

INSPECTION REPORT

HIGHFIELD JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Saltley, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103215

Headteacher: Mr Nick Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr R Cheetham
2592

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 25th April 2002

Inspection number: 196319

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and Infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Highfield Road
Saltley
Birmingham

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs S Baker

Date of previous inspection: 2nd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2592	Mr R Cheetham	Registered inspector	Mathematics and English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9003	Mr B Findley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development, How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19121	Mr D Walker	Team Inspector	Science, religious education and equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils?
26219	Mrs P Hatfield	Team inspector	Art and design, music and the Foundation Stage	.
20990	Mr P Weston	Team Inspector	Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
15360	Mrs E Randall	Team Inspector	English and special educational needs	.
27618	Mrs P Baldry	Team Inspector	Geography and history	
14509	Mr P Mann	Team Inspector	Information and communication technology, design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a junior and infant community school that serves the Saltley area of Birmingham. This is an inner city area with significant social deprivation. In the area there is significant pressure for school places. It is a much larger than average school, with 801 pupils on roll aged from four to 11 and has increased in size since the previous inspection. This number includes 124 children in the reception classes into which they are admitted in the September of the year they have their fourth birthday. On entry to reception, children's attainment is well below the local education authority average, with particular weaknesses in speaking, reading and writing. Ninety three per cent of pupils come from families with either Pakistani or Bangladeshi backgrounds. The remaining pupils are from other minority ethnic backgrounds or are of White UK heritage. Recently the school admitted 19 pupils with Somali backgrounds who came to England from another European country. Ninety eight per cent of pupils are learning English as an additional language and this is very high when compared nationally. Thirty per cent of pupils (mostly in the reception and Year 1 classes) are at the very early stages of learning English. Besides English, the other languages spoken include: Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali, Pushto, Somali, Swedish and Malaysian. Fifty six per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal and this is well above average. There are 33 per cent of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and this is above average. These pupils' needs include: moderate learning difficulties, emotional and behavioural and speech and communication difficulties. Since the previous inspection the school has appointed a new headteacher. It has gained additional funding from the Excellence in Cities initiative, has acquired additional information and communication (ICT) resources and has developed adult education provision. It has recently received a national award for improving pupils' achievement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Highfield is an effective school that gives satisfactory value for money. Pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have improved since the previous inspection, as has the quality of teaching, which is now good overall. The school is well led and managed and has effective procedures to include all pupils in the education that it offers.

What the school does well

- The headteacher sets a clear educational direction and with senior staff leads and manages the school well
- Has established the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy well
- Is improving pupils' attainment in English, mathematics, science (the core subjects) and information and communication technology (ICT), and children's attainment in the Foundation Stage (children under five)
- Promotes pupils' good behaviour and very good attitudes to school
- Provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

What could be improved

- Standards in English and mathematics and in design and technology and geography (for pupils aged seven and 11), and in history and physical education (for pupils aged 11)
- The management of provision and aspects of teaching for pupils learning English as an additional language
- The effectiveness of the governing body
- The detail of school improvement planning over more than one year

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 previously inspected in June 1997. Since then it has made good progress and no longer has the serious weaknesses identified in the previous report. It has the capacity to

continue to improve. It has made satisfactory progress in raising pupils' attainments in English and mathematics although they remain well below the national average. It has made good progress in ensuring that its provision for religious education meets all the statutory requirements and in ICT that meets nearly all of them. It has developed curriculum planning, improved the assessment of pupils' progress, monitored and improved the quality of teaching, improved school management and has made sure that the school meets statutory requirements for collective worship. With the support of the local education authority it has managed a deficit budget and now has a small carry forward.

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	D	E	E	D
Mathematics	D	E	D	B
Science	D	D	D	B

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

On starting school, most children's attainment is well below that generally found particularly in mathematics and communication, language and literacy. During the reception classes they make good progress, especially in mathematics. By the time children start in Year 1, they reach below expected standards in all the areas of learning except in communication, language and literacy where their attainment is well below. In recent years, seven year old pupils' standards in reading and writing have been well below the national average. In mathematics, standards were either below or at the national average. In 2001, standards were very low in reading and well below the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, they were both well below average. Seven year olds' standards in mathematics were well below the national average but matched the average of similar schools. In 2001, science standards were very low against the national average and well below the average of similar schools. Since 1998, 11 year old pupils' standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have consistently improved. The table above shows that, when compared nationally, 11 year old pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science have been either below or well below average. In 2001, they were above the average of similar schools (those with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal) in mathematics and science but below average in English. When compared with similar Birmingham schools, the comparisons are generally more favourable because they take into account the proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language. Last year, the school did not meet its target for 11 year olds reaching the average grade in English but exceeded its target in mathematics. It is making satisfactory progress towards its challenging 2002 targets. The school acknowledges that it can improve standards further.

The inspection team finds that the current 11 year old pupils' standards of attainment continue to improve but are well below average in English and mathematics and are average in science. Most pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points. Standards in writing are below those in reading. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in reading and in mathematics. Most pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. In science, most Year 2 pupils' standards are below the level expected. In art and design there are particular strengths in shading and the use of tone and standards are average. In design and technology standards are below average and

pupils have weak skills in design and evaluation. Older pupils make slow progress in developing geographical skills and reach below average standards. Seven year old pupils have a good understanding of historical sequence but Year 6 standards are below average. In ICT, 11 year olds make good progress in developing their skills and understanding and reach average standards. Most Year 6 pupils are working below the expected level in physical education. In religious education, pupils aged 11 make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standard.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and have improved since the previous inspection.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Most pupils behave well because they understand and accept codes of conduct they have helped to make. Pupils observe classroom rules well and conduct themselves properly when moving around the school and at play.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and has also improved since the previous inspection. Relationships between pupils and with members of staff are good.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory but has improved steadily since its very low point some years ago. The average rate has been around 91 per cent for the last few years, which is well below the national average.

Pupils work and play happily together with few tensions of any kind and pupils co-operate well, especially when sharing equipment in pairs. At playtimes, pupils share the restricted space well and show consideration for others. Younger pupils have the worst attendance rates. A large proportion of absences is due to extended time spent abroad by around ten per cent of pupils and also absence by almost all pupils for some religious festivals. Unauthorised absence is too high because a few parents keep their children away for unnecessary reasons that the school does not condone. Punctuality is unsatisfactory because too many pupils are arriving late for registration in the morning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1-2	Years 3-6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

In the Foundation Stage, in all areas of learning, most teaching is good and in some lessons it is very good. Staff plan carefully to make sure the children experience a balance of activities that are suited to their differing abilities. All the reception classes are organised so that children experience a balance between teacher-directed activities and those that children choose. As a result the children learn to become more independent. In the rest of the school, the quality of English and mathematics teaching is good and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Most teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language is satisfactory but a few lessons are unsatisfactory. The school meets the needs of its pupils satisfactorily and the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is also satisfactory. Teaching is generally well planned and teachers have high expectations, particularly of higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics. Throughout the school teachers work well with learning support assistants to improve pupils' progress. From age 7, pupils are taught in ability groups in English and

mathematics and this helps teachers match their work to pupils' needs well. A few teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour well enough and they make slower progress. Most pupils respond well to their teachers and listen carefully. A minority do not ask promptly for help when they do not understand. Higher attaining pupils are mostly well motivated and try hard to improve. A minority of lower attaining pupils do not persevere when they find the work difficult.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory overall but lacks balance because one element of the ICT curriculum is not taught and a few subjects are not allocated enough time. The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements in all National Curriculum subjects (except ICT) and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for these pupils is good. They have access to all activities and a range of good resources and additional support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for these pupils is satisfactory. Nearly all those at the early stages of learning English are well supported and they make good progress in speaking and listening.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This provision is good overall with strengths in moral and social development. This promotes above expected standards of personal development. The school is a caring community and this has a good effect on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils well. It monitors their academic and personal development well.

The school has effective links with parents. There are effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and the school makes good provision for extra activities. It promotes pupils' access to school activities well and provides well for their personal, social and health education. The community makes a good contribution to the life of the school and it works well with local schools and organisations. ICT provision does not meet statutory requirements. The school monitors and promotes pupils' attendance and good behaviour very well. Staff are very careful to monitor and eliminate all forms of oppressive behaviour and are particularly vigilant over potential issues of racism. The school uses its assessment information on pupils in English and mathematics well to help it plan. It does not have detailed records on the progress pupils make in most subjects other than English and mathematics and in the early stages of learning English as an additional language.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads the school well and is supported in its good management by the leadership group that includes the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the two assistant headteachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body are fully committed to school improvement but does not fulfil all their responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school monitors and evaluates some important aspects of its work such as the quality of teaching and pupils' progress well.
The strategic use of resources	It makes satisfactory use of its resources but does not plan well enough for their use over the medium term.

The leadership group oversees school development and ensures that the school aims, such as those promoting all pupils' involvement in school activities, are well reflected in its work. Other important areas of school activity such as the leadership of most subjects have been delegated satisfactorily. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and the budget spent wisely. The line management for the provision of pupils learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. Governors are committed to school improvement and have some involvement in the improvement planning process but do not see the school plan at an early enough stage to help decide main school priorities. They rely too much on the headteacher for support in routine matters and not enough governors are directly involved in gathering their own information about the school or generating questions about its provision or priorities. There is a good number of teaching and support staff to cater for the needs of the pupils. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. The school is short of additional internal and external space. Learning resources are satisfactory. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like school • Good teaching • Expectations that pupils will work hard • How the school helps pupils become mature and responsible • How well it is led and managed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in the use of homework • Better information about progress • Better activities outside lessons

The inspection team supports these positive views but finds there are a few weaknesses in teaching of some younger pupils. The concerns about homework and information about progress are justified. Homework is not used consistently enough to support pupils' learning and pupils' annual reports are too brief. There is a good range of activities outside lessons to stimulate pupils' interest in learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

The Foundation Stage (children in the reception class)

1. According to the school's initial assessments, most children's attainment is well below that generally found when they start school. This is particularly so in mathematics and communication, language and literacy. During their time in the reception classes they make good progress, especially in mathematics. By the time they are ready to start Year 1 just under half the children have attained the early learning goals in mathematics and around the same proportion in the other areas of learning, with the exception of communication, language and literacy. The children's speaking and listening, reading and writing skills are still well below expected standards at the beginning of Year 1. Children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and most children for whom English is an additional language make good progress. This is because the staff plan suitable activities to develop children's language skills. The progress of a small number of Somali children is slow because staff do not speak their language.
2. **Key Stage 1** (pupils from five to seven)
Recent trends
In recent years, pupils' standards in reading have been well below the national average. In 2001, results were very low compared with the national average and well below the average of similar schools. Pupils' standards in writing were usually well below the national average except in 1999 when results were slightly better. In 2001, results were well below the national average and the average of similar schools. Girls did significantly worse than boys over this four year period. In the same period, mathematics standards were slightly higher and were either below or at the national average. In 2001 they were well below the national average but matched the average of similar schools. In the 2001 assessments in science, standards were very low against the national average and well below the average of similar schools. Last year, the school completed a value added analysis of pupils' progress from their starting points on entry to Year 1 to the end of Year 2. This showed that most who made slow progress were on the special educational needs register or had a poor attendance record. Of the remainder, 37 per cent did better or much better than predicted in reading, 20 per cent in writing and 53 per cent in mathematics.
3. The similar schools comparison matches this school's results with the results of other schools nationally that have a similar proportion of pupils entitled to a free school meal. It does not take into account the proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language. The school claims that the high proportion of pupils in Years 1 and 2 who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language significantly affects the comparison of school results when this factor is not taken into account. Birmingham education authority includes this factor in its local comparisons. In 2001, the school results compared favourably with similar Birmingham schools in mathematics and science and were broadly in line with them in reading. The school results were below the average of similar Birmingham schools in writing.
4. **Key Stage 2** (pupils from eight to 11)
Recent trends
From a point of very low English standards in 1998, standards steadily improved to either below or well below the national average. In 2001, standards were below the average of similar schools. Standards have improved overall from their low point of 1997 but have declined slightly since 1999. Mathematics standards have improved from a point of very

low standards in 1998, to either below or well below the national average. In 2001, standards were above the average of similar schools. Overall the trend has been upwards since 1998 and boys did significantly better than girls during this period. In 1998, pupils' standards in science were very low. Since then standards have consistently improved to be below the national average. Boys did significantly better than girls over this period. In 2001, standards were above the average of similar schools.

