

INSPECTION REPORT

ST THOMAS MORE CATHOLIC FIRST SCHOOL

Redditch

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116910

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Fitton

Reporting inspector: Mrs Janet Sinclair
19824

Dates of inspection: 15 – 17 April 2002

Inspection number: 196537

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | First |
| School category: | Voluntary Aided |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 - 9 |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Woodrow Centre Studley Road Redditch Worcestershire |
| Postcode: | B98 7RY |
| Telephone number: | 01527 525821 |
| Fax number: | 01527 517453 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs J Stone |
| Date of previous inspection: | July 1997 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Mrs Janet Sinclair 19824 | Registered inspector | Science Art and design Design and technology Foundation Stage | The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? |
| Mr William Walker 19366 | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| Mr Joe Haves 8070 | Team inspector | English Geography History Special educational needs English as an additional language | How well is the school led and managed? |
| Mr Jon Palethorpe 20671 | Team inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Physical education. | How good are curricular and other opportunities? |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Thomas More Catholic First School is situated in the Woodrow centre in Redditch. It mainly draws its pupils from the local area. Children's attainments on entry vary from year to year and are occasionally well below average. However, over time attainment on entry is below average. At the time of the inspection there were 188 pupils on roll. There are 80 pupils with special educational needs and this is a higher than average proportion, but a good number of them require monitoring rather than direct intervention in their learning. Two pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need, which is broadly average. There are four pupils who speak English as an additional language; their first languages are Icelandic and Cantonese. The number of boys and girls is broadly the same in most classes, except in Reception and Year 4 where there are few boys. Although the socio-economic circumstance of the pupils is below average, the number of pupils claiming a free school meal is below the national average of 19 per cent. The number on roll is higher than at the time of the previous inspection and the school is over-subscribed. Additions have been made to the building to help meet the demands of increased pupil numbers. The school places a high value on its religious ethos, which is reflected in all its work.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The headteacher is providing very good leadership and is ably supported by her governing body and staff. Children start school with standards that are below, and occasionally well below, average. By the time they leave the school standards have improved and pupils achieve well. They do well because the quality of teaching is good. Teaching is often very good in the Foundation Stage and children get a very good start to their learning. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good and children achieve well across the areas of learning.
- Teaching is good overall and, as a result, pupils make good gains in their learning.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. She ensures the school continues to raise standards within a supportive learning environment
- There are very good assessment procedures in literacy and numeracy, which are helping to raise standards.
- There are very good links with parents and the school provides them with very good quality information.
- There are very good extra-curricular activities, which help to promote the very good personal development and relationships across the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in English and mathematics by continuing to build on what is already in place.
- Standards in science.
- The monitoring role of co-ordinators, but especially those new to their roles.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since its previous inspection in 1997, in spite of extensive teaching staff changes. It has worked hard to address the issues raised by the last inspection. Planning has improved, schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and are used well to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Although the role of co-ordinators still requires further improvement, because of staff changes, the work of co-ordinators has improved. The headteacher has worked hard to ensure staff are trained for their roles and has appointed new staff to fill gaps where necessary. Learning resources and their storage has been improved for subjects where there were weaknesses. Omissions to the prospectus have been put right. The school is working hard to improve standards and is rigorous in monitoring and evaluating progress in English and mathematics. The proportion of very good teaching has risen and examples of this were seen in most classes. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2001 |
| Reading | E | D | D | E |
| Writing | E | E | D | D |
| Mathematics | E | D | E | E |

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

This information shows that the performance of pupils in 2001 was below the national average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Results of teachers' assessments in science showed that standards were well below average. However, these pupils started school with well below average levels of attainment; very few of them were assessed as being average or better. The school has done well to improve reading and writing given pupils very low starting point. Over time standards are gradually improving in reading and writing and fluctuating in mathematics. The school now monitors pupils' progress in English and mathematics rigorously, sets clear and specific targets for improvement and has improved the quality of teaching. This is now beginning to have an impact on standards, as the standards seen during the inspection indicate. The school's targets for English and mathematics are realistic and achievable.

Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 2 are below average in reading, writing and science and average in mathematics. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily, and sometimes well, given their attainment on entry. Standards are at the nationally expected level in all other subjects and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. By the end of Year 4, standards are at the expected level in reading and writing and below expectations in mathematics and science. Pupils are achieving at least satisfactorily and sometimes well. Standards in all other subjects are in line with expectations. Pupil achievement is satisfactory. Children start school with at least below average levels of attainment. They make good progress due to the very good teaching in the Foundation Stage and are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in physical and personal, social and emotional development¹. A good number are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in all other areas of learning, but there are some who will not.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good, both in classrooms and around the school. Behaviour in the Reception classes is very good. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and are keen to get involved in all school activities. Relationships are very good at all levels. They are promoted strongly through the school's ethos. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Pupils arrive on time and settle to work quickly. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

¹ [The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.](#)

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 4 |
|------------------------|-----------|-------------|--------------|
| Quality of teaching | Very good | Good | Satisfactory |

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. It is particularly good in the Foundation Stage, where all lessons seen were good or better. Teaching in English is good across the school. In mathematics it is good in Years 1 and 2 and varies between good and unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The literacy and numeracy strategies are used well by most teachers and lessons are effectively planned. The main strengths in the teaching are well-planned lessons, a good range of activities, a brisk pace to lessons and clear explanations. Teaching assistants are well deployed and make an effective contribution to the learning of lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils concentrate well, are generally keen to answer questions and have good attitudes to their work. As a result they make good gains in their learning. Teachers set targets for pupils in English and mathematics. These targets are shared with pupils and have a positive impact on their learning. Relationships are very good and there is a high level of respect shown for individuals. This creates a good learning environment for pupils. The main weaknesses, which resulted in unsatisfactory lessons, were poor management of pupils' behaviour and slow pace of lessons. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned and resources are well used. The main weaknesses in science teaching are an over reliance on worksheets, a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils and lack of questioning to develop scientific knowledge and understanding

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. Extra-curricular provision is very good. The school works hard to provide equality of opportunity for all its pupils. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. They have full access to the National Curriculum and are included in all aspects of school life. |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language | Satisfactory overall. Staff work hard to support these pupils in class, but there is no external support available and sometimes the school cannot fully meet their learning needs. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Good. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This provision is strongly linked to the school's religious ethos, which permeates the life of the school. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | There are good procedures for child protection, health and safety. Assessment procedures are very good in English and mathematics and information is used well to inform curricular planning. |

The school's partnership with parents is very good and the school provides them with good quality information.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Good. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is ably supported by governors and staff. All are clearly focused on raising standards within a supportive learning environment. Co-ordinators are developing their roles well. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Good. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities well, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a positive role in shaping its direction. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Good. The school is very clear about its performance through the good tracking procedures that are in place. |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. The school is suitably staffed and has good accommodation. Resources are satisfactory and are used well. The principles of best value are applied 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"> • Their children like school, behave well and make good progress. • The school expects their children to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led, the teaching is good and children get the right amount of homework. • The school works closely with parents and all staff are approachable. | |

Six parents attended the parents meeting and 63 questionnaires were returned. Parents were very positive about the school and the inspection team fully agrees with their views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of assessments undertaken when children start school show that attainment on entry varies from year to year. It is occasionally well below average, but is mainly below average. Inspection evidence shows that children achieve well in the Reception classes due to the very good teaching they receive and the good quality learning environment the school creates. Many children will exceed the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development and physical development. A good number will attain the Early Learning Goals in all other areas of learning, whilst a few will exceed them and some lower attaining children will not reach them.
2. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, results were below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, based on the number of pupils having a free school meal, standards were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. However, the assessments undertaken when these pupils started school showed that their attainment on entry was well below average with few children having average or above attainment. The school, therefore, did well to improve standards in reading and writing. Taking the years 1999 to 2001 together, results have gradually improved in reading and writing and fluctuated in mathematics. Test results show that over time girls do not do as well as boys in writing and mathematics, but there was no evidence of this during the inspection. The results of teacher assessments in science show attainment to be well below average with no pupils achieving at the higher than expected Level 3. The previous inspection identified that standards were average in English, mathematics and science, but national tests taken at the same time showed standards to be below average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. Teacher assessments showed science to be well below average.
3. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, standards are below average in reading, writing and science and average in mathematics. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily and sometimes well in relation to their prior attainment. The school has worked hard to improve teaching and learning in English and mathematics, and this is beginning to have an impact on standards. This is already showing in mathematics, but standards in English are slower to rise. The effect of the school's hard work in English is beginning to show in standards in Years 3 and 4. Although pupils achieve satisfactorily overall in science, higher attaining pupils are not challenged enough and there are not enough opportunities for pupils to carry out investigations or explain their own methods.
4. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Some of the work of pupils in Year 4 is above expectations; for example, their work on writing a newspaper, which includes changes in font size and the addition of pictures.
5. Standards in all other subjects are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on standards in music. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well throughout the school. This is because they have clear targets identified for their work and are well supported by teaching assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language mainly achieve satisfactorily, despite limited resources, because of the support given in class. At present there is no additional support or funding available for these pupils so in some lessons, where support is not readily available, they do not achieve as well as they should.

