they fit into the sentences of the story and if not, why not. They are particularly sensitive to each other's achievements and in one lesson they spontaneously clapped a boy who read his work successfully. The school makes great efforts to invite and entice children to read, by offering a wide variety of books, whole school reading challenges, competitions and the high level of time devoted to reading. Pupils enjoy stories, talk about their choices and thoroughly relish explaining what might happen next. This spills over and helps pupils to write more

imaginatively. However, these rich experiences are not as evident in Key Stage 2 where, until recently, teachers have not given enough attention to writing. Although older junior pupils have good opportunities to select books for information, they are not able to explain why authors use different devices to make the information clearer, such as highlighting sub-headings and placing chunks of information into boxes. This is because teachers do not plan enough opportunities for pupils to explore the way that non-fiction information is presented. As a result, pupils do not use these techniques in their own writing.

80. The teaching of writing has been identified as a priority by the school. Children's work has only recently been analysed to identify what is specifically needed to improve their work. By the end of Year 2, pupils write eagerly but still struggle with sentence construction. To counter this, pupils now have their own set targets to reach, for example, 'Does my sentence have a full stop and a capital letter?' Children are able to write imaginatively because they are encouraged to read good literature. The writer's workshops, provided for pupils in Years 3 and 5 from the Small Education Action Zone, are making a difference. In these, pupils achieve rapidly by experimenting with words, and writing situations, designed to entice them into story making but supporting them as they write rather than by correcting their mistakes. The work of the subject leader adds to this by showing children how to draft out first ideas, change them and prepare to organise their pieces of text for someone else to read. Year 6 pupils have not had these experiences and therefore have not benefited from the improved provision. Weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting, particularly in Key Stage 2, have resulted in pupils' poor presentational skills and this affects their self-confidence. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to produce writing such as leaflets and brochures in other subjects. Although they write accounts and reports in subjects such as science and geography, too little attention is given to choosing the best form of presentation to make it attractive and interesting to the reader.
81. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers share the goals for each lesson with pupils so they know exactly what to do. Teachers manage pupils very well. Good relationships encourage children to listen and to contribute ideas. Teachers have a good knowledge of English and the new teachers know how to teach it well. Where teaching is very good, as is the case with hearing impaired pupils, teachers expertly engage their interests and set a high level of challenge. A striking example in Year 3 involved pupils in writing their own play scripts entitled 'Banana Road.' In this they mastered punctuation, layout, characters and speech very well in a short time. However, the good teaching seen in lessons is not always evident in pupils' written work. This is because pupils are not encouraged enough to take a pride in the presentation of their work. In Year 6, for example, the teacher praises work that is not as good as it should be. Suitable use is made of information and communication technology. Pieces of writing are word-processed and skills programs are used to improve pupils' use of words. Pupils with special educational needs work in small groups, usually with good adult support. They are encouraged to try out their own ideas with spelling. Pupils' work is carefully marked but teachers in some Key Stage 2 classes do not always comment on how they can improve.
82. New leadership in English during the past year is successfully identifying and prioritising what is needed to raise standards. This has been achieved because the

subject leader has looked at children's work, brought in experts and worked with others to analyse results of tests. She acts quickly to share effective teaching methods that help to raise achievement. The next step is to identify groups of pupils who have similar learning needs and set targets for them to achieve collectively.