5. As with the Key Stage 1 figures, the school has compared the Key Stage 2 figures with those of similar Birmingham schools. The school's results compare favourably with these in mathematics and science and were broadly in line with them in reading. They were below them in writing. The school's value added analysis shows that 57 per cent of 11 year olds made better or much better progress in mathematics and English than was predicted from their results at age seven. In science the proportion was higher at 60 per cent.
6. As a result of the analysis of pupils' performance, the school decided to continue to keep further improvement in pupils' writing as its top priority and to try to raise girls' attainment by altering its teaching methods and grouping girls separately for science in Year 6. Last year the school did not meet its target for 11 year olds' attainment in English but exceeded its mathematics target. It has set challenging targets in both subjects this year and is on course to meet them.
7. **The current seven and 11 year olds**

In both English and mathematics, lower attaining pupils are a larger proportion than is found in most schools. The relative size of this group makes the school's results significantly lower overall. Most of these pupils are slower than others to master spoken and written English and a minority of them join the school with little or no English. This is a factor in their making slower than expected progress in both English and mathematics as well as in some other subjects. In a few cases, a few older pupils make very good progress in learning English as an additional language. They quickly acquire a functional vocabulary but this does not yet enable them to follow the nuances of English that would give them access to higher levels of attainment. Successful teachers are constantly aware of the difficulties faced by pupils learning English as an additional language and build in particular teaching strategies to give their pupils the widest access to learning and enable them to make good progress. The impact of these strategies is mentioned in this section of the report and in the Teaching section.

8. Pupils' standards of attainment in English are rising because of good teaching and management. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of good support in lessons. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy well and this is helping to raise standards and improve the quality of learning. Seven and 11 year old pupils' standards of literacy are well below average but they make satisfactory progress from their starting points. Most pupils' standards of speaking and listening are well below average but they make good progress from their starting points. Seven year old pupils listen well to the teacher and use a growing vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils show confidence when speaking to larger groups and can give relevant details when explaining something. They show by their questions and answers that they understand instructions and the main points of discussion. Boys are more eager to talk than girls. Most lower attaining pupils answer with a single word and find it difficult to speak in sentences. Eleven year old pupils speak confidently when answering questions and talking in small groups. Many average and lower attaining pupils do not speak clearly or confidently enough when talking to larger groups because they are not always sure of the words they need to use. Higher attaining pupils learn new vocabulary quickly because teachers use books well to introduce them to new words and ideas. They are good at remembering these and use them in their own talk.

9. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in reading. Higher attaining pupils (about one quarter of all pupils) make good progress and reach the expected level. Seven year old pupils' standards in reading are well below average. Most make satisfactory progress and learn how to use sounds and pictures to work out new words. Higher attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in recognising and matching letter sounds and rhyming words when they work with an adult but do not do this well enough in their own reading. Higher attaining pupils read simple texts fluently and accurately. They enjoy reading and talk about their book enthusiastically. Most average attaining pupils find it difficult when they read a word but do not know what it means. This frustrates them and slows their progress. Most 11 year old pupils make good progress in reading accurately and fluently because teachers give them plenty of time to read in groups and alone. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in reading with understanding. They can talk about characters and what they do. Most average attaining pupils read accurately but not always with expression. They understand most of what they read but are not so good at explaining why characters act as they do. They do not think about the meaning of the whole piece to help them work out words they do not know. This prevents them from fully understanding all of what they read. Lower attaining pupils read accurately but without expression. They can tell about some of what happens but often do not understand much of the meaning and struggle to discuss it. A few boys do not enjoy reading. Most pupils can use contents, index and glossary to help them to find what they want in information books.
10. Seven and 11 year olds' standards of writing are well below average. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils are making good progress and are reaching reasonable standards. Seven year old pupils make good progress in forming their letters and writing these correctly because teachers show them regularly. Higher attaining pupils write neatly and generally spell words correctly. In some cases when they are not sure they make a good try. Average attaining pupils know that a story needs a beginning, middle and end but often forget to build their writing well enough. They use letter sounds to help them spell correctly and although most know about capital letters and full stops, they do not use them consistently. Lower attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in writing simple sentences but often need a lot of help with this. Eleven year old pupils make good progress in writing stories, using a wider vocabulary and drafting their ideas to improve their writing. Most higher attaining pupils write in a lively way and use punctuation correctly. Average attaining pupils know how to build up a story. Most use punctuation correctly when reminded but often cannot think up enough of their own ideas to enliven their writing. Lower attaining pupils write in sentences but do not use enough words to extend their writing. They do not know enough English words to write at any length.
11. In mathematics, seven and 11 year old pupils' standards of attainment are well below average. Pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points and the school's standards have improved since the previous inspection. Numeracy standards are below average. However, higher attaining pupils make good progress and reach above average standards in mathematics by the time they are 11. The proportion of these pupils is about a fifth of the year group. Pupils' attainment in number work is higher than in other aspects of mathematics. Higher attaining pupils carry out number investigations swiftly and accurately and have good recall of their times tables. They make slower progress in developing their own ideas for investigations or when checking their answers by estimating. There are fewer girls than boys in this higher attaining group and girls progress at a slower rate in other year groups. However, the proportion of girls reaching the expected levels of attainment continues to rise as teachers give them opportunities to explain their work to the class. Average attaining pupils have a good grasp of the four rules of number and are particularly good at showing how they worked out the answers to problems. Their work in calculating the perimeters of shapes and co-ordinates needs

further improvement. Lower attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in basic number skills but slow progress solving problems either when they are written or when the teachers read them out.

12. In science, most Year 2 pupils' standards are below the level expected and only a few pupils are working at the higher level. Most do not make enough progress because pupils of differing abilities often get the same work to do. Pupils can communicate their findings in diagrammatic ways but cannot do so using scientific vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils can record their observations in limited ways but are unsure about carrying out fair tests. Pupils can identify fruits and vegetables and describe the changes in their bodies brought about by exercise. Most can draw a simple circuit. They can identify plants and animals in the local environment but have difficulty in classifying them. The standard of work in Year 6 is average, with about one fifth of pupils working at the level above that expected of their age. Overall, these pupils have made good progress since their most recent national tests in 1998. Pupils are developing their skills of scientific enquiry well and can decide on an appropriate approach to answer a question. They can control the variables to make a fair test and make careful measurements to record their findings. Higher attaining pupils can draw conclusions from their observations.
13. Seven and 11 year old pupils' standards in art and design are satisfactory. All pupils make reasonable progress. There are particular strengths throughout the school in shading and the use of tone, especially in pencil drawings. In design and technology, standards are below average for both the seven and 11 year olds and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Although Year 6 pupils' construction skills are satisfactory, they have weak skills in design and evaluation. In geography, older pupils make slow progress in developing geographical skills especially work relating to using atlases, globes, maps and plans. Pupils make satisfactory progress in comparing their own locality with other areas. In history, seven year old pupils reach average standards. They have a good understanding of historical sequence and a growing knowledge of important figures in the past. By the time they are 11, standards are below average and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. Pupils can recall the detail of some of the periods they have studied but they have difficulty going beyond this by examining reasons for the differences. In ICT, seven year old pupils' standards are below expectations but 11 year olds reach average standards and make good progress in developing their skills and understanding. Attainment in physical education is average by the age of seven and below average by the age of 11. Most are working below the expected level in gymnastics, games and swimming skills and make unsatisfactory progress. In religious education, seven and 11 year old pupils' standards are in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus and they make satisfactory progress. Seven year old pupils' standards are average but too little music was seen to make a judgement on 11 year olds' standards and progress.
14. **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' personal development is good and has also improved. Behaviour and relationships remain good but attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. Parents generally agree that their children like school and acknowledge the work of the school in promoting good standards of behaviour. Pupils are enthusiastic about school and organise themselves well at the beginning of the day. A minority of girls lack confidence in their ability and do not take an active enough part in lessons. A few pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language do not ask for help when they are uncertain. Most pupils are keen to start lessons, take pleasure in what they do and are proud to do well. A few pupils in Years 1 to 3 cannot sustain their interest and concentration when not clear about what to do or when the pace of work is too slow. Most pupils with special educational needs try hard and behave well when their work is well

matched to their needs and when supported by adults. They lose interest and motivation when these two factors are not present.

15. Most pupils behave well because they understand and accept codes of conduct they have helped to design. Pupils observe classroom discipline well and conduct themselves properly when moving around the school and in the playground, where they share restricted space well. Pupils are polite and take good care with their work and with equipment. A few pupils, mostly boys behave unsatisfactorily and talk when they should be listening. This is often a response to uninteresting work and there are a few times when the teacher does not deal with disruption properly and classrooms become too noisy. Generally, pupils are motivated to behave well and need little more than a reminder about how to conduct themselves. Sanctions beyond that are unusual for nearly all pupils. The rate of exclusion is very low and last year one pupil was excluded temporarily.
16. Relationships between pupils and with members of staff are good. Pupils of different ethnic backgrounds work and play happily together with few tensions and co-operate well in class especially when sharing equipment in pairs. Girls can relate instances of being picked on by some of the boys but this does not hinder their enjoyment of school because staff deal with problems promptly. Children in the reception classes and older pupils generally develop very well during their time in school. They respond well to the opportunities provided for exercising responsibility. Good examples of this are when reception class children tidy away their games and learn to share activities and when Year 6 pupils act as play leaders at break and lunchtimes. Pupils from this year group also act successfully as mediators for problems that occur in the playground. Pupils accept their responsibilities very maturely. This is particularly noticeable during their involvement in the school council, where they develop a very balanced view of school issues. Another good example is the adoption of streets in the vicinity of the school, which they keep clear of litter under the supervision of a staff member.
17. Attendance has improved steadily since being very low some years ago. The average rate has been around 91 per cent for the last few years, which is well below the national average. Attendance improves as pupils grow older and some Year 6 classes have attendance around the national average. Younger pupils have the worst attendance rates. Most absences are due to extended time spent abroad by around ten per cent of pupils and also absence by almost all pupils on religious days during Eid, although there are also some absences in preparation for these occasions. But for these circumstances, due to the very high proportion of Muslim pupils in the school, the rate of attendance would be in line with national averages and most pupils have a good record of attendance. Unauthorised absence is too high because a few parents keep their children away for unnecessary reasons that the school does not condone. Punctuality is unsatisfactory because too many pupils are arriving late for registration in the morning, although lateness after registration has improved as a result of the school's strenuous efforts and encouragement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. Across the school, 12 per cent of lessons are very good, 42 per cent are good, 30 per cent are satisfactory and 14 per cent are unsatisfactory. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and in some lessons it is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching in reception classes was unsatisfactory. Staff plan carefully to make sure the children experience a balance of activities that are suited to the different abilities of the children. Some bilingual learning assistants use the children's home language to support those learning English as an additional language. Where teaching is very good, the staff carefully introduce new words and phrases to the children, emphasising pronunciation and encouraging them to use the new words. This happened in a painting activity, where the teacher emphasised the word 'blossom' to describe the flowers on the cherry trees they

had seen on a walk. This helps to build their knowledge of English words and phrases. All the reception classes are organised so that children experience a balance between teacher-directed activities and those that children choose. As a result the children learn to become more independent.

