

INSPECTION REPORT

BUTTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Butts Road, Walsall, West Midlands, WS4 2AH

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 104147

Headteacher: Mr. A. Wiggins

Reporting inspector: Jacqueline Ikin
3349

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th June 2002

Inspection number: 195996

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Butts Road
Walsall
West Midlands

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Appropriate authority: Walsall

Name of chair of governors: Mr.J. Simkin

Date of previous inspection: 23rd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3349	Jacqueline Ikin	Registered inspector	Geography, History, Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils or students taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11418	John Baker	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils or students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11227	John Moles	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information & Communication Technology, Music, Equal Opportunities	
10782	Henry Moreton	Team inspector	Science, Design & Technology, Religious Education, Special Educational Needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?
22434	Sandra Bradshaw	Team inspector	English, Art, Physical Education, English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Butts Primary School has 278 pupils on roll, aged between 3 and 11 years. Of these, 49 pupils attend the nursery on a part time basis. Seventy-three pupils of compulsory school age come from ethnic minority heritages: Caribbean, Indian, Pakistan and other minority ethnic groups. Throughout the school 57 pupils speak English as an additional language, including seven pupils who are at an early stage of English acquisition. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. Most pupils in the school have attended the nursery. The percentage of pupils identified with special educational needs is below average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational needs. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the nursery but overall it is well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The headteacher took over the school when it was at a low ebb. As result of his strong leadership, the good support given by the governing body, and better teaching, standards in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and the behaviour of pupils, have improved. The school now has a clear educational direction and high aspirations for its pupils. A good start has been made in the subjects that it has tackled and the school is now moving forward. It knows that a great deal more remains to be done. Overall it provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is good and ensures that pupils have a good start to their schooling.
- The teaching of reading and mathematics is good and ensures that pupils achieve the standards expected of them by the time they reach Year 6.
- The headteacher provides strong leadership. Standards have begun to improve as a result of the decisive action that he has taken. He is well supported by a strong governing body.
- Procedures for assessment and target setting in mathematics and English, and the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning have been effective in enabling teachers to match work to pupils' needs.
- The provision that the school makes for pupils' personal, moral and social development results in pupils developing positive attitudes to themselves and others.
- The good standard of care and personal support and guidance ensures that pupils receive the help they need when they have educational and personal problems.

What could be improved

- Pupils' standards are too low in science, art and design, design and technology and religious education.
- The curriculum does not ensure the progression of skills and understanding in science, art and design, design and technology, religious education, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to apply their skills and knowledge and to learn in interesting ways.
- The leadership role of the senior management team in helping the school to improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then standards at the school have declined significantly, in part due to changes in its catchment area. Under the leadership of the new headteacher the decline has slowed significantly, and initiatives aimed at improvement are having a positive effect in English and mathematics. The new headteacher has also taken steps to address the main weaknesses identified in the last report, and in this respect the school's improvements are satisfactory. As a result of his action subject leaders now have clearer roles and responsibilities and action plans to improve their subjects. Provision for spiritual development is now satisfactory. Good procedures are now in place to improve attendance, although low attendance, much of which is beyond the school's control, is still a feature.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	E	D	C
mathematics	D	E	D	C
science	E	E	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The table shows that results of 2001 national tests for Year 6 pupils were below the national average in English and mathematics, but average when compared to similar schools. For science they were well below both the national average and the results of similar schools. The results of 2001 national tests for Year 2 pupils were well below the national average and the average for similar schools in reading, writing and mathematics. The results of teacher assessments for Year 2 pupils in science were also well below the national average.

The evidence of the inspection is that standards are now better than this in mathematics and English.

- The school has set appropriately challenging targets for improvements this year and is on course to meet them.
- Pupils make good progress in the nursery and reception classes to reach standards that are just below those expected by the end of the reception year.
- In Year 6 standards are average in reading and mathematics, but below average in writing.
- In Year 2 standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics, although they have improved on previous years. Improvements in writing have resulted in more pupils attaining the levels expected for Year 2 pupils, although few attain at the higher levels.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), history, geography and physical education are satisfactory.
- The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is satisfactory in English, mathematics, ICT, history geography and physical education.
- Attainment in science, art and design, design and technology and religious education is below average throughout the school and all pupils should be doing better in these subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most children have positive attitudes to the school, are keen to learn and do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The school's procedures to promote good behaviour are having a positive effect and are consistently applied throughout the school.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. In the main pupils form constructive relationships with adults and with each other, work purposefully on tasks and respect each other's ideas.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The school has put good procedures in place to promote attendance and there are few unauthorised absences. Factors, such as illness and extended holiday leave, lower attendance figures considerably.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	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 in the nursery and reception classes is good. All practitioners have a good knowledge and understanding of the development needs of young children and of the curriculum guidance. In Years 1 to 6 teaching is satisfactory overall. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall and in information and communication technology and physical education teaching it is satisfactory. In the science and religious education lessons seen teaching varied between very good and unsatisfactory. In history, geography, art, music and design and technology not enough lessons were seen to form a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Unsatisfactory. There are weaknesses in the progression of skills and understanding in science, art and design, design and technology, religious education and limited opportunities for pupils to learn in interesting and relevant ways. Provision for literacy and numeracy and for extra curricular activities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The good support that pupils receive enables them to make satisfactory progress overall.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The support that they receive enables them to understand their work in lessons and have access to learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal, moral and social development is good and for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. Pupils feel that they can discuss concerns with staff and they receive the help they need when they have problems.

The school actively promotes the involvement of parents from an early stage and provides good information for them. However, it has not yet been successful in encouraging half of the parents to be involved in helping their children at home or in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher is good and has been effective in halting the decline in standards, promoting improvements and giving a clear educational direction to the school's work. Although senior staff have given appropriate support to the headteacher they have taken an insufficiently proactive role in leading the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their roles well and give good support to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has an accurate view of its own performance as a result of improved checking procedures. It has made good use of the information gained to target improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of the resources in the school, but limited use of those available to it within the community and further afield.

The school's accommodation is adequate and the school makes good use of all the space it has at its disposal. However, the design of the building results in classes sometimes being disturbed by lessons in adjacent rooms and by other classes moving through the building. Learning resources are satisfactory in all subjects of the curriculum. There are sufficient teachers for the demands of the curriculum. The school soundly applies the principles of best value to all its work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The progress that children make. • The quality of teaching. • The expectation that children should work hard and do their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of homework. • Information about their child's progress. • The provision of extra curricular activities.

The inspection team agree that pupils make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory progress in most subjects. However, the inspectors found that pupils do not make enough progress in science, art and design, design and technology and religious education. They found that teaching is satisfactory and that most teachers expect children to work hard and to achieve their best. Inspectors found that parents concerns were mostly unfounded. They judged the provision of homework and information about children's progress to be satisfactory and the provision of extra-curricular activities to be good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Many children who enter the nursery have poorly developed personal, social, physical and language skills, little understanding of mathematical ideas and limited experience of the world about them. They make good progress in the nursery and reception classes as a result of the good teaching they receive and most children reach standards that are just below those expected at the end of the reception year. A small number of higher attaining pupils reach the standards expected in literacy and numeracy.

2. The evidence of the inspection, and the results of national tests, show that standards in English and mathematics are lower now than at the time of the last inspection. This can be partly explained by changes in the nature of the school's intake, but the evidence suggests that there was also insufficient focus on improving standards prior to the appointment of the new headteacher. Since his appointment, the need to raise standards has been recognised and decisive action taken, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics to move the school forward. As a result of the introduction of more rigorous procedures to check pupils' progress and monitor the quality of teaching, standards are now beginning to rise. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are still below average by the end of Year 2, but more pupils are now attaining the levels expected, particularly in writing, and this is an improvement on previous years. Few pupils attain at the higher levels however. This represents broadly satisfactory progress given pupils' below average starting points at the beginning of Year 1. As a result of some good and very good teaching in Years 3 to 6, pupils now make good progress in reading and mathematics and, by the end of Year 6, standards are in line with those expected for their age. Standards remain below average in writing, but this is an improvement on previous years and represents satisfactory progress for the majority of pupils, given their very low starting points on entry to Year 3.

3. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are below average when they enter Year 1 because pupils do not have the range of vocabulary they need to express their ideas clearly. Many pupils still find difficulty in expressing their thoughts and ideas by the end of Years 2 and 6 because of their limited vocabulary for their age and weaknesses in the use of grammatically correct sentences. Weaknesses in pupils' speaking skills are also evident in the structure and form of their writing. The skills practised in literacy lessons on grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting are not always transferred to written activities. All pupils show an interest in books and respond well to stories in class and to the opportunities presented for reading individually and in groups. Although phonics are introduced at an early age, some pupils do not have sufficient strategies for tackling new words by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made considerable improvement and many read fluently and with expression. Higher attaining pupils are able to predict events in a story and talk about their favourite books and authors. Many pupils are beginning to develop appropriate library skills.

4. By the end of Year 2 pupils know basic multiplication tables such as the two, three and five times tables and can use the associated division facts to solve simple calculations. They give the mathematical names of simple shapes such as cone and cylinder and name the shapes of common objects. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent at carrying out a wide variety

of calculations to two decimal places and the use of standard methods of measurement. They are confident in the use of the twenty-four hour clock. Throughout the school pupils are less sure of selecting the most appropriate way of solving a problem independently. They have insufficient opportunities to develop these skills through investigations in other areas of the curriculum.

5. Along with literacy and numeracy, information and communication technology has been a priority subject for improvement. Shortly after his appointment the headteacher took decisive steps to ensure that the school had sufficient resources to set up an ICT suite, and then implemented a programme of training for teachers. All pupils now have timetabled access to computers. As a result pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject and attain standards in line with those expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. These findings are similar to the last inspection, and show that the school has kept pace with national expectations for ICT. Pupils use their ICT skills to a satisfactory standard in both literacy and numeracy, and links with other subjects are being developed. By the end of Year 6, pupils confidently access a wide variety of programs and select those best suited to the work they intend to do.

6. The school recognises that science has been neglected and has plans to address this. The results of 2001 teacher assessment for Year 2 pupils and national tests for Year 6 pupils were well below both the national average and the average for similar schools. The evidence of the inspection is that standards are better than the test results indicate but that they are still below the standards expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and achievement is unsatisfactory overall, particularly in scientific enquiry. These findings show that standards have declined since the last inspection. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of some scientific facts, for example about what is needed by plants and animals to live, but their knowledge of materials and physical processes is not sufficiently extensive and their skills of scientific enquiry are weak. Their scientific writing and presentation of work are poor. These weaknesses were also found in the last inspection, and the fact they have not been addressed to a sufficient extent is a contributory factor to the low standards being achieved.