MATHEMATICS

83. Standards in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 are below average but the work in Year 2 shows an improvement on standards reported previously as well as those shown by the most recent national curriculum test results. This is because pupils are now encouraged to apply their knowledge of number and shape to solve mathematical problems, which is leading to a better understanding of mathematics.
84. Standards by the age of eleven are also below average. Standards in Year 6 this year show an improvement over the 2001 national tests, which were very low and well below those in similar schools. The 2001 results do not reflect the work of the current staff, many of whom are new, or the school's results over time. Unusual factors, such as the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and higher numbers of pupils entering and leaving this year group, contributed to the very low standards in 2001.
85. Given the low attainment levels when pupils enter the school, they achieve well by the time they are seven. The numeracy strategy has been embraced fully by the school and forms the basis of lesson planning. This ensures there is a satisfactory emphasis on the teaching of basic number skills. By the end of Year 2, for example, pupils understand tens and units. They sequence numbers to 100 and add and subtract numbers with two digits correctly. They recognise two and three-dimensional shapes and begin to measure in standard units such as centimetres.
86. In the junior classes, the pattern of achievement is less consistent, although pupils achieve steadily overall. Pupils achieve well in Year 3. The teaching is good and pupils build well on skills learnt earlier. Progress for Year 4 pupils is severely restricted because they have had seven different supply teachers this term. This has led to weaknesses in the pace and presentation of their work and some negative attitudes. Recent measures to set targets for pupils based on assessments of their learning, together with a more settled teaching staff, are helping to lift pupils' performance. Number skills are taught well. By Year 6, pupils understand fractions and decimals, they are able to multiply and divide numbers by 10 or by 100 and carry out mental calculations using a range of strategies such as halving or doubling. When handling data, pupils complete 'tally' charts to record information and show findings by drawing graphs. They use the correct terminology for 'acute' and 'obtuse' angles.
87. Satisfactory emphasis is placed on the teaching of number skills. To help this, computer programs are used to extend pupils numerical skills. However, not enough time, particularly in upper Key Stage 2, is given to practical and investigative work where pupils apply their knowledge and skills. In these classes, there is not enough pace and urgency to achieve the targets set because of the lack of challenge and expectation, particularly for more able pupils. Consequently, some tasks are left unfinished and less 'ground' is covered.

88. Pupils with special educational needs are well catered for and they make good progress. A good team of support assistants, who know the pupils well, ensure that they learn successfully. This same is true of the hearing impaired pupils. Specialist teachers work alongside them, interpreting the class teachers' explanations and instructions. Through writing messages on white boards, hearing impaired pupils are able to communicate their answers to the teachers' questions.
89. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. All teachers establish good relationships with pupils and this promotes a positive learning atmosphere. Planning is closely linked to the numeracy strategy and identifies clear objectives. These are shared with pupils so they know what they are expected to learn during lessons. Lessons are prepared well by ensuring that pupils have the right resources to help them to learn. Teaching is very good in Year 3. In this class, there is good teamwork between the class teacher and the teacher supporting pupils with impaired hearing. Here, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the lesson and close attention is given to pupils who need most support. Expectations of both teachers are high and the task of solving problems is intellectually demanding. In other classes, teaching is often good in the whole class teaching part of the lesson. New ideas are carefully explained and lively discussions take place during which pupils share their ideas. However, in upper junior classes, particularly, the tasks provided to help pupils to consolidate their understanding and practise their newly acquired skills are not always accurately matched to pupils' different learning needs. In these classes, teachers do not expect enough of pupils' ability to work on their own with accuracy and good presentation, particularly the more able ones. For example, in one lesson the teacher used his secure subject knowledge well to present a lively and interesting lesson on the relationship between the internal angles of a triangle and the degrees in a straight line. The subsequent tasks however did not sufficiently extend all pupils so their learning was satisfactory at best. This weakness in teaching is also evident from pupils' work over time, which shows shortcomings in both volume and quality. The lack of challenge and urgency, especially for older pupils, means that they do not progress as quickly as they should. Teachers mark pupils' work conscientiously but it does not always inform pupils of how they might improve. At times work of ordinary quality is too highly praised. This not helpful to pupils.
90. The subject is led satisfactorily. The curriculum leader is clear about the strengths of mathematics and the areas for development. He is beginning to gain an overview by monitoring the curriculum and the quality of teaching. Tracking pupils' progress by comparing the results of assessment form one year to the next is a recent development however. This is to be followed up by strategies such as 'booster' classes and setting clearer targets for attainment. As yet these developments are too recent to have had an impact on standards in the school.