6. Standards are below expectations in mathematics and science when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. They are at the expected level in all other subjects, except in music and physical education where there was not enough evidence to make a judgement on attainment. Pupils are achieving at least satisfactorily and sometimes well. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection, except in mathematics and science where standards are now lower.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of the good support they receive in class. Individual education plans set clear targets for their learning and teaching assistants ensure that these guide their work with pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily and teachers do their best to support them. However, in some lessons they do not achieve as well as they should as the school cannot provide the level of support they need to enable them to understand the content of the lessons.
8. Standards in literacy and numeracy are satisfactory overall and the school is rigorous in its approach to learning and assessment for these subjects. Literacy and numeracy are used satisfactorily across the curriculum.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to their work continue to be good. As at the time of the previous inspection, the great majority enjoy their learning and are keen to be involved. They apply themselves well and collaborate effectively with their peers. Behaviour in classrooms is mainly good, but there is a minority whose ability to concentrate is inadequate and whose distracting behaviour sometimes detracts from the learning environment in lessons. Behaviour in the Foundation Stage is very good. At all levels relationships are very good and are a strength of the school. Levels of attendance are broadly in line with those found nationally. Most pupils arrive in good time, enabling teachers to make a prompt start to lessons. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, enjoy the facilities provided by the school and are fully involved.
10. Children coming to St Thomas More First School make a very good start to their education. They settle quickly and soon become absorbed in the stimulating activities provided. They develop confidence in the safe and welcoming environment created for them and soon build very positive relationships with members of staff and with their classmates. As they move up through the school pupils quickly adapt to the routines and recognise the high expectations of their behaviour. They are anxious to help in the preparations for the day and take pride in carrying out their varied tasks well. They make visitors feel very welcome and their happy demeanour contributes much to the sense of Christian community, which characterises the school.
11. Behaviour in the classroom is mainly good, often very good, and the well-ordered environment helps learning. Pupils respond well to good teaching. They listen closely, collaborate well with each other and apply themselves conscientiously to individual tasks. There are a few pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 4, who are easily distracted and sometimes find it difficult to conform to normal classroom expectations. Teachers usually manage such pupils well, minimising any disruption to lessons. About the school, pupils move calmly and purposefully, showing courtesy and consideration to others, especially to visitors. They defer to adults, hold open doors, queue patiently and offer to help when they see it is needed. Mealtimes are civilised and orderly occasions. Quiet music creates a pleasant background to the low hubbub of conversation as pupils eat with good manners and general courtesy. Playtimes during the inspection were happy occasions, with pupils taking full advantage of the warm sunshine to run around and engage in varied games and

activities. There is much good humour amongst the pupils of all ages. No unpleasant behaviour was observed in the playground during the inspection. The school has not excluded any pupils during the last year.

12. Pupils react very well to the opportunities provided for their personal development. In their early weeks at school children soon learn to accept some responsibility for their actions. They become progressively involved in daily routines, putting things away, clearing up mess and tidying their classroom. Often they do these things quite independently, without any directive being given by their teacher. As they move through the school their responsibilities increase and they play a valuable part in enabling routines to run smoothly. They help to operate equipment in assemblies, prepare classrooms, put away chairs, collect litter from the playground and recycle appropriate material in the compost bin. Members of the Gardening Club provide valuable help in maintaining the shrubs and flowerbeds in the very attractive quadrangle. Often older pupils are seen assisting younger pupils who appear to have hurt themselves or are unsure of procedures. They also assist children in the Reception and Year 1 classes with their reading. They gradually develop the confidence and the competence to take some responsibility for their own learning. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for example, learn library skills and many take the opportunity to join the Bookworm Club, designed to encourage wider and more regular reading. In these and many other ways they show a growing maturity, which will benefit them greatly as they approach the next stage of their education. Relationships are very good. There is a strong sense of community and common interest. Pupils play and work well together. They learn to respect differences and to understand the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Teachers and other adult members of staff are treated with respect and courtesy.
13. Pupils enjoy school and most attend regularly and on time. Attendance levels have been consistently slightly above the national average for primary schools over recent years. There is very little unauthorised absence. Registers are called promptly and properly, and often with some variety, such as singing or responding in Latin, which serves to sustain the interest of pupils even with such a routine procedure.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching is good overall. One in three lessons seen were good or better and most of the rest were satisfactory. Only a small number of lessons were unsatisfactory. In the Reception classes half of the lessons seen were very good and the rest were good. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, both in the Foundation Stage and in the overall quality of teaching in the school.
15. Teaching is good and often very good in the Foundation Stage and, as a result, children make good gains in their learning. Lessons are well planned, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and work output, a clear understanding of the needs of these children and provide a secure and challenging learning environment. Both teachers and teaching assistants have very good relationships with the children. This promotes children's self-esteem and gives them confidence to contribute in lessons. Adults constantly reinforce good behaviour and attitudes through positive praise. Teachers conduct lessons at a brisk pace and provide very good learning opportunities. Good links are made across the areas of learning through good choice of topics such as 'Ourselves'. Assessment is used well to inform planning, ensuring work is well matched to children's individual learning needs, which maximises their progress. Teachers use reading homework very well to promote good learning and positive attitudes to reading. Parents are fully supportive of this.
16. Teaching is good overall in English. In mathematics, it is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. The national strategies are in place and are used well by

staff to ensure basic skills are securely taught. The school has worked hard to improve teaching and learning in English and mathematics, and this is beginning to show in standards. This is already showing in mathematics at the end of Year 2 where standards of work are at the nationally expected level, but standards in English are slower to rise. The effect of the school's good teaching in English is beginning to show in standards in Years 3 and 4. Where teaching is good, basic skills are thoroughly taught, teachers have high expectations, learning intentions are shared with pupils and lessons are conducted at a brisk pace. Teachers manage pupils very well and make good use of resources. Where teaching is satisfactory, although lessons are well planned and organised, not enough attention is given to meeting pupils' individual needs. In the unsatisfactory lesson seen in mathematics, pupils were inattentive and the pace of the lesson was too slow to engage their interest. Support staff have a clear role in lessons and provide good support to pupils, ensuring their specific learning targets are well met. In English and mathematics, assessment information is used well to plan work, which meets pupils' differing learning needs maximising their learning.

17. Teachers make sound use of opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. For example, they take accurate measurements in science and write about the lives of Roman soldiers or children during wartime. Opportunities for writing across the curriculum are being developed, but this needs further work.
18. In the lessons seen in science, teaching was satisfactory overall with some good elements. Lessons were well planned and pupils were provided with a good range of activities to engage their interest. In Year 2 pupils were given good opportunities to explain their ideas, but this strategy is not sufficiently used across the school. This teacher also made good use of scientific vocabulary, which she encouraged the pupils to learn and use. However, there are weaknesses in teaching over time linked to the use of worksheets, which prevent pupils from expressing their own ideas and stop them from learning to set out their work systematically. Additionally, there is a lack of challenge for higher attainers and in some classes not enough opportunities for experimentation or investigation. Marking is not used well to promote scientific ideas or to tell pupils how they can improve the scientific content of their work. Teaching in most other subjects is satisfactory overall. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in design and technology and history across the school or information and communication technology, music, physical education and art and design in Years 3 and 4. In the few lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory the main reasons were weaknesses in managing pupils' behaviour and the slow pace of lessons.
19. Teachers make sound, and sometimes good, use of computers to support their teaching. For example, teachers encourage pupils to use their word processing skills to write stories or make their own newspaper.
20. The quality of learning by pupils with special educational needs is good. This is because they receive effective support from classroom assistants in subjects such as literacy. Support staff work effectively alongside classroom teachers and receive clear guidelines to govern their work. For example, in Year 2, work is carefully matched to their learning needs enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning. External agencies, which include the educational psychologist, visit regularly and support the school well. Teachers and support staff work hard to support pupils with English as an additional language, for example, by providing texts they can read in literacy or by scribing for them in science. However, there is a lack of specialist external support to help the school in meeting their needs.

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

21. The last inspection reported that:
 - the curriculum was broadly based and all pupils had equal access;
 - the curriculum for under-fives was very well planned;
 - the provision for pupils with special educational needs was good;
 - the school curriculum was enriched by extra-curricular activities.

22. These judgements remain the same. However, considerable improvements have been made in the following areas:
 - all subjects now have up-to-date policies and schemes of work. These ensure that all the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and that the skills and knowledge taught to pupils builds on their previous work and attainment;
 - planning is thorough and indicates what is to be taught when;
 - the timetable ensures that there is an appropriate balance of time allocations to each subject throughout the year. However, the weekly teaching time for pupils in Years 3 and 4 remains below the recommended minimum.

23. The curriculum for all pupils is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is a suitable curriculum for religious education and for personal, social and health education. Policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. From these, teachers have developed half-termly and weekly plans, which culminate in detailed lesson plans that indicate clearly the lesson objectives. Although there looks to be not enough time for teaching in some subject areas, with science suffering, this is not the case as more time is given to certain subjects in certain terms.

24. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They have full access to the curriculum. In many lessons tasks are specifically designed to meet their needs. This includes extension tasks for higher attaining pupils who are on the register of special educational needs.

25. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented. The teaching of literacy has very sensibly been adapted to suit the school's needs. For example, as the standard of writing was seen to be a problem, the literacy hour is now supplemented with extra work on extended writing. The approach to numeracy has been welcomed and enjoyed by teachers and pupils. The three-part lesson with an emphasis on pace and direct teaching is beginning to show benefits in standards.