7. In the last inspection standards in art were above average in Years 1 and 2 but below average in Years 3 to 6. The evidence of this inspection suggests that all pupils make unsatisfactory progress and achieve standards below those expected in art and design, design and technology and religious education. This suggests the school has been insufficiently able to maintain its drive for improvement in these subjects. The reason for this is that weaknesses found in the last inspection, for example, the development of skills, use of a range of media and the use of sketchbooks as working documents have not been sufficiently addressed. In design and technology no judgements were made about standards in Years 1 and 2 in the last inspection, but standards were found to be about average in Years 3 to 6. Some of the weaknesses found during that inspection, for example, insufficient emphasis on the evaluation of work, have not been addressed and this contributes to pupils' skills being poor. In addition, their skills in using equipment and materials is underdeveloped. In religious education standards are below those found in the last inspection because there is not a consistent balance in the time allocated by all teachers for each topic to allow for the major religions of the world to be studied in sufficient depth. As a result, there is insufficient development of some important ideas. For example, although pupils have some appreciation of the importance of faith and ritual across a number of different religions and are beginning

to make comparisons between them and their own lives. Their understanding of the way different religions influence the life style of believers is weak.

8. Standards in history, geography and physical education are broadly in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. These findings are similar to the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a reasonable knowledge of significant places and environments. They can talk about the local area and the features of contrasting areas, for example, Weston-Super-Mare, an area that they are preparing to visit. Pupils' map skills are satisfactory, for example, they can plot routes between towns, and, using their knowledge of scale, calculate the actual distances between towns. By the end of Year 6 pupils can make use of four figures grid references. Pupils' appreciation of how their knowledge of geography can be applied to environmental issues and their fieldwork skills are less well developed. In history pupils' understanding of chronology develops appropriately as they move up through the school. They are familiar with different periods of history, with specific, significant dates, and with timelines on which they locate events that are important to the topic they are studying. They develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of people and events in different periods of history. There is, however, scope to develop pupils' skills of historical enquiry further and to broaden the range of ways in which pupils organise and communicate their work in history. Pupils perform energetically in physical education and practise their skills with enthusiasm. Almost all pupils can swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school because of the good focus that the school has on swimming. After school clubs make a significant contribution to the standards that are achieved in games.

9. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about music. However, from observations made it is clear that pupils enjoy music and sing enthusiastically in assembly and concerts. They listen carefully to the music played to them but more could be done to make pupils aware of composers, and the particular arrangements being played.

10. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is satisfactory in English, mathematics, ICT, history geography and physical education. Along with other pupils their achievements in science, art and design, design and technology and religious education is unsatisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to school are satisfactory. The majority like school and takes part willingly in all aspects of school life. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall and are very good in the nursery and reception class because of high quality teaching and the very good relationships between pupils and adults. In Years 1 to 6 the majority of pupils are attentive, respond well to questions and undertake tasks enthusiastically. However, in some lessons where teaching is uninspiring, pupils soon lose interest and, as a result, achieve very little.

12. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and sometimes very good in lessons where there is high quality teaching. This is not as high as in the last inspection when behaviour was found to be good. However, the evidence suggests that behaviour at the school was poor prior to the appointment of the new headteacher. One of his first priorities was to improve the situation and as a result of the actions he has taken most pupils are aware of the high standards expected and respond well to discipline which, for the most part, creates an orderly

environment conducive to learning. Behaviour is still occasionally unsatisfactory in a small minority of lessons, particularly when work is dull and uninteresting. However, when this occurs it is swiftly and firmly dealt with. Most pupils play harmoniously together in the playground. They are very lively and active with older pupils, including some girls, playing football and younger ones playing chasing games and making good use of the adventure playground. There is some boisterous play amongst Year 3 and 4 pupils but there were no signs of aggressive behaviour or any forms of oppressive behaviour during the inspection. However, older pupils said that this did sometimes take place, and when it occurred was promptly dealt with. There were a small number of temporary exclusions in the last year. All were appropriate and the correct procedures were followed in each case. There has been a significant reduction in the number of temporary exclusions so far this year indicating an improved situation and governors report that the complaints from parents about behaviour are rare since the appointment of the new headteacher.

13. Most pupils are friendly and polite to adults, show respect for other people's property and respect the school's environment. For example, at the end of break time a pupil collected up sweat shirts left by others and handed them to a teacher. Also there was no graffiti and the playgrounds were litter free.

14. Pupils' personal development is good, they mature as they progress through the school and willingly take on increasing responsibility. For example, Reception pupils have to find their name on arrival and together with other Year 1 and 2 pupils take turns with classroom duties. Each pupil in Years 3 to 6 has a classroom duty and Year 6 pupils carry out a range of whole school duties such as preparing the hall for assembly and keeping the library tidy. Also older pupils can become members of the 'Privilege Club' and act as 'Trouble Busters' who sort out other pupils' problems. Pupils take some responsibility for their own learning but opportunities are limited.

15. Relationships between pupils are satisfactory. The majority work well together in the classroom when in pairs or groups and play together harmoniously. Relationships between pupils and staff are satisfactory overall and on occasions very good. When teachers win the most respect from pupils it is because they are highly confident in the knowledge of the subjects that they are teaching, present work to pupils in a wide range of interesting and exciting ways, have very high expectations and set clear rules and boundaries which are consistently reinforced. All staff give a positive lead in engendering good relationships, for example, by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity.

16. Pupils have a good awareness of others' needs; for example, they raise considerable funds for charity. Also they respect the feelings of others and understand the impact of their actions on others. These qualities were well demonstrated in a Year 3 'Circle Time' session where pupils listened sympathetically to others talking about name-calling and how it made them feel.

17. Levels of attendance are below the national average but unauthorized absence is below the national average. The main reasons for the high rate of authorized absence are medical and extended family holidays. Most pupils arrive punctually and lessons begin on time. Registration is carried out in accordance with legal requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

18. Ninety one per cent of lessons seen during the inspection were satisfactory or better and nine per cent of lessons seen were unsatisfactory.

19. Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good and sometimes very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. All practitioners have a good knowledge and understanding of the development needs of young children and of the curriculum guidance. A very good range of practical and purposeful activities and a rich environment for learning has been created. Good links are made to the national curriculum at the end of the reception year to ensure an appropriate level of challenge for higher attaining pupils.

20. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall and in information and communication technology and physical education teaching is satisfactory. In the science and religious education lessons seen teaching varied between very good and unsatisfactory. In history, geography, art, music and design and technology not enough lessons were seen to form a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching. Some very good teaching was seen in a Year 3 lesson where the teacher's very good subject knowledge was evident in all areas of the curriculum.

21. The good teaching of English and mathematics makes a substantial contribution to the progress that pupils make and the standards that they achieve. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of both subjects is good as a result of the introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies, the work of the subject leaders, outside consultants and the headteacher.

22. Literacy lessons are well planned and prepared, learning objectives are clearly identified, and work is well matched to pupils' differing levels of ability. In the best lessons teachers use a range of interesting strategies to engage the pupils interest, pupils have confidence that the teachers know what they are talking about, respect what they have to say and behave well because they are interested in their work. A good example of this was in a Year 3 literacy lesson where the teacher chose of a letter of complaint, about a toenail found in bag of crisps, as an introduction to a lesson on letter writing. It led to spontaneous expressions of disgust from the pupils and effectively captured their imagination. The teacher modelled the techniques of letter writing well as she wrote the ideas contributed by the whole class. She made deliberate mistakes for the pupils to spot to reinforce learning points such as the use of capital letters. Very skilled use of questions, aimed at different ability groups within the class helped pupils to develop their ideas and ensured that everyone was involved. Tasks were matched well to pupils' differing abilities and needs and this ensured access at a range of levels. There was effective use of paired and small group work, where pupils shared ideas and helped each other, to promote confidence in pupils who struggle when working alone.

23. Numeracy lessons are usually well structured to develop learning. For example, a clear whole class introduction to a Year 5 lesson ensured that all pupils gained new knowledge about the 24 hour clock. The teacher's good knowledge of subject enabled him to respond quickly to pupils and to ask questions that extended their thinking and skills in using the 24 hour clock. The good pace to the lesson and good control of behaviour ensured few interruptions to learning and all pupils had an opportunity to take part. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils became adept at using tables to aid calculations because the teacher was very skilled at mental calculations, used visual systems well to support explanations and instructions, and skilled questioning ensured that all pupils were involved. Pupils were also successfully involved in assessment of their own learning. Very good relationships with pupils in this class resulted in a relaxed atmosphere in which pupils were not afraid to try out and put forward their own ideas as they were fully involved in mathematical dialogue and discussion. In a Year 6 lesson pupils increased their understanding of data handling because the teacher matched

work well to the groups, selected items of interest for investigation, and given clear information and reminders about learning points that needed to be remembered.

24. In a very effective religious education lesson, the teacher's own expertise and knowledge enabled her to communicate difficult ideas to pupils about faith and the way a belief in God affected the lives of believers. She explored ideas about trust in relation to their own lives and then extended pupils' understanding through stories about the prophets of the Old Testament who had demonstrated their trust in God. Very high expectations of work and behaviour were consistently reinforced by reminders of what was expected and acknowledgements of what pupils were doing well when giving praise. Most of all the expectation that pupils would work hard and an atmosphere of mutual and genuine respect between the teacher and pupils was firmly established.

25. The planning and the preparation of materials in ICT reflects teachers' sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and ensures that new learning builds on pupils' previous experiences. Teachers use ongoing questioning and intervention well to help pupils develop their skills, for example, in a Year 5 lesson on data handling which was linked with pupils work in science, and a Year 6 lesson, where work on mathematical modelling was linked to work on spreadsheets. The school has a well-trained support assistant, who gives invaluable technical and learning support for the subject.

26. There are weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and the expectations that they have of their pupils in science, design and technology, art and religious education, where standards are below average. When lessons were unsatisfactory, it was because teachers lacked confidence in answering the questions that pupils asked, pupils spent too long listening passively to the teacher and dull and undemanding tasks failed to capture pupils' interest. Pupils then became bored, their interest waned and behaviour deteriorated. The lack of subject knowledge also leads to weaknesses in the development of subject specific skills, for example, in art. There is also an overuse of published worksheets, for example in history and geography, that often constrain learning and fail to meet the different needs and abilities within classes.

27. Information from assessment is used well in English and mathematics to inform the next steps in learning, particularly for pupils who are working at the lower levels of attainment. Although the use of assessment is broadly satisfactory in other subjects, more use needs to be made of it to ensure a greater level of challenge for pupils achieving at the higher levels. Marking varies and does not always focus sufficiently on helping pupils to improve their work. Ongoing questioning and interaction with pupils is also varied. When it is used well it helps pupils to overcome misconceptions, to develop their ideas and improve their work. The teaching assistants, particularly those who are bilingual, give effective ongoing support to pupils who speak English as an additional language, to help them understand what they have to do and how to improve their work.

28. Insufficient use is made of individual education plans to inform planning for pupils with special educational needs. However, good use is made of assessment data in English and mathematics, to identify how pupils working at the lowest levels can be helped to overcome specific difficulties. Additional support is then targeted to help them.

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

29. The curriculum provided in the nursery and reception class is good. It is securely based on the curriculum guidance for children of this age and they make good progress. In the rest of the school the curriculum broadly meets the statutory requirements in that it is broad in that

it covers the range of National Curriculum subjects as well as personal and social education and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Provision for literacy and numeracy is good and the school benefits from the clear structure given by the national numeracy and literacy strategies. Both literacy and numeracy, have received priority since the appointment of the new headteacher, as has ICT. Provision for ICT, physical education, geography and history is also satisfactory overall. Extra-curricular provision is good and this is an improvement since the appointment of the new headteacher. However, there are significant weaknesses in the provision for other subjects that result in the balance and relevance of the whole curriculum being unsatisfactory.