19. In the rest of the school, the quality of English and mathematics teaching is good and the skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well. Teachers have good knowledge of these subjects and lessons have a clear structure. Teachers introduce lessons well by telling pupils what they are to learn and often linking this to preceding work. The work with groups of pupils is usually good and teachers work well with learning support assistants to involve all pupils in the lessons. Most English and mathematics lessons end well and teachers use this part of the lessons to assess what pupils have learned and reinforce some key points. Because the pupils are taught in ability groups for English and mathematics, teachers are better able to match the work to most pupils' needs. Teachers assess pupils' work well and use this information to plan future lessons. Most pupils then try hard to improve, although some lower attaining pupils do not persevere if the work is too demanding or if they do not readily understand.
20. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is of a generally higher quality than in Years 1 and 2 although there are several examples of high quality teaching throughout the school. Some unsatisfactory aspects of teaching include a lack of subject knowledge in physical education and geography for instance. Where teachers are confident in their subject knowledge as in some art and design lessons, they demonstrate techniques for pupils to copy. In a few lessons, teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour well enough. They allow pupils to call out and this does not let others contribute and the pace of these lessons is too slow. These weaknesses in teaching are often the result of inexperience and the school is actively supporting further improvement. In the very good lessons, teachers ask a lot of their pupils and they respond well by answering questions eagerly and completing work to a good standard. In these lessons though, boys tend to answer more questions and teachers are careful to encourage the girls to answer or to demonstrate their work to the whole class. This is a consistent feature of most teachers' work and is helping to raise girls' attainment and self-confidence. Homework is routinely set for English throughout the school and mathematics homework set for older pupils is helping to improve their progress. Overall, however, the quantity and regularity of homework varies from class to class and its impact is unsatisfactory. ICT is being used to limited extent in most subjects. It is used satisfactorily in English for redrafting writing but it is not in regular use in all classes in mathematics.
21. Most teaching of pupils learning English as an additional language is satisfactory but a few lessons are unsatisfactory and some teaching techniques are not used widely enough. Most teachers make good use of pupils' different levels of speaking and listening attainment by regularly providing them with opportunities to discuss what they have been asked to do and how they should go about it. Sometimes pupils talk in minority languages to explain to others or they simply re-phrase in English what the teacher has explained. This regular routine enables a wider group of pupils to make progress than would otherwise be the case if they relied on teacher explanations alone. Most teachers speak distinctly and a minority regularly repeat what they have said in different ways to help more pupils understand. A few teachers and learning support assistants speak the same languages that pupils speak at home and use simultaneous translations with pupils who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. The school is actively seeking more staff with this ability. In a minority of lessons, teachers make a point of introducing new words by repeating them with the pupils and writing them on the board for reference. This helps to increase their vocabulary and understanding. This does not happen enough. Too few teachers routinely correct pupils' spoken English and this is more noticeable among lower attaining pupils. When teachers do make a point of doing this they do it well. They strike the right balance so that they pick out aspects of spoken

English that are most commonly incorrect and this helps a wider group of pupils to improve. When the specialist teacher works alongside class teachers, the work is satisfactory because small groups of pupils can talk through parts of the lesson with her. She can assess their needs and give them extra support. Her work with small groups away from the class is unsatisfactory. This is partly because the lessons are in a busy corridor and pupils find it hard to concentrate. However, it is mainly because pupils are of similar attainment. Discussions among them are very limited. Pupils make little progress in developing their speaking skills. The resources pupils use in pairs do not stimulate discussion although they do help to develop skills of co-operation. The school intends to review this element of provision.

22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. There is some unsatisfactory teaching in Years 2 and 3 because the work is not pitched at the right level. Generally, learning support assistants work well with the pupils and use good resources to reinforce their understanding. Teachers' planning is good and is mostly linked to pupils' individual education plans. Teachers question pupils sensitively as they work to assess their level of understanding. Pupils are interested in their work and gain confidence from working in small groups. They work well with adult support but do not concentrate well when working independently.

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory overall. The curriculum is broad and meets statutory requirements in almost all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. Not all elements of the ICT curriculum are offered and a few subjects such as music are not allocated enough time. The school is aware of this and taking steps to address it. High priority is given to English and mathematics and the school has rightly given these two subjects prominence. The National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy have both been fully implemented. Staff continue to receive effective training, which makes a good contribution to raising standards throughout the school. Medium term (for each term) and short term (weekly) planning is good in both subjects. Teachers use the Strategy frameworks well to set progressively more demanding work and to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.
24. The curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is well-planned using nationally recommended guidance and gives children a good range of learning opportunities. There is a particularly strong emphasis on pupils' personal, social and emotional development, and on communication and language skills, which is very relevant to the needs of the pupils. Staff offer a wide variety of interesting and stimulating learning experiences to ensure that the children make good progress. Displays of work in reception classes create an exciting learning environment.
25. Since the previous inspection the school has made satisfactory progress in completing the developments in curriculum planning. Planning has mostly been updated, often using national guidance. Each year group has termly plans and clear objectives are shared with pupils. The Foundation Stage, Literacy and Numeracy lessons follow their respective strategies and in these areas progress has been good. However, there remain weaknesses in the planning of some subjects. Planning does not ensure that pupils systematically develop their skills in science, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Although ICT makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning in English, it makes an unsatisfactory contribution in most other subjects.
26. The school works hard so that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and equal opportunity to succeed in learning. The school's determination to meet the needs of its pupils is reflected very clearly in its policies and practices. There are a range of quality initiatives, which are starting to be co-ordinated by the inclusion team (a group of staff) to

develop cross-curricular links and ensure equal opportunities are implicit in the curriculum. For example, the team has written an effective equal opportunities policy and admissions policy and has purchased bilingual texts, which are deployed in classrooms. All pupils with special educational needs have access to all curricular activities. A range of good resources and work matched to their needs enables pupils to be taught in class. Learning support assistants and integration assistants give good support to make sure that pupils have access to the full curriculum. This helps them to make satisfactory progress. In a similar way, the school makes satisfactory provision for pupils learning English as an additional language. It rightly places emphasis on those pupils new to the language and if their home language is one spoken widely at school, then staff and pupils provide good support. The school recognises the need to increase its bilingual provision in the majority languages. Some specialist support for young pupils is not effective because the level of activity and grouping arrangements do not promote good progress. The school has tried hard to provide bilingual support for those pupils that are new to English and speak minority school languages such as Somali. This support has been difficult to obtain and most of these pupils' progress has been slow as a result. The majority of pupils are not at this early stage although they are still learning English as an additional language. The support for these pupils mostly comes from class teachers and its quality depends on their awareness of the pupils' differing language needs. Most teachers provide a satisfactory level of support through their teaching strategies.

27. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education through the daily life and routines of the school. The school has recently been awarded the Healthy Schools Award and the Birmingham Healthy School Standard for its progress in implementing its health education programme. Pupils learn about healthy life styles and gain an awareness of drug misuse and sex education within their science lessons. The school is about to consult with parents about introducing a more formal sex education programme for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Weekly circle time lessons (lessons in which pupils learn to listen to and respect other pupils' views and offer their own) are timetabled throughout the school and these provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to explore personal feelings. The school's anti-bullying policy and practice is strong. The election of representatives to the School Council is helping pupils to understand citizenship. This has been extended into the wider community following the election of two representatives onto the Saltley Young People's Parliament.
28. There is a good programme of extra-curricular activities including football, Uni-hoc (an adaptation of hockey) and skipping. Pupils take part in football matches and an annual Uni-hoc competition against local schools and have had some success. The school gives pupils good opportunities to take part in a wide variety of educational visits that enrich the curriculum. These include visits to Symphony Hall to listen to concerts, a trip to see the Birmingham ballet performance of 'Swan Lake' and visits to The Fort Shopping Centre to study history and geography as well as reinforce mathematics and English skills. Visitors to the school also provide a good support for the curriculum. Recent examples of this were visits by 'Caliche' to share South American music, Urdu singers and puppet theatres. Education visits are organised for each year group to complement subjects and themes being studied and the school holds an annual Art Festival Day to share learning in music, drama, gymnastics, poetry and dance. Residential trips to Bell Heath and a weekend camping trip further enrich the curriculum.
29. The quality of the curriculum is enhanced by good links with the community. There are good relationships with the local nursery. The community room is a joint venture operated with Highfield Nursery School and is used for adult education classes for the locality. Annual harvest food is distributed to Trinity House and St Basil's. A local bakery generously supports the school, which allows it to subsidise the cost of trips, visits and visitors to the school. There are effective partnerships with other schools and colleges through organisations such as 'Saltley Plus', a consortium of schools in the Saltley area,

and the school also benefits from its participation in the 'Excellence in Cities' project. These links provide good opportunities for teachers' joint training activities and to transfer information. They also allow pupils to visit other schools, for instance, to participate in sports events.

30. The school has established good connections with the Careers and Education Business Partnership. Together they have developed an association with the Fort Shopping Centre and Jaguar. Pupils in Year 1 have worked with Pizza Express and a good school magazine has been established in connection with the Birmingham Mail. The school has established a good association with the sports officer, who arranges for sports celebrities to coach pupils in basketball, football and cricket. Staff have made effective links with the Bangladeshi community who use the school premises for homework classes. The school is host to a number of students for work experience. It is a nursery nurse training centre and participates in the graduate teacher training programme, which provides a good source of additional help and support for pupils and staff.
31. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This promotes above expected standards of personal development. The school is a caring community and this has a good effect on pupils' behaviour and attitudes.
32. Pupils' spiritual development is supported well through religious education and assemblies. Teachers encourage pupils to consider others' beliefs and help them develop an understanding of these. Pupils learn to appreciate the beauty of the world and talk about things they can see but cannot explain and touch. After one group of pupils discussed this beauty as a miracle, they wrote about their own "miracles". One wrote with feeling about, "Sparkling stars shining in the silk sky." Teachers encourage pupils to think about such issues as disasters and debate why these happen. This makes pupils think more deeply about life and the feelings of others. Regular assemblies are good opportunities for pupils to think about giving thanks for what we have and remembering the needs of others. Teachers consistently take into account pupils' ideas and show them that they matter. Pupils know that they can share their feelings and ideas, for instance when talking about stories and poetry. They respond well when teachers ask them to think how others feel when they are bullied or lost and afraid.
33. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' moral and social development and make them clear. Adults set a good example by treating pupils and other adults with courtesy and thoughtfulness. For instance, thanking the pupils for working hard and taking time to thank the learning support assistant for helping pupils. School, playground and class rules, which pupils have helped to write, are prominently displayed. Teachers expect pupils to follow these. There is a good emphasis on pupils doing their best. Teachers give awards for individuals and classes for good work, helpfulness and behaviour. This shows that the school values effort and helpfulness. Teachers consistently remind pupils of their duty to care for others. Older pupils help others at playtimes and dinner times. They act as mediators and play leaders to help other pupils play together and solve difficulties. Pupils who are part of the school council accept their responsibilities maturely and sensibly decide on issues brought by other pupils. Pupils are aware of people less fortunate than themselves because the school makes them aware. They raise money for charities to help. In lessons teachers encourage pupils to work together to discuss, share and solve problems. A good example of this is pupils working in pairs on mathematics investigations. At playtimes pupils use restricted play spaces well because teachers constantly remind them of the need to share and think of others. Awards for attendance encourages pupils to work as a class to gain a certificate. Teachers give pupils jobs to do such as helping to clear up and tidying their own tables. All these opportunities make a very good contribution to pupils' social and moral development.

34. There are good opportunities for pupils' cultural development. Visits, assemblies and subjects such as history, English and religious education help pupils to understand different celebrations and cultures. In religious education pupils learn about other faiths such as Buddhism and can compare ideas and beliefs with their own faith. They understand what has influenced their heritage through work on Islam. When they learn about famous people like Martin Luther King, Gandhi and Mother Theresa, teachers help pupils to realise the importance of human achievement. Books give pupils the chance to experience, for instance, African Caribbean and Gambian stories and way of life. In art and design, pupils learn about different kinds of art including Islamic, African, Indian and Chinese. The school takes every opportunity to display work on these themes to make pupils more aware of aspects of other cultures as well as their own.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school provides a safe and caring place for learning and gives effective levels of support and guidance to pupils. There are good arrangements for the welfare and safety of pupils, with regular health and safety checks and adequate levels of first aid expertise. A few staff do not ensure that pupils observe school guidance on wearing jewellery in physical education. On the other hand, the school crossing patrol works diligently to make sure that such large numbers of pupils and their parents or carers cross the busy road in safety. It has satisfactory arrangements for pupils' safe access to the Internet. Child protection arrangements are in line with locally recommended procedures. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are satisfactory. It uses its analysis of pupil performance data effectively to plan its curriculum and class organisation.
36. The school monitors and promotes pupils' personal development well. There are very good procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Pupils are involved in the target setting process and are aware of their individual targets for writing. The school celebrates the achievement of its pupils and promotes their confidence and self-esteem. There are congratulation assemblies, discussions between teachers and pupils about progress, parents' evenings and pupils' annual reports. The school's organisation of teaching and learning supports different groups of pupils increasingly well. For instance, to counter girls' underachievement in science the school has organised for girls in Year 6 to have some separate lessons.
37. Pupils' good behaviour is promoted very well through a positive ethos of respect for others and the high quality relationships between pupils and members of staff. Codes of conduct are agreed with pupils and rules are displayed around the school. Pupils value the awards they receive for doing well. Unsatisfactory behaviour in the classroom is not always dealt with successfully enough, because a few teachers of some of the younger pupils do not have all the necessary skills. The school has recently adopted a strategy for dealing with unsatisfactory behaviour through joint work between the teachers and the school behaviour coordinator. This is proving successful.
38. The school treats the question of bullying and all forms of oppressive, sexist or racist behaviour seriously. Records, such as the racial incident log, are used very well to support very positive measures to eliminate problems. Issues are discussed between pupils in circle time in lessons and through the School Council, so that problems are aired openly and this gives pupils confidence in the school procedures. The school has successfully involved pupils in taking responsibility for supporting behaviour by using Year 6 pupils as mediators and play leaders at break and lunchtimes.
39. The school tries very hard to improve and sustain levels of attendance, which are affected by some special family circumstances such as extended holidays. The school has a very clear picture of attendance. It uses computer records very well to analyse data to act on

and also provide information to pupils and parents. Most teachers keep very detailed records of the reasons for absences and lateness. The school is also working with the educational social worker to improve punctuality by school gate checks and speaking with parents. There are notices around the school, and a large clock face showing the time pupils should be in the playground is in a prominent position near the school entrance. Leaflets in different languages are given to parents when arriving late. These measures have largely eliminated lateness after registration.