SCIENCE

91. Standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are below the national average. Standards are very low by the end of Key Stage 2 and well below those of similar schools. Standards have fallen since the previous inspection. There are three main reasons for this. The school now devotes only about half the time to the subject that most schools do;

pupils are given too few opportunities to conduct their own investigations and the work provided is not sufficiently planned to extend the more able pupils. In addition to these limiting factors, the school has experienced significant changes in staff, including the loss of the subject leader who has yet to be replaced. The standard of teaching seen in lessons was of a higher quality than that seen through the work in pupils' books. In too many lessons teachers tell pupils what to write and pupils have insufficient opportunities to think for themselves, especially at Key Stage 2. Good progress is made by three groups of pupils at both key stages. Those with hearing impairment develop their signing well to extend their vocabulary and to improve their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language from the Hearing Impaired Unit are closely supported and set appropriate challenges. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from much individual teaching. These groups receive very good support in addition to that provided by class teachers. Average attaining pupils achieve well at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. At both key stages, achievement levels of the more able pupils are unsatisfactory.

92. A high proportion of pupils reach the level expected by the age of seven. However, more able pupils are not given challenging activities. Consequently none are reaching the higher levels. Activities planned for all pupils introduce them to scientific ideas and good discussions increase their knowledge of the subject. However, they are not sufficiently encouraged to develop their own ideas and skills. Consequently, teachers are unaware of just how much they can do.
93. Standards at eleven are unsatisfactory. When questioned, more able pupils were aware of the effect of exercise on the pulse rate and could give some reasons why this occurs. They had an awareness of why plastic is used for electric cables, although they could not remember the word 'insulator'. They identified most forces that can act upon a football, forgetting only friction. However, their experiences of scientific experiments were limited. They could not recall any investigations that they had planned and conducted independently. This is because their knowledge of science is not sufficiently used in practical work to extend their understanding, which limits their learning considerably. Work in science is often undertaken within broader topics, developed across various subjects. This gives it added relevance. However, pupils' skills of investigating and experimenting do not increase, as they should. For example, although they experience themes, such as 'Electricity' in different classes, new work rarely builds upon previous learning with sufficient challenge or regularity.
94. Pupils achieve well in Year 1. They begin to gain an understanding of what is a fair test, for example when undertaking an experiment with the teacher about the relative waterproof properties of different materials. In Year 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and these good foundations are extended. However, they are often all given similar work to complete and the learning of the more able pupils is not sufficiently extended. Pupils achieve best in Year 3. They are encouraged to think for themselves, for example in considering what happens to puddles in the playground. They are expected to observe carefully and record their findings and ideas accurately. However, the skills of independent investigation are not sufficiently developed in later years. Because pupils only undertake science work for half of each term, they fall increasingly further behind pupils in other schools. In comparison to most schools, they receive only limited preparation for the annual national tests. This has an

additional negative impact on pupils' levels of attainment that is reflected in the school's low results, especially at Key Stage 2.