30. There are weaknesses in science, art and design, and design and technology that have not been addressed since the last inspection. For example, there is insufficient emphasis on the development of scientific enquiry skills, materials and physical processes in science, there is insufficient use of sketchbooks and the development of skills in using materials and a range of media in art and design, and there is limited emphasis on the development of planning and evaluation skills in design and technology. As a consequence, planning lacks the rigour needed to ensure the progression of skills in these subjects and results in standards being below average. In religious education there are inconsistencies in the amount of time that is spent on religious education between classes and there is often a lack of planning for the progression of ideas to a sufficient depth. Weaknesses occur to a lesser extent in geography and history. Opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of historical enquiry in practical ways and to take part in geographical field and environmental work are limited. The school has in part recognised this and has taken steps to ensure that pupils have more opportunities to enhance their experience and learning by taking part in visits to the locality and further-afield. More should be done to reflect the ethnic background of pupils in the curriculum.

31. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. They have full access to all subjects and this assists their progress. Good provision is made when pupils are withdrawn from their normal lessons, but this is not having the impact it should because the overall strategy for addressing pupils' specific needs is not systematically and routinely planned for by teachers, utilising pupils' individual education plans. There is no regular monitoring of the way teachers use these plans.

32. The school makes satisfactory provision to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. Procedures for the implementation of the school's race equality policy are satisfactory. In literacy and numeracy teachers provide activities set to an appropriate level of challenge compared to pupils' prior attainment. In all lessons they support all pupils well through targeting particular groups of pupils for additional support and learning support assistants work closely with individual pupils or groups of pupils to ensure all achieve as well as possible. All pupils are thus fully included in learning in lessons. Some pupils are withdrawn from lessons for additional support and the school ensures that pupils are appropriately cared for on their return to class. It is judged that this additional provision enhances pupils' learning satisfactorily and enables them to keep up with their classmates in literacy and numeracy and assists appropriately with their special educational needs to help them work confidently in class. Some pupils are withdrawn from collective worship in order to comply with parents' requests, but insufficient alternative provision is made for them at this time. The school makes good arrangements for these pupils to rejoin the assembly for whole school events, notices and certificate presentation. School drama and musical productions provide valuable opportunities for pupils to work as a team and use their speaking, listening and musical skills and talents. However, not all pupils take part because

not all want to be involved. There is scope for the school to review this situation to enable all pupils to learn from these special occasions.

33. The school has sound links with its partner institutions, including the many secondary schools to which pupils transfer.

34. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided in religious education lessons where beliefs and values are explored. Opportunities also occur in some assemblies through giving time for reflection and through prayers. The school is aware of the opportunities for spiritual development in a wide range of subjects but these are not yet fully developed. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection.

35. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils learn the difference between right and wrong from an early age through agreeing class rules and discussing the reasons for having them. Also the recently introduced assertive disciplines approach, which is consistently applied by all staff, give pupils a clear picture of the high standards of behaviour that are expected of them. Evidence suggests that behaviour and relationships were poor prior to the appointment of the new headteacher and improvements have taken place as a result of procedures introduced by him.

36. Provision for social development is good. There are many opportunities through the school's personal, social and health education programme to discuss social issues such as respect for others, the effect of one's action on others and friendship. They learn how to keep safe and healthy and how to manage their own feelings. They become conscious of their own rights and the rights of others, as well as their responsibilities. Further opportunities occur through the school's drama scheme through games, 'circle time' and role-play. In addition pupils are given the opportunity to take responsibility appropriate to their age culminating in older pupils becoming members of the Privilege Club and taking on whole school responsibilities.

37. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory but more should be done to develop opportunities throughout the curriculum, especially in history and geography. Also more could be done to reflect pupils' background and cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and their academic progress are satisfactory. The school has good procedures for monitoring the pupils' attainments and tracking the progress they make in English and mathematics. There is a range of recording sheets and forms, some using appropriate software, for assessment. The school makes effective use of the baseline assessments, the national tests, reading tests, tests at the end of each year and teacher assessments. The school uses these assessments well to identify groups of pupils who might benefit from additional support in English and mathematics. Pupils who need it receive extra support in these subjects. Assessment in science and in other subjects are some way short of the standards set in English and mathematics.

39. The marking of pupil's work is inconsistent across the school. Some teachers provide comments in the pupils' books that help to clarify their misunderstandings. Others do not give

the pupils' sufficient guidance on how to improve the quality of their work. The school's targets for attainment in English and mathematics by the age of 11 are appropriate.

40. The school provides a good standard of care and personal support and guidance for its pupils. The good personal support and guidance which pupils receive makes a significant contribution to their personal development. Looking after pupils' personal and emotional needs is the responsibility of class teachers who, together with support staff, know their pupils and their families well, are sensitive to their needs and thus able to provide good personal support and guidance.

41. Procedures for promoting positive behaviour are good and include discussing and agreeing class rules in all classes at the beginning of the year. These rules, together with the school's 'Good Behaviour Code' and lists of rewards and sanctions are displayed in all classrooms. All staff have attended courses on assertive discipline, since the appointment of the new headteacher, and as a result the approach to behaviour management is consistent throughout the school. The emphasis is on promoting good behaviour through praise and rewards which range from awarding stickers and house points to the celebration of good behaviour in assemblies through the 'Golden Child Award'. The school's procedures for eliminating bullying are very good and include a very detailed policy as well as a pro-active approach to the matter. The school is very diligent in preventing any forms of rough play that could develop into bullying or mask it.

42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are very good. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and absence, for which the school has not been given a reason, is followed up the same day to establish the pupil's whereabouts and safety. Good attendance is promoted strongly through the award of certificates termly for 100 per cent attendance and through awarding a cup weekly to the class with the best attendance. Frequent absence is followed up appropriately by the school and where necessary by the Education Welfare Officer.

43. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The designated person and another senior member of staff are suitably trained and keep up to date through attending training courses. Staff are aware of the procedures and bring any concerns to the attention of the designated person. The policy is due for review and will include more details to assist staff. There is good liaison with other agencies.

44. Health and Safety procedures are good and include termly inspection of the premises. All issues are resolved with appropriate urgency and the governing body are kept fully informed of any problems. The caretaker is very diligent in his duties and inspects the grounds daily before the start of school looking for any potential hazards.

45. Pupils' personal safety, personal hygiene and general well-being are covered well in the personal, social and health education curriculum. In addition these messages are reinforced by outside speakers such as the Road Safety Officer and by visits to the local fire station.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents have positive views about the school overall. The vast majority of parents are satisfied with all aspects of the school, except the provision of homework, information on

their children's progress and the provision of extra-curricular activities. They are particularly satisfied with the fact that their children like school, the progress their children are making, the quality of teaching, and the expectation that their children should work hard to achieve their best. The inspection team partly endorses these positive views. It considers that pupils make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory progress in most subjects, but not in science, art and design, design and technology and religious education. Teaching is satisfactory and most teachers expect children to work hard to achieve their best. However, the team does not support the views of a significant number of parents who are not happy with certain aspects of the school. The team considers that the provision of homework is satisfactory, information about children's progress is satisfactory and the provision of extra-curricular activities is good.

47. Parents are well informed about the school through the prospectus, the governors' annual report, newsletters and other correspondence. Information about the curriculum is also good. Curriculum details are sent out at the beginning of each term and curriculum evenings are held to discuss specific issues.

48. Information to parents about their children's progress is satisfactory overall. They are well informed through termly consultation evenings where attainment levels and targets are discussed. Annual reports give a satisfactory picture of what pupils can do, give details of attitudes and personal development with some setting personal development targets. However, there are very few comments on academic progress and very few academic targets given. Parents are also welcome to discuss issues informally at any time and allowing pupils and parents into the classroom ten minutes before the start of the school day provides an excellent opportunity for such discussions. The school makes every effort to involve parents of pupils with special educational needs in annual reviews, but is not always successful in this.

49. The very good contacts that school makes with home prior to pupils starting at the nursery contribute strongly to the development of good relationships between the school and parents. All parents receive a booklet "Supporting your Child's Learning" which gives guidance on how to help their children with reading from nursery age upwards and how to help with handwriting.

50. Parents' contributions to children's learning at school and at home are satisfactory overall. Parental help in the nursery and reception is very good and good in Years 1 and 2 but non-existent in Years 3 to 6. However parents do provide good support on trips and visits for all classes and also provide practical help such as building the pond and helping with the school play. The school values this support, which makes a positive contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. Only about 50 per cent of pupils regularly do the homework that is set each week, and the take up of the home reading scheme varies. This indicates that many parents are not supporting their children with work at home and that the use of homework to support the work that pupils do in school is unsatisfactory.

51. Language problems make it difficult for many ethnic minority parents to help their children at home and the school has difficulties in getting ethnic minority parents to come into school to help. The school is trying to address this with the appointment of a bilingual teaching assistant.

52. The school involves parents in the work of the school by seeking their views through questionnaires and acting on the outcomes. For example, parents were very dissatisfied with homework provision. The work the school has done in the past year has improved the provision and considerably reduced parental dissatisfaction.

53. Parents give good support to school assemblies and school productions where their children are involved. They have also raised useful funds for the school through the Friends of Butts School Association. However, many do not yet see the value and benefit to their children of giving their total support to the school since only about half of parents have signed the home/school agreement.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The school benefits from the good leadership of the headteacher. He took over the school when it was at a low ebb and his determination to improve the quality of education that the school provides has been a significant factor in halting the decline in the academic and behavioural standards that took place after the previous inspection. He has won the respect of staff, parents and governors, has high aspirations for the school and gives a clear sense of educational purpose and direction to the school's work.

55. The evidence of the inspection is that, under his leadership, the school has started to move forward in the areas prioritised for action; English, mathematics and information and communication technology. The headteacher rightly recognises that a great deal more work needs to be done to improve standards in other subjects and aspects of school life, and has clear plans for this. Roles and responsibilities have been delegated appropriately. There has been good encouragement at all levels for staff to contribute their strengths and expertise for the benefit of the school. When they have done this they know that their efforts are appreciated. The deputy headteacher and senior management team provide sound support for the headteacher. However, their role in initiating, organising and leading the school's improvement efforts is insufficiently developed.

56. Governors are highly committed to the school, hold the head teacher in high regard and have a trusting relationship with staff. They carry out their roles and responsibilities well and ensure that the statutory requirements are met. They have a good range of strategies for monitoring the school's assessment results and as a result have a good awareness of the school's performance, believe that it has a sound base for further improvement and know the challenges that it faces. A particular strength is that most governors live in the local community and have good relationships with parents. As a result parents approach them willingly to voice their views and concerns. This was a significant factor in identifying the difficulties being encountered within the school after the last inspection. Governors took decisive action to deal with the problems occurring and ultimately appointed a new headteacher. There is, now, scope for governors to develop their role in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in order to ensure that they have an even better understanding of the school's work to inform the decisions that they make regarding its future improvement. The chair of governors, works in close partnership with the headteacher and visits the school regularly. The chairs of committees carry out their responsibilities efficiently and meetings are well attended.