40. The school provides good levels of personal support and guidance based on the high quality of relationships between teachers and support assistants with their pupils and the records teachers keep. There is good collaboration between teachers and two learning support mentors and the home liaison teacher, so that individual problems are addressed promptly and parents involved appropriately.
41. When children join the Foundation Stage, staff make detailed assessments of what children can do and use the results to set targets for pupils' future learning. They keep records of children's progress in three of the areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, and mathematical development. Progress is not assessed and recorded in the other three areas of learning: knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. This means that only informal records in these areas are passed on to staff in Year 1.
42. The school has recently introduced effective procedures for tracking pupils' progress as they move from the Foundation Stage to Year 6. At present these can only track pupils' progress in English and mathematics and in these subjects the monitoring of pupils' progress is very good. Teachers set targets for all pupils in these subjects during October and then their progress towards them is reviewed in February. In light of the review, targets are set for July. The school's senior managers then review the progress made by all pupils prior to the cycle beginning again in October. Pupils have individual targets for writing. They are familiar with these and they help keep pupils focused on their areas for improvement.
43. In science, geography and history, teachers make regular assessments of pupils' attainment and progress against the learning objectives for each unit of work. In these subjects, teachers plan work based on what they know about pupils' learning. This is not possible in music, art and design, design and technology, ICT and physical education because the school does not record the attainment and progress of pupils in these subjects. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have an exercise book for collecting examples of their work in religious education. Although this shows what they have covered, it does not show their progress or attainment. Pupils' skills development in ICT is recorded in a personal record of achievement. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is recorded in the Foundation Stage but there is no recording of older pupils' personal development through the rest of the school.
44. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is reviewed regularly and the special educational needs' co-ordinator effectively monitors the progress of these pupils. Pupils are involved wherever possible in setting the targets for their own Individual Education Plans. Teachers then plan work that helps pupils to reach their targets. The progress of pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is changing from one system to another. The previous system recorded the progress of most of these pupils on an individual basis but did not enable the school to have an overall view of their collective progress. The new system will record this individual progress in more detail but will have the same shortcoming. The work is focused on the youngest pupils and some older ones' progress is not detailed in the same way. The information is largely confined to the specialist teacher and should be more widely used by the school to help its planning. Since most other pupils are also learning English as an additional

language, the school uses its English assessment data to record their progress. This is not refined enough to pick out the detail of some of the slower pupils' progress in speaking and listening.

45. Developments based on the analysis of data include: setting by ability in English and mathematics, providing science booster classes in Year 6, a wider understanding of the use of data among staff, additional literacy support for pupils in Year 3, keyword assessment in Year 1 and the appointment of an additional teacher to support literacy work in Year 4. The deputy headteacher leads this use of analysis of the school's performance data well and this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Curriculum co-ordinators are not involved in this to the same degree but the school has plans to increase their role.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents generally think well of the school and express support for most areas of its work. In particular, parents compliment the school on how much pupils like school, its good teaching, staff expectations that pupils will work hard, how the school helps pupils become mature and responsible and how well it is led and managed. The inspection findings support these positive views but find there is some weakness in the teaching of the younger pupils. A substantial number of parents would like to see improvement in the use of homework. Some parents would like better information about progress and better activities outside lessons. The concerns about homework and information about progress are justified. Homework is not used consistently enough to support pupils' learning and pupils' annual written reports are too brief although they are backed up with discussions. There is a sufficient range of activities outside lessons to stimulate pupils' interest in learning.
47. The school has an effective relationship with parents, which contributes significantly to pupils' learning. Parents take a keen interest in school life and value the school as a community asset. There are workshops in literacy and numeracy to equip parents to support their children at home. The school arranges courses in English, computer studies and childcare, which give parents the confidence and skills to help their children learn. There are regular helpers in the classroom, some of whom are gaining qualifications through this route. School events are well attended and parents give very good support to fund-raising activities of the pupils. The school takes account of parental views in evaluating its work through questionnaires and consultation meetings and is about to consult over a policy change.
48. Information to parents about school life is good. There are very good newsletters, regular daily contacts with staff and well-displayed notice boards. Letters are sent to parents in different languages, for example, about attendance. The annual report of the governing body does not meet some headline requirements, such as the professional development of staff, arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and for people with disability. The school prospectus does not inform parents of their right to withdraw pupils from religious education and collective worship. General Information about pupils' progress is unsatisfactory although parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed of their progress. Most reports offer too little information about attainment and progress and do not identify targets for improvement. Comments are often too general and there is little reference to the key skills in English and mathematics.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. This aspect of the school has improved since the previous inspection when there were significant weaknesses in leadership and management. The headteacher leads the school well and is supported in its good management by the leadership group of senior

staff. The governing body is fully committed to school improvement but does not fulfil all its responsibilities effectively. The school monitors and evaluates some important aspects of its work such as the quality of teaching and pupils' progress well. It makes satisfactory use of its resources but does not plan well enough for their use over the medium term. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

50. The headteacher has established a clear agenda for the improvement of this very large school and has involved staff and governors well in this shared enterprise. He has established clear management roles for the leadership group. Besides the headteacher, there is the deputy headteacher, who analyses pupil assessment data to help the school understand how well it is performing. The two assistant headteachers' main tasks are to co-ordinate teaching, learning and organisation in the lower and upper school. The group oversees school development and works together well on such tasks as co-ordinating the school improvement plan. It also ensures that the school aims, such as those promoting the interests of all pupils and their involvement in all school activities, are well reflected in its work.
51. Other important areas of school activity such as the leadership of most subjects have been delegated satisfactorily. Initiatives such as the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and the development of the Foundation Stage curriculum are being implemented well and pupils' learning has improved as a result. Significant new areas of school activity are being developed such as the strong links with local business. These enable the school to develop resources and widen the curriculum for its pupils. However, the development of the school management structure is only partly complete and some anomalies exist. These include one teacher overseeing the development of two subjects. As a result one subject is led satisfactorily but the other is not. There are informal arrangements for supporting subject leaders in their work but the school is large enough for these arrangements to be put on a more formal footing. As a consequence of a long-term staff absence, geography is led unsatisfactorily. The school recognises the clear need to give the leadership of subjects (other than English and mathematics) and aspects (such as the provision for pupils learning English as an additional language) a higher priority but does not have a detailed medium term improvement plan for bring this about.
52. The school ensures that the provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and the budget spent wisely. The co-ordinator analyses data on the progress of special educational needs pupils well. She understands their needs and sets targets for their improvement with staff. She has a clear action plan to implement the new code of practice and it will be implemented shortly. She works with learning support assistants to help them make further improvements to their work. In such a large school, there is a danger that provision may be uneven and it is partly due to her vigilance and staff awareness that it is only on the odd occasion that the requirements of all pupils with special educational needs are not fully met. There is no similar clearly defined line management for the provision of pupils learning English as an additional language, and this is unsatisfactory. The specialist teacher is making changes to the assessment of their early progress but this is behind hand and it does not yield enough useful information. The quality of teaching of English within other subjects to all pupils who have English as an additional language has not been a focus for staff training or of classroom observation and so the quality of this aspect of teaching is good in just only half of the lessons. The budget for the provision of pupils learning English as an additional language has been focused on the youngest pupils since they have the greatest need. This has helped these pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and overall progress in learning English as an additional language for most other pupils is satisfactory.
53. The current improvement plan is satisfactory and has helped chart school progress for this year. There is a clear set of annual priorities and these are linked to school finances. Tasks are allocated to staff and there is a satisfactory timetable for task completion. The

plan does not have clear ways for staff and governors to judge the success of their efforts. There are a few links to school targets and these help to bring together school activity with measurable outcomes. The plan should have more of these links. A good feature of the current plan is the way the school's good system of performance management of teaching staff links the pupil progress targets with staff targets. However, the plan does not go into enough detail on school development beyond one year. The school included this in previous plans and has the financial forecasts to do so now. Governors have some involvement in the improvement planning process but do not see it at an early enough stage to help decide fundamental school priorities. The leadership team drafts these and staff are properly consulted. Some subject leaders have useful plans for developing their subjects but others do not. This is because the links between their subject leadership and school improvement planning are not clear enough. However, subject leaders do bid for finance for the development of their subjects each year and the allocation is moderated by the leadership group. In this way, they allocate finance to school priorities in line with the improvement plan.

54. Since the previous inspection, the school has agreed with the local education authority to manage a deficit budget so that it could buy needed subject resources, maintain staffing levels and promote school improvement. The school has managed its financial resources satisfactorily and this year plans a small carry forward rather than a deficit. Governors have been kept informed throughout this period of deficit and the school has taken some measures to reduce its expenditure to bring the budget back into credit. Most aspects of its budget are managed satisfactorily. Until recently, the school found it difficult to plan beyond one year since some additional finance sources varied from year to year. However, the school has acted on the recommendations of the latest auditor's report and its financial controls are satisfactory.
55. The governing body has a few vacancies because local education authority nominees do not attend regularly. Governors set and oversee the school budget and this aspect of their work is satisfactory but other aspects are unsatisfactory. This is because while they keep a general overview of school development, they rely too much on the headteacher for support in routine matters such as the Governors' Annual Report to Parents or the school prospectus. Both these documents have omissions and do not fulfil statutory requirements. A few governors have a direct involvement with the school. For instance, the chair of governors meets the headteacher weekly and the governor linked to special educational needs provision has some contact with the special educational needs co-ordinator. Too few others are directly involved in gathering their own information about the school or generating questions about its provision or priorities.
56. The school has a good structure for monitoring the quality of teaching. Senior staff mostly carry this out although there are plans to involve subject leaders more. They have mainly observed the teaching of English and mathematics and this has helped raise the standard of teaching in line with the improving quality of post-observation discussions with teachers. Other monitoring and evaluation activities include the regular oversight of planning and some scrutinies of pupils' work. These activities are part of a regular system spread across the year and the results of evaluation help to set the school's strategic targets for improvement but do not include all subjects. Newly qualified staff are inducted satisfactorily into the school and senior staff play a useful role in monitoring and supporting their work.
57. There is a good number of teaching and support staff to cater for the needs of the pupils. The school has steadily increased the number of support staff and has a good programme of training to increase their effectiveness. It has wisely employed a full-time technician to keep the computers ready for use. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. The school is short of additional internal and external space. It makes the best of what it has but the playground and grassed area are too small for such a large number of pupils. The

Foundation Stage does not have ready access to a safe outdoor play area although there are plans to develop one next year. In the meantime staff compensate for this by using the local environment and planning physical activities in the hall. The classrooms are an adequate size but there are no rooms suitable for working with pupils in small groups. One of the two halls provides limited accommodation for physical education, and the ICT suite is in cramped conditions in a converted corridor. It speaks well of the staff's organisation and pupils' attitudes to school that the school day runs smoothly. Learning resources are satisfactory. By using specific grants well, the school has improved resources for English, mathematics and ICT in line with its major priorities and the refurbished libraries are an attractive feature of the school's provision.