26. Extra-curricular provision is very good. This judgement is based on the fact that there are very few teachers at the school, but a good number of activities. For example, there are clubs for basketball, gardening, board games, library, country dancing, drama and choir. In addition, there are a good number of visitors and visits to enhance the curriculum. For example, visitors include:
 - members of the church for assemblies and masses;
 - coaches for team games, including basketball;
 - a librarian, parents and others to read to children;
 - a road safety officer;
 - a peripatetic music teacher to take recorder lessons;
 - a local councillor to talk about democracy in preparation for the school council;
 - the local mayor and MP to read with children on World Book Day;
 - the local community police officer;
 - a health visitor to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Visits outside the school include:

- the local library;
 - an old people's home to deliver gifts;
 - Reception and Years 1 and 2 visits to a local farm;
 - Years 3 and 4 to Warwick Castle;
 - the local leisure centre based at Kingsley College.
27. The school emphasises equality of opportunity in its mission statement and its effect is apparent in all areas of school life. For example, support is given to pupils according to their need, whether they are having problems with their learning, are high achievers, or are at an early stage of learning English. Teachers and classroom assistants are well aware of the needs of their pupils and do all they can to ensure that all pupils benefit equally from the school's provision. For example, in one lesson, as soon as the pupils were set to work on their own, the teacher went to a pupil with English as an additional language to make sure that he had understood all that was required of him.
28. There is good provision for personal, social and health education. The school follows the sex education policy that has been developed by the Archdiocese of Birmingham as part of their Family Life Programme. Sex education is taught through topics such as 'My Family', 'Ourselves' and 'New Life', and links with the schemes for science and religious education. Health education is an integral part of the science curriculum, but other contributions are made through visits from the health visitor, and the Healthy Schools initiative. The school has recently developed an impressive citizenship policy. The aim is to help pupils become informed, thoughtful and responsible citizens who are aware of their duties and rights, and to give children the knowledge, skills and understanding to play an effective role in society. Opportunities to enhance citizenship are built into planning in a variety of ways. For example, in circle time pupils discuss various issues such as problems which arise in school, opportunities to help the less fortunate members of society and work within their own parish community.
29. There are good links with the local community. A number of visits and visitors has been mentioned earlier. Of particular note is the work with the local parish and the involvement of coaches from Redditch Borough Council's Action Sport Development Team. Although in different ways, both effectively use the human resources in the locality for the benefit of the pupils.
30. There are good relations with local partner institutions. There are a number of links, including:
- early years partnership for the youngest pupils;
 - links with local first and middle schools;
 - Catholic schools link;
 - links with the local high school (which has specialist PE status).
31. These links benefit the pupils in a number of ways. They ensure that pupils receive a coherent education from 5 to 16 and beyond, enable them to socialise, compete and take part in festivals and tournaments with pupils from other schools. They ensure that the transition from one school to another is as smooth as possible, and provide professional development for teachers, thereby improving the quality of education offered.
32. The school provides effective personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. The friendly, welcoming and very positive ethos that attracted favourable comment in the previous inspection report is still much in evidence. Pupils are educated in an environment where spiritual values are considered paramount and a strong moral code ensures that pupils soon understand the difference between right and wrong. They quickly learn the values of group rules and have good opportunities to experience the cultural traditions of their own area and appreciate the richness of other cultures.

33. The good provision for pupils' spiritual development is reflected in the ethos of the school. It pervades all the documentation; it is very visible in the displays around school. The act of collective worship, whether celebrated with the whole school or in individual classes, provides a focal point for each day and encourages pupils to consider their own lives at home, in school and in the wider community. Periods of quiet allow time for reflection and in assemblies good use is made of music to create an atmosphere of quiet and reverence. Music is also used well to raise the spirits in celebration, as was seen when pupils sang an 'Allelujah' with joy and enthusiasm in an assembly. Whilst the nature of the act of worship closely reflects the Catholic commitment of the school, pupils also have opportunities to celebrate festivals and events from other religions, such as Divali, Eid and the Chinese New Year. In lessons teachers take care to ensure that pupils' ideas are fully valued, thereby giving them the confidence to share their thoughts with others. This practice of knowing when to speak and when to listen is effectively developed in circle time where pupils share items of personal interest and news. This has become an established and popular part of the curriculum. Sometimes precious moments of wonder occur during lessons, as when Year 1 children demonstrated shock and surprise on hearing their own voices played back to them, or Year 3 pupils applauded the announcement of a classmate that she had recently received the sacrament of Baptism. This is a school where the governors' aim of fostering 'a reverence for God, (and) a sense of love and respect for one another', is at the heart of its provision.
34. Consistent with its Christian teaching, the school strongly emphasises pupils' moral development. Children begin to understand ideas of right and wrong from their first entry into the school. Rules about behaviour and relationships are displayed in classrooms and teachers help to ensure compliance by discussing them regularly with pupils. There are occasions when teachers allow misbehaviour to persist beyond what is acceptable in the classroom, thus affecting the learning of all pupils. Such instances are untypical. Generally, pupils know exactly what is expected of them. In assemblies and in the lessons where there is a focus on personal development, pupils are encouraged to consider ethical and moral dilemmas through modern and traditional stories. They are taught to be thoughtful and to set targets for themselves. They know that older pupils are expected to set good examples for others, just as teachers and support staff provide good role models for them. Positive attitudes, effort and hard work are consistently rewarded. Through their fundraising activities for local, national and international charities, pupils learn to think of those less fortunate than themselves and to recognise their moral responsibility to help when they can.
35. The school provides very well for the social development of its pupils. They quickly become aware of the school's high expectations of behaviour, the essence of which is summarised in the Code of Conduct. The fruits of this are seen in the very good relationships and in the sense of community that embraces pupils, parents and parishioners as well as the wider community. This has a significant impact on pupils' social development. They take responsibility for their own personal needs in the Reception classes and progressively play a greater part in maintaining the social fabric of their school. Thus they collect litter, compost waste, tend the garden, collect and deliver registers and help to organise lunchtime games equipment. Older pupils look after younger colleagues, help to supervise them at play, and sometimes share their reading in the classroom. These activities all make a positive contribution to the development of independent learning skills and prepare pupils well for the next stage of their education.
36. Cultural development is also good. Pupils are taught to respect their own heritage and the wide diversity of other cultures. Through their recently enhanced citizenship curriculum they are beginning to learn how democracy works and how a local council is managed. They visit nearby museums to learn of local history and art galleries to enhance their aesthetic development. In class, they work with artists and musicians to broaden their

skills. Good use is made of music in the daily life of the school both to create a calm and orderly environment, as is seen in assemblies and at meal times, and also to introduce pupils to the music and history of a wide range of composers. The pupils' efforts to support international charities, such as Catholic Aid for Overseas Development and the Romanian Orphanage appeal, and their celebration of significant events and religious festivals from other cultures, such as Divali and the Chinese New Year, help to prepare them for life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. This is a very caring school where children are happy, teachers know them well, and trusting relationships give pupils the confidence to share any concerns they may have with adult members of staff. The good practice found at the time of the previous inspection in ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety is still in place. Effective monitoring procedures contribute to the good educational and personal support that is still provided for all pupils.
38. The school is characterised by a strong sense of Christian community. Very good relationships at all levels help to create an atmosphere of mutual trust and understanding. Teachers know their pupils very well and show great commitment in providing the help and support appropriate to each one. In particular, teachers make time for their pupils. They are very approachable and are always prepared to listen. Particular sensitivity is shown for the needs of the more vulnerable and the school works closely with parents, carers and other responsible agencies to ensure that individual needs are met. The school places a high priority on the personal, social and health education of children and after reviewing its citizenship teaching has developed a whole-school policy to ensure consistency and continuity. Its success is shown in the growing independence and self-confidence of pupils as they move through the school.
39. The governors have established good, systematic procedures to deal with health and safety risks. Regular risk assessments are carried out for the building and in all curriculum areas. Proper documentation is completed and reports submitted to the governing body, which is thereby kept well informed of any areas of concern. A senior member of the support staff administers the system very efficiently. Child protection procedures comply fully with local authority guidance. The designated person is well trained, works closely with the area child protection committee, and ensures that there is a high level of awareness of the issues involved amongst all adult members of the school staff. Good use is made of the curriculum to help pupils become independent and knowledgeable about themselves and about healthy and safe living.
40. The school gives a high priority to encouraging good behaviour and eliminating bullying. The close involvement of all staff in the Reception classes helps to establish good and consistent procedures, such as using praise to encourage children and firm comment to indicate when behaviour is unacceptable. Pupils soon become aware of the school code of conduct and the individual classroom rules. Teachers generally have high expectations of behaviour and demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's policy through the good learning environment, which they establish in lessons, and in their skilful handling of distracted and occasionally disaffected pupils. Lunchtime supervisors are alert and vigilant in their duties and make a positive contribution to the orderly environment that is found in the school. Pupils know what is expected of them and they are well aware that bullying, or any form of oppressive behaviour, is not tolerated. Frequent reminders are given to both parents and pupils about the importance of regular and prompt attendance. They are strongly discouraged from taking holidays during term time. Careful monitoring takes place and early contact is made with parents whenever there is any cause for concern.
41. There are comprehensive assessment procedures throughout the school. The formal assessments start when children enter the school, which gives a good indication of their

starting point. It also gives an early indication of whether pupils will need any special provision. They continue with the statutory tests for pupils at the end of Year 2 and also include non-statutory assessments at the end of Years 3 and 4.