57. The school's arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its own performance are good. The headteacher analyses the results of both national and non-statutory tests and assessments. The senior management team are fully involved in the analysis of data and the results are shared with governors. The headteacher, outside consultants and subject leaders for English and mathematics have observed lessons and given useful feedback to teachers to help them improve. There are clear systems and procedures for school development planning which involve all members of the school community. Priorities for development are identified accurately as a result of consultations with members of the

school community, analysis of assessments and test results, and the results of monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher. The school improvement plan is located firmly within the school's long-term strategic aims and is a useful tool for development. The school has identified appropriately challenging targets for improvement and has taken effective action to meet them. An appropriate programme for future development and review has been identified. Members of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators, have a relatively generous amount of non-contact time and as result have begun to develop a better understanding of the subjects they lead. However, other than in English and mathematics, their role in monitoring and improving standards, teaching and learning is unsatisfactory.

58. The school is administered well. All those within the school community are kept well informed about current issues. All visitors to the school are made to feel welcome and day-to-day matters are dealt with calmly and efficiently. This makes an important contribution to the calm and orderly atmosphere that is prevalent through most of the school. The administrative officer provides effective support, which ensures finances are efficiently managed. The budget is very well planned to ensure that it is used to meet the school's priorities. It is prudently managed so that the best possible use is made of all the funding available to the school. There are clear and comprehensive budget reports and the principles of best value are satisfactorily applied. Governors debate expenditure rigorously. The strategic financial management of the budget is good and ensures that there are sufficient funds to sustain developments. For example, the large carry over that currently appears in the budget enabled the headteacher to focus funding on areas prioritised for improvement when he was appointed. However, the average class in the school has thirty-two pupils and the provision of teaching assistants is less than generous.

59. All staff have a clear understanding of equal opportunity requirements and consistently put them into practice. The school is particularly sensitive to practical aspects of inclusion, such as funding of visits and ensuring pupils with disabilities or special educational needs receive the support that they need to access the curriculum. The school's ethos of respect for the individual ensures that all children are valued and supported according to their needs. The school recognises the need to ensure that more parents are involved in their children's education. A bilingual teaching assistant has recently been appointed and as a result of this there has been better communication with parents whose first language is not English. The headteacher is the special educational needs co-ordinator in the absence of a member of staff. He gives sound support to the teachers in this role and ensures that all the necessary procedures are carried out. Appropriate steps have been taken to appoint new special educational needs co-ordinator for the Autumn term.

60. There are sufficient teachers, and collectively they have the experience and expertise to teach the age range of pupils in the school. However, there are weaknesses in their subject knowledge in science, design and technology, art and religious education and there is currently no special needs co-ordinator. Procedures for staff development are appropriately linked to performance management and the school's priorities for improvement. They have been particularly effective in improving teachers' confidence and skills in the use of ICT. Procedures to monitor and support the work of newly qualified teachers need to be strengthened. Performance management procedures are satisfactory and contribute to the school's main priorities for improvement.

61. The school's accommodation is satisfactory and is clean and well maintained. The school has good-sized grounds that include an adventure playground, a secure outdoor area for the foundation stage that has recently been enlarged, and a new environmental area. There are adequate playing fields and a satisfactory hard surfaced play area. The grounds contain many bushes and semi-mature trees. These are maintained in good order and set a good example of the standards expected within the school. Much has been done to improve the appearance of the school in recent times. The classrooms and hall are adequate in size for the

number of pupils in the school. The open plan arrangement of classrooms means that the sound of teachers talking to pupils, can be clearly heard in other teaching areas. Music lessons can also be clearly heard. This is a distraction for pupils and sometimes prevents teachers from hearing pupils' replies. In addition several classes have thoroughfares across the middle of the teaching area, this leads to distraction as staff, and sometimes whole classes, cut through a lesson. The school has done all it can to overcome these problems using furniture as dividers and in one case building a wall. Learning is frequently interrupted by sounds and intrusion, in spite of this, and this causes problems in some lessons. There is satisfactory access for the disabled to the building but the absence of special toilets means that the school cannot offer satisfactory provision for disabled pupils who might want to join it.

62. Overall, resources for learning are satisfactory. In art, physical education and music they are good. In information and communication technology resources have improved since the previous inspection, there has been a considerable investment in this area and the skills of pupils have improved as a result. The resources are used well to support learning. There are an adequate number of books both fiction and non-fiction. Although the library area is small, books are readily available and clearly set out using appropriate reference systems to enable pupils of all ages to access the books. The school has very recently, with the help of parents, dug a pond and is developing an outdoor classroom to support English, science and art.

63. Given the average unit cost for each pupil, the good progress that pupils make in the nursery and reception classes and in reading and mathematics by the end of Year 6, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

1. In order to improve the curriculum and the achievement of pupils further, the governors and headteacher should:

- raise standards in science by:
 - ensuring that scientific enquiry is taught through contexts taken from the sections on 'life processes and living things', 'materials and their properties', and 'physical processes' in the National Curriculum programmes of study;
 - ensuring clear planning for progression in skills, knowledge and understanding;
 - improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject;
 - ensuring that teaching methods include interesting and practical opportunities for learning.
- (see paragraphs 6, 25, 106 –102)

2. Raise standards in design and technology by:

- improving curriculum guidance and planning for progression;
- improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject;
- ensuring that teaching methods include opportunities for pupils to generate their own designs, and evaluate their finished products.

(see paragraphs 7, 25, 29. 119-122)

3. Raise standards in art by:

- improving curriculum guidance and planning for the progression of skills;
- improving pupils' skills in using sketchbooks to collect visual information, record and develop their ideas, and plan their work;
- improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject.

(see paragraphs 7, 15, 29, 113-118)

4. Raise standards in religious education by:

- improving teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject;
- establishing a consistent approach to the amount of time spent on the subject;
- ensuring that teachers use the curriculum guidance and plan for progression;
- improving resources to ensure that they reflect the range of religions required in the curriculum;
- ensuring that teaching methods include interesting and practical opportunities for learning, and make full use of the resources available to it within the community.

(see paragraphs 7, 25, 29, 145-149)

5. Improve the role of senior staff and the subject leaders so that they are fully involved in the leadership and management of the school by:

- clarifying the role of the deputy headteacher to ensure active involvement in leading the school forward;
- clarifying the role of the senior management team so that they are fully involved in school improvement;
- developing the role of subject leaders, particularly in monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and standards.

(See paragraphs 56, 118, 112, 122, 126, 130, 138, 143, 149)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	9	17	15	4	0	0
Percentage	2	20	37	33	9	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

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)	55	164
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		64

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		33

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	11	20	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	12	13	15
	Total	20	21	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	65 (74)	68 (76)	81 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	10	9
	Girls	13	17	14
	Total	22	27	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (82)	87 (74)	74 (56)
	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	11	10	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	5	8
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	14	10	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (65)	48 (59)	67 (74)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	14	13	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (56)	62 (62)	67 (62)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	10
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	5
Pakistani	56
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	146
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21:1
Average class size	32

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	156

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	564105
Total expenditure	553982
Expenditure per pupil	2261
Balance brought forward from previous year	36471
Balance carried forward to next year	46594

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	278
Number of questionnaires returned	93

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	38	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	33	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	49	4	2	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	41	14	7	5
The teaching is good.	62	34	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	35	11	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	32	2	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	28	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	49	8	3	5
The school is well led and managed.	56	32	0	5	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	42	1	4	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	33	7	5	12

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

64. Children enter the nursery after they become three and spend about five terms in the nursery on a part-time basis, prior to moving into full time schooling in the reception classes. Nearly all the children in the Butts School have attended the nursery, which also serves other schools in the area. The nursery is housed in an attractive purpose built unit attached to the main school and it has a secure outdoor play area. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The reception class is housed in an adjacent classroom. It has well planned use of the nursery's outdoor area, in addition to a large play area allocated for its use outside its own classroom.

65. The nursery and reception staff plan together, to ensure that children in both areas have access to a similar curriculum at an appropriate level. The influence of planning is clearly reflected in the way the nursery and reception class work. The curriculum covers all six areas of learning and activities are purposeful, coherent and well structured. The quality of education that is provided in the nursery and reception classes has improved since the last inspection and is now good. Although the attainment of many children is below average at the end of the reception year this represents good achievement in relation to their very low starting points on entry to the nursery. They develop very good attitudes to learning, improve their literacy and numeracy skills and broaden their experience of the world about them. As such they are well prepared for the National Curriculum. Higher attaining pupils begin to work on more formal literacy and numeracy skills towards the end of their time in the nursery. However, most of these pupils do not live within the school's immediate catchment area and move on to other schools.

66. Provision in both the nursery and the reception class is good and is a strength of the school. Teaching is good overall and some very good teaching was also seen during the course of the inspection. A rich environment, which promotes learning through play and talk, has been created. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated tasks and there are ample opportunities for children to take part in practical and purposeful activities. The teachers, nursery nurses and teaching assistants make a highly effective team. They work closely together, and share responsibilities for groups of children and areas of the nursery and reception class. This results in the children benefiting from their shared expertise. A notable feature in both classes is the staff's knowledge and understanding of the individual needs of pupils and of how young children learn best and this makes a significant impact on their well being, the progress that they make and their positive attitudes to school

67. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and there are appropriate links with outside agencies when specific help is needed. There are good monitoring arrangements, which are used to inform planning for children's particular needs. This contributes to the good progress that children with special educational needs make.

68. Provision for children who speak English as an additional language is good. Children who are at an early stage of English acquisition receive sensitive support which enables them to take a full part in lessons. The recent appointment of a bilingual teaching assistant has enhanced this provision.

69. The partnership between parents and the staff is good. Teachers and the nursery nurse work hard to involve parents and all children are visited at home prior to starting school. There are good induction procedures, which ensure that children are well prepared for entry into the nursery and the reception class. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress and of the work that the children are doing. The bilingual teaching assistant, who comes from the local community has made a

significant contribution to the quality of communication with parents of children who speak English as an additional language.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. On entry to the nursery children's personal, social and emotional development is very poor. They lack confidence and find it hard to work with their classmates. As a result of the good teaching they receive, both in the nursery and the reception class, pupils make good progress develop positive attitudes to school and learn to co-operate with others. Most children begin to concentrate for extended periods because of the wide range of activities that are well suited to their needs and interests. The nursery teacher and nursery nurses give sensitive encouragement to the more reticent children to try new experiences for themselves and this helps them to gain in confidence. For example, in the course of thinking of ways to move a toy boat across a paddling pool the teacher gently encouraged a child who understood little English to demonstrate her idea. She showed great pleasure and satisfaction in this and gained in confidence as a result. In the course of whole class discussions, handling a wide range of materials and textures, moving in response to music and in role-play children have ample opportunities to develop an awareness of their own feelings, and gradually develop a growing knowledge of the language they can use to describe them. This results in children who do have problems and concerns being able to approach the adults who work with them to make their needs known. Children's growing ability to accept the needs of others makes a significant contribution to the positive relationships they develop with their classmates. By the end of the reception year they have a satisfactory understanding of the basic rules which make for harmonious groups, such as turn taking and working together. Children have a developing knowledge of what is right and wrong and some understanding of the consequences of their actions for themselves and others. They can dress themselves and take care of their personal hygiene. There is appropriate provision of equipment and resources to reflect children's own backgrounds and cultures. This makes an effective contribution to the development of their sense of self, and awareness of their own cultures and those of others within the class.