58. The school satisfactorily applies the principles of best value and should work with governors more closely on this to increase their awareness. The school compares its results with other schools. It does not yet compare its spending levels although plans to do so. It challenges its practice, for instance by examining the quality of its teaching and bringing about improvements. Governors do not challenge some school spending, such as that on pupils learning English as an additional language, to see if it is spent effectively. The school consults well with its parents, such as seeking their views on sex education and through open evenings and workshops. It ensures fair competition in its tendering arrangements by contracting through the local education authority.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should improve provision further by:

- (1) Raising standards in the English and mathematics and in design and technology and geography (for pupils aged seven and 11), and in history and physical education (for pupils aged 11)

Paragraphs 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13

- (2) Improving the management of provision and aspects of teaching for pupils learning English as an additional language

Paragraphs 21, 52

- (3) Improving the effectiveness of the governing body

Paragraphs 49, 55, 58

- (4) Increasing the detail of school improvement planning over more than one year

Paragraphs 51, 53

In addition to these Key Issues, governors may wish to include the following minor issues in their action plan:

- Work with parents and outside agencies to make further improvements to pupils' attendance and punctuality *

Paragraph 17

- Ensure that the Governors' Annual Report to Parents and the school prospectus contain all the required information

Paragraph 48

- Ensure that all aspects of the ICT provision meet statutory requirements and that all subjects have an appropriate allocation of time *

Paragraphs 23

* Indicates that the school currently has plans to deal with these aspects.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	88
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	11	37	26	12	0	0
Percentage	0	12	42	30	14	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	801
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	450

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	263

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	783

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	46
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	71

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	8.1
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	56	62	118

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	41	40	47
	Girls	42	41	52
	Total	83	81	99
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (69)	69 (73)	84 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	43	49	40
	Girls	43	54	38
	Total	86	103	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (73)	87 (97)	66 (73)
	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	49	41	90

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	36	43
	Girls	25	22	32
	Total	50	58	75
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (60)	64 (58)	83 (77)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	38	34
	Girls	21	26	26
	Total	42	64	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	47 (62)	71 (57)	67 (70)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	18
Black – other	2
Indian	5
Pakistani	546
Bangladeshi	111
Chinese	0
White	12
Any other minority ethnic group	20

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	35
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y7

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked per week	421

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	1705088
Total expenditure	1714268
Expenditure per pupil	2141
Balance brought forward from previous year	-37000
Balance carried forward to next year	-46180

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	801
Number of questionnaires returned	151

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72.0	25.0	0	1.0	1.0
My child is making good progress in school.	55.0	34.0	4.0	3.0	4.0
Behaviour in the school is good.	55.0	32.0	5.0	2.0	6.0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46.0	30.0	12.0	11.0	1.0
The teaching is good.	61.0	33.0	3.0	2.0	1.0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50.0	35.0	9.0	5.0	2.0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52.0	35.0	3.0	1.0	10.0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70.0	20.0	6.0	2.0	2.0
The school works closely with parents.	56.0	27.0	8.0	2.0	7.0
The school is well led and managed.	57.0	34.0	1.0	3.0	5.0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58.0	32.0	7.0	1.0	2.0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46.0	32.0	8.0	4.0	9.0

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

59. Foundation Stage provision is a strength of the school. Improvements since the last inspection have been good. It is well led and provides a safe and friendly environment for the children and their parents. Teachers, learning support assistants and bilingual learning support assistants work well together as an effective team and provide a range of interesting and challenging activities. As a result, at the end of reception, most children make good progress from their starting points. They reach below expected levels in all areas of learning except for communication, language and literacy where their attainment is well below. At the time of the inspection, there were 124 children in the Foundation Stage.
60. Children start full time in reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they have their fifth birthday. Most children will have attended the adjacent nursery school. A small number will not have experienced any pre-school provision. Teaching of all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum is good and in some lessons it is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching in reception classes was unsatisfactory. Staff in the reception classes have good links with the adjoining Nursery School. They meet regularly and have an agreed view of the children's abilities before they start in reception and can plan suitable activities. Staff assess children's progress regularly and keep detailed records of their progress in mathematics, personal, social and emotional development and communication, language and literacy. They keep no formal records relating to the other areas of learning. This affects the progress of a minority of children. The home/school liaison officer and bilingual learning assistants help the school to liaise with parents. Parents are encouraged to collect their children from the classrooms and they receive a friendly greeting from staff. When children return from extended holidays abroad they are made welcome and settled back into school routines with sensitivity.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. From the start of their time in the reception classes the children are encouraged to make choices about activities and to work co-operatively. Most reach the early learning goals by the end of reception. They are taught to share equipment, take turns and think about the consequences of their behaviour. For example, when a child accidentally hurt another by lurching forward excitedly, he was asked to think about what he had done and say sorry. In another lesson a child who had recently returned from Pakistan was paired with another child who showed him a new toy. This helped him settle back into school routines quickly but also developed the confidence of his friend. Children who are learning English as an additional language are helped to interact with English speaking children, for example in the role-play area. This also develops their confidence. In 'circle time' the children are asked to think about how they might help each other. One higher attaining boy confidently took on the role of the teacher and modelled a series of actions for the rest of the children to copy. These lessons also help children to begin to understand the culture and beliefs of others. Regular routines in reception classes, such as clearing away and changing their clothes independently for physical activities, help the children to develop personal independence.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Children make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening, reading and writing. About a fifth of the children reach the early learning goals by the end of reception. A few higher attaining children are beginning to write simple sentences with some recognisable words and can talk about what their writing says. Some know most single letter sounds and can recognise simple words. They talk about their favourite books and listen carefully to other

children and adults. Other average attaining children are beginning to use recognisable letters to write stories, but do not yet consistently match the correct letters and sounds. Nearly all children can speak a simple sentence in English. However, a number of children who are learning English as an additional language cannot yet speak confidently in English and make grammatical errors. This affects their progress in reading and writing as well as spoken English. Teachers generally provide well for such pupils. Bilingual learning assistants encourage them to express themselves in English and all staff speak clearly and are good role models.

63. There are many good activities to encourage children's communication skills. Each reception classroom has writing and reading areas. The children are encouraged to use these, especially when the main taught activity is on language. There are scripts other than English for children to copy. Staff observe children carefully and monitor the activities they select when making choices. This helps them to know the children well and guide them towards activities they might not otherwise select. During the inspection the role-play area was set out as a school. However, there was little adult involvement in the children's role-play and adults missed some opportunities to develop children's language skills.

Mathematical development

64. Children make good progress in this area of learning, especially in number work. By the time they begin Year 1 just under a half achieve the early learning goals. Many children have poor mathematical understanding when they start and the staff provide many activities to develop this. Even when the main focus of an activity is not mathematics, they still use every opportunity to reinforce children's mathematical development. For example, they count the number of children playing in the sand tray, they count scissors and paint brushes and emphasise language such as 'big', 'under' and 'behind'. Nearly all children can recognise and count numbers up to ten. Higher attaining children can use numbers up to 20 and beyond; can add two numbers together and write simple sums. One higher attaining boy worked out and then said, "If I have six birds, I need three more to make nine." Average attaining children can work with numbers below ten. Children with special educational needs are beginning to say numbers in order, but do not count objects accurately.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children make good progress in this area of learning. Teachers choose many activities that help them understand their widening world. They are introduced to different aspects of ICT, for example using listening centres and computers. Most children can use a mouse to click and fill in colours using a 'Paintbrush' program. One higher attaining boy could change the program to one of his own choice. He then used the mouse to select the print icon and printed some work he had produced. The tadpoles in the classroom fascinated many children. They used a magnifying glass to examine them closely and could talk about the changes they had already observed and knew the tadpoles would soon develop legs and turn into frogs. In a lesson on growing beans, many children could explain that the beans needed water to grow. A learning support assistant used very careful language with small groups of children to reinforce language such as *seed*, *colours* and the names of fruit. This helped their language development as well as their understanding of the environment. Work in this area of learning makes a good contribution to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. For example the children learn about their cultural heritage, making candles for Eid.

Physical development

66. Children make good progress in this area of learning because of good teaching and careful planning that compensate for the lack of a suitable outside area. It was not possible to observe children using large equipment during the inspection, but teachers' plans show appropriate attention to the development of skills using larger muscles. Most children have

good manipulative skills. They use equipment such as building materials, pencils, pens, brushes and modelling materials carefully. This is because they are taught the basic skills of using equipment. In a painting lesson, the children were shown the difference between thick and thin brushes and taught how to use the brushes correctly and to control the amount of paint on the brushes. Some lower attaining children have less co-ordination and had difficulty with rolling dough and cutting a shape from the dough.

Creative development

67. Staff plan a range of activities that includes art and design, music and imaginative play to support this area of learning. As a result, children make good progress. Some higher attaining children make very good progress in artwork. One gifted artist had done an excellent charcoal drawing of an elephant showing good proportion and the fine detail of the elephant's feet. Children who are learning English as an additional language make good progress in this area of learning. One child showed absolute delight at the painting she had completed. She had shown fine control of paintbrushes and sponges to produce a painting of blossom on trees. The role-play area (set up as a school during the week of the inspection) mostly provided good opportunities for children to use their imaginations.

ENGLISH

68. Standards of attainment are rising because of good teaching and management but standards of literacy are well below average. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection. Most pupils start school with little knowledge of the English language. Most make satisfactory progress in reading and writing and good progress in speaking and listening. Higher attaining pupils, about one quarter of all pupils, make good progress and reach the expected level by the time they are 11. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress because of good support in lessons. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy well and this is helping to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching.

69. To encourage pupils' speaking and listening skills, most teachers speak clearly and pupils can understand what is said. This helps them learn more words and use them when answering questions and talking about their work. Seven year old pupils listen well to the teacher and use a growing vocabulary. Higher attaining pupils grow in confidence when speaking to larger groups and can give relevant details when explaining something. For instance, a Year 2 pupil explained clearly to the class how an elephant calf would feed. They show by their questions and answers that they understand instructions and the main points of discussion. Boys are more eager to talk than girls. A few do not listen to others and try to shout their answers to the teacher. In most lessons teachers deal with this well by asking the girls questions so that they have a chance to speak. This helps their confidence. Most lower attaining pupils answer with a single word and find it difficult to speak in sentences. Pupils at the early stage of learning English as additional language make satisfactory progress.

70. Eleven year old pupils speak confidently when answering questions and talking in small groups. They enjoy the time teachers give them to talk in pairs and small groups and this encourages them to speak more freely and try out new words. Many average and lower attaining pupils do not speak clearly or confidently enough when talking to larger groups because they are not always sure of the words they need to use. Higher attaining pupils learn new vocabulary quickly because teachers use books well to introduce them to new words and ideas and they are good at remembering these. In one Year 5 class, the teacher asked pupils to talk about the story they were reading and explain their thoughts by using words from it. This introduced them to new words and phrases such as "inner strength", "agitation" and "pimento". They then used these in their own talk.

71. To promote pupils' reading teachers and learning support assistants work hard with pupils in Years 1 and 2 to show them how to use sounds and pictures to work out new words. Higher

attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in recognising and matching letter sounds and rhyming words when they work with an adult playing sound games. They do not do this well enough in their own reading. Higher attaining pupils read simple texts fluently and accurately. They enjoy reading and talk about their book enthusiastically. These pupils read at home regularly with parents and other members of the family helping them. This is helping them to make good progress. Most average attaining pupils can work out words by using sounds and pictures. Sometimes they find it difficult to understand when they read but do not know what a word means. One pupil in Year 2 read a book accurately but faced with the word "allotment" could not explain the meaning. Teachers make every effort to increase pupils' vocabulary so that they can read with more understanding.

