

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY TRINITY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Handsworth, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103413

Headteacher: Miss C Dunford

Reporting inspector: David Carrington
15414

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th March 2000

Inspection number: 197237
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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Havelock Road Handsworth Birmingham
Postcode:	B20 3LP
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev R Hunt
Date of previous inspection:	8 th – 11 th July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr David Carrington	Registered inspector	Science, Physical education, Special educational needs.	The school's results and pupils' achievements, Teaching and learning.
Mr John Bayliss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values and personal development, Partnership with parents and carers, Welfare and guidance.
Mr George Logan	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information technology.	The quality and range of learning opportunities.
Mrs Julie Moore	Team inspector	Art, Design and technology.	
Miss Fiona Robinson	Team inspector	English, Music, English as an additional language.	Leadership and management.
Mrs Beryl Thomas	Team inspector	Geography, History, Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage.	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School is situated close to the main A34 Walsall Road about 4 miles north of Birmingham city centre. There are 85 boys and 92 girls at the school plus 26 pupils who attend the nursery. Nearly 80% of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and over half speak English as an additional language. Over forty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is above average. Over a third of the pupils have special educational needs, though none have statements. This proportion is well above average. The attainment of pupils when they start school is well below average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has made a good rate of improvement in many things in recent years. Although standards are improving, particularly at Key Stage 1, they are not yet high enough by the age of eleven. However, everyone is committed to lifting standards through the school and, in the main, staff work hard to do this. One of the best features of the school is the way it develops pupils into mature and responsible people who mix well together and who are good to know. The head teacher has played a major part in the improvements that have emerged in recent years, fully supported by the deputy headteacher and they ensure that all other staff are drawn into the process of improvement effectively. There are a number of aspects that the school knows it can improve further and a start has been made on most of the issues identified in this report. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher leads the school well.
- Pupils like their lessons, they work hard and behave well.
- Relationships are very good and pupils of all backgrounds work and play together in total harmony.
- The personal development of pupils is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported well and they build skills and knowledge at a steady rate.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is well taken care of.
- Teaching in Key Stage 1 is very good and pupils make steady strides in their learning to achieve average standards overall by the age of eleven.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information technology by the age of eleven are not high enough.
- There are not enough links between the work in the nursery and the work in reception and there are some contrasts in the learning experiences of children under five in the two classes.
- The information produced from assessment is not put to good use in setting targets for learning.
- Not all pupils have enough opportunities to develop independence and responsibility for their own work.

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

There are a number of other strengths and weaknesses in school, however the list of strengths is longer than the weaknesses. The ones on the grid above are the central strengths and issues for the school though.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In 1996, when the school was last inspected, there were five key issues:

1. Raise attainment in speaking and writing in Key Stage 2, especially for pupils whose home language is not English.
2. Improve the quality of teaching.
3. Ensure that attendance levels are improved.
4. Make sure all statutory requirements are met.

5. Lift standards in information technology in Key Stage 2.

The school has improved the first four issues well, though information technology remains a weakness. Good progress has also been made in improving many of the less important issues identified in 1996. Overall, the school has improved well and it is in a secure position to continue to build on its successes.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E	E	E	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	B	E	E	C	
science	B	D	E	D	

In 1999 the standards achieved by eleven year olds were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, the position was stronger. Standards in the three core subjects were much closer to the average found in schools with pupils of similar backgrounds. Evidence from the inspection shows standards this year to be below average in English, mathematics and science. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language and this holds standards back, however these pupils make good gains in knowledge and skills. Earlier in school, standards are satisfactory overall by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils make very good progress at this key stage. The rate of improvement in standards has been erratic in Key Stage 2 with swings in attainment from year to year. In ironing out the swings, it is clear that standards have improved at a similar rate to that in many primary schools. School managers know that more improvement is needed and they have introduced a number of effective changes to boost standards. The school exceeded its targets for attainment in 1999, but it still has a way to go in order to catch up with other schools.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils want to come to school, they are interested in the work and they work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well and settle quickly to their work. A few pupils are not so willing. Teachers deal effectively with problems of behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. These are things that the school does really well. Pupils mix happily and they become pleasant people who are good to talk to.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The level of attendance has improved over the last few years and is moving towards the national average.