42. The assessment procedures for English and mathematics are very good. Systematic monitoring is an integral part of teaching and learning, and comprehensive records are kept. Results of assessments are analysed for different groups and year groups. Teachers have a wealth of information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses and this is used well to set targets and guide their planning. Individual and class targets are reviewed regularly. Assessment in other subjects is less well developed, but is still satisfactory. A system of highlighting objectives when pupils have achieved them is working effectively.
43. The school does its best to acknowledge the achievement of its pupils, whether it be academic, sporting, or in personal development. Building pupils' self-esteem is a high priority and achievements are recognised in class and in assemblies. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans with short-term targets for both academic work and behaviour. Targets are discussed with pupils and parents in an endeavour to enable pupils to reach their targets as quickly as possible. Statements of Special Educational Need are reviewed and updated appropriately

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school enjoys the overwhelming confidence of parents. Since the previous inspection the headteacher and staff have built on the good practice that was in place and worked hard to foster the productive working partnership that they recognise as being so important in the education of the children. The weaknesses that were identified then in the quality of information for parents have been resolved. The link with parents is making an increasing contribution to pupils' learning in school and at home.
45. At their meeting with inspectors and in their responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, parents have been almost unanimous in their praise of the school. They indicate very strongly that their children are happy at school, feel that they are well taught by teachers with high expectations, make good progress and are helped to become mature and responsible. They consider the leadership and management of the school to be very good. They find the teachers work with them closely, are very approachable and they consider themselves to be well informed on their children's progress. A very small number of parents would like a wider range of activities outside lessons and three parents have expressed reservations about the homework provision. The inspection evidence is that the school makes good use of homework to support pupils' learning and provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
46. Most of the information provided by the school for parents, both verbal and written, is very good. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are well presented and now comply fully with statutory requirements. The many letters are well written, informative and interesting. They are supplemented by noticeboards, which always include copies of recent letters, for the benefit of parents whose child may have mislaid a letter. Parental consultation evenings each term make good provision for parents to discuss their children's personal progress and development. The daily planned availability of teachers after school, including the headteacher, provides an excellent opportunity for parents to resolve any interim concerns they may have about academic or personal matters. The annual reports on pupils were reviewed following criticism in the previous report. They now comply fully with statutory requirements and contain many good features. For example, they are written in language readily understood by the lay-person, include targets for future development and provide an opportunity for parents to comment on them. Their quality, however, is not consistent. Some of the judgements tend to be

bland and targets sometimes lack the precision that would enable clear evaluation to be made.

47. Overall, parents make a positive and constructive contribution to their children's learning. They begin at an early stage when they first bring their children into school and discuss with teachers how they can help with the personal and social targets. They explore the implications of the home-school contract and in due course they become involved with their children's education through the home-school diaries and, in Years 3 and 4, the very well structured homework diaries. These documents are very well used by parents and teachers as an effective means of communication as well as a record of children's work at home. Parents also make effective use of school resources, including story tapes, mathematical games and home reading books. They have access to guidance on hearing readers, helping with handwriting and supporting their children with mathematics. The school's homework policy has been recently reviewed in consultation with parents and is strongly supported by them. A small number of parents and friends help regularly in the classroom, carefully planning their involvement with the class teacher. In a less obvious way, many more make a valuable contribution to the pupils' education through fundraising. The parents, teachers and friends association is an active and enterprising body that raises substantial money to buy resources that enrich the curriculum, as well as supporting many pastoral and social needs for the school community. Education in this school is clearly viewed as a shared responsibility. The partnership between the school, the parents and friends and the parish is very fruitful and makes a good contribution to pupils' learning at school and in the home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher herself provides very good leadership. She sets a clear educational direction, which is the foundation for many of the improvements now in place. The headteacher is also a very effective manager, which has resulted in the establishment of clear policies and procedures that guide the day-to-day running of the school.
49. The headteacher has a clear view of priorities for the school. Central to this is her belief that all pupils should gain a sense of excitement and wonder from their learning. Her style is corporate and she works hard to provide opportunities for all staff to share in discussion on educational issues affecting the school. She remains fully in touch with activities throughout the school, visiting each area on a daily basis. She is keen for staff to share ideas and good practice and as part of this process has become an influential leader amongst local schools in promoting performance management strategies for staff.
50. The headteacher has set out clear guidelines and responsibilities for all staff. At present there is an acting deputy headteacher while the school considers future staffing needs as pupil numbers continue to increase. Despite this, the acting deputy headteacher has a clearly defined role, negotiated with her, to make best use of her particular strengths. Elsewhere, the headteacher has worked hard to achieve a balance in staffing when opportunities arise to make appointments. Class teachers know what is expected of them in working with their pupils. Subject co-ordinators have important levels of responsibility and the process of devolving these is continuing. For example, their role in monitoring standards is further forward in English and mathematics than others. However, as yet, co-ordinators do not fully manage their subject area's budget. The leadership of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator monitors and records the progress of all these pupils and provides effective support for her colleagues. The headteacher and financial administrator form an effective partnership, with the headteacher setting the parameters for budgeting and drawing effectively upon the financial expertise of the administrator to action these. The headteacher has ensured that other groups of staff, for

example classroom assistants, have clearly defined roles and know to whom they are responsible.

51. There are clear communication systems throughout school. A full range of policies is in place and the meeting structure ensures staff have good opportunities to consult and be consulted. There are clear plans for the school's improvement in place, which are reviewed on a regular basis. The school makes a very thorough analysis of available data concerning pupils' attainment on entry to the school and their subsequent progress. This analysis plays an important part in focusing educational priorities as the school seeks to raise standards. The information has helped the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators plan the teaching programmes in each year group and particularly the support for those pupils who have special educational needs. The headteacher systematically monitors teaching and provides detailed feedback to staff in order to support their professional development.
52. The governing body meets their statutory responsibilities well. They have a very strong commitment to the school and effectively promote its Catholic ethos. Governors and headteacher form an effective partnership. They respect her professional expertise, but retain an appropriate degree of independence of thought when reaching decisions. Although the governing body is currently two members short, steps are being taken to achieve a full complement of governors. Governor committees meet on a regular basis and provide sound advice to the full governing body on a range of issues. The governing body has established clear priorities for the future development of the school. These have been carefully discussed and their implications considered and costed. For example, they are giving careful thought on how best to staff and accommodate the additional class needed next September. As part of the continuing commitment to school improvement, the governing body has agreed to retain the services of an independent consultant, who is able to offer expert advice to the school on a range of issues.
53. The school's finances are in good order. The financial administrator has considerable knowledge and expertise. She is fully trained and is a member of the regional bursars group. Financial control is very good and there are clear systems in place, which ensure the school meets regulations and guidance in this area. The recommendations of the most recent audit have been met. The 7 per cent carry-over of public funds, at the end of the last financial year, is clearly earmarked for appropriate expenditure later this year. A sum carried over from the Standards Fund is also earmarked for expenditure by 31st August this year. The specific funding for special educational needs is fully spent on the education of these pupils and the school provides substantial additional funding from its own budget. This has a positive impact upon the progress achieved by these pupils.
54. The school continues to develop the use of technology to manage its systems. Budgetary control is fully linked to the local education authority's computer system. However, the school does not yet use computers to monitor attendance. Considerable care is taken to achieve good value when seeking quotations from contractors for specific work, such as routine maintenance. The list of approved contractors is consulted and references are sought. The school also extends the principles of 'best value' to comparing its performance with other schools.
55. The school has worked hard since the previous inspection to act upon its findings. For example, two statutory omissions have been put right. The headteacher continues to provide very good leadership and management to the school. The high standard of financial administration has been maintained and procedures improved. The introduction of performance management has created new opportunities to support the daily practice and professional development of all staff.
56. The school has a good number of teachers who are well qualified and suitably experienced to teach the National Curriculum. Following criticism in the previous report

about subject expertise in some subjects, the headteacher has given a high priority to the professional development of staff. This has contributed well to the good quality of teaching seen during the inspection and has had a beneficial effect on the performance of co-ordinators in the monitoring and evaluating of their subject. The teaching assistants are very experienced in their various roles supporting the under-fives, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, and, in one case, providing specialist expertise with information and communication technology equipment. They work closely with teachers, are fully involved in planning and monitoring and make a valuable contribution to the quality of the education provided. The headteacher has implemented a very effective performance management strategy, linked to the professional development of staff. The arrangements for the induction of staff new to the school, and in particular for newly qualified teachers, are very good. In the latter case, the local education authority also provides good support.

57. The accommodation is good and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The teaching environment in the classrooms is of good quality. Colourful displays of pupils' work serve well to celebrate achievement and there is much interactive material, which enhances the opportunities for learning. The headteacher has had difficulty in recruiting suitable cleaning or caretaking staff and has had to rely on contract cleaners, over whose work she has little direct control. Nevertheless, the premises are well maintained and adequately cleaned. The site of the school is very attractive and the outdoor facilities are satisfactory. The headteacher is conscious of the need to provide more stimulus in the playground and has developed plans with the staff and parents to extend the garden and mark the hard play area for games.
58. The school has taken effective action to improve the learning resources following the identification of shortcomings in the previous inspection report. A full audit has been carried out in information and communication technology, design and technology and history. Appropriate investment has been made to bring these areas up to standard, although in the case of information and communication technology the school still awaits further improvements following a successful bid for additional funding. Otherwise, learning resources are all satisfactory and in mathematics, physical education and for the Foundation Stage they are good. Centralised resource areas have been established throughout the school and are now readily available and used effectively to support learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards and enable pupils to make further progress, the governing body, headteacher and staff as a whole team need to:

improve standards in English and mathematics

improve standards in English by:

- continuing to build on what is already in ;
- providing pupils with more opportunities to discuss their work in small groups;
- developing the lower attaining pupils' ability to sound out words in order to help their reading;
- ensuring pupils use acquired punctuation skills in all their written work;

(Paragraphs: 3, 18, 71-73, 80)

improve standards in mathematics by:

- providing more challenging work for higher attaining pupils;
- reducing the number of worksheets in use and giving pupils more opportunities to solve problems;
- continuing to build on what is already in place;

(Paragraphs: 3, 18, 85)

improve standards in science by:

- analysing what pupils know, understand and can do and using the information to plan work to meet pupils' differing learning needs;
- reducing the number of worksheets and giving pupils more opportunities to carry out investigations and explain their thinking;
- marking pupils' work in a manner which tells them what they have achieved scientifically and what they need to do next;

(Paragraphs: 3, 18, 91-92, 98)

improve the monitoring role of co-ordinators, but especially those new to their roles by:

- providing appropriate training to enable them to carry out their roles more effectively;
- ensuring they monitor their subjects through work sampling, lesson observations and checking standards attained;
- developing a portfolio of evidence for standards attained and progress made across the school.