95. Standards of teaching overall are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. A strength at both key stages is the input provided by teachers from the Hearing Impaired Unit. They contribute successfully to all elements of the lessons in which they are present. Pupils with special needs and those with English as an additional language from the Hearing Impaired Unit benefit considerably. Classroom learning assistants also contribute well, especially in the group activities where good questioning extends pupils' thinking. Class discussions at the beginning and end of lessons help pupils to increase their knowledge. They enjoy these elements and show good levels of behaviour and interest. However, there is too great an emphasis on passive, rather than active learning. For example, in Year 6, much work this term involved copying scripts, prepared by the teacher, and completing printed diagrams. Opportunities to develop the pupils' independent learning are missed. Computers are increasingly being used in the subject. For example, data-bases on animals have been compiled, with their findings graphed and analysed. However, there are few computer accessories for measuring, for example, the speed of an object, the frequencies of sound waves or ranges of temperature.
96. There have been improvements in the assessment of pupils' knowledge and understanding of science. However, teachers do not record the development of pupils' investigative skills. As a result, lessons are not planned to extend work in this area. Tests are given each term on the work covered and annual tests are used to compare the school's standards with those nationally. The school is beginning to identify groups in need of extra support. So far, however, this has not included those who could reach above average standards, given extra challenges. There are guidelines which provide stimulating ideas for teachers and promote good practice in the subject. However, because the work of the pupils has not been carefully checked, the good practice recommended is far from being realised. Increasing the role of the next subject leader to monitor both the teaching and pupils' learning is necessary to raise standards in this key subject.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Standards in art and design are average and have been maintained since the previous inspection. Subject leadership is satisfactory and pupils are provided with a suitable range of experiences in painting, drawing, three-dimensional work and computer graphics.
98. Infant pupils achieve steadily and learn how to mix primary colours to create new ones. They add black or white to obtain different shades. Year 1 pupils' 'self portraits' clearly demonstrate their colour mixing skills and increasing control when painting. Year 2 pupils explore colour further by using different papers and fabrics to show the colours and textures they found when studying old buildings. In the junior classes pupils build well on their earlier knowledge and skills. They use the work of artists such as Picasso, examine photographs and, as in Year 5, use their own fingerprints to create effects. Pupils in Year 3 produced some careful drawings which demonstrated good understanding of tone and textures, while Year 4 pupils used Picasso's 'Three

Musicians' as a starting point for their own surrealist drawings. The work by Year 6 pupils showed sensitive use of watercolour and pastels to create patterns based on the movement of gases around Jupiter.

99. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use resources and their own subject knowledge thoughtfully to interest pupils and generate ideas. In Year 6, for example, works by artists such as Hockney, Picasso and the Renaissance painter Bellini are used effectively to demonstrate different approaches to portrait painting. This helps pupils' to understand how artists use their skills differently to portray what they see. Teachers motivate pupils well so they work with care and take pride in their finished work. Pupils' efforts are valued, particularly those with special educational needs and those with hearing impairment. They are helped and encouraged to play a full part in lessons and their finished work is arranged in the attractive displays in classrooms and around the school. The thriving lunchtime art club gives pupils good opportunities to develop the techniques learned in the classroom, as well as the chance to work alongside pupils from classes other than their own.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Standards are in line with those expected at the ages of seven and eleven and have been maintained since the last inspection. It is not possible to make a secure judgement of the quality of teaching because no lessons were observed in this subject. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for. Discussion with these pupils about their work indicates that they are often taught in small groups with hearing impaired pupils. Samples of their work suggest that both groups make good progress. The effective support they receive in lessons helps them to understand the task and develop their own ideas.
101. Discussion with pupils and an examination of their work indicates that in both the infant and the junior key stages they achieve steadily. They have valuable opportunities to experience design and technology projects each half term. For example, the moon buggy project completed in Year 6 shows that pupils understand how to design their intended models by sketching the view from above, from the side and the end. This provides a lot of detail, which is reflected in the good quality finished models. However, there is little use of information and communication technology in this subject.
102. From the infant key stage onwards, pupils work with a wide range of materials such as wood, card, textiles and foodstuffs. They are presented with challenges to develop their understanding of control technology, such as devising games using electric circuits in Year 5. Pupils learn to plan ahead and are familiar with producing labelled diagrams showing how the model will be made. Older pupils, often as a homework task, complete written evaluations explaining how they could improve their work. However, many of these reports are not retained in books or folders and it is difficult for the teacher or pupils themselves to reflect on the progress they have made.
103. The subject leader provides satisfactory support and guidance for teachers but there are weaknesses in the monitoring of the subject. Not enough is known about pupils'

learning throughout the school and this needs to be remedied if improvements are to be made.