The school is successful in developing the pupils as warm, friendly people who are at ease with others. This is a particular strength of the school. It also builds well on these qualities, so pupils become mature and responsible.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	satisfactory	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.

Inspectors observed 58 lessons or part lessons and judged that teaching is satisfactory overall. About 24 per cent of lessons are of very good or better teaching quality, and another 36 per cent were good. All other lessons were satisfactory and none were unsatisfactory. This is a major improvement on the quality of teaching at the last inspection. The best teaching is found in Key Stage 1 where lessons are well motivating, interesting and enjoyable. Some aspects of planning and everyday assessment would stand improvement. Additionally, some teachers make all the choices for their pupils in lessons. This reduces the opportunities pupils have to develop independence and responsibility in learning. On the other hand, control and discipline are good, basic skills, particularly in English and mathematics, are taught properly and teachers generally use a variety of teaching methods. Classroom assistants are very effective in their work and they teach well.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and key staff have made major changes to the way the school is run. These have been successful in bringing improvements and other key staff have supported this work effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have appropriate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school though they are not yet asking the right questions at the right time to check that decisions bring the expected improvements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Managers collect the necessary information to analyse how well the school is doing and improvements are emerging. There are still a number of improvements to complete though.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Staff are used well, extra money given to support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is used effectively. However, some time ago the school spent more than it was allocated and it still owes this money.

In many subjects there are just enough resources for learning, though the position is better for English, mathematics and science. There are not enough computers though. There is more than enough space in school but it is costly to keep in good state of repair.

The headteacher is uniting the staff with a determination to bring improvement and she is the chief reason why things are moving forward. Governors are growing in their role and they make sound attempts to uphold the principles of *best value* which public services are committed to.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Most subjects are covered in the curriculum, though information technology is a weakness and children under five do not always have a balanced blend of learning activities. Appropriate amounts of time are spent on English, mathematics and science. The provision for extra curricular activities is less than found in most schools.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The support staff are the centrepiece of the good quality learning provided for these pupils. The work is interesting and holds the pupils' interest well. The monitoring of pupils withdrawn for extra support is unsatisfactory.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Again, the support staff are effective and they give good quality support that enables pupils who do not use standard English at home to speak with greater fluency and confidence.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. This is something the school does well. In particular, pupils' moral development is good and their social development is very good. The school has made good improvement to the spiritual development of pupils and there are now plenty of chances for pupils to reflect on what makes things special for them.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Pupils' welfare is good. Assessment procedures have been improved but the information that results is not yet used enough to identify the next steps to be taken to build skills and knowledge at a good rate.

The curriculum gives appropriate experiences for pupils to help them build knowledge, skills and understanding. In Key Stage 2, the work in information technology does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, pupils do not use computers enough and standards in the subject are unsatisfactory. The school has established satisfactory links with parents in order to try to build a partnership in education. Many parents are keen for their children to succeed and they contribute soundly to the work of the school and they are positive in their views of the school. All staff take good care of the pupils. Assessment has weaknesses because it is not used well enough to produce personal targets for learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • They feel comfortable in approaching staff with problems or concerns. • The school expects their children to do well. • They get good information about how well their children are doing. • Teaching is good in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is not enough homework. • The range of activities outside lessons is limited.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive in their views of the school. In the main, the inspection team agrees with the views of parents, though the information sent home could be more helpful. There is enough homework set and it is linked effectively to lessons. There are not many activities outside school time and the team agrees this is something for the school to develop.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The previous inspection report judged that standards were broadly average in all subjects at the end of Key Stage 1, with attainment in design and technology being better than the expected level for seven year old pupils. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards were average in all subjects in 1996, with the exception of English and information technology where standards were below those expected. Whilst pupils with special educational needs made good progress, those with English as an additional language were not supported well and they underachieved. As the following paragraphs show, the school has made some improvements to teaching and the curriculum and standards have shown some advance as a result.
2. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, pupils at Key Stage 2 achieved at well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. When these results are set against those for similar schools, pupils at Holy Trinity School fared better. They matched the average of similar schools in English and mathematics, though results were below average in science.
3. In the same year, standards in the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests were above the national average in reading and were the same as the national average in writing. They were, however well below the national average in mathematics. Again, in comparison with similar schools, the pattern was better. Standards matched the average found in similar schools in Key Stage 1 mathematics, were well above this level in writing and were amongst the top 5 per cent of similar schools in reading.
4. Over the last three years, the trend in improvement in standards at Key Stage 2 has been close to the national pattern. Standards have improved in Key Stage 1 over the same period too. There have been variations between years, but the overall trend in standards in school is upward.
5. There are some significant trends in the achievement of boys and girls. In 1999, boys achieved better standards than girls in English and science, though there was hardly any difference in mathematics. At Key Stage 1 it was in reading and writing that the boys outperformed the girls, with no difference in mathematics. On the whole, these trends go against the national picture, where girls tend to outshine the boys. There have been some significant differences in the performance of boys and girls at both key stages over the last three years, though the trend has favoured girls one year and boys another. The school is tracking the discrepancies in attainment between boys and girls and has made a sound start in work to narrow the gap between the genders.
6. Several key factors contribute to the picture of standards that emerges from studying the National Curriculum test results. The school has a very high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. These pupils are well supported throughout the school, and compared to the previous inspection, make good progress in building skills, knowledge and understanding. However, they do not speak English with the fluency, confidence and expression of other pupils and they often find difficulties in putting their thoughts into words, whether spoken or written. This impacts on standards.