(Paragraphs: 50, 92, 101, 120, 123)

In addition the school needs to:

- consider the length of the taught week in Years 3 and 4 as it is currently below the recommended time.

(Paragraph: 22)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 42 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 23 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number | 1 | 7 | 21 | 10 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Percentage | 2 | 16 | 50 | 24 | 8 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | YR – Y4 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 188 |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 27 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | YR – Y4 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 2 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 80 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 4 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 9 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 5 |

Attendance

Authorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 5.9 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

Unauthorised absence

| | % |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data | 0 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2001 | 17 | 15 | 32 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above | Boys | 12 | 15 | 14 |
| | Girls | 12 | 12 | 13 |
| | Total | 24 | 27 | 27 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School | 75 (76) | 84 (79) | 84 (79) |
| | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above | Boys | 14 | 14 | 14 |
| | Girls | 13 | 13 | 12 |
| | Total | 27 | 27 | 26 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | School | 84 (86) | 84 (97) | 81 (93) |
| | National | 85 (84) | 89 (88) | 89 (88) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 10 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 1 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 2 |
| White | 122 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 8 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 21 |
| Average class size | 25 |

Education support staff: YR – Y4

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 6 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 133 |

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 2000/2001 |
|----------------|-----------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 357,146 |
| Total expenditure | 342,233 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,923 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 10,910 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 25,823 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

| | |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years | 2 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 3 |

| | |
|--|---|
| 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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 33.5%

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 188 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 63 |

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 67 | 32 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 63 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 59 | 34 | 5 | 0 | 2 |
| The teaching is good. | 83 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 70 | 28 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 87 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 75 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 73 | 27 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 87 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 73 | 25 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 48 | 30 | 8 | 0 | 14 |

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. The Foundation Stage is very good, an improvement since the previous inspection when it was found to be good. Children are admitted to the Reception classes in the academic year in which they are five and attend on a full time basis from the outset. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, occasionally being well below average. However, over time, it is below average overall.
60. Children make a very good start to school as a result of the very good learning environment created by the Reception class teachers. Teachers' detailed planning caters for all the areas of learning effectively. Teachers assess children regularly and use the information well either to ensure tasks are well matched to children's individual needs or to target small groups of children needing extra support. Teaching is good and often very good across the areas of learning and all children, including higher attaining children and those with special educational needs, achieve well. By the end of the Foundation Stage a good proportion of children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. A few will exceed them and some lower attaining children will not meet them. In personal, social, emotional and physical development most children are likely to exceed them.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. Most children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning and they achieve well. They have very good levels of concentration and demonstrate good levels of confidence and independence within their classroom, for example, when changing for physical education or role-playing in the class hospital. All know their class routines well and take responsibility for looking after their belongings and tidying up at the end of class activities. They are happy to work with each other and are developing good social skills, for example, when working together to manipulate a parachute or when using the apparatus in physical education. There are very good relationships at all levels. Children know their ideas are valued, which encourages their self-esteem. The quality of teaching is good. All staff are sensitive to children's needs and consistently encourage them to co-operate with each other and develop skills of self-confidence and independence. Teachers keep detailed records of children's progress in personal, social and emotional development, reflecting the importance they give to this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

62. A good proportion of children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage and some will exceed them. They make good progress in this area of learning and achieve well. Although children generally enter school with below average speaking and listening skills, the school works hard to improve these skills through a variety of specific activities; for example, the use of role-play to develop new vocabulary and through regular opportunities to explain their thinking or talk about themselves. For example, when discussing photographs of themselves they were keen to tell the rest of the class the context, 'That was my Christening' or, 'I was in the bath, I was nearly all bubbled up'. Children listen well in all areas of their work and as a result their responses are relevant. They are keen to give their points of view. Very good emphasis is placed on the development of reading skills and the school works hard to involve parents in the process. All children have reading targets, which are reviewed on a regular basis. Children learn to link the sounds of letters to words and use this knowledge well when reading their reading books. All children read confidently and with enjoyment. Some higher attaining children have a good sight vocabulary and use their knowledge of sounds

and letters well in order to build up more difficult unknown words such as 'skateboarding'. They know the terms 'author' and 'illustrator' and explain what they mean. Lower attaining children point to the words and tell a story to match the pictures. All children handle books carefully and have a very positive approach to their reading. Parents support their children's developing reading skills very well through regular reading at home. They have good opportunities to develop their writing skills. They write their names and copy the teacher's writing using good letter formation. Some higher attaining children write several sentences independently with some use of capital letters and full stops. However, although staff encourage children to write for a variety of purposes, they do not encourage their independent writing skills sufficiently.

63. Teaching is very good. Lessons are very well planned and organised, and basic literacy skills are very well taught. Teachers use every opportunity to develop children's literacy skills, both in literacy lessons and across the areas of learning. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, resources are used very well and questioning is used effectively to reinforce learning. Both teachers use the literacy framework very well in order to promote good learning.

Mathematical development

64. Most children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning, and some exceed them. They achieve well in this area of learning because they are taught well and sometimes very well. Teachers use a very good range of resources to help children understand mathematical ideas and ensure they use mathematical language effectively to encourage the use of appropriate vocabulary. For example, good use is made of positional language such as 'before, after and between'. Learning objectives are shared with the children at the start of lessons and reviewed at the end. This provides a good focus for the children, who are clear about what they are expected to learn. As a result, most children count to 20 and beyond and, with help, start counting from a given number, for example counting in twos starting from eight. They know terms such as 'more than' and 'less than'. Most know how to use a number line and can visualise a sequence of numbers. They use language effectively to explain their thinking. For example, '19 is one less than 20'. Higher and average attaining children carry out simple addition sums. Most children name and recognise common two-dimensional shapes. They enjoy number rhymes such as '2, 4, 6, 8' and '1, 2, buckle my shoe', which are used effectively to help them count in twos. Through regular opportunities to fill and empty containers they use terms such as 'full', 'empty' and 'half full' correctly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. This area of learning is taught well and children, therefore, make good progress and are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children are given good opportunities to learn about the world around them. They bring in photographs of themselves as babies in order to discuss how they have changed. Good questioning by teachers, such as 'How has she changed?', 'What do you notice?', 'Why would you not fit into these clothes now?', focuses children clearly on changes in themselves. Children develop their skills in computer use well due to the careful teaching of key skills and good use of appropriate vocabulary. Most children use computers confidently and are familiar with a variety of programs for mathematics and drawing. Teachers make good use of resources to develop children's knowledge and understanding. For example, in their topic about themselves and their bodies they sing songs such as *Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes*, make a moving person using split pins and match names of body parts to the relevant part of the body. Additionally, in role-play in the class hospital, they discuss the body parts that are affected when treating their 'patients'. They use water effectively to explore its properties. They learn about their own and other cultures through a variety of celebrations such as Chinese New Year. Teaching is good and enables children to

investigate their surroundings and find out about the world in which they live. Teachers provide a wide range of interesting activities to encourage learning and use resources very well to stimulate interest.

Physical development

66. Children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Foundation Stage due to the very good teaching they receive. Teachers give children very good opportunities to be physically active and fully explore and use the range of apparatus available to them. For example, in the lessons seen, children were expected to warm up and were told why this was important. They learned how to travel on different parts of the body using different methods and used space very well. They were given plenty of opportunities to experiment with movement using the apparatus and were encouraged to be adventurous. The apparatus was well arranged in order to facilitate this. Teachers skilfully encouraged children to demonstrate ideas and skills. All children were fully included and keen to participate. Teachers use the outside area well to develop children's physical skills; for example, children learn to throw and catch balls and bean bags with a good level of skill. Good provision of a wide range of practical activities enables children to handle tools, plasticine and construction kits with a good level of skill.

Creative development

67. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Displays show that good opportunities are given to children to paint, draw and print. Some very good examples of observational drawings of spring blossom were seen during the inspection. The drawings of forsythia and cherry blossom were especially good, showing that children had looked very carefully before committing their work to paper. Children use computer graphics programs to make patterns and pictures. They enjoy singing and good use is made of this in all areas of learning. As a result, children have a good repertoire of known songs and rhymes. Children enjoy music lessons. They make sounds using different parts of their bodies and learn new songs and consolidate well-known ones, such as *If you're happy and you know it...* This is also a good link to their current topic of 'Ourselves'. They use their imagination well when they role-play different people in the class hospital, although most seem to enjoy being patients! Occasionally, the fact that there is too much adult intervention stops children from being more creative. As a result of good teaching and a wide variety of interesting activities children achieve well in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

68. Standards of attainment are below the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing for pupils currently in Year 2. Although this appears to be a decline in standards since the previous inspection, national tests taken then showed standards to be below average. Standards in reading and writing have gradually improved over the last three years. National tests show variations in the attainment of boys and girls in writing, but this was not evident during the inspection. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory as they move through Years 1 and 2. This is because they are taught basic skills competently and their early progress in the Reception classes is consolidated effectively.
69. Standards are close to national expectations for pupils in Year 4. Pupils' achievement is good as they move through Years 3 and 4. Building on earlier progress, pupils make good advances in all areas of literacy. This is because of effective teaching and carefully focused sessions during literacy hour.
70. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is because of the support they receive in class and the carefully matched tasks set for them

during lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. Whilst individual teachers work hard to meet their needs, there is no funding to provide additional support and, therefore, their progress is not as good as it might otherwise be. The school works hard to ensure all pupils have good access to the full English curriculum and tasks are well matched to ability.