GEOGRAPHY

104. Standards in geography are average. Some examples of the good provision noted at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils' work seen was limited in both range and volume but it indicates that achievement is satisfactory across the school. Teachers make particularly good use of the local area in topics such as 'Out and About.'
105. Pupils achieve well in Key Stage 1 because geography is an important ingredient in many topics. In Year 1 for example, pupils design their own weather symbols and use the computer to decide where to use weather logos on the map of Britain. Children take 'teddy' home for the weekend and write about where he has been. They have an Estate Agents shop where they sort houses by describing differences between flats, semi-detached houses, bungalows and high-rise properties. Pupils respond very positively to their work because they share ideas and listen to each other well. This is because teachers manage pupils successfully.
106. Achievement in Key Stage 2 is typical of that seen in most primary schools. Geography was not being studied at the time of the inspection, apart from in Year 3. In this class, pupils use the Internet to locate their house on a web site by using their postcode. This good teaching enables pupils to learn in some depth about the world around them. Year 6 pupils talk about the differences between Kingstanding and the village of Middleton and have benefited from visits into the locality and farther afield as part of the geography curriculum. As a result, their knowledge and skills, particularly of environmental enquiry, are sound. Pupils who have special education needs are well supported and fully integrated into lessons. However, pupils who are talented in the subject have not been identified and, along with the more able pupils, are not always sufficiently challenged.
107. All but one of the pupils for whom English is an additional language also have hearing impairment. Specialist teachers and support assistants work closely with them to ensure that they understand and are able to talk about their work. This helps them to achieve well. The subject leader provides sound leadership. She has good knowledge and supports teachers well. She has worked on improving the teaching of skills by checking what pupils have been taught and improving the planning in the light of feedback received from teachers.

HISTORY

108. Standards achieved in history by the ages of seven and eleven are similar to those seen in most schools. This was also the case at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because teachers make sure that they understand the work and assistants help them to complete it. Pupils with hearing impairment also make good progress. They often work in groups with other pupils whose learning needs match theirs. Specialist teachers work with them, ensuring that they have good opportunities to discuss and suggest ideas.

109. The planned curriculum ensures that pupils learn about ancient civilisations, Roman settlement, as well as Tudor and Victorian history. Year 6 pupils complete a local study linking the historical and geographical aspects of their region. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 visit the Black Country Museum to learn about changes which take place over time. This makes learning more meaningful and improves their understanding.
110. Teaching time allocated to history alternates with that for other topics. It was, therefore, not possible to observe any lessons and judge teaching during the inspection. Evidence from pupils' work and discussions, suggests they have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of past events. For example they can recall facts about Tudor kings and queens and Victorian lifestyles, but they are less sure of their place within a historical time-scale. Pupils make suitable use of CDROM to research historical information.
111. Management of history is satisfactory. The subject leader monitors pupils' work in order to maintain an overview of standards in the school, but there is no formal monitoring of teaching in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. On the limited evidence available on this inspection, standards in information and communication technology are below average at both key stages. Although this matches the findings of the previous report, standards have risen since the last inspection. Pupils now work successfully in all areas of the subject. There are now at least four computers in every classroom. These are networked together to enable a greater range of programs to be accessed by the pupils. Teaching skills have been greatly improved and training is ongoing. Computers, tape-recorders and a digital camera are used creatively across a range of subjects, usually within class topics. This enables pupils to gain a better understanding of the range of applications in which computers can be used. Pupils with special educational needs use computers to improve their basic skills and this increases their progress. Pupils with hearing impairment also make good progress. They have their own computers in the base and use them frequently as a means of communication.
113. Pupils' levels of achievement are now satisfactory at both key stages. During the inspection, the computer server system was not functioning at either key stage. This was through no fault of the school. Samples of work from the half term were made available and discussions with pupils provided additional evidence on which judgements were made. Children's pre school and home experiences of computers are limited compared to children in most schools. They achieve particularly well in Year 1. For example, they produce weather charts by moving symbols and adding lines of text to a map of Great Britain. By the age of seven, pupils have had regular access to computers, especially in their English and mathematics work. For example, writing in sentences is regularly practised and a Logo program enables pupils to construct shapes by typing directions that create their designs on the screen. This extends the programming they do in Key Stage 1 using a Roamer. This vehicle manoeuvres a specific route when given the correct directions. Positive achievement continues in Year 3 where pupils are introduced to the Internet. Data from local house agents is