7. There is also an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The support given to these pupils is also of good quality and they too make good progress. Nonetheless, the proportion of special needs pupils has a profound impact on standards. During the current year (1999-2000), nearly half of Year 2 and well over a third of Year 6 have special educational needs. It is evident from inspection that standards in English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Key Stage 2 and the proportion of special needs pupils and those with English as an additional language are key factors why this is the case.
8. Evidence from the inspection shows that standards are well below the expected level when pupils start in the nursery. These children settle well to their early days of education and make good progress. By the time they are five, they have caught up some ground, though there is still much to be accomplished. Five year old children achieve at below the expected level, though this does mark a significant improvement over their starting level. In some respects, there are differences between work in the nursery and that in reception. More uniformity and smoother transition between the two classes will contribute to even greater progress for the under-fives, and thus, is a key area for improvement.
9. Progress holds up very well through Key Stage 1 because the quality of teaching is good. Pupils build sound skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and basic numeracy through the key stage. Their progress accelerates particularly in Year 2. By the age of seven, standards are at the expected level in all subjects.
10. The pattern of progress is not as strong in Key Stage 2. Progress continues at a steady rate in the first part of the key stage but slows after that. For this reason, standards are not as strong by the age of eleven in comparison with those at the age of seven. The school has tracked this trend carefully and last September, major staff changes were made and significant alterations made to teaching in a bid to bolster progress. This is having good impact, work is becoming more demanding through all years and the pace of learning is picking up well. Standards in basic literacy and numeracy are showing good improvement because the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced well and, in literacy especially, are already showing good impact. There are positive signs of improvement to basic counting, number and arithmetic skills and knowledge, though it is still too early to judge the total impact of the numeracy strategy in school.
11. Standards in other subjects are broadly at the level expected at the end of both key stages. These standards are discussed further in later sections of this report. There is one exception to this picture. Standards in information technology are below the expected level by the end of school. This is because not enough use is made of computers and associated technology to give pupils the necessary skills and knowledge in the subject. There is also little use made of information technology to support other subjects.
12. The headteacher and key managers know that standards must rise even more and that variations from year to year must be ironed out. There is a good sense of determination amongst staff to keep moving forward and the signs are positive. The school exceeded its targets for attainment in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 1999, but managers know that they must be vigilant and refine and extend the measures introduced to improve standards in a bid to keep pace with, and outshine, improvement elsewhere. The school's targets until 2002 will provide the necessary challenge to keep management focused firmly on standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The positive situation found at the time of the previous report has been successfully built upon. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good overall. The school has raised its level of attendance and has been successful in reducing the rate of fixed term exclusions to a very low level. Opportunities for the pupils to take on responsibility outside the classroom have increased. These features positively promote pupils' progress and to improve standards of attainment. Pupils are polite, friendly and well behaved, they are confident and relate easily with adults. They are keen to come to school and are enthusiastic about their learning opportunities. They apply themselves well in the classroom and they sustain their concentration. Inspectors confirm the view of most parents that the school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible.
14. Children under five settle quickly into school routines and build up good relationships with adults and with each other. They behave well and are co-operative with each other, amicably sharing toys and resources and taking turns. They enjoy the activities in the nursery and reception classes, and are keen and eager to learn. They are attentive and are beginning to follow instructions well.
15. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils have good attitudes to learning and are well motivated. They listen politely and attentively to the teacher and to each other and are keen to answer questions, putting up their hands to do so. The pupils show consideration for others and for property. They are courteous and helpful to each other, to staff and to visitors. During lessons pupils respond appropriately to instructions from teachers and very quickly settle to work. They work well together and individually and show an interest in their work. Most are keen to participate in question and answer sessions and do so in a sensible and mature way. They readily take turns and show a willingness to apply themselves to whatever task is presented to them. They are keen to collect rewards for good behaviour and good work. They are polite and courteous, holding doors open without being prompted and enquiring if they can help. They enjoy conversations with each other and adults and listen with interest to what is being said, for example when reading to inspectors or when discussing their views of the school and the part they play in its activities. Such arrangements allow for confident, positive learning to take place.
16. Very little inappropriate behaviour was observed during the inspection. When it occurs, which is infrequently, the teachers use effective strategies to rapidly restore order. All pupils respond well to the high standards of behaviour expected and the action taken by the school to ensure good behaviour is successful. The overall standard of pupils' behaviour in classrooms, in the playground, when moving to the hall for physical education or assembly, and when eating their lunch is never less than satisfactory, and is frequently good or very good. Pupils behave well during break times and play together well.
17. Effective, sensitive behaviour management has resulted in a significant improvement in the rate of exclusions in recent years and there has been a need to exclude only one pupil for a fixed period during the present school year. This compares with seven instances last year and twenty-four reported at the time of the previous inspection.
18. The pupils respond very well to the school's very good provision for their personal development. They have opportunities to act as monitors, which steadily increase through their school life. Children under five in the nursery and reception class are starting to carry out routine responsibilities such as clearing away after activities. At

Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils are diligent in fulfilling their classroom and school responsibilities. Relationships are very good, both among pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils respect the values and beliefs of others and this is apparent in the way they relate to each other both in lessons and elsewhere. Pupils of all ages mix well together at playtimes and lunchtimes. Racial harmony exists within the school. When given suitable opportunities, which is frequently, pupils show that they can collaborate well such as when involved in group activities or when involved in Class and School Council activities.

19. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. Although still slightly below the national average for primary schools nationally good progress has been made since the time of the previous inspection. Attendance levels are reduced by a number of parents organising extended visits to family homelands. Most pupils are punctual arriving at school and a prompt start is made to lessons, ensuring that the maximum amount of time is made available for pupils to learn. When instances of lateness occur they are of a minor nature and are not disruptive to lessons. There is very little unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. In 1996, inspectors judged teaching to be satisfactory or better in 80 per cent of lessons seen and unsatisfactory in the rest. About a fifth of lessons seen were of very good teaching quality. The best teaching which was consistently good, was seen in the nursery and reception classes. The second key issue of that inspection related to the improvement of teaching quality by giving more challenge, improving planning and involving the pupils more in their own learning. School managers have done much to improve the quality of teaching and today, all teaching is of at least the expected standard, and the three specific aspects of the key issue have been answered effectively, though some things remain to be completed.
21. During the current inspection, 58 lessons or part lessons were observed. In addition, inspectors looked at past work and talked to pupils to find out more about teaching over a longer period than the four days spent in school. All this evidence points to satisfactory teaching quality overall. Nearly a quarter of teaching across the school is very good, indeed, a small proportion is excellent. Much of the best teaching clusters in Key Stage 1, especially towards the end of that key stage. No teaching observed was unsatisfactory, though one or two elements of teaching would stand improvement. All this marks good improvement to teaching since 1996.
22. Teaching is at least satisfactory in all subjects in both key stages. It is also of this quality for pupils who are under five. There are some contrasts in the teaching of children in the nursery and reception class and this impacts on learning. These children do not always have enough opportunities to investigate and play in a guided way in order to find out more about the world about them. Part of the third issue from the inspection centres on the need to ensure that the necessary skills, knowledge, confidence and independence are developed for this age group.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. A particularly effective contribution is made by the classroom support staff. These people work as a very good team and they are given many opportunities to take groups, both within and outside the classroom. In general, they teach their groups well and they are well skilled in supporting the diverse demands of pupils with special educational needs. Because teaching is so well focused on the individual needs of these pupils, they make good progress towards their personal targets.