71. In both the nursery and reception classes teaching is good. Staff, build trusting relationships with children from an early stage and encourage children to try new experiences. They use varied and suitable teaching methods, including lively and effective interaction with children's play, giving clear explanations, introducing props at appropriate moments and using questions skilfully to move learning on. Children are encouraged to think for themselves and take responsibility for deciding the activities they will take part in when they are not working directly with the teacher. Children are given opportunities to demonstrate what they know and understand, both during the course of activities and in small and large group review sessions. This encourages them think about what they have achieved, to take a pride in their work and grow in confidence when talking with others. Given children's starting points on entry however, there is scope to place even more emphasis on the development of pupils' social skills so that more reticent children are helped to understand how to join a group and play alongside and with others. There is also scope to give greater emphasis to the development of the skills that children need to organise their own materials and resources in the course of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

72. Children's communication and language skills are very poor on entry to the nursery. They improve their vocabulary and their ability to express their ideas and thoughts in words, and increase their knowledge of books by the end of the reception year. Overall, pupils make good progress in relation to their starting points on entry to achieve standards that are below average overall by the end

of the reception year. Most children use words and gestures and go on to develop these into simple statements while they are in the nursery, changing their tone of voice to make the meaning clear. Their vocabulary in the initial stages mainly focuses on objects and people that are of particular importance to them. It is gradually broadened to reflect the range of experiences that the nursery and reception class provides. However, most children need support to use talk to describe or talk through their actions, to sequence ideas and recreate roles and experiences.

73. As a result of the emphasis that the nursery places on books, children quickly begin to enjoy listening to stories and poems and sharing books with adults. By the end of their time in the nursery most children hold books carefully the correct way round and understand that the marks on the page carry some meaning. They take a particular interest in the illustrations and listen intently as adults read to them. The reception teacher builds effectively on this as she introduces the more formal aspects of literacy, for example the sounds that letters make. She does this orally and in ways that help the children to enjoy their work. As a result children begin to link letters to the sounds that they make and can recognise the initial sounds that they hear in the names of objects. Children continue to enjoy books in the reception class and begin to talk about well known stories, such as ‘Cinderella’ and ‘Goldilocks and the Three Bears’, as a result of the good provision of role-play equipment to help them act out and consolidate their understanding of the stories and the vocabulary that they hear. The children have also been taken on a visit to a bookshop.

74. Children in the nursery are encouraged from an early stage to make marks using pencils, crayons and paints. They also have a range of good opportunities to develop the co-ordination of the eye and hand movements that they need to learn to write when working with clay, scissors and construction equipment. In the reception class, children are encouraged to ‘sign in’ by writing their own names on a ‘register’ as they enter the classroom. This encourages them to gain in confidence and most children begin to form recognisable letters and can write their name with reasonable accuracy by the end of the reception year. Children in both the nursery and reception classes use the keyboards on computers to type in letters that appear on the screen and which they then print out.

75. The teaching of communication, language and literature is good, both in the nursery and reception. Most of the work on literacy, including early phonic work, is done through exciting, practical and imaginative activities, which involve play and talk. Activities are well structured and linked together to ensure coherence and continuity in the curriculum. Teaching takes into account children’s different attainments and reflects high expectations for children to progress further. This results in sufficient challenge for the small minority of children who can talk fluently and who are beginning to read and write with confidence. Throughout the foundation stage there is an emphasis on providing real experiences, which will develop pupils’ vocabulary. Given children’s starting points on entry however, there is scope to place even more emphasis on the development of children’s oral skills in order to widen the range of words they have at their disposal, to help children to use simple grammatical structures, and encourage the use of talk to organise, sequence and clarify thinking, for example, through the use of small representations of the objects, places and people in the real world.

76. Regular assessments are systematic, informative, and objective and clearly linked to the early learning goals. Assessments are based on observations of children’s behaviour and activity, listening to children in different contexts and on evaluations of their work. Good use is made of them to help and encourage pupils to overcome difficulties and to inform ongoing planning for different needs. Teachers know their children well and this makes a substantial contribution to the provision that is made and the good progress that children make.

Mathematical development

77. When children enter the nursery their mathematical development is very poor for their age. As a result of good teaching in both the nursery and the reception class, they make good progress in relation to their starting points. A minority attains or exceeds the standards expected for children who are five years old by the end of the reception year, although the majority attains below. Children begin to show an interest in numbers and in counting at an early stage because of the well-designed activities provided. For example, in the nursery they catch fish with numbers on them, and sing counting songs such as ‘one, two, three four five, once I caught a fish alive’. In the reception class they count using their fingers and respond enthusiastically to the teacher, singing aloud ‘I have ten little fingers and they all belong to me’, and then, in response to the teachers’ instruction show her five fingers, then another five and shout in chorus that this makes ten. Older and higher attaining children are beginning to record and write numbers accurately.

78. Children in the nursery begin to develop an early understanding of shape and space as they build models and enclosures with lego. In the reception class children move in response to their teacher’s instructions as they learn the language of position. Children in both the nursery and reception classes fill and empty containers using both sand and water and begin to learn the language and meaning of full and empty, more and less. Practical experiences such as cooking reinforce this knowledge and in addition help children to develop an early understanding of weight. When making collages and models they cut various lengths of paper and compare the sizes of boxes and tubes. This work is built on effectively in the reception class where children learn more formal recognition of shapes and begin to use language to correctly describe comparisons between objects, such as bigger, smaller, heavier and lighter.

79. The teaching of mathematics is good, both in the nursery and in the reception class. Teachers demonstrate an enthusiasm for the subject themselves and present the work on mathematics through purposeful and practical activities, which interest the children. They plan a wide range of mathematical opportunities and make good use of talk to help children develop their mathematical vocabulary in the course of intervening in their play. There is very good use of everyday activities, such as registration, to promote the use of counting and number recognition. Planning takes into account children’s different attainments and reflects high expectations for all, including the small number who achieve at higher levels.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

80. Pupils’ knowledge and understanding of the world are very poor for their age on entry to the nursery. They make good progress as a result of the wide range of good opportunities that are provided for them to explore and make sense of the world around them, both indoors and outside. These include formal input, practical play experiences and visits to places within the locality and further-afield. Children have been taken by bus, train and tram on a journey through their own community and a little further-afield and this has extended their understanding of the different ways in which people can travel. Visits from people such as the fireman have helped them to learn something about people who help them in their own community. Preparation for an eagerly awaited trip to the seaside is helping them to develop an understanding of a place that has very different characteristics from the place in which they live. They investigate the natural world in a range of different ways, for example by observing the growth of plants such as sunflowers and by searching the school grounds for small insects. They are equipped with rain coats, boots and umbrellas so that they can splash in puddles and stand under leaking drainpipes, to explore the effects of wet weather on the outdoor area. Children find out about some of the properties of materials as they play with sand and water. They learn something about the changes that heating has on materials as a result of

making their own food, such as samosas. They explore light and sound from a variety of sources as they play in a well-resourced 'cave', which is equipped with torches, lamps, and metallic objects that reflect the light, mirrors, tape recorders and chiming bars. They look carefully at a variety of fruit noting differences in colour and texture and the different kinds of seeds that appear when they are cut in half. They investigate the different tastes of fruits and decide which they like best, comparing their findings with their initial ideas. Children achieve well when making models from construction equipment, boxes and tubes and use computers with confidence demonstrating good hand and eye control when controlling images on screen using a mouse.

81. Teaching for knowledge and understanding of the world is good both in the nursery and the reception class. All adults who work with the children interact and support them in ways that help them to learn from their explorations and observations, and which involve children in using all their senses. They act as good role models as they work alongside children showing real enthusiasm for activities and posing appropriate questions, which encourage the children's curiosity. They give very careful consideration to the provision of resources and make effective use of the outdoors and the local environment.

Physical development

82. Children's physical development on entry to the nursery is poor. They benefit from suitable opportunities to develop manipulative skills when using construction toys and play-dough, and when painting, cutting, drawing and working with role-play equipment. These opportunities are appropriately extended into the reception class. Children make good progress and demonstrate increasing control as they manipulate material to achieve the desired effect. Children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy regular access to the outdoor area, where, supervised by adults, they develop their co-ordination and their awareness of space for themselves and others. Activities on the hard play area help pupils to control their movements through a growing awareness of the speed and direction in which they travel. Some children demonstrate that they can do this with great accuracy but many initially lack the confidence and co-ordination and need a great deal of encouragement to ride on the tricycles, for example, and to climb on the larger apparatus. Children in the reception class have access to the school hall for activities, which involve the children in more formal preparation for the early stages of the National Curriculum. They begin to control and co-ordinate their bodies confidently, when walking and running, and have a satisfactory awareness of their own space in relation to others.

83. The quality of teaching for pupils' physical development is good in the nursery and in reception. Teachers and the nursery nurse interact with activities to help children to develop and extend their skills. For example, when working with clay children are shown how to make marks in the clay, and push it and pull it to make different shapes.

Creative development

84. Children's creative development is poor on entry to the nursery. As a result of the good teaching and the time that they are given to explore and experiment with materials and ideas, children make good progress overall in relation to their starting points. They make satisfactory progress in painting and enjoy mixing paint to create different tones and colours to represent the shades of the sea or the sunshine. Children respond very well to opportunities to express their ideas when singing and moving to music. A very good lesson was seen in which the teaching assistant encouraged the children to move like various sea creatures in response to the calypso rhythm 'Under the Sea'. They responded with enthusiasm and enjoyment, energetically copying and then embellishing the movements demonstrated by the teaching assistant as they developed their own imaginative ideas. The extent of their involvement was clear when one child shouted 'That was great, I kept my eyes

closed when I was under the water!'. The children learn a range of songs by heart, sing them enthusiastically at an early stage and accompany themselves with appropriate movements and mimes. They enjoy exploring the sounds made by musical instruments and the movements made by the piano keys that result in a sound being made. Children act out familiar experiences when they play in the home corner and also familiar stories. Their ability to make up their own imaginative stories when using the role play areas and small world equipment is at an earlier stage of development however, and is mainly inhibited by their skills in using language to converse with others, sequence their ideas and confirm their thinking.

85. Teaching for creative development is good. Good planning ensures that children have well focussed opportunities to take part in a wide range of creative activities in which they can respond to a range of stimuli and develop their own creative ideas ideas. All adults support and encourage children well and value their ideas and suggestions.

ENGLISH

86. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress in English, and by the time they reach Key Stage 2 most pupils are making good progress. The previous inspection report stated that attainment in both key stages matched the national average. The attainment of the current Year 2 is below average for reading and writing, mainly because not enough pupils are achieving at the higher levels. More pupils are now attaining the levels expected for their age, however, particularly in writing.

87. The attainment of the present Year 6 pupils is below the nationally expected levels in English but standards in reading for the majority of pupils are average. This represents an apparent decline in standards since the previous inspection. The results of national tests also show that the school's standards in English have declined rapidly in recent years. This can be in part explained by changes in the nature of the school's intake. However, since the appointment of the new headteacher the school has had a greater focus on improving standards and the evidence shows that attainment levels in English have now begun to improve.