72. Most 11 year old pupils make good progress in reading accurately and fluently because teachers give them enough time to read in groups and alone. Higher attaining pupils make good progress in reading with understanding. They can talk about characters and what they do. They use sentences from their books to back up the opinions they give. Comparing the film and book of "Lord of the Rings" one said "I prefer the book because it gives more detail, like, - Tolkien says – the dim shapes of mountains – while the film just shows you." Teachers help pupils to think of their reading like this by asking them to look in their books to back up their answers. In a Year 4 class, the teacher made sure the pupils read with understanding by asking what the start of the piece was about. One pupil replied, "The weather, because it says a cold grey day." Another said, "No it's about going on a journey because it says left for Africa." The teacher encouraged them to discuss this, which helped them to think about what they were reading. Most average attaining pupils read accurately but not always with expression. They understand most of what they read but are not as good at explaining why characters act as they do. They do not think about the meaning of the whole piece to help them work out words they do not know. This prevents them from fully understanding all they read. Lower attaining pupils read accurately but without expression. They can tell about some of what happens but often do not understand much of the meaning and struggle to discuss it. A few boys do not enjoy reading. They say they prefer to watch television or play at night and so lose valuable practice time at home. Most pupils can use contents, index and glossary pages to help them to find what they want in information books and this helps the school to meet the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy.
73. Teachers are putting in a great deal of effort into raising the standards of pupils' writing. They have identified what pupils need to do to improve and are setting work to help them. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. Higher attaining pupils are making good progress and are reaching reasonable standards. Seven-year-old pupils make good progress in forming their letters and writing these correctly because teachers show them regularly. Higher attaining pupils write neatly and generally spell words correctly. In some cases when they are not sure they make a good try. For example writing "heghog" for "hedgehog". They write in sentences and add detail to make their writing interesting. "The wolf jumped on the chair, rolled off the table and ducked out of the door," wrote one Year 2 pupil. They can write in different ways and in one Year 2 class they learned how to use headings, captions and diagrams and make contents and index pages. One pupil said, "You have to write this different from a story because it is non fiction and telling you something." Average attaining pupils know about story structure but often forget to use it in their writing. They use sounds to help them spell because teachers encourage them to do this to make the link between reading and writing. Teachers regularly remind them about capital letters and full stops and most pupils know about these although they sometimes forget to use them. Lower attaining pupils make satisfactory progress in writing simple sentences but often need a lot of help with this.
74. Eleven year old pupils make good progress in writing stories and using a wider vocabulary. Teachers help them to plan their work and draft their ideas to make improvements using computers satisfactorily. They use good examples and point out interesting vocabulary in

their reading to encourage pupils to think about their readers. Higher attaining pupils write in a lively way and use punctuation correctly. Average attaining pupils know how to build up a story and most use punctuation correctly when reminded. They pick up well on teachers' ideas but often cannot think up enough of their own to make their writing exciting. Lower attaining pupils write in sentences but do not use enough words to describe or extend their writing. They do not know enough words in English to write at any length. Teachers give pupils real reasons for writing in different ways such as a thank you letter to parents, older pupils writing for younger ones and book reports for other pupils to read in the library. As well as writing in English lessons, pupils write factual accounts in history, descriptions in geography and labels and findings in science. Most pupils present their final drafts neatly and take pride in their writing. Teachers encourage this by displaying work prominently.

75. The quality of teaching is good with some very good teaching in Years 2 and 5. There is some unsatisfactory teaching in Year 1 and Year 3. All staff are committed to raising standards in literacy. Teachers plan lessons well and are clear about what they want pupils to learn. They know the National Literacy Strategy well and encourage pupils to do their best to improve. Most teachers and support staff speak clearly and encourage pupils to learn new words in English by getting pupils to repeat and use them. For instance in one Year 4 class, the learning support assistant taught one pupil the word "wings" by speaking it in his own language, repeating it in English and demonstrating with actions. The pupil repeated it back and then used it correctly. A minority of teachers speak too quickly at times. They do not make sure that the pupils pronounce their words correctly nor do they correct spoken grammatical errors. This leads to pupils misunderstanding instructions, not being able to speak or write certain words correctly, and repeating mistakes. Teachers make sure that there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to read. They read with the pupils and keep detailed records of what pupils can do so that they know what to teach them next. Teachers of older pupils discuss their reading with them and get them to give opinions. This helps higher attaining pupils to extend their understanding. In one Year 5 class this was linked very well with writing when pupils presented a written argument from a character's point of view. Teachers read excerpts from books to show pupils how to read fluently and with meaning. This is helping pupils to make acceptable progress. In a few lessons in Year 1 and 3 teachers give pupils sheets to read that are too hard and so they cannot complete the work set.
76. Teachers make sure that pupils know what they need to do to improve and then set work to help them to do so. They regularly encourage the pupils and so most want to improve. Most lessons move at a good pace and teachers use different teaching techniques such as working in pairs and individually as well as a whole class. They ask questions to involve all pupils so that each has a chance to contribute. This helps some of the quieter girls particularly. In all lessons, learning support and integration assistants and other adults give good support to pupils to help them understand their work. In a few lessons with younger pupils, teachers allow pupils to shout out answers, which prevents others from taking part. Teachers give good opportunities for pupils to learn and practise punctuation. Most plan for them to learn spelling and handwriting but a few teachers of older pupils do not emphasise these skills enough. Teachers do not use homework consistently enough for it to help raise standards. The quality of specialist teaching of young pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. Although the small groups of pupils are well behaved and attentive, there are too few opportunities for them to talk about what they are doing. Because the pupils are at a similar stage of learning English, they do not have good role models to learn from. Some of the activities are not matched well enough to pupils' stage of development.
77. Teachers record what pupils have learned and need to do next to help them plan for the next lesson. This is helping most pupils to make satisfactory progress and higher attainers to make good progress. Teachers encourage pupils to read and talk about their feelings for poetry and literature from many different places. They listen well to pupils and show that they value their ideas. In this way, they are making a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral,

social and cultural development. Pupils behave very well. They work hard in lessons because the teachers make them interesting, keep the pace up and pupils know what to do to improve. In a few lessons in Year 1 and 3, pupils lose interest and concentration because the work is too hard for them and they do not understand what to do. Pupils enjoy working in pairs and sharing ideas. Older pupils enjoy writing. In one lesson when the teacher said, "Now you have to write", there was a collective but controlled shout of, "Yes! Great!" This attitude helps them to make sound progress.

78. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and sets a good example through her teaching. This good management is helping to raise standards. She has a clear view of the quality of teaching and standards of attainment because she observes teaching, checks planning and pupils' work and thoroughly checks test results. She has made sure that teachers have a range of attractive resources to work with. The procedures for gathering, analysing and using information on pupils are good. They help teachers set targets for improvement with pupils and contribute to raising standards. There are not enough spaces around the school for pupils to work adequately in smaller groups.

MATHEMATICS

79. Seven and 11 year old pupils' overall standards of attainment are well below average and their numeracy standards are below average. The lower attaining pupils are a larger proportion than is found in most schools. The relative size of this group makes the school's results significantly lower overall. However, most pupils make at least satisfactory progress from their starting points and the school's standards have improved since the previous inspection. For instance, the proportion of 11 year olds reaching the higher than expected has significantly increased so that just over one fifth of them are now working confidently at this level and are making good progress.
80. Higher attaining pupils (including talented pupils) carry out number investigations swiftly and accurately and have good recall of their times tables. They make slower progress in developing their own ideas for investigations. They are comfortable working with decimals, fractions and percentages but are less certain in working out equivalences among them. They are also more hesitant when it comes to checking their answers by estimating. Through careful assessment, the teacher has recognised these shortcomings and they are the current focus of the pupils' work. There are fewer girls than boys in this higher attaining group and girls progress at a slower rate in other year groups. However, the proportion of girls reaching the expected levels of attainment continues to rise as teachers encourage them to answer during mental and oral sessions and give them opportunities to explain their work to the class. Average attaining pupils have a good grasp of the four rules of number and are particularly good at showing how they worked out the answers to problems. Their work in calculating the perimeters of shapes and co-ordinates needs further improvement. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in basic number skills but slow progress solving problems, either when they are written or when the teachers read them out. The degree to which pupils have a good knowledge of English is an important factor in their progress in mathematics. All pupils try hard to present their work well.
81. Since the previous inspection the school has worked hard to improve the quality of teaching. Most is now good and teachers are asking more of their higher attaining pupils. They respond very well and those in Year 6 particularly are confident and inquisitive mathematicians. Teachers generally set a good atmosphere for learning mathematics by creating displays in each classroom and having resources readily to hand for the pupils to use. Most pupils have good attitudes to learning mathematics although girls remain rather shy during whole class lessons and teachers work sensitively to encourage them to answer by giving them time. Higher attaining pupils respond quickly to answer the teachers' questions but are less certain when working out their own. Lower attaining pupils work slowly and turn to the support of learning assistants or other pupils when they do not understand either the mathematics

involved or the teachers' explanation. Most of these pupils persevere for a time but are discouraged if their work lacks variety. When teachers use games to enliven lessons, pupils work harder without feeling the effort. A good example of this was towards the end of a Year 4 lesson when a version of Blockbusters designed to consolidate pupils' basic number skills increased their motivation. The use of games is more apparent in lessons with average and high attainers and the school plans more staff training to increase their use with all pupils. Most pupils behave well although in one Year 1 lesson, they were inattentive and made slow progress.

82. Teachers have good subject knowledge and their training in teaching the daily mathematics lesson ensures that most lessons are planned well and have a good structure. Teachers almost always introduce them clearly by talking about the aims of the lesson and how the work fits into what has gone before. Just over half the teachers make a point of explaining the lesson aims and instructions in several different ways to help those pupils learning English as an additional language understand what is being asked of them. They then group the pupils so that they can work together and explain their ideas. A few of the teachers of younger pupils make a point of asking pupils to translate for others who are at a very early stage of learning English. This generally works well but teachers report that they are reluctant to ask pupils to do this too often in case their own progress is slowed. About half the teachers also use the end of the lesson to reinforce any new mathematical terms that they have introduced. This builds pupils' vocabularies and is particularly helpful for pupils learning English as an additional language. These teaching strategies should be used more extensively with lower attaining groups of pupils. A minority of teachers are using ICT satisfactorily to support pupils' learning in data handling and the school plans to increase the overall use of ICT in the subject.
83. Pupils are mostly helpful towards one another and this supports the learning of the whole class. In one Year 4 class, a pupil very sensitively helped her partner by reading instructions from the board so that she could continue with her work despite poor eyesight. A good feature of the teaching is when pupils take part in the lesson introductions, often by explaining how they worked out an answer. The best teaching quickly follows this with a written version so that a wider cross-section of the class can understand it in a different way. Good examples of this were in Year 1 with explanations of simple addition, and in Year 6 when pupils sought quicker ways of adding sets of numbers using rules they had worked out previously. Most lessons end positively when teachers reinforce the main points of the lesson or ask questions to find out what pupils have learned. Generally, teachers assess pupils' progress well and use the information to alter their lesson plans if necessary.
84. The co-ordinator sets a strong personal example and leads the subject very well. She has led staff training very well by working with other colleagues in school and outside specialists. Through careful monitoring, she has a good picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses of provision and has a very good plan to develop the subject further. In collaboration with other staff she uses the analysis of pupils' attainment very well to pick out how to improve provision further and is aware of the need to put more emphasis on raising the attainment of the lower attaining pupils and improving the use of ICT. There are too few spaces around the school for pupils to work in smaller groups to carry out mathematics investigations.

SCIENCE

85. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Although 11 year old pupils' standards have improved those of seven year olds have not. The improvement in 11 year olds' standards is because the school has made this a priority and improved the way in which pupils are taught. It has not done the same for pupils aged seven.
86. Most pupils in the current Year 2 are working below the level of attainment expected of their age. Few pupils are working at the level above that expected. They make unsatisfactory

progress because pupils of differing abilities often get the same work to do. Pupils can communicate their findings in simple ways, as when making a tally chart of their favourite foods, but they are not able to describe their observations using scientific vocabulary. Pupils have few opportunities to say whether what happened was what they expected. Higher attaining pupils are unable to record their observations in a variety of ways and they are unsure about carrying out fair tests. This level of work is not challenging these pupils. Pupils can identify fruits and vegetables and describe the changes in their bodies brought about by exercise. One pupil described the change as moving from being, "Full of energy and relaxed," to, "Tired and sweaty." They can identify sources of electricity around the home and draw a simple circuit. They are able to identify plants and animals in the local environment but have difficulty in sorting living things into groups based on what they can see. For example, some pupils are unable to identify feathers as a common feature of birds.