71. By Year 2, most pupils listen carefully in class, but speaking skills are quite variable. The more able pupils are confident and speak clearly and sometimes perceptively. For example, when discussing the tenses one says, 'the past is a long time ago'. They provide some imaginative synonyms when asked, for example 'wind' and 'twirl.' However, many other pupils lack confidence in speaking aloud, they do not extend their answers sufficiently and some speech lacks sufficient command of relevant vocabulary. More time needs to be given for pupils to discuss their work in small groups and to contribute to reviews at the end of lessons.
72. Reading standards are below average, although there are a number of competent readers in Year 2. The more able pupils read accurately and with some fluency. These pupils possess good strategies for word recognition. Other groups of pupils in Year 2 lack fluency and pronounce some words inaccurately. A few pupils struggle to read because they do not possess sufficient strategies to sound out words. Most pupils know how to locate the contents page and index in an information book and the more able pupils use these features confidently.
73. Handwriting and writing standards are below average. Many pupils are developing their handwriting skills using a cursive style, but letter size and shape are inconsistent. The spelling and punctuation of more able pupils are secure, but significantly weaker amongst other groups. The less able pupils do not use capital letters or full stops often enough. Story writing is developing appropriately. Amongst more able pupils there is evidence of extended writing. However, with other pupils, stories are often too brief and lack good grammatical expression. Pupils are being taught basic skills effectively and learn to think creatively about stories. However, there is not enough transference of skills from the practice of writing and punctuation into creative work because the school does not give enough time to it.
74. By Year 4, pupils listen carefully and a considerable number speak confidently. Pupils are aware of the need to match speech to audience. Standards are improving because pupils have good opportunities to explore language. For example, they enjoy discussing Haiku poetry and are able to suggest lines that match the number of syllables needed. They explore the work of different poets, for example Roger McGough, and make valid comparisons with other poets. When questioned, the more able pupils offer detailed comments of different authors and contrast their literary styles well. For example, one pupil offers a perceptive critique on Roald Dahl and J. K. Rowling. The value of good discussions at the end of lessons is highlighted where pupils have the time to listen and then offer constructive comments on one another's work.
75. Standards in reading are close to age-related expectations for pupils in Year 4. Most read accurately, because they possess effective strategies for word recognition. Pupils are quite fluent and many read with expression. They are able to recall and comment upon plot and, to a lesser extent, character. Most pupils are reading from a commercially produced reading scheme and do so at levels that match their reading abilities. Reading records are effectively maintained and indicate that parents hear their children read on a regular basis. Pupils possess basic library skills and can locate non-fiction books effectively, knowing how to use them. Standards are rising because of the specific focus on reading in the literacy hour and the increased opportunities that have been created for teachers and classroom assistants to hear pupils read individually.

76. Standards in handwriting and writing are broadly average. Most pupils use a joined, cursive style accurately. Punctuation skills are a little less secure, but most pupils use basic punctuation accurately and are beginning to improve their use of apostrophes and speech marks. They know the purpose of nouns, verbs and adjectives, using them appropriately in creative writing. Pupils are beginning to use language imaginatively within a number of situations, for example, detailed diaries of their leisure activities. Pupils enjoy writing poetry, character studies and biography. They recognise the importance of developing a character when telling a story. Standards are rising because of good teaching and a focus on extended writing each week in their literacy hour. There is also an increasing emphasis on developing writing across the curriculum. In history, for instance, pupils in Years 3 and 4 use empathy skills well to describe the lives of Roman soldiers and children in wartime.
77. The standard of teaching in Years 1 to 4 is consistently good because the staff are confident in the techniques of the literacy hour. They plan carefully and have a secure knowledge and understanding both of the teaching materials used and of which strategies to employ. Most lessons proceed at a good pace, support staff have a clear role and relationships are good. This promotes effective rates of learning and ensures that all groups of pupils have the opportunity to make progress. Classroom assistants play an important part in promoting the improvements taking place. In particular, they provide good support to those pupils who have specific learning targets identified for them. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Many of them actively seek to contribute in discussion and are keen to learn. This is because pupils' behaviour is effectively managed and tasks are clearly explained. Pupils know what is expected of them.
78. Literacy is promoted satisfactorily across the curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills in subjects such as history and information and communication technology.
79. The school provides a good quality curriculum in English and careful planning ensures that pupils' work is matched to their ability. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment are very good and inform planning extremely well. Good use is made of library provision to improve standards and the use of ICT as a research facility is improving. There is an effective partnership with parents in supporting reading homework.
80. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and, because of her further role as special educational needs co-ordinator, is able to closely monitor the progress of all groups of pupils. She is clear about the need to continue to improve standards and now has a number of appropriate strategies in place to address this issue. The decision to focus specific literacy sessions on reading or writing is having a positive impact on standards. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, with good improvement in the use of assessment information.

MATHEMATICS

81. Pupils' standards in mathematics are close to the national average by the end of Year 2, but below expectations at the end of Year 4. Although this appears to be a decline in standards in Year 2 since the last inspection, test results of pupils at that time show that standards were in fact below the national average and satisfactory progress has been made. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a beneficial effect on pupils in Year 2. Teachers have received training for the new curriculum and have developed a new confidence and enthusiasm for the subject. This has been transmitted to the pupils and has enabled them to make good progress from their below average standards when they entered school. Year 4 pupils are making satisfactory progress, but have not made up ground from their below average starting point. They have only had the benefit of the National Numeracy Strategy since they were

in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are given appropriate support enabling them to make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress. The support they receive in class ensures that all pupils are fully included in the mathematics provision. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

82. An appropriate emphasis is placed on number work and, by the end of Year 2, most pupils can count reliably to at least 100. They can count in steps of two, five or ten starting at zero or other given numbers. They can read and write numbers in figures and words, and can respond to questions about which is more than or less than a given number. With money, some are able to work out the cost of two or three items, and how much change they would get from £1. They are developing their mental work and also their ability to record, either with informal jottings or with more formal presentation. They construct simple charts to display data they have collected, for example of their favourite toys, and make use of information and communication technology skills to present their work in pictograms or block graphs. Most pupils can find a half or a quarter of various shapes. They give sensible estimates of a variety of items up to 50, with a few going much higher. Most pupils have a sound understanding of a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They can describe the features of a square, triangle, circle, pentagon and hexagon, on to cube, cuboid, cylinder, cone and pyramid. They can make sensible estimates of length and measure articles around them in centimetres. They can identify reflective symmetry in common two-dimensional shapes and use paint patterns on a computer program to make their own symmetrical patterns.
83. By the end of Year 4, pupils develop their number skills to ordering four-digit numbers and placing them on a number line. Good links are made with history and time lines. Many pupils add and subtract with hundreds, tens and units, and can double or halve two-digit numbers. They are beginning to use $<$, $>$ and $=$ symbols correctly, and tackle 'real life' problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. However, many have a limited understanding when the problem requires more than one process, such as working out how much articles will cost and how much change they will receive. Most pupils understand a fraction as a part of a whole, with some recognising equivalent fractions, and some understand that 10 is two thirds of 15. Many pupils measure accurately in millimetres, such as the dimensions of a picture of a robot, and know how to measure the perimeter of shapes. They understand that some shapes tessellate and can draw tessellating triangles. Most pupils can represent data on bar charts or pictograms and interpret information from them, such as which is the most favourite or least favourite animal.
84. Teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to excellent, being satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 and 4. The better aspects of teaching were:
- well planned lessons with clear learning objectives made known to pupils at the start of the lesson;
 - clear explanation and demonstration of the skills to be learned;
 - a good variety of activities designed to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are challenged according to their needs;
 - a brisk pace, ensuring that pupils are kept well motivated, but have time to practise what they have learned;
 - good use of information and communication technology, developing both computer and mathematical skills.
- Where these were evident, pupils showed a good deal of enthusiasm for their work, tried hard and often made good progress. In particular, in one Year 2 lesson, all pupils were working very hard at their own level and making very good progress. Here, pupils had been very well motivated, with activities carefully chosen to challenge and interest them.

85. In some lessons, even those judged overall as satisfactory, there were elements requiring improvement. These largely concerned:
- the pace of the lesson being too slow, with pupils not being motivated and, therefore, losing interest. This was particularly noticeable at the start of lessons, where insufficient use was made of individual whiteboards or digit cards to enable all pupils to take part in the mental mathematics introduction. Occasionally, some pupils did nothing for the first half hour of the lesson and very little in the second half;
 - inadequate strategies for the management of pupils, with many pupils totally ignoring the teacher's instructions and the teacher not using a wide enough range of strategies to deal with this
 - insufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils. In one instance, pupils finished their work very quickly and were then asked to colour in the pictures on the worksheet. They were not given further demanding mathematical work which would have helped them learn more;
 - too much reliance on published worksheets, particularly for the older pupils. This is inhibiting their development from mental calculations, to informal jottings, to standard written methods of calculation.
- In these instances, pupils' progress suffered.
86. Pupils use their mathematics and numeracy skills well across the curriculum; for example, to carry out accurate measurements in science and design and technology and to create pie charts and graphs to display data in information and communication technology.
87. Teachers have worked hard to implement the National Numeracy Strategy under the leadership of an enthusiastic co-ordinator. She is developing the school's own scheme of work, which is a combination of national guidance and a published scheme. This is ensuring appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum and that pupils are building on their skills as they move through the school. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is beginning to improve the attainment of the younger pupils. Planning is thorough and undertaken in teams of teachers to ensure equality of opportunity, particularly with a mixed-age class. Assessment procedures are comprehensive and results of tests, including the tests at the end of Year 2, are carefully analysed and used to inform planning. The co-ordinator has given teachers good guidance as to which computer programs can be used to develop mathematical skills and these particular programs are well used by teachers. There is a good quantity of resources available to teachers to teach the curriculum, which are also well used.