88. Children enter the school with poor language skills in comparison to children of a similar age. Many children are reluctant to communicate and have poor speaking and listening skills. Attainment of Year 2 pupils is below the national average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Most pupils appear to listen to what the teacher is saying but need a great deal of encouragement to reply to questions with relevant comment and detail. Most pupils require constant reminders to ensure that they understand and listen carefully to instructions. Many lower attaining pupils, although appearing to listen to their teachers, have difficulty in expressing their thoughts and ideas. Teachers work hard to compensate for pupils' lack of expressive vocabulary and are adept at modifying questions and explanations to match pupils' level of understanding. In a Year 1 lesson the teacher developed pupils' speaking and listening skills by providing several opportunities within the lesson, for them to discuss in pairs, the stories they were going to write. During a science lesson the same teacher encouraged the pupils to listen by asking some pupils to make sounds behind the board whilst the others had to listen carefully to identify how the sound was made.

89. Pupils' speaking and listening skills in Year 6 have developed well. However, many pupils still find difficulty in expressing their thoughts and ideas. They still require a lot of support from their teachers to explain the work they have done and many lack the confidence to speak in front of others. The school seeks to address this area by involving pupils in drama lessons. In a good lesson in Year 4, the main theme of the lesson was self-expression. Pupils worked well together as they discussed various situations and then performed them for the rest of the class. Pupils made good progress in this lesson, where they developed their ability to express ideas and to speak with confidence.

90. Pupils' attainment in reading is below the national average by the age of seven, but by the age of eleven it is at the expected standard for this age group. By the age of seven, pupils including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, have made satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 6 have made good progress in their learning in relation to their prior attainment. All pupils show an interest in books and respond well to stories in class and to the opportunities presented for reading individually and in groups. Although phonics are introduced at an early age, some pupils do not have sufficient strategies for tackling new words. For instance, many younger pupils are aware of the names of letters but cannot connect this with the sound, so are unable to attempt new words. If pupils know the letter sounds they are unable to put them together to form words. Some pupils rely on adult support and are hesitant and lack confidence. Many pupils understand the stories they read but are unable to deduce or predict what might happen next without considerable support. Most pupils attempt to join in with class reading during the literacy hour. Several pupils in Year 2 are reading at the expected level and read accurately, fluently and with understanding.

91. By the age of eleven, most pupils are reading at the expected level for their age. Pupils have made considerable improvement and many read fluently and with expression. Higher attaining pupils are able to predict events in a story and talk about their favourite books and authors. Many pupils know how to select an information book from the library. Reading records are kept in all classes. The school works very hard to teach pupils to read and teachers encourage pupils to take books home to share with parents. However, there is not always the level of support from home to support the pupils' learning in this way. There are appropriate books in all classes and the library books are neatly displayed. Older pupils have satisfactory library skills but at this time pupils in Year 1 and 2 have not developed these. The co-ordinator realizes that there is a need to formalise the use of the library for all pupils.

92. Pupils' attainment in writing at the age of seven and eleven is below the national average. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on writing standards and pupils, when considering prior attainment, make at least satisfactory and often good progress.

93. Pupils in Key Stage 1 can write for a wide variety of purposes. From the analysis of pupils' work it is clear that they write poetry, stories and news reports. They are able to retell traditional stories as well as create their own. In addition to this, they compile lists and can order a sequence of events and write a description of how to plant a seed. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to write well-constructed stories but have not developed their skills sufficiently to write at length.

94. Older pupils have opportunity to write in a wide range of different genre. For instance, work sampling indicated that pupils have written poetry, plays, stories, biographies, autobiographies and letters. The majority of pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 2. By the time they are in Year 6 their writing becomes evaluative and they are able to appreciate different styles of writing. For example, pupils studied three poems which were linked by a common theme – family members. Most pupils were able to discuss how the poems related to each other and were then successful in their writing when they analysed the words and phrases that illustrated meaning and feelings. Most pupils have a sound understanding of basic grammar and the focus on raising standards in writing across the school is having a positive effect by the time they are eleven. Teachers have a clear view of the stages of development and there has been a good programme of staff training. Clearly, this structure and concentration on developing basic skills is beginning to have a positive effect as pupils move through the school. Presentation of work varies throughout the school. Although most pupils are able to produce a neat cursive style of handwriting, work is often presented in a careless and untidy way. There is a consistent approach to the teaching of spelling, although this could still receive more attention to enable pupils to transfer their skills to their writing more regularly.

95. There are some weaknesses, in areas such as writing at length, spelling and use of grammar and this limits the number of pupils attaining the high Level 3 and Level 5 at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 respectively. The skills pupils practise in literacy lessons on grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting are not always transferred to written activities and other lessons. There are two main reasons for this. The first is that other subjects of the curriculum such as geography, history and religious education, are not used as well as they could be as contexts for the extension of pupils' writing skills. The second is that, in some other subjects, some areas of learning are dominated by the completion of commercial worksheets. These restrict the style and quantity of writing that pupils might otherwise be expected to use.

96. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. Teachers show confidence and good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Work is well planned and builds on pupils' knowledge. This was evident in a Year 5 literacy lesson when the teacher used the pupils' former knowledge of clauses and phrases to appreciate and write in the style of a chosen author. Some teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills, skilfully adapting questions so that pupils of all abilities can succeed and respond. Target setting has been introduced. Pupils are reminded of their targets and receive appropriate encouragement and support to reach them. Targets are shared with parents and pupils have some practice in evaluating their own work. Although higher attaining pupils are identified, activities and tasks set for them are often insufficiently challenging. Where teaching is not so successful the pace of lessons is too slow and the teacher's expectations of what the pupils can achieve is too low.

97. Assessment procedures for literacy are good. The school has introduced some good systems to assess and track pupils' progress. The information collected from a wide range of assessments and tests from when the pupils first start school are collated and analysed to identify areas for development for the pupils, the staff and the school. In lessons, the use of regular assessment informs future planning of pupils' individual needs. Marking is inconsistent. In the best examples, it is positive and indicates what pupils need to do to improve their work.

98. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to introduce new systems and procedures. She has had a significant impact on standards, through her work in leading the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. Because of the good monitoring procedures in place she has a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She is aware that as a result of monitoring there is a need to provide additional support for some teachers. Homework is set but is not always completed by all pupils. Resources are satisfactory and meet the needs of the curriculum but there is a need to extend the number of books in the library.

99. During the inspection the school was preparing for a major school production about the past 1,000 years of history. Approximately 60 pupils from Years 3 to 6 were involved in the production. The school had the use of a nearby theatre. The facilities are good and include a good size stage and tiered seating for the audience. A considerable number of staff and volunteers are involved and the school has drawn successfully on the expertise of a local amateur dramatic society. The pupils involved learned much about performing on stage, learning about dramatic gestures, positioning and the need to project their voices. Consideration needs to be given to enabling all pupils to partake in such valuable drama activities and the place of such school performances in the development of the programmes of study for drama in the national curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

100. By the end of Year 6, when the pupils leave the school standards in mathematics are in line with the national average. At the end of Year 2 standards are below average. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below that expected for their age. All pupils including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress and their achievement is good against their below average starting point. This is the result of good teaching early in their time at school and between the ages of seven and eleven. Performance by pupils in Year 2, in the national tests has been well below the national average and that of similar schools, for the years 2000 and 2001. During the same period the performance of pupils in Year 6 was below the national average and that of similar schools. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in both the current Year 2 and Year 6 classes have risen as a result of the priority given to raising standards in mathematics by the new headteacher.

101. By the end of Year 2 pupils know basic multiplication tables such as the two, three and five times tables and can use the associated division facts to solve simple calculations. They can give the mathematical names of simple shapes such as cone and cylinder and can name common objects such as an ice cream cone or drinks can as examples. They can carry out a survey into the number of letters in the family names in the class. They record their findings in simple tally charts and group the information in sensible groupings. Under clear direction from the teacher they then construct bar graphs to determine the most common grouping in their class.

102. By the end of Year 6, pupils are competent at carrying out a wide variety of calculations to two decimal places and the use of standard methods of measurement. They are confident in the use of the twenty-four hour clock. For example drawing on information in text-books they are able to work out journey times from various towns and cities to Heathrow, find the times of flights to places such as New York and calculate what the landing time will be in

local time. They draw on text-book information about temperatures around the world and present these as graphs using information and communication technology to display these in various ways.

103. Throughout the school pupils are less sure of selecting the most appropriate way of solving a problem independently. They have insufficient opportunities to develop these skills through investigations in other areas of the curriculum. For example, the skills of recording and presenting numerical results in science investigations are under developed. The opportunities to gain an understanding of time and distance in geographical work are underdeveloped.

104. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are keen to take part in mathematics work. Younger pupils are keen to answer questions in mental work. Older pupils carefully assemble data in tables and this means they are able to construct graphs accurately. Expectations of attainment by pupils in Years 3 to 6 are high and pupils strive hard to rise to the challenges set. This means they have to concentrate hard and apply considerable mental effort to their work. Where they are fully involved in these activities they behave well and all can concentrate on their work and all learn well as a consequence.

105. Overall, teaching in mathematics is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. In Years 1 and 2 it varies between unsatisfactory and satisfactory but between Years 3 and 6 it is good. In one lesson observed during the inspection, teaching was very good. In this lesson the teacher demonstrated a variety of ways of finding the remainder when dividing two digit numbers, she then expected the pupils to independently use which ever strategy they found most useful. Some used counters, others cubes others drew diagrams to help in the calculation. Such strategies aided the pupils' understanding of the work well and learning was very good. The national numeracy strategy is now firmly embedded in the way teachers structure and organise lessons. This is judged to have had a significant impact on raising standards. Learning in mathematics is predominantly good. During the inspection, learning in one lesson was unsatisfactory. In this lesson the work was not sufficiently well matched to the pupils' previous work and they did not achieve the objective of the lesson. Most work is accurately matched to previous work and attainment and this means pupils learn well. This has been significant in raising standards. Older pupils are beginning to catch up and their use of mathematics and confidence in the subject is improving. This greater understanding is insufficiently consolidated through investigative activities in other areas of the curriculum.

106. With the exception of the wider use of mathematics the curriculum is broad and pupils receive a balanced curriculum during their time in school. All pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn and all are fully included in learning the full range of the programmes of study in mathematics. They also have good opportunities to work together in pairs and groups and this contributes well to their social development. The management of the subject is good. The headteacher has provided many opportunities for the subject co-ordinator to monitor teaching with the assistance of a local education authority adviser. This has had a significant impact on the overall good quality of learning and the planning of lessons that now takes place in the school. The procedures for assessment are satisfactory and the data is used well to plan lessons in English and mathematics. This good use of assessment data is an improvement since the previous inspection. Marking against the learning objectives is inconsistent and where errors have occurred in pupils' work, these are not always followed

up. Resources for learning are satisfactory and they are used appropriately to support learning. The use of information and communication technology to support mathematics work is satisfactory and developing well as teachers become more confident in its use and identify an increasing number of opportunities to use it.