24. Pupils with English as an additional language have work well matched to their needs. Careful planning helps them to achieve their targets. The school deploys its English as an additional language support staff well to assist their learning. They make a valuable contribution, helping pupils' progress to accelerate and their standards to improve. Teachers and classroom support staff assess pupils' needs regularly and the information from these assessments helps staff develop the work in effective ways to help the pupils improve their English skills and knowledge.
25. There are many strengths of teaching, not least the management of pupils, the use of support staff, the range of methods used, teachers' subject knowledge, the level of expectation and the teaching of basic skills. There are, however two elements that require strengthening. These are day-to-day assessment and the sometimes strong control of learning imposed by teachers. When marking pupils' work, teachers do not always indicate ways in which it can be improved and there is little use of assessment to set and share targets for learning with the pupils in lessons. Inspectors observed that teachers often make all the choices of materials, tools, methods and ways to record the work. This does not allow pupils to develop the full measure of independence and responsibility in their work.
26. Occasionally in Key Stage 2, teachers use novel and unorthodox teaching methods. This is generally effective within the individual lesson, as in a Year 5 mathematics class where the teacher introduced a different way to calculate more complicated subtraction sums using negative integers. The pupils responded well to this method and were quite quick to calculate the answer using this approach. The possible disadvantage in the long term was not recognised sufficiently by the teacher who had not shared this approach with colleagues. It is unlikely that the pupils will use the method outside the current year.
27. The best teaching is summed up by a Year 2 science lesson when the pupils were given every opportunity to think for themselves, investigate and talk in depth about their discoveries. The lesson focused on the sense of sight, and pupils were very keen to look into each other's eyes and to describe what they saw. The teacher explored the sense of sight thoroughly, drawing comparisons with a camera lens and, in discussing the cornea, to cling film. The pupils formed graphic knowledge of the eye and sight and talked animatedly about their discoveries. The classroom support assistant worked in very good partnership with the teacher and he ensured that his group knew the importance of a fair test and that they made simple predictions and compared them with the outcome. Learning proceeded at a good pace in this lesson, skills and knowledge were built well and pupils quickly attained the expected standards in the work.

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

28. The 1996 inspection report identified that the curriculum was broad and balanced and complied with the requirements of the National Curriculum. Additionally, the curriculum for the under fives was good, there was a wide range of activities outside lessons and the provision for pupils with special educational needs was effective, though it was judged too variable for pupils with English as an additional language.

The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils was found to be appropriate, with some strengths in the fostering of moral development.

29. Today, the school provides a curriculum which is broad and, for the most part, balanced. It successfully promotes the intellectual, physical and personal development of pupils. The school has recently reviewed the amount of time given to individual subjects. Additional time has been allocated to the teaching of English, with the intention of raising standards in reading and writing. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught at both key stages and statutory requirements are met in all subjects apart from information technology. Here the level of improvement has, until recently, been poor and some elements of the curriculum are not yet covered.
30. The planning of the curriculum for children under five in the nursery is in a transitional phase, between the currently defined areas of learning for children under five and the early learning goals. The quality of the provision is satisfactory overall and successfully meets the requirements of the children. The planning of the curriculum for those children under five in the reception class successfully supports the development of children as they make the transition to the early stages of the National Curriculum.
31. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well, although there are some inconsistencies in work in mental mathematics. In language, teachers are planning to the format of the National Literacy Strategy and lessons broadly follow the expected structure.
32. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is well matched to their individual needs. The requirements of the Code of Practice are met, special needs pupils are well supported and they make good progress. Support staff play a central role in ensuring that all pupils with special educational needs study from an appropriate curriculum. The school does not, however, monitor carefully enough the impact of withdrawing pupils from lessons. Some older pupils miss key elements of the work in geography and history, for example, and the school cannot be certain that the withdrawal programme compensates enough for this loss of opportunity.
33. Pupils are withdrawn occasionally from collective worship and pupils often line up by gender. This is an aspect of the school's work which is not monitored effectively.
34. Pupils who speak English as an additional language have equal access to the curriculum. Good planning between class teachers and support staff ensures that all pupils take a full part in lessons. Pupils' linguistic and other needs are identified in nursery and reception. There is careful monitoring and evaluation of pupils' performance as they move through the school. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
35. The school has a restricted programme of extra-curricular activities. This includes football and choir and an annual camp for Years 5 and 6. This marks a reduction on the situation at the last inspection. Parents are not happy with the limited range of extra curricular opportunities for their children.
36. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social education. Health education, including sex education and drug awareness, is specifically identified across the school in the whole-school curriculum framework. Much of the provision is successfully included in units of the science curriculum and the programme is

effective. Many pupils across the school are involved in the annual residential visits. There is a good programme of visits to support geography, science and other subjects.