SCIENCE

88. Standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 are below average. In Year 4, they are generally below and sometimes well below average. However, across the school teaching is sound and pupils are achieving satisfactorily in most aspects of science. This is a similar finding to the previous inspection at Year 2, but there has been an apparent deterioration in Year 4. However, attainment on entry varies from year to year, sometimes being well below average and, therefore, it is difficult to make direct comparisons in standards. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. However, pupils with English as an additional language do not always make satisfactory progress in spite of teachers giving additional support where necessary. This is because some pupils are at an early stage of learning English and require greater individual help to enable them to understand what is being taught. There were no evident differences seen in the attainment of boys and girls during the inspection. They worked well together, sharing ideas and listening to each other's contributions, and all took part in all aspects of lessons.
89. Pupils in Year 1 identify a variety of sounds and their sources. They describe the properties of materials using terms such as 'smooth' and 'bendy'. Most know what a

'push' or 'pull' is and know they need food and drink to stay healthy. There is little evidence, however, in the written work seen to show that higher attaining pupils are challenged sufficiently. Most of the work done by different pupils is almost exactly the same and appears to have been copied into books. By Year 2, most pupils can sort materials into either manufactured or natural. They know how pushes and pulls affect objects. They carry out experiments to investigate surfaces that enable vehicles to go fast and those that slow them down. Higher and average attaining pupils make suitable predictions, carry out accurate measurements and are learning to label diagrams well. However, there are a number of pupils who are still working at the lower than expected Level 1 overall. They are still developing their ideas and explain their findings in simple terms such as 'I saw a bird and ants'. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to develop an understanding of what constitutes a fair test; for example, the same person pushing the car and the same person measuring (using hand spans). Most pupils are developing a clear idea of which appliances do or do not use electricity due to the teacher's good use of resources, clearly stated learning objectives and good focus on scientific skills. Pupils learn to use vocabulary such as 'battery powered', 'charger' and 'socket'. Good use is made of experimentation to develop pupils' ideas, but there is not enough emphasis on extending higher attaining pupils.

90. By the end of Year 4, pupils investigate the habitats of creatures and plants living in the school grounds. Some higher attaining pupils recognise the significance of these habitats in terms of providing food and safety. Average and lower attaining pupils have some understanding of habitats and what they provide, but generally describe them in much simpler terms. Most know how to read a thermometer to measure temperature accurately and complete a table of results. They have worked with materials and recognise where they can be used effectively, for example 'foil is useful in wrapping up meat'. Higher and average attaining pupils have a good idea of fair testing whilst lower attaining pupils are less clear on this and are less able to describe their observations in scientific terms. They sort things into groups using simple terms and compare movement in terms of speed or direction. They observe and compare living objects and events.
91. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers make effective use of national guidelines when teaching science, thus ensuring that the programmes of study are covered. They use a good range of resources to support their work and generally encourage pupils to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills. There are examples of good opportunities given to pupils to demonstrate their thinking skills and sound use of scientific terms such as 'habitats' and 'organisms', which pupils use appropriately in their responses. The main weaknesses in the teaching of science are:
- the heavy reliance on worksheets which require completion rather than encouragement of pupils to think about what they have learnt;
 - the lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils through clearly identified extension activities;
 - marking, which is mainly ticks and tells pupils very little about their learning;
 - a lack of questioning to develop pupils scientific ideas and skills through questions such as 'What is the scientific way of saying this?', 'What does this mean in scientific terms?'
92. The co-ordinator of the subject is new to the role and has not attended any courses to improve skills and expertise in order to carry out the role effectively. She has checked that planning is appropriate and the two-year programme of topics ensures that pupils in the mixed-age class do not repeat work. Regular assessments are made by teachers to show what pupils know, understand and can do, but this is not used to provide work that meets the differing learning needs of pupils.
93. Pupils use their numeracy skills well in science through taking accurate measurements and completing tables of results and graphs. They use their literacy skills less frequently

as much work is completed using work sheets, except in Year 2. Sound use is made of information and technology skills to support work in science, for example, the sequencing of plants in Year 1. In some classes there are good opportunities to develop social skills through opportunities to work collaboratively, but this is not a regular feature in all classes.

ART AND DESIGN

94. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection. Although no lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4, the work around the school of pupils of this age was analysed, and sketchbooks and portfolios of work were reviewed in order to come to judgements.
95. Pupils in Year 1 have opportunities to paint, print and use collage materials in a variety of contexts. They experiment with weaving and use play-dough to make fruit and vegetables. They use a variety of printing tools sensibly in order to design patterns for plates. By Year 2, pupils use their drawing skills appropriately to complete portraits. Good use is made of sketchbooks to practise drawing facial features such as ears and teeth. They learn to use the technique of framing in order to draw an interesting viewpoint. Most look very carefully at paintings before deciding which part will make an interesting viewpoint. They readily distinguish landscape and portrait paintings and recognise the value of using a viewfinder in exploring artwork. In Year 3 pupils investigate the work of sculptors and their influence in improving the environment. They develop their sketching techniques to help them with drawing a building to a consistent scale. When preparing to draw their portraits they looked at the work of artists such as Holbein. They have experimented with tones and tints, but there is no evidence of how they have subsequently used this skill. Most of the work seen did not show a good attention to detail or use of a range of techniques. By Year 4, they explore the designs of chairs, looking at different types and materials used in their construction. They use this information well when making their own chairs for different characters. They experiment with different materials and techniques in order to construct a model chair. Their finished products are of good quality, particularly the one for Princess Crystal.
96. The teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 varied between satisfactory and good and was good overall. However, teaching over time is satisfactory. There is not enough attention given to the progressive development of skills and techniques and their use in lessons. Teachers use national guidelines satisfactorily in order to develop pupils' skills and creativity. Lessons are well planned and organised, enabling learning intentions to be met. Teachers use a good range of resources, which help pupils to experiment and consolidate their learning. In most lessons pupils are well managed, although occasionally their inattentiveness disrupts lessons and this is not always dealt with effectively.
97. Teachers make sound use of computer programs to support work in art. For example, the use of a computer generated repeating patterns for Christmas cards. There are occasional links with literacy, for example, when Year 3 pupils were asked to give their views on Roman wall paintings. They used adjectives such as 'thoughtful', 'beautiful', and 'serious', to describe the people in them.
98. The co-ordinator for the subject is very new. However, she is knowledgeable and keen to give the subject a higher profile. She is setting up an art week, which is to take place in the near future. Additionally, she has started to complete a portfolio of good work, which will be levelled to indicate the standards achieved. However, apart from this, there is no assessment of pupils' work in art so there is no clear view of pupils' standards or rate of progress across the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 in the making aspect of the subject. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement on the design aspect. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily in the making aspect of the subject. This is a similar finding to that of the previous inspection except that at that time there was enough evidence to make a judgement about the design aspect of the subject. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, but work around the school was analysed, discussions were held with class teachers and work in books was reviewed in order to come to judgements.
100. In the lesson seen in Year 1, pupils made a variety of playground equipment based on a playground design they had finalised in the previous week. Additionally, pupils had carried out surveys, completed questionnaires and looked at a variety of playground equipment. Pupils used construction bricks, recyclable materials and cut out paper designs as a means of making their equipment. By the end of Year 2, pupils use their design and make skills effectively to make a textile product. In order to make their sock puppet, they investigated a variety of puppets, particularly finger puppets, as a basis for their designs. They learned about fabrics, joining techniques and physical features. Some pupils labelled their designs and most completed simple evaluations. By Year 3, they use techniques such as triangulation and re-enforcement. They have disassembled packaging in order to determine nets. Pupils in Year 4 have made a variety of models, which light up, by using their knowledge of electrical circuits. They used a variety of re-claimed materials and cut and joined in a variety of ways to complete their models.
101. Teachers make sound use of national guidelines to teach the subject. The co-ordination is satisfactory, although the new co-ordinator has had limited time or opportunity to influence the subject. Evidence of work covered needs to be kept in order to clearly demonstrate pupils' progress over time in the design element and enable all teachers to know what has been covered and the standards attained. Storage and resourcing have been improved since the last inspection and the school has sufficient resources for the units of work it uses.

GEOGRAPHY

102. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and nine. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. This is because standards of teaching are satisfactory and at times good. This promotes effective rates of learning in each year group, with pupils progressing steadily with their programmes of study as they move through the school.
103. By Year 2, pupils know how to record information in written and illustrative form. They carry out observations in the school grounds and immediate locality to record significant features. They map their journey to school and describe features seen on route, such as shops and traffic. Pupils are aware that their home town is inland and that it requires a considerable journey to reach the coast. They compare and contrast Redditch with a coastal resort, noting such features as sea and sand. They are aware that specific leisure activities can be pursued at the coast but not inland. The development of these basic geographical skills is effectively promoted by careful teaching, which ensures pupils have opportunities to study visual resources that help reinforce learning. For example, good use is made of maps and photographs to help pupils recognise features of a seaside resort. Discussion opportunities help pupils draw on their own experiences of holidays to inform their work.