SCIENCE

107. Overall, the quality of provision in science is unsatisfactory. Results are consistently below national averages. Standards in science are unsatisfactory by the end of Year 2, and satisfactory by the end of Year 6, mainly because of weaknesses in pupils' skills of scientific enquiry and their understanding of materials and physical processes. Although standards have fallen since the last inspection there are now some signs of improvement.

108. Standards are below average when measured by the assessment tasks at the end of Year 2 and the national tests at the end of Year 6. In 2001, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was well below average, and for those attaining beyond that level, it was well below the national figures. Boys tend to do a little better than girls but both do much worse than the average nationally. Results are also well below the average of similar schools at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Lower and higher attaining pupils, and pupils with special educational needs, do not achieve as they should.

109. During the inspection the standard of work seen in lessons was not as high as it should be, but was better than the teacher assessments and national test results for the previous year show. The pupils' knowledge of scientific facts is generally sound. However, their understanding of concepts and principles is unsatisfactory. Their writing and presentation of work are poor, as is their ability to express their ideas orally. Many, including the pupils with special educational needs, have an unsatisfactory understanding of important scientific words.

110. Pupils in Year 1 have some knowledge of what is needed by plants and people to live, and some understanding about the five senses, teeth and healthy eating. However, pupils of all levels of attainment cannot write and record their findings and observations to an appropriate standard. Pupils in Year 2 can identify and demonstrate pulls and pushes in their work on forces and know the names of common materials while naming their characteristics. The tasks set are undemanding and do not contribute sufficiently to the development of pupils' literacy skills. There is too much drawing, much of which is inaccurate and untidy. Pupils' spelling of scientific words is unsatisfactory. By Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of the importance of a fair test, but no real understanding of how to plan, carry out and, in particular, record their investigations. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of living things but the opportunity to learn about materials and physical process is not extensive enough, nor is it of sufficient depth to achieve the standards expected nationally. Pupils' limited literacy skills continue to affect the way they record their work

111. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory overall although some good teaching was also seen in the inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding of the way pupils develop basic skills are unsatisfactory. Lesson planning still does not take into account the different needs of individual pupils, which is an important weakness. When teachers give pupils purposeful, clear and interesting tasks, they respond very well, as when pupils in Year 3 handle a celery plant and discover, by investigation, how water is transported in its stem. Unsatisfactory use is made of information technology. Standards of literacy are poor, and teacher's expectations in this crucial aspect are far too low regarding written work.

The teachers' awareness of pupils' previous learning is unsatisfactory. Formal assessment is too irregular to make any real difference to planning. Marking does not routinely inform pupils of what they need to do to improve.

112. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are satisfactory and sometimes good when lessons are characterised by an atmosphere of purposeful activity. In some lessons pupils have to listen to the teacher's explanations and instructions for overlong periods of time and they then find it difficult to concentrate. Overall, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to learn through practical work and there is an over-use of worksheets, which constrain learning and are not matched sufficiently to the needs and aptitudes of pupils. There are too many examples of unfinished work.

113. Standards are not improving fast enough and since the last inspection there has been insufficient rigour in tackling the shortcomings identified. In particular, the quality of teaching has not improved. The standard of work produced by pupils is below expectations and most are not achieving as well as they should. The subject has been neglected and this is recognised by the co-ordinator who has plans to implement long overdue changes at the start of the next academic year. Although he has been given some time for subject management, his role in monitoring and evaluation has not been developed sufficiently.

ART AND DESIGN

114. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson. Judgements are based on curriculum plans, pupils' work on display and in photographs and conversations with pupils and staff. However from this limited sample of work and the lesson seen, standards appear to be below national expectations. By Year 6 pupils' skills when using a wide variety of equipment and materials are underdeveloped. From an analysis of pupils' work throughout the school there was little evidence to suggest that pupils control of both tools and techniques had progressed in line with national expectations. The previous report stated that attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was average and attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was below average. Overall, all pupils, including those with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, have made unsatisfactory progress.

115. By the time they are seven pupils can use paint, collage, pens and pencils to create a range of imaginative and illustrative work. For example, Year 1 pupils made collages of different types of paper and used pencils to produce self-portraits. This work was extended with the involvement of a sculpture project. Pupils made models of their heads out of clay and concentrated on close observation of facial features and hair. Pupils in Year 2 had looked at the environment to stimulate ideas for making their own patterns and prints. They enjoyed the experience of creating their own designs and were truly amazed at the appearance of the first print.

116. In Key Stage 2 pupils ideas and skills of observation are developed as they sketch self-portraits and portraits of their friends. Pupils are taught to mix colour and to achieve different shades by adding black and white. Overall, pupils' ability to use paint, pencils and charcoal is sound. For example pupils in Year 3 sketched a design for a purse in connection with their design and technology work and Year 4 pupils were successful in sketching a book design. In Year 5 pupils painted very detailed still life pictures of a pot of flowers using a variety of

colours and illustrating their skills of shading. Pupils in Year 6 painted very attractive designs for wallpaper in the style of William Morris.

117. The last report criticised the development of pupils' skills, in using a range of media and also the use of sketchbooks. Although pupils do use sketchbooks to plan their work they do not make sufficient use of them as working documents and pupils skills in using different media are not developed to a sufficient depth. Overall, the issues from the last inspection remain.

118. Overall, the teaching of art and design throughout the school is unsatisfactory. Work appears to be closely directed leaving little scope for pupils to use their imagination or exercise their independence. Too few opportunities are provided for pupils to make their own selection of materials and tools. For instance, they are not offered the full range of paintbrushes and rollers to carry out an activity. Generally, throughout the school it would seem that art is given a fairly low profile with little evidence of pupils' work displayed. Clearly, there is a need to provide support for staff in their knowledge and understanding of the subject to aid them in their delivery of the curriculum.

119. Teachers are using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work but at this time there has been no opportunity for them to monitor and modify it to meet the needs of the school. There has been an apparent decline in standards since the last inspection. However, as other areas of the curriculum has taken priority, there has been less of a focus on developing teaching and learning in art and design. The co-ordinator is a part-time teacher who has had responsibility for this subject for only one and a half terms. She has not yet monitored teaching and learning across the school or seen teachers' planning. However, she has carried out a recent audit of resources and the school is now well equipped. Additionally she is aware of the importance of familiarizing pupils with investigating art, craft and design in the locality and has arranged a series of visits to the local art gallery.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

120. It was not possible to observe more than one design and technology lesson during the inspection. However, from the scrutiny of the pupils' past and present work, together with discussions with staff, there is clear evidence that standards do not meet national expectations by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs, in common with all others, make unsatisfactory progress because teachers do not consistently and rigorously address the important designing, making and evaluation skills as pupils move through the school. Standards in the subject have fallen since the last inspection because it is not timetabled suitably for all classes, and teachers' understanding of the design process is limited.

121. Pupils in Key Stage 1 draw very untidy plans of their work, and only the higher attaining pupils evaluate their work. Pupils in Key Stage 2 evaluate and modify their work in a cursory manner and the plans are of a poor quality, as instanced by the older pupils' work on bridges. Few pupils use pencils properly and the writing to support their work is poor, including their spelling of important words. The quality of some pupils' finished products is sometimes sound, as in the case of the bags made by the younger pupils.

122. It was not possible to observe a sufficient number of lessons to make a secure judgment of the quality of teaching, but the standards of work seen indicate that it is unlikely to be

satisfactory in either key stage. Expectations are too low and the subject makes insufficient contribution to the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills. The standard of pupils' written work is poor, including their illustrations. Their work in their books is not carefully marked and includes few specific questions to extend pupils' thinking about their ideas, especially the potentially higher attaining pupils.

123. Overall the quality of provision in design and technology is unsatisfactory because there is no consistent approach to teaching across the school and there are no monitoring procedures in place to ensure that all pupils receive their curriculum entitlement. The standard of work that all pupils produce is below that expected and pupils do not achieve well. The role of the subject leader in monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and standards in the subject is underdeveloped.

GEOGRAPHY

124. Standards in geography are broadly average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. During the inspection only two lessons were observed, so no judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching in the subject. Evidence from the lessons seen, from pupils' work and discussions with pupils, shows that pupils make satisfactory progress overall. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

125. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a reasonable knowledge of significant places and environments. They can talk about the local area and key features of their journeys to school. They are able to talk about Walsall and about some of the contrasting features of Weston-Super-Mare, an area that they are preparing to visit. As they move through the school this knowledge is extended to places further afield. Links with history, for example, the study of Roman roads and Viking trading routes, have extended pupils' knowledge of places in the British Isle and of Europe. Pupils in Year 5 can name the main mountain ranges of the world and, in the course of their own personal studies are developing a more in depth knowledge of specific mountain ranges. Pupils know something of the patterns of human geography through their combined studies of history and geography when they learn something about the lifestyles of the people who live in their own locality and of how the area has changed over the course of time. As they move through the school they compare their own lives with those of children living in China. Their understanding of the patterns and processes in physical geography is developed appropriately through work on the water cycle and on the features of mountainous areas. Pupils' map reading skills are satisfactory. For example, in Year 2 they can identify the key features of the local area on maps and can track their route to school. In Year 4, they plot routes between towns, and, using their knowledge of scale, calculate the actual distances between towns. Year 6 pupils can use four figure grid references to identify places on ordinance survey maps. They make satisfactory use of information books, the Internet, plans, atlases and diagrams to support their work in geography. Pupils' appreciation of how their knowledge of geography can be applied to environmental issues and their fieldwork skills are less well developed.

126. In the geography lessons seen teaching was satisfactory. In the best lessons work is made relevant and interesting to pupils and builds on what they already know and can do. For example, pupils build on their knowledge and understanding of the local area in their studies of the contrasting area of Weston-Super-Mare. The whole school is shortly to visit this seaside resort, and this adds interest and relevance to their work. The teacher designed worksheets which supported her learning objectives well and were well matched to pupils'

differing needs. Similarly in a Year 5 geography lesson pupils identified what they already knew about mountains prior to identifying what else they needed to know. Skilful guidance by the teacher resulted in them asking their own questions and exploring information books and the Internet to find out more about specific mountain ranges. Where weaknesses occur in teaching it is because there is an over-reliance on the use of published worksheets which too often result in low level, dull and uninspiring tasks that have little meaning for the pupils.

127. The subject is being satisfactorily managed on a temporary basis in the absence of a member of staff. There has, however, been little analysis of standards, teaching and learning to inform its future development. The school has recognised this and the subject has now been incorporated into a programme of review and development. Although the curriculum covers all aspects of the National Curriculum, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their fieldwork skills and for them to ask their own questions about geographical and environmental issues. Insufficient use is made of the wide range of ethnic backgrounds of pupils, and their countries of origin, to enrich the curriculum for geography.