87. The standard of Year 6 pupils' work is average overall, with about one fifth of them working at the level above that expected of their age. Overall, these pupils have made good progress since their most recent national tests in 1998. Pupils experience a satisfactory range of science work that is used well to develop their skills of scientific enquiry. Pupils can decide on approaches to answer a question. An example of this was when they tested a hypothesis about friction by sliding a domino down a slope covered with different materials. They were careful to ensure that the test was fair by controlling the number of differences within the investigation. They made a series of observations and measurements that provided the information they needed to answer the question. Higher attaining pupils can draw conclusions from their observations and measurements. Pupils can identify the position of organs in the human body and plants and describe the relationship between plants and animals in different habitats. They know about evaporation and condensation and can describe reversible and irreversible changes. They can describe the orbit of the earth, moon and sun and detail the apparent change of position of the sun during the day.
88. The teaching of science varies in quality across the school. Of the five lessons observed, two lessons were unsatisfactory and the others ranged from satisfactory to very good. The one lesson seen in Year 2 was unsatisfactory because the teacher did not manage the pupils well enough and they made slow progress. The teaching of pupils currently in Year 6 was at least good. This is why standards have improved for these pupils. The best teaching was encouraging pupils to work scientifically. Teachers achieved this by using their good subject knowledge to challenge pupils' thinking. For example, this occurred in a Year 6 lesson on forces where pupils were testing the strength of different types of paper. The teacher encouraged pupils to explain their thinking to each other to help clarify their understanding. Pupils then worked hard because they understood what they were doing. Where pupils were not actively involved in their work, as in a lesson on seed dispersal where the teacher tested the seed models made by the pupils, they were not developing the skills required for them to investigate for themselves. During the inspection, teachers improved the way they planned for science. The planning format normally used does not ask teachers to identify what they want pupils to learn in lessons, how the work will reflect pupils' differing abilities in science, or what teachers will do to assess the progress made by pupils in their learning. Planning does not support effectively those teachers who are not confident about the teaching of science. There is little evidence of teachers' written marking improving pupils' future work. Teachers encourage pupils through their marking but often do not identify what pupils need to do next in order to improve their work. Teachers do not use ICT widely enough to support their science teaching. Pupils do not have regular homework for science so this has little impact on the work that pupils do in school.
89. The co-ordinator for science has taken over the role since the previous inspection and her management of the subject is satisfactory. She has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has identified how the weaknesses can be improved. The urgent need to develop the quality of teaching to support pupils' enquiry skills is, quite rightly, the main priority. The co-ordinator sets a very good personal example in her teaching but her impact

on the overall standards of teaching and learning in science is limited. This is because she manages all aspects of science in this very large school without designated support. Despite this, she has had a significant impact on the standards attained by pupils aged 11. Her analysis of the school's test results in science led to pupils being grouped by ability in Year 6. This grouping included a single sex group for higher attaining girls. The organisation of teaching in Year 6 is such that the co-ordinator now teaches science to all of the groups. This has had a positive impact on the standards attained by these pupils. The school makes good use of national guidance in its planning for science. This ensures that pupils experience a breadth of work across all aspects of the subject. However, Year 1 and 2 pupils do not have enough experience of investigative work and so their enquiry skills are not as well developed as they should be. The school does not have enough flexible spaces for teaching pupils' investigative work in smaller groups. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed at the end of each unit of work. Targets are not set for pupils in science as they are for English and mathematics. This makes it difficult for the school to know if pupils are making the required progress over time. The co-ordinator has not yet had the opportunity to monitor the teaching of science across the school. Senior staff monitor teachers' planning but teachers do not receive individual feedback and so do not know which aspects to improve and hinders the further improvement of standards.

ART AND DESIGN

90. The standards of seven year old and 11 year old pupils in art and design are average and all pupils make reasonable progress. The satisfactory levels seen in the last inspection have been maintained. The display of artwork around the school has a high profile. There are particular strengths throughout the school in shading and the use of tone, especially in pencil drawings. Year 5 pupils are good at enlargement techniques based on the work of Escher. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of perspective. There are displays based on the work of non-western artists. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the lack of non-western artists was criticised.
91. Year 1 pupils can mix shades of colours by adding white and black to reds and greens and talk about the effect they have. Some higher attaining pupils are particularly successful in using monochrome pencils to show light and tone in drawings of bicycles. This skill is developed in Year 2. Pupils use a variety of materials such as pastels, crayons, chalks and paint to explore their ideas. Year 4 pupils can talk about the work of famous artists and investigate tactile qualities, for example by using three dimensional collage techniques to represent some well-known pictures. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils developed a good understanding of light sources and light and shade. They understood that the pre-Raphaelite period was a long time ago but could not relate the work to other artists or periods. In a Year 6 lesson, all pupils could roll out clay and use slip to join coils and smooth them effectively. Higher attaining pupils had a good understanding of perspective, using the buildings in the work of LS Lowry to study lines of foreground and background.
92. Teaching is generally satisfactory with some good teaching in Year 6 and Year 1. In the Year 6 lesson, the teacher paid close attention to the teaching of basic art and design skills. She used resources such as Greek artefacts to stimulate learning and assessed pupils' work well throughout the lesson, drawing the pupils' attention to certain difficulties that arose and asking them to evaluate their work at the end of the lesson. As a result the pupils made good progress. Pupils made good progress in the Year 1 lesson because the teacher demonstrated the work well and made it interesting: the pupils were fascinated by the effect of adding black to green paint. Teachers throughout the school take care to display pupils' work attractively, which encourages them to take pride in their work. Pupils enjoy their art and design lessons and are pleased with what they produce.
93. Pupils' artwork makes a good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, particularly cultural education. There are many examples of art and design

throughout the school based on work from the Indian sub-continent, China, South America and Africa. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in Asian arts festivals, to visit exhibitions in Birmingham art galleries and to work with visiting artists. The art and design curriculum is broad and balanced.

94. The co-ordinator is new to the role, having only taken over at the beginning of the school year. Her leadership of the subject is satisfactory. She has a clear understanding of the role and an action plan for future development. She has monitored art and design throughout the school by looking at planning and pupils' work. There is little formal assessment of pupils' work. They have sketchbooks that show development as they progress through the school. However, teachers do not record the acquisition of skills or progress in units of work so they are unable to focus on particular strengths or weaknesses. This affects the progress of some higher and lower attaining pupils.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. During the inspection little teaching of the subject was taking place and only two lessons were seen. Evidence has been drawn from additional sources including pupils' work and teachers' planning. Apart from the recent introduction of national guidance to topics for each year group, the subject has not sustained attention and standards have fallen. At the previous inspection, standards were in line with national expectations and progress was satisfactory. Now standards are below average and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory.
96. Although pupils in Years 1 and 2 are beginning to design and plan their work, they do not have sufficient opportunities to work with a range of materials, tools and techniques and therefore their range of skills and knowledge are not being sufficiently developed. Year 1 pupils have designed and made wheeled vehicles as part of their work on *moving along toys*. They recorded their intentions under headings such as, "It will look like this," and, "I will need." Their vehicles had axles held in place by straws and these functioned well, enabling the vehicles to move. The school has a good selection of construction kits but these are not used enough by this age group.
97. In Year 3, pupils have made jack-in-a-boxes from paper. Teachers provided an attractive work sheet to help their pupils plan and evaluate their finished product and pupils are beginning to learn the importance of evaluating their work. One pupil commented, "We could have made it stronger by using wood, the hardest part was the spring, it was fun making it." There are limited opportunities to design and make artefacts within other subjects but in history, Year 4 pupils have constructed Tudor style houses and in science they have made model lamps, which worked with batteries and simple switches. They had planned and evaluated their products although their lack of linguistic skills limited their quality. Pupils making proficiencies are below average as shown by inaccurate measuring, cutting and joining skills.
98. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have limited opportunities to design and make artefacts other than through the termly unit of work. These tasks in themselves do not enable pupils to develop adequate skills. Year 5 pupils had designed and made containers for cereals, had made up cereals of their own design and produced posters to advertise their product. The packet designs were satisfactorily constructed but the printed lettering and information on the packets were untidily produced and the choice of felt pen to colour the lettering had no visual impact. This term the Year 5 classes had been studying William Morris designs and used the computer to produce their own floral repeat patterns. These had good visual impact and the use of ICT within the project helped to produce a better product.
99. Year 6 pupils have built suspension bridges from wood, string and card as part of the autumn term activity. A number of these were soundly constructed but pupils' designs and evaluations were unsatisfactory because their drawing and labelling skills were weak. Last

term Year 6 pupils designed and made biscuits. Some pupils used ICT to illustrate their findings. These evaluations were attractively designed using desk top publishing software but lacked evaluative comment as to how their product could be improved. Throughout the school pupils often find difficulty in recording their ideas and evaluations in written format because of their limited literacy skills. The use of ICT, including a digital camera, helps pupils to record and evaluate their products. In general, by the end of Year 6, progress is unsatisfactory, as pupils have not reached the standard expected for the age group in their designing and making skills.

100. The teaching seen was satisfactory although there are some weaknesses in subject knowledge and not enough use is made of ICT. Pupils' behaviour is managed well, and although they enjoy the subject, they tend to work slowly especially when trying to evaluate their work. Although during the lessons, they made satisfactory progress, they make slow progress over time in developing design and technology skills. Generally, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do in all aspect of the subject are too low and they do not systematically assess the progress pupils' make. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. The lack of procedures for monitoring teaching and learning and assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding has meant that the school has not formed a clear view of standards or of weaknesses in provision. Overall resources are adequate, the range of materials available is sufficient but not necessarily used by the pupils. In order to provide better opportunities to develop design and technology skills and to help raise the status of the subject, the school needs to consider alternative ways of timetabling for design and technology and to link such activities more closely with other subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Developing the geography curriculum has not been a recent school priority and there is currently no geography co-ordinator. The standards pupils achieve by the ages of seven and 11 are below national expectations. The majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 make insufficient progress. However, a few pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress when teachers take care to explain new words carefully and give them the opportunity to practise using the words correctly. Many pupils in the early stages of learning English find it hard to understand the concepts in geography because they cannot follow the lessons.

102. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make insufficient progress overall. A particular weakness is their acquisition of geographical skills especially in work relating to using atlases, globes, maps and plans. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in their ability to compare their own locality with other areas, at an increasingly sophisticated level. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 take insufficient care in the their geography books, work is often unfinished and presentation poor.

103. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and generally satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is unsatisfactory when the lesson does not take into account what pupils know and understand, when resources are underused and when pupils are not clear about the task they have to do. Teaching is also unsatisfactory where teachers have low expectations, and fail to deal effectively with a small number of disruptive pupils who then prevent others from learning. Where the quality of teaching is satisfactory teachers have appropriate expectations, they use relevant resources that interest the pupils and they ask appropriate questions to deepen pupils' understanding. For instance in Year 3, teachers make good use of a local study based on Middleton village, and teachers in other classes use the pupils' experiences of visiting other countries, especially India. Leadership of geography is unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator for geography is on long-term sickness absence and the responsibility has not been reallocated. Although the headteacher and colleagues are covering some aspects of the role, there is no clear action plan to take the subject forward. The headteacher ensures that the geography curriculum is taught, with aspects appropriately allocated to different year groups. Teachers have sensibly used the nationally recommended

modules of work as a basis for their curriculum plans but the school scheme of work and geography policy has not been updated to reflect this. The headteacher monitors coverage of the subject by looking at displays of work but teachers' planning and the work in pupils' books are not monitored. Resources are satisfactory but becoming dated and worn out, with inadequate storage particularly for large maps. There has been no audit of resources and there is no purchasing plan. Teachers do not use ICT enough in the development of the subject.

HISTORY

104. Until very recently developing the history curriculum has not been a school priority. Overall, pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and pupils aged seven achieve in line with expectations. They can place pictures of dolls in correct historical order and explain their reasons e.g. "This one is bright colours and plastic, this is dull coloured so it is older." They can talk about Guy Fawkes and in simple terms explain why he acted as he did. Although pupils in Year 3 make satisfactory progress, pupils in Years 4 to 6 make unsatisfactory progress and the standards pupils reach by the age of 11 are below average. Pupils of average ability can recall some facts about the different lifestyles in the historical periods they have studied but they are unable to suggest reasons for the differences. Their understanding and therefore use of first and second hand sources is unsatisfactory. In some classes, history does not receive the planned allocation of time because other lessons overrun or the focus of the lesson is English not history. Therefore pupils make less progress than expected over the four years.
105. No teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 so there is insufficient evidence on which to base a judgement on the quality of teaching. From other evidence it is clear that teachers' planning is satisfactory, books are marked and teachers take care to display pupils' work well. Teaching in Year 3 to 6 is satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons well, especially in Year 3 where the co-ordinator teaches. Teaching is effective when the teacher allows the pupils to talk together in a structured way to deepen their understanding, as in a Year 4 lesson. Pupils working in pairs devised their own questions about a picture and then read together a short piece of text prepared by the teacher in order to answer them.
106. Teachers make good use of history-based texts in the literacy hour and there is a comprehensive programme of visits to places of interest. There are effective links with design and technology when pupils use their historical knowledge in art and design when drawing portraits of famous people. There is not enough consistency between teachers, and pupils' books, particularly in Year 6, show different expectations of work in quality, quantity and the use of ICT.
107. Leadership of history is satisfactory. The newly appointed co-ordinator for history has quickly gained a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses in history. She is keen to promote her subject and knows what needs to be done to improve the quality of teaching and learning. There is a very comprehensive, costed action plan for the next two years. Resources are adequate and the co-ordinator intends building up the provision of artefacts and computer software. Teachers have sensibly used the nationally recommended modules of work as a basis for their curriculum plans, and dates have been identified when the scheme of work and the policy will be updated to reflect these changes. Currently the co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and end of topic assessment sheets.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

108. Since the previous inspection the school has made good progress in the use of ICT as a teaching and learning resource. Standards were found to be below expectations during the previous inspection. Currently seven year olds' standards are below average but 11 year olds standards are average. Pupils aged seven to 11 make good progress in their development of

skills and understanding and in certain areas skills are well developed. Two main factors have been responsible for this improvement; the school has developed two networked areas of computers to give pupils better access, and the majority of staff have undergone training. Both of these changes have had a significant impact on the way computers are used across most subjects to support pupils' learning.