104. By Year 4, pupils improve their mapping skills sufficiently to record land usage in Redditch. This enables them to analyse simple data and suggest improvements to the environment. Pupils know that information can be gathered in different ways. For example, they take photographs to record the local environment around the school and match these to outline maps of their route during a supervised walk. Through careful questioning by class teachers, pupils are able to suggest improvements to the environment and begin to formulate plans to achieve this. In other work, pupils recognise that there are contrasting climates in different regions of the world. They are able to chart these climates and regions on a world map and include temperature and rainfall data. This helps them select regions where particular activities are popular, for example, Mediterranean holiday resorts. Pupils make good use of atlases to locate different towns and cities in the UK. This helps improve their understanding of location and the implications for travel between regions.
105. Standards of teaching are satisfactory over time and ensure that all pupils learn at an appropriate rate. During the inspection, examples of good teaching were observed. The features of these lessons included careful planning, the effective use of resources and carefully matched tasks to age and ability. This good teaching helps promote effective learning, as pupils are challenged to think carefully and respond accordingly. The overall standard of teaching has ensured that appropriate standards have been maintained for pupils in Years 1 to 4.
106. The curriculum meets national requirements and is effectively informed by national guidelines. It provides all pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop an appropriate range of geographical skills. On occasion, good use is made of support staff and parental volunteers to support specific groups of pupils. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and is beginning to develop a range of monitoring procedures. Assessment procedures are improving and inform parental reports effectively. Curricular provision is enhanced by educational visits within the locality and occasionally further afield, for example, to Umberslade Farm. The school is beginning to draw upon information and communication technology as a resource for information and good use is made of the school and public library for this purpose. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

HISTORY

107. Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations for pupils in Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily over time. This is because standards of teaching are mostly satisfactory and, because of this, pupils progress steadily with their programmes of study as they move through the school.
108. By Year 2, pupils have an understanding of chronology and can place themselves within a family group. More able pupils record a family tree across three generations. Pupils are aware of change over time. They study the Victorian period and record differences within the household between then and now. Pupils hear about the story of Grace Darling and write a short illustrated biography of her life. This helps develop an understanding that significant acts by individuals can influence events. Good use is made of story to promote an understanding of famous historical events in the more distant past; for example, the Gunpowder Plot. This helps them understand that different viewpoints are held by individuals, for example religious beliefs, which lead to controversial actions.
109. By Year 4, pupils gain an understanding of events across different periods in history. They study the series of invasions during the first millennium and discover how they helped shape the British nation. Pupils are taught carefully to use investigative methods. They have opportunities to study history through examining artefacts, photographs and documents. For example, pupils make good use of census material to build up a picture of

Redditch during the Victorian period. This enables them to develop empathy skills when writing about Victorian factory children. Further work on the Second World War helps reinforce empathy skills and promotes an understanding of cause and effect. Pupils gain useful insights into the impact of war upon civilian populations. Overall, pupils are introduced to an appropriate range of historical skills and acquire appropriate levels of knowledge and understanding for their age. This is because class teachers make good use of primary and secondary source material, which generates interest amongst most pupils. This is evident through some of the classroom displays in Years 3 and 4.

110. From the work sample, standards of teaching over time in Years 1 to 4 are satisfactory and enable pupils to progress adequately. There is a clear commitment to develop resource-based learning and encourage pupils to investigate sources of evidence. During the inspection, little teaching was observed because of timetabling constraints. Where teaching is occasionally less than satisfactory, the pace of the lesson is too slow and leads to some inattentive behaviour from a minority of pupils.
111. The curriculum follows national requirements and is effectively informed by national guidelines. It provides all pupils with sufficient opportunities to develop an appropriate range of historical skills. Good use is made of educational visits to enrich curricular provision, for example to Warwick Castle and Forge Mill Museum. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and has a clear view of the priorities. Assessment procedures are beginning to improve and inform parental reports effectively. Increasing use is made of ICT to research topics and present information. Good use is made of the school and local library as sources of information. On occasion, classroom assistants and parents provide useful support for teaching staff. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Resource provision is now satisfactory, as more books have been purchased and better use is made of artefacts and software.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Pupils' standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at the end of both Year 2 and Year 4. Whilst this is a similar judgement to that of the last inspection, in fact it represents good progress as the requirements have changed significantly since then and the school has made good progress in implementing the new curriculum. Although the number of computers in school is still too low, teachers are making the best use of what they have available.
113. With only two computers in most classes, it is impossible to have all pupils working at the same time. The chosen method of teaching is for the class teachers to demonstrate the required skills, followed by opportunities for pupils to practise them during the next week. This is working satisfactorily, especially as many of the developing skills are practised in other subject lessons. For example:
- in science and personal education, when talking about themselves, pupils choose tools from Colour Magic to draw self-portraits;
 - in literacy, pupils use word processing, choosing different fonts, to write stories;
 - in history, pupils copy pictures from CD-ROMs to their own work;
 - in religious education, pupils write prayers and find pictures to go with parables, such as The Lost Sheep;
 - in numeracy, pupils use pictograms, pie charts and block graphs to display their data;
 - in music, pupils compose and record using graphic scores;
 - in geography, pupils reproduce maps of the British Isles.
- Whilst most work is in line with national expectations, some particularly good work has been produced by Year 4 pupils. They have produced newspaper reports for different audiences, using a variety of font sizes, and have added pictures.

114. There is not enough evidence to make a judgement on teaching as it was possible to observe only two lessons in information and communication technology. In the very good lesson seen in Year 1, pupils were taught that machines and devices can be controlled by a sequence of actions. The teacher very effectively reinforced key language and made good use of demonstration to ensure pupils could carry out a set of instructions to operate the cassette recorder. In the Year 2 lesson, the pupils developed their skills of control further by giving a floor robot a set of instructions to make it move forward and turn. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported and all pupils are included in lessons. There are useful portfolios of pupils' work indicating curriculum coverage and standards attained. Pupils are well motivated, not solely by the teachers, but also by the attractive information and communication technology displays in each classroom. There are examples of word processing, word art, clip art, pictograms and photographs using a digital camera. Displays throughout the school are enhanced with labels, which have been computer generated.
115. All teachers have received training that has greatly improved their competence and confidence in working with computers. This has helped raise the profile of information and communication technology within the school and is helping to raise standards. Planning is thorough and indicates almost full coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. The only omission is the sending and receiving of e-mails, which is to be introduced this year.
116. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has many plans to improve the school's provision. These include a mini-suite, laptop computers and a quicker connection to the Internet. Good use is made of the local education authority consultant for advice on how to move forward with hardware provision. Many pupils use the adjacent local library and are encouraged to use its Internet facility.

MUSIC

117. Very little music was seen or heard during the inspection. The only lessons observed were in Years 1 and 2 and here some pupils' attainment was in line with national expectations, whilst the attainment of other pupils was below expectations. The singing in assemblies by the whole school was of good quality and added to the sense of occasion. All pupils were included and they thoroughly enjoyed their work. Attainment was deemed to be good at the last inspection. However, it would be unfair to conclude that standards have declined because there was so little evidence.
118. Pupils sing a number of songs from memory. Many of these include actions, which they perform in time, at the right time. Younger pupils are introduced to many songs that include counting, which links well with their mathematical development. Pupils listen to a variety of music by different composers at assembly times, with information on the particular composer written on notices on the wall. Good links are made with literacy when pupils find words to describe how certain music makes them feel. Through their singing and listening to music, pupils are introduced to elements of music such as tempo, pitch and dynamics. They compose music, with instruments or by using their body parts, to create different effects. They use tape recorders and a computer program to record their compositions.
119. Where teaching is good, pupils are well motivated to join in enthusiastically with the activities. They try hard, and display very good attitudes and behaviour. Where teaching does not meet this standard, pupils lose interest and show apathy. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are included in music lessons and activities.
120. The co-ordinator has only been in post a short while, but has made a good start, especially as the subject was without a leader for a time. She is continuing with her own professional

development in the subject and is helping to raise the level of confidence amongst other teachers. The curriculum is being developed through national guidelines and a published scheme. A teacher from the county music service visits to teach the recorder to pupils in Years 3 and 4. They play at assemblies and end of term concerts, and may soon have the opportunity to play in a lunchtime club. A choir for Years 3 and 4 has recently been started and there are plans for the pupils to join with other schools for music festivals. There are sufficient resources to teach the curriculum, although there are very few instruments from other cultures.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. Standards in Years 1 and 2 for games are satisfactory. Pupils have appropriate skills for throwing and catching large and small balls. In Year 4, pupils' standards in basketball are very good. They show high levels of competence in passing, dribbling, shooting and in lay-ups. These were the only elements of physical education observed, although records indicate that pupils reach good standards in swimming.
122. The class teachers took the lessons in years 1 and 2 and the teaching was satisfactory. Planning was sound with appropriate lesson objectives. Pupils and teachers were all changed into appropriate clothing for physical education. All lessons began with a warm-up, although in some of these pupils did not get out of breath or raise their heart rate. Pupils were all well managed and good teaching points were made. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, were included well, with additional support given where necessary. A common factor in all the lessons was too much teacher talking, thus limiting the time for pupil activity. It is understood that this was the first lesson on a new activity, but there was still too much time spent on over-long explanations. An Action Sports coach took the basketball lesson in Year 4 from the local leisure centre. This lesson was very good. Pupils were well managed and very well motivated. They worked very hard and made very good progress. The lesson started with a good warm up, and followed with a series of well-chosen activities to develop pupils' skills. The lesson proceeded at a good pace, but more pupil activity could have been gained with several small groups rather than four groups of seven for many of the practices.
123. The co-ordinator has only recently taken up the post, but has the support of the previous post holder. A curriculum map shows appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum throughout the school. Good use is made of outside agencies for teaching pupils, supporting teachers and providing bright and colourful equipment. Most teachers have attended a variety of courses, such as Kwik cricket and Unihoc, which has developed their competence in teaching. However, some areas of games teaching, particularly in developing attacking and defending skills, need further development. Resources are good, both in terms of the facilities such as hall, playground and playing field, and the small games equipment. The school knows that the hall floor needs attention, as loose blocks could be dangerous.