HISTORY

128. No lessons were seen in history. However, evidence from pupils' work shows that pupils make broadly satisfactory progress and reach the standards that are expected of them by the end of Year 6. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection. There is insufficient evidence to form a secure judgment about standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

129. Pupils' understanding of chronology develops as they move up through the school. They are familiar with different periods of history, with specific, significant dates, and with timelines on which they locate events that are important to the topic they are studying. They develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of people and events in different periods of history. For example, in Year 1 pupils have found out about the toys that children played with in the past. In Year 2 they have looked at the way in which people dressed and behaved when they went to the seaside in Victorian times. In Year 3 pupils have studied the way of life in Roman times. Later on in Years 5 and 6 pupils learn how historical events affected children; for example, how children were forced to work in cotton mills and the mines as a result of the industrial revolution, and how the second World War caused children to be evacuated. Pupils can identify and explain different ways of representing and interpreting the past. In Year 5, for example, they can describe life in Victorian time from the contrasting points of view of rich and poor people. In Year 3 they consider the way of life in Roman times from the point of view of a Roman soldier. Pupils have some understanding of the different ways of finding out about the past. For example, pupils in Year 2 have examined old photographs to find out about visits to the seaside, Year 1 pupils have looked at old toys and Year 4 pupils know something about contribution of archaeology to our understanding of the Viking way of life in York. There is, however, scope to develop pupils' skills of historical enquiry further and to broaden the range of ways in which pupils organise and communicate their work in history.

130. The lack of history lessons scheduled to occur during the inspection made it impossible to form a secure judgement about the overall quality of teaching in the subject. Evidence from pupils' work indicates that teachers' planning broadly reflects the content of National

Curriculum. However, it is planned over a two year cycle and this means that pupils in adjacent year groups study similar themes. Whilst this ensures that the content of the National Curriculum is covered it limits progression in the skills of historical enquiry, the understanding of increasingly complex historical themes and the development of different ways for pupils to organise and communicate their findings.

131. The subject is being satisfactorily managed on a temporary basis in the absence of a member of staff. There has, however, been little analysis of standards, teaching and learning to inform its future development. The school has recognised this and the subject has now been incorporated into a programme of review and development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

132. Standards are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Over their time in the school the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. All pupils have regular access to computers and all are fully included in learning in information and communication technology.

133. By the end of Year 2, pupils can carry out a survey of the different means of transport used to come to school, enter the data into an appropriate computer program, print off a pictorial presentation and analyse the graph to identify the most and least used forms of transport. They recognise that video and tape recorders and the school's digital cameras are all items of information and communication technology. They can write instructions for the use of the television remote control. This is a good link with literacy work.

134. By the end of Year 6, pupils confidently access a wide variety of programs. They select programs best suited to the work they intend to do. For example, in one class where pupils were assembling posters, to encourage people to give money to charity, they trawled through various programs before deciding which to use or in some cases deciding to word process and cut and paste their design instead. Such comparatively refined understanding of the use of information and communication technology as a tool, is significant to the standards achieved. Other pupils controlled images on screen competently as they used a program, accessed through the Internet, to design a duck. They had to consider body weight to wing size ratio, the aerodynamics of the bird's beak and legs and then finally the flap speed of the wings. They know that only if all these factors were in balance would the duck be able to fly a level flight path. This activity contributed appropriately to their work in design and evaluation work in design and technology. Through the range and accuracy of vocabulary needed to carry out these various activities information and communication technology makes a satisfactory contribution to literacy and numeracy work.

135. Pupils are keen to use the various computer programs available. Their attitudes are good and behaviour is generally good, spoiled only by individuals occasionally behaving in a silly and immature way. In the main they listen carefully to their teachers, ask sensible questions to check what they have to do and then willingly work with the mouse and key board to achieve the task they have been set. From time to time when the program does not respond as it should, pupils confidently attempt to trouble-shoot the problem themselves before asking for help. This level of confidence, keen attitudes and the generally good behaviour of the majority of pupils means that pupils can work independently to learn well

the procedures and uses of information technology and this is beginning to successfully enhance learning in several other aspects of the curriculum.

136. Overall the quality of teaching in information and communication technology is good. Teachers skilfully combine the teaching of information and communication technology skills and the use of information and communication technology with their work in other subjects such as design and technology and mathematics. This is good practice and is an improvement since the previous inspection. Good use is also made, by pupils and teachers, of the school digital cameras to record events and prepare displays celebrating events that have taken place in school. Pupils find these activities interesting, inspiring and motivating and are keen to use them and truly see information and communication technology as a tool for learning. Teachers are often effectively supported by able adults who work with pupils who have a specific learning difficulty or have lower prior attainment compared with the rest of the class. As a result, all pupils learn at a good rate.

137. The breadth and range of the information and communication technology curriculum are satisfactory. The use of information and communication technology to support standards in other subjects is developing well but does not yet have sufficient impact on learning in the core subject of science. The subject contributes well to the development of pupils' social skills as they work closely together to solve problems. The subject co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership. Significant to the recent development of the subject is the construction and equipping of the computer suite. This means that most classes can undertake whole class teaching with a common set of computers. This has had a positive impact on the learning of computer skills. The suite is an improvement since the previous inspection and has had a significant impact on the learning of information and communication technology skills. Unfortunately there are still insufficient computers for all pupils to work in pairs in all classes. In some larger classes pupils have to undertake other activities whilst they wait their turn and this slows learning. Software resources are developing, currently they are adequate. Assessment procedures are not in place to ensure progression through the school. Considerable use is made of information and communication technology by teachers in display work and planning and this is raising teacher confidence and clearly demonstrates day to day use of information and communication technology to pupils.

MUSIC

138. Due to the nature of the school's timetable it was not possible to observe any music lessons during the inspection. A rehearsal for the school production was observed but it was not possible to gather sufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards, achievement and teaching throughout the school. Pupils enjoy music and sing enthusiastically in assembly. They listen carefully to the music played to them at the beginning of assembly although more could be done to make pupils aware of the composer of the music and the particular arrangement being played.

139. The music curriculum is satisfactory and the school uses appropriate published schemes of work and nationally recommended schemes to support planning. The school has moved from specialist teaching to class teaching and these schemes are helpful to teachers who are non-specialists and planning by class room teachers has improved since the previous

inspection. Records are now kept by all staff and the co-ordinator keeps an overview of provision to ensure a broad and adequate range of coverage. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school gives satisfactory introductions to music from around the world, for example, Asian music was a central part of an arts week. There are a good number of instruments available both tuned and untuned, although there is a limited range of instruments from different countries and cultures. Instruments are now stored in a readily accessible way. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and provides good support to class teachers in their work. She is providing training for teachers in the use of information and communication technology to support the music curriculum and this area is improving. However, more should be done to develop her role, particularly in monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and standards in the subject.

140. At the time of the inspection the school was preparing for a major school production at a nearby theatre. Approximately 40 per cent of pupils from Years 3 to 6 were involved. The facilities at the theatre are good and provide the pupils with an excellent opportunity to put together a production for their families and friends. Considerable time and effort has been put into this performance by staff, helpers and volunteers. Early rehearsals indicate that those pupils involved are learning much about performing on stage and how they must adapt their own individual performance to cope with a large audience. Consideration needs to be given to the link between such a school musical performance and its place in developing the performing, composing and appraisal skills of all pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

141. Standards in physical education are in line with expectations by the end of both key stages. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils throughout the school make steady progress in the acquisition of physical skills. At Key Stage 1, good teaching led to pupils using their bodies energetically as they practised dribbling a ball around a set of markers. They are beginning to understand the importance of warming up and cooling down. Throughout Key Stage 2 pupils continue to develop their skills. Pupils in Year 3 showed sound standards in dribbling, running and ball control. They were very enthusiastic when practising these skills in the form of a relay. Skills required in performing a relay were further developed in Year 6 when pupils learned to run a relay race and pass a baton. All pupils ran energetically between the changeover positions. In Year 4 pupils practised different ways of throwing a ball. They are developing their understanding of the use of different techniques and styles for specific purposes. There is evidence that almost all pupils reach the requirement to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school and many do so before because of the good focus on swimming.

142. The satisfactory standards and gains in learning are a result of the overall satisfactory quality of teaching. Teaching is almost always satisfactory with some good and some very good teaching. Teachers plan lessons well, making good use of the scheme of work. Teachers give clear instructions and mostly manage behaviour well, although when pupils are given too little activity, for example when having to wait too long for their turn to run or throw, they become restless and learning slows. In a very good lesson in Year 3 the teacher set appropriate challenges by using a stopwatch to encourage teams of pupils to run faster. In the best teaching the teacher shows good knowledge and is able to point out to pupils where they are going wrong and how to correct it. Opportunities to reinforce literacy skills by getting pupils to talk more about their performance or the performance of others are often

missed. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported satisfactorily by teachers, enabling them to join in as fully as possible. There are frequent well-taken opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively in pairs. These opportunities enhance the social development.

143. Most pupils dress suitably for physical education although a small number do not always bring their kit, despite the best efforts of the school to implement its policy.

144. The enthusiasm and skill of the co-ordinator is a strength of this subject. She has recently carried out an audit and ensured that the school has a wide variety of resources in good order. At this time she has not monitored teaching and learning throughout the school and there is no formal procedure for tracking pupils' progress.

145. The school broadens pupils' cultural awareness by providing a good range of activities within the curriculum and as extra-curricular clubs, for example, football, netball, cross-country and gymnastics. Matches are arranged with other schools and the mixed netball and football teams are included in the town's league fixtures. Such activities develop good attitudes to competition, teamwork and sportsmanship.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

146. Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are below the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The pupils make unsatisfactory progress in religious education. Standards have fallen since the last inspection. The school's scheme of work does not enable the required areas of study to be covered in enough detail throughout the key stages. There is not a consistent balance in the time allocated by all teachers for each topic to allow for the major religions of the world to be studied in sufficient depth.

147. Throughout the school, the pupils have some appreciation of the importance of faith and ritual across a number of different religions and are beginning to make comparisons between them and their own lives. Pupils are given some opportunities to discuss cultural development, moral and social issues as part of the religious education curriculum. For example, the younger pupils learn how the Chinese and Africans believe how the World began, comparing this with the Christian faith. However, older pupils do not make the link between religion and charitable giving, and the way religions influence the life style of believers.

148. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. The teachers do not have a secure knowledge and understanding of the scheme of work for religious education. Much of the work that pupils do is oral and little written evidence is available in some classes. The quality of presentation is poor and tasks set are far too easy for most pupils. Too much work is unfinished. The lack of opportunities to write at length in religious education affects pupils' learning. It does not allow religious education to make enough contribution to their English skills. Nor does it allow pupils to consolidate their knowledge by sharing it with others. For some teachers, the limited amount of written work restricts their opportunities for assessing pupils' progress in this subject.

149. Where the teacher is enthusiastic, and plans the lesson well to involve the pupils fully, they respond positively. For example, in one lesson, pupils in Year 3 were very interested in

the importance of Abraham to Christianity, Judaism and Islam because they were able to take an active role, either as performers or spectators. They were able to develop their speaking skills, and to extend their social skills. However, this is an exception. As a result of repetitive and mundane tasks, often involving drawing and colouring, and far too much passive listening, pupils of all ages and attainments get bored and restless. Some misbehave. Few take sufficient pride in their work.

150. Displays fail to add to pupils' learning. Information and communication technology is not used to support teaching and learning in the subject. There are few opportunities to link with local places of worship, although the teachers do use the expertise of religious leaders in the wider community. Opportunities for spiritual development and reflection are available in some whole school assemblies. The subject leader is knowledgeable and provides good advice for colleagues when it is required. However, her role in monitoring and evaluating standards, teaching and learning is underdeveloped.