downloaded to compare information about properties for sale. However, opportunities to use the Internet have not yet been developed sufficiently in the upper classes. Pupils achieve well in Year 5. For their daily session, each pupil has a personal disk containing a range of programs. This enables pupils to develop work independently in literacy and numeracy, as well as across other subjects. For example, they produce play scripts for their studies on Ancient Greece. In Year 6, pupils collect evidence on pocket money, via their own questionnaires, and collate results on a spreadsheet. They then print graphs and charts, to find patterns and draw conclusions.

114. On the second-hand evidence available, standards of teaching are satisfactory overall and in some classes they are good. Since the last inspection, teachers have had to develop many new skills to take advantage of the sophisticated hardware and software now available to pupils. For example, the school now has a digital camera. Year 6 pupils are taught how to take face portraits, using the camera. They then manipulate these images by distorting features to create humorous or dramatic effects! However, there are no set weekly lessons for teaching information and communication technology. This means that skills are taught, not in a sequence, but when they need to be applied in topic work. The advantage is that information and communication technology is integrated into almost every subject. However, the disadvantage is in ensuring that skills are built up systematically. Satisfactory procedures for assessing the progress of pupils are well established. At present, insufficient use is made of the information gathered to plan work that will stretch pupils of all abilities. Satisfactory leadership ensures that teachers are provided with lists of those areas in the subject which they are expected to cover in each topic. The subject co-ordinator leads by example and works weekly in other classes. This gives him a clearer picture of how successfully the subject is being taught in the school. Good practice is also shared and spread. Information and communication technology makes a satisfactory contribution to learning in other subjects. However, there is insufficient analysis undertaken of the quality of the pupils' learning, to assess exactly where and how standards need to be raised. The school has rightly identified this as a key area for development.

MUSIC

115. Standards are average as they were at the time of the last inspection. Music plays an important part in the life of the school. The subject leader teaches, guides and manages the subject well. He organises a number of high quality musical events such as concerts and choir recitals. Pupils also have good opportunities to learn to play the recorder and the guitar after school. As a result, pupils enjoy music, they sing with enthusiasm and feeling and develop an appreciation of how music enriches people's lives.
116. Pupils achieve steadily in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 they learn to identify important elements of music such as the pulse and the rhythm. In one lesson, a pupil explained that he could feel the beat in his tummy. When listening to different pieces of music, pupils are quick to recognise changes in loudness and tempo. They learn to compose simple musical patterns and repeat them for others to listen to. Pupils' singing is of a good standard, particularly in the large choir. In Key Stage 2, pupils learn to compose their own pieces and to record these using symbols. At a later stage,

they begin to use standard notation and record and save their work on the electric piano.