109. As part of their work in science, pupils in Year 1 use modelling software to label parts of a plant. They can log onto the network and access the software. They use the mouse to arrange parts of the plant successfully on screen and to label the parts accurately. By the end of Year 2, pupils have gained experience in the use of graphics software such as drawing pictures using the fill and shape tools to produce pictures in the style of Mondrian, and have written stories using simple word processors. However, their information handling skills are not extended, for example through the use of simple graph drawing software or by accessing information from sources such as CD ROMs. They do not gain experience through the use of programmable robots to gain understanding of the sequencing of commands.
110. Throughout Years 3 to 6 pupils develop ICT skills through using appropriate software to support learning in other subjects. However, there are gaps in the software and pupils do not receive their full entitlement limiting their knowledge, skills and understanding. In Year 3, pupils use word processing in history to write about Boudicca and access the Internet to find information on the Romans. They used a database to plot graphs showing what kind of Roman the class would prefer to be. Progress is limited in Years 3 and Year 4 as pupils have no access to a branching database or to CD ROMs in order to use simulations and modelling software. The school is aware of the requirements and are working to overcome the technical problems with the access of CD ROMs across the network. Progress is better in Years 5 and 6 where pupils' confidence in using the network enables them to make rapid progress in ICT skills. There are, however, gaps in the provision of software that include data logging and control activities. In Year 5, pupils use spreadsheet software in geography to illustrate the traffic flow on local roads and used graphics very effectively within a design and technology context to produce William Morris wallpaper designs. As part of a literacy lesson, Year 6 pupils were writing adventure stories in a multimedia format. These had been written for a variety of audiences including younger children. Pupils made good progress in the use of multimedia effects such as text animation and the use of sound.
111. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. The staff have enjoyed their ICT training provided through the New Opportunity Fund and this has had a positive impact on how ICT is used and on teachers' skills and confidence. Teachers use these skills effectively for their school administration and especially for labelling and captions on display boards. This helps to provide an attractive and informative working environment for their pupils. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of software and how it can support learning has improved since the previous inspection although teachers need to ensure their pupils' receive the full entitlement and that the full range of software is planned into the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. All pupils enjoy using the computers, they are excited and interested and when working in pairs share their knowledge and understanding.
112. The management of ICT is good. The school has a clear development plan for the subject, is aware of the existing software limitations and is working to address this. The school has devised a satisfactory assessment system, which enables teachers to monitor what pupils have done, and to assign a level of competence to each unit of work completed. The appointment of a full-time technician has had a positive impact on the provision for pupils. She works alongside teachers and pupils and enables teachers to concentrate fully on their pupils' learning. Although the computer suite in upper school is cramped, a whole class can work successfully and the development of this resource has enabled pupils to make good progress.

MUSIC

113. Music does not currently have a high profile in the school. Seven year olds' standards of attainment are average and they make reasonable progress. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards and progress of 11 year old pupils as only one music lesson with older pupils was observed. However pupils were observed singing in assemblies and standards of singing were average.
114. Year 2 pupils can repeat simple clapped rhythms. They can sing tunefully with a good sense of rhythm and can keep a tune going while others sing a background *drone*. They understand terms such as *high* and *low*, *loud* and *soft*. Pupils in Year 4 are also able to clap rhythms and use a range of untuned percussion instruments to create effects.
115. It was only possible to observe two music lessons during the inspection. One of these, in Year 2, was very good, the other, in Year 4, was unsatisfactory. In the very good lesson the teacher had a good understanding of the pupils' learning needs and planned a well-structured lesson. The pupils enjoyed it because it was challenging and fun. They made good progress in their music skills and in their language acquisition. This was because the teacher carefully emphasised new words such as *drone*, repeating it for them and re-emphasising it at the end of the lesson so the pupils remembered it. The Year 4 lesson was unsatisfactory because of the teacher's lack of subject knowledge in music. She did not give clear instructions to the class. The pace of the lesson was slow because the same activity went on for too long and it was too easy. As a result the pupils made unsatisfactory progress.
116. A small number of pupils belong to a school choir that meets regularly. Apart from this group there are no opportunities for pupils to become involved in regular music clubs. However, there are numerous musical extra-curricular activities opportunities during the school year. A South American group, 'Caliche' performs an annual workshop with Year 6 pupils. An Indian dance group, 'Chitralka' works with Year 2 pupils. There are also opportunities to visit the Royal Ballet Company in Birmingham and take part in an Asian arts festival. The curriculum is broad, but it lacks balance. There is insufficient time allocated to teaching music in Years 3, 4 and 6 and there is not enough of ICT. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education, particularly the opportunities to explore their own and other cultures.
117. The music co-ordinator is new to her role, having been appointed at the beginning of the year and her leadership is satisfactory. The policy and scheme of work give good guidance to teachers. However, there have been few opportunities for staff training recently in music and some teachers have weak subject knowledge and understanding. There are few teachers on the staff who have particular strengths in music. The Year 2 singing practice was unaccompanied by either a piano or recorded music, which affected the quality of the singing. There are no formal systems for assessing or recording pupils' progress in music. However the co-ordinator has an action plan to develop the subject in the future. This includes plans to improve the monitoring of the subject that is currently unsatisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

118. Pupils' attainment in physical education is average by the age of seven and below average by the age of 11. This is similar to that found at the time of the previous inspection for younger pupils, but below that for older pupils. While a few Year 6 pupils make satisfactory progress and are attaining the expected level of gymnastics, games and swimming skills, most are working below this level. The attainment of girls is below that of boys. A minority of girls by the age of 11 are unfit because they are not encouraged by their families to participate in physical education lessons for cultural reasons. The school tries to address this by providing a range of physical education opportunities solely for girls but with limited success. Pupils make satisfactory progress in dance and developing social skills such

as appreciating the efforts of others and taking turns. They have some understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies.

119. By the age of seven, pupils have satisfactory catching skills and they can send and receive a ball in different ways with different parts of the body. In gymnastics, they have a good awareness of space and can move with good levels of control to produce good sequences. For example, in a well-taught Year 2 gymnastics lesson, a good lesson plan allied to clear explanations and demonstration enabled pupils to produce good movements and to hold balances well. The teacher was quick in assessing the quality of their work and gave good tips on how their work could be improved further. Pupils responded well.
120. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory and in Years 3 to 6 is satisfactory overall but with weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge and understanding, the teaching of basic skills and expectations of pupils. Teachers plan from a scheme of work drawn together by the school which has similarities to that contained in national guidance, but it lacks sufficient direction for most staff who lack subject expertise. So, the quick cricket games lesson for Year 3 pupils did not provide appropriate levels of challenge. Teams were organised with ten on each side, which did not allow pupils to develop either their skills or an appreciation of tactics and team play. Pupils waited too long for their turn and some lost interest. A third group, which was working independently on the grass area, was spread out over too large an area and more time was spent retrieving balls than practising skills. In contrast, a dance lesson for Year 6 pupils built sequences of movement on the theme of Pandora's Box. Pupils used music to interpret the story, working individually initially. The teacher steadily increased the level of complexity and demand indicating a confident grasp of the subject. Pupils showed good control and co-ordination and reflected on their work to suggest where improvements could be made for the next lesson.
121. Teachers' management of lessons is generally satisfactory. Most pupils are attentive, carry out instructions, co-operate well and are well-behaved. All lessons have a satisfactory structure, with opportunities for pupils to warm up before the main activity and cool down after exercise. Pupils respond well to the balance of instruction and practice but do not get enough chance to comment on their own progress or the performance of others.
122. Resources are satisfactory. There are two halls but one does not have enough available space for older pupils. The school uses off-site facilities such as the swimming pool. Indoor gymnastics equipment is satisfactory although some items in the Year 1/2 hall are too large for pupils to set up for themselves. There is enough small games equipment for inside and outdoor use and this is stored well. Staff give of their own time to run after-school sports clubs such as football, skipping and Uni-hoc and the school takes part in some local sports events. Good links are established with the sports officer based at Sports College who arranges for sports celebrities to coach pupils in basketball, football and cricket.
123. Physical education is unsatisfactorily led. The subject has not been a whole school priority in recent years and its status now needs raising. The co-ordinator has been in post for a number of years and was instrumental in constructing the school policy and scheme of work. The policy is in need of review. She has not recently monitored and evaluated standards and quality in the subject and as a consequence does not have an accurate view of the quality of planning, teaching and attainment of pupils. She has successfully co-ordinated some external training and development for staff and pupils.
124. A range of health and safety issues was noted in a minority of lessons. These include earrings and bangles being worn by pupils, long hair not tied back, apparatus set too closely together and pupils playing games in trainers with laces undone. Some teachers are not aware of the school policy and there has not been a recent risk assessment of PE.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the last inspection report and religious education now has a much higher profile in the school. The school has developed an effective programme of work derived from the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The quality of teaching has improved and all pupils now make satisfactory progress in their learning. Seven and 11 year olds' standards of attainment are now in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
126. Pupils aged seven know about festivals in different faiths and can talk about what happens at Christmas, Divali and Easter. They are aware that there are some signs and symbols, such as light representing the triumph of good over evil, that are common to all faiths. They understand that different faiths have holy books such as the Bible and the Qu'ran. A display of sacred books in the school hall emphasises their importance to pupils. Pupils are aware that there are aspects of their own lives that are especially important to them and they are able to express their own feelings. Pupils in one Year 2 class were able to discuss the personal qualities that might influence their choice of friends. One pupil decided that "Friends play together". They were then able to relate this to Jesus and his best friends through talking about the disciples. The individual knowledge of some pupils was very good and some were able to identify that Matthew was a friend of Jesus and a tax collector.
127. Pupils aged 11 are aware of creation stories from different faiths and cultures and can draw upon their own faith to explore questions such as "Do you think hardship and suffering are necessary?" and, "Who created the world?" They are able to reflect upon abstract themes such as beauty and goodness and can offer their own views of miracles within our world. One pupil identified "Sparkling stars shining in the black sky" as a miracle of our world. Another pupil was moved to write about, "A crescent moon shining beautifully." Pupils know about the life of the prophet Mohammed and can talk about his pilgrimage to Mecca in terms of journeys that they have made. They can describe personal qualities they admire in their friends and how they would want to improve aspects of themselves. They can relate this to the five pillars of Islam. They have a growing understanding of Buddhism and can compare the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism with the main ideas of their own faiths. They are able to offer their own ideas about meditation and its effects. One pupil reported that it made, "all the bad things go out of your head."
128. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching in the Year 2 lesson was good and teaching in the Year 6 lesson was very good. In both lessons, planning was effective and clearly linked to the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers had high expectations of their pupils and they responded well to the challenge of the work that they were given. This made pupils work hard and this helped them to make good progress in the lesson. Teachers were particularly effective in encouraging pupils to think about issues and then discuss their feelings. The teacher in Year 6 drew effectively upon the pupils' own faith experiences when discussing the main ideas of other faiths. Teachers assessed pupils' progress carefully to address any pupils' misconceptions. The initial discussion in one lesson, for example, was used to address some confusion in pupils' minds about elements of Buddhism and Hinduism that had been identified in the previous lesson. Lessons are well managed and teachers involved all pupils in discussion through effective questioning. This means that pupils are interested in their work and behave very well.
129. Pupils are encouraged to express their own views and opinions and show respect for others. They have an awareness and understanding of others' beliefs and an appreciation of the intangible, as when writing about their own "miracles". They relate well to each other when working co-operatively and share views and opinions with each other, as when pupils in Year 6 were discussing the Four Noble Truths of Buddhism. They have a growing understanding of the influences that have shaped their cultural heritage and are open to new ideas, such as

when comparing Buddhism with their own faiths. They also have a regard for the heights of human achievement through their work on Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Razia Sultana.

130. The co-ordinator for religious education leads the subject well. Although new to the role, she has already reviewed resources and matched them to the topics within the teaching programme. The school has a good programme of work that ensures that pupils have a broad range of learning opportunities. At present the school's arrangements for recording pupils' progress in this subject are unsatisfactory. There is no monitoring of teaching and learning in this subject at present. Both elements have been identified as areas for improvement by the new co-ordinator.