117. Teaching is satisfactory. The subject leader has produced detailed lesson plans for each year group. This ensures that purposeful teaching takes place and pupils are able to build on the skills they have learnt earlier. However not all teachers have a secure understanding of how to make the subject come alive and tend to dwell on one idea. When this happens, lessons lack variety and pupils begin to lose interest. When the subject leader takes music lessons, the teaching is good. These lessons are skilfully taught and pupils learn in some depth. For example, in one lesson, interesting pieces of music were selected from different cultures. Pupils were asked to listen and 'allow a picture to fill their minds.' One pupil pictured a lonely beach with a solitary woman kneeling by the water's edge. Others were reminded of the war in Afghanistan. As the lesson progressed pupils developed a clear understanding of how music affects people in different ways.
118. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to share their ideas. Their comments are highly valued and this helps them to make good progress. In one lesson, a hearing impaired pupil's interpretation of the music was very different to that of the hearing pupils. Through sign language, the teacher helped her to explain why. In so doing, the teacher helped other pupils to understand more about those with hearing impairment and the way they learn.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. Pupils achieve standards typical for their age and this was the picture at the time of the last inspection. However, many pupils achieve well in games. Despite the lack of a subject leader during a period of staff change, a wide range of extra curricular sporting activities is provided and the school takes part in local football and netball leagues. These experiences help pupils to develop good hand eye co-ordination, healthy attitudes to winning and losing and enjoyment in physical activity. The school is very committed to maintain the swimming programme in Years 4, 5 and 6 despite the long walk to the swimming pool. A small number of pupils avoid swimming and their attendance at lessons is irregular. This is largely why one out of every five pupils does not achieve their 25 metres distance award by the age of eleven.
120. Pupils achieve steadily. Year 1 pupils understand the purpose of the warm up before exercising and comment on their increasing heart rates. They learn to throw and catch a ball correctly and work with a partner. In Year 2, pupils develop good self-control. They are agile and light on their feet as they pretend to be ribbons curling, flowing and swirling round the room. By Year 3, pupils have acquired an understanding of rules to enable them to improve passing skills in small team games. By Year 6, pupils link movements together well in sequences. They know that practice improves their performance.
121. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned, effectively organised and well managed. Teachers and pupils are mindful of safety. Demonstration is used effectively to show pupils what good quality movements look like. Pupils are often invited to evaluate their work and that of others to help them to understand the important points,

such as using their arms as well as their legs when they jump and land. However, pupils are occasionally unable to understand just what a demonstration is showing them and they cannot incorporate the idea into their work. Learning would be better if all teachers picked up on this and improved their coaching techniques. Pupils with special educational needs are watched carefully, particularly those with hearing impairment. Teachers use microphones and sign language well to enable these pupils to take a full part in lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. At the end of both key stages standards are in line with those mapped out in the syllabus for Birmingham schools. Pupils with hearing impairment make very good progress, especially in those classes where teachers accompany them from the Unit. These teachers also provide good individual support for pupils with English as an additional language as well as those with special educational needs, enabling them to make good progress. The good questioning ensures that pupils of all abilities are challenged to think about religious ideas and make reasoned judgements.
123. The best achievement is in Year 3, where the subject leader supports the class teacher very effectively. Here the quality of learning is very high, enabling pupils to express their innermost thoughts with confidence. Despite good planning and much effort by the temporary teacher in Year 4 to engage the pupils' interests, they achieved very little in the lesson observed. This was largely because these pupils have experienced a very fragmented education over an extended period and their attitudes to learning have suffered. In contrast, pupils in Year 6 were totally involved in a discussion about 'Commitment'. Introducing the concept by dressing a pupil in his favourite Aston Villa kit and supplying him with much club memorabilia, immediately stimulated pupils to make good comparisons between commitment to one's soccer club and commitment to one's faith. This led to well-informed analyses of the symbols, ceremonies, special books and holy places of Christians, Jews, Muslims and Sikhs.
124. Teaching is predominantly good. Lessons are planned to take account of the pupils' knowledge and experiences. Issues about the deeper meanings of life are addressed well. For example, pupils in Year 3 were asked what questions they would like to ask the God of their faith. Interesting responses included, 'Are you a vegetarian?' 'If we are good, will we go to Heaven?' and, asked in all seriousness, 'Do you have a poodle?' When pressed sensitively about this question, the child explained that he had once seen a cloud shaped just like a poodle and had wondered if it belonged to God. Teaching is enhanced by visiting speakers and occasional visits to different places of worship. However, more time allocation, particularly at Key Stage 2, would enable pupils to extend good discussions into some form of written account to enhance the learning experience. Opportunities are also missed to celebrate the school's own religious and cultural diversity. The subject is soundly managed. The recently appointed subject leader has a clear vision of how standards can be raised still further.