37. The personal development of children under five is particularly well catered for. All staff in the nursery and reception classes work hard to settle the children quickly so that they can gain the most benefit from their learning. The children are confident, work well with others and show a good degree of independence. They make very good progress in their personal development overall.
38. There are appropriate policies for all the curriculum subjects, except information technology. There is an approved policy for sex education. The school has made good use of recent national publications to assist its planning of the curriculum. These are regarded as the school schemes-of-work in the majority of subjects. No schemes of work are in place for information technology or design and technology.
39. The quality of medium-term curriculum planning is good. Detailed medium-term plans, covering a term, have been drawn up successfully to a common format. Planning is thorough, although there is some variation in the thoroughness with which planned activities are carried out. There are sometimes weaknesses in the extent to which teachers plan to meet the needs of different attainment groups within each class. Teachers' short-term plans are regularly monitored by the headteacher and subject managers and this is successful in improving the quality of planning.
40. The school tries hard to encourage community links and these are satisfactory at present. Links with the church are strong and pupils support several charities. Visitors to school include the police liaison officer, the fire service and representatives of the Post Office. There is a 'Citizenship' project involving the local council and the Lord Mayor of Birmingham.
41. There are few links with specific local secondary schools, mainly because pupils typically disperse across a large number of schools. However, the school is now participating in the city programme for Year 6 pupils in the final half-term before they move on to secondary education. All pupils attend their chosen secondary school for a day visit towards the end of the summer term.
42. The quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural education is good. The provision for pupils' social education is very good. Through the school, adults actively and consistently promote high standards of behaviour and consideration for others. The staff aim to help pupils to care about and respect each other.
43. The provision for spiritual development of all pupils, including the under fives, is good. Spiritual occasions are not specifically planned within the curriculum, but teachers take advantage of appropriate opportunities when they arise. Pupils feel special when their achievements are celebrated in assembly or class and clap spontaneously to congratulate each other. Assemblies are used to enable pupils to consider the effect of faith on the lives and actions of different peoples. There is good provision for pupils to reflect on the purposes and meaning of life. Questions of life and death are explored sensitively in class and through the 'Faces of God' project. Teachers successfully promote respect, feeling and value for others across the curriculum.
44. The provision for moral development is good. The school has a positive ethos of thinking about and caring for others, especially those younger and weaker, teaching the principles of right and wrong, care of the environment and property. Teachers use

circle time effectively to promote consideration for others, the taking of turns, listening to and thinking of those around and developing self awareness skills. Pupils learn to be honest, tell the truth, show respect and have thought for their own property and that of others. Moral issues are raised and discussed in science as when the case for or against vivisection is discussed. The citizenship week provides opportunities for the oldest pupils to debate issues crucial to the future of the city. The school code encourages a calm atmosphere so that pupils feel secure.

45. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are encouraged to relate effectively to others, take responsibility for themselves and others and participate fully in the school and wider community. They develop a good understanding of community living and citizenship. Pupils are actively involved with the running of their school and they learn how to value themselves and each other. Relationships throughout the school are very positive and teachers provide very good examples of the attitudes and behaviour which they expect from pupils. In circle time pupils learn to care for others, developing quality relationships. Pupils raise money for a range of charities, providing for the less fortunate, both in their own city and across the world.
46. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school provides successful opportunities for pupils to appreciate the cultural traditions of Britain in history and literature. The school's provision for multicultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have some opportunities to appreciate the diversity and richness of the cultural traditions of others.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. In 1996 the staff were observed to have a caring concern for their pupils and gave effective guidance in social, personal and academic matters. However, the lack of a rigorous system of monitoring attendance was a key issue of the inspection. The school has worked well to monitor attendance since then, attendance rates are improving, and it has sustained the many strengths identified in the past.
48. The school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of its pupils, and its procedures for assessing their attainment and progress and ensuring that they receive the academic support and guidance they need are satisfactory overall. The school has addressed appropriately the issues found at the time of the previous inspection.
49. The school provides well for the welfare of the pupils in its care. There is good provision for the support of pupils with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The positive situation found at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. All members of the school community work together to provide a very caring environment in which the pupils feel secure. Staff have very good knowledge of the pupils as individuals and this enables them to respond sensitively and positively to their needs. Mid-day supervisory staff relate well to the pupils. They provide good support during lunchtimes, which has a positive effect on behaviour and safety. First aid and fire safety arrangements are satisfactory and the school provides a safe and supportive environment in classrooms and in the school grounds that facilitates learning. The school's procedures for dealing with accidents are secure. Relationships amongst all members of the school community are very good. The pupils are happy at school and confidently turn to adults when they need help or advice. The resulting supportive atmosphere within the school is conducive to learning.

50. The school's procedures for child protection are very good. They have improved significantly since the previous inspection and now fully meet statutory requirements. The designated member of staff and the headteacher have received relevant training and are suitably experienced to properly undertake their responsibilities. Class teachers and support staff, have been trained and are attentive and conscientious in their approach to the proper support of the pupils in their charge.
51. There are weaknesses, however, in the school's use of academic assessment to guide planning to support pupils' learning. There is also a lack of definitive information about the standards attained by children when they start school. The present arrangements for using assessment information to guide curricular planning are unsatisfactory. The school has recently implemented a range of procedures, at both key stages, for identifying and recording the assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, including those necessary to identify and track higher-attaining pupils, or those with special needs. These procedures have the potential to become a very effective system which will give a focus for teachers to plan and through which the school can identify and monitor the progress of individuals and groups of pupils. However, at the present stage of development, much of the recorded information is not used effectively across the school to identify what is necessary to ensure that effective curriculum planning takes place. As a result planning is sometimes inappropriate to meet the individual needs of all pupils, especially in Key Stage 2.
52. Statutory assessment and recording procedures are satisfactorily carried out. The results are discussed by staff to identify weaknesses in attainment, in teaching or the curriculum. The results of these discussions are used to help identify individual targets for improvement, which are shared with pupils and parents. However, there is a need to refine the use of the information gained to better identify pupils' needs for their next stage of learning.
53. Since the previous inspection the school has introduced new strategies for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and for eliminating oppressive behaviour, and these have been very successful. They are now very good. Parents are very supportive of the school's efforts. There is an ethos of positive behaviour within the school that facilitates learning. Rewards and sanctions are well understood and accepted by pupils. The procedures allow the pupils to take advantage of the opportunities for learning presented to them in an environment in which there is an absence of oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racial harassment. All members of staff, both teaching and non-teaching, set a good example which encourages learning.
54. There are good formal procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Informal monitoring, which benefits from teachers' knowledge of pupils as individuals, is very good. Good links exist with outside support services that contribute well to the work of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils for whom English is not the first language are well looked after.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

55. At the time of the previous inspection, communication with parents formed part of the fourth key issue in respect of reporting about special educational needs. It was also identified that the school had made appropriate attempts to involve parents in the work of the school. Today, the issue of information about special educational needs has been eliminated, as the information provided is good. The school continues to work to broaden the level of parents' involvement in learning.

56. Parents are very supportive of the school. They consider it to be a caring school that provides well for their children. They are comfortable approaching the school when they have worries or concerns, and they are happy with the quality of teaching and the standards achieved. They feel that the school works closely with them, keeping them informed about events and activities, and the progress made by their children. Inspection evidence supports many of the positive features identified by parents. A small number of parents express concern about the range of activities outside lessons and the amount of homework set. Inspection evidence does not support parental concerns about the school's homework policy, which is appropriate, but there is only a limited range of extra-curricular activities.
57. The school's links with parents are secure. Home school links have recently been supported by the introduction of a home-school agreement that provides for commitment by the school, parents and the pupil to the improvement of standards.
58. Parental support at home is variable, but overall it is satisfactory. Although parents and other helpers are warmly welcomed into school only a few do so. Those that are able to help are used well, contributing positively to the support of pupils in class and elsewhere. There are plans to start a 'Friends' organisation to further foster relationships between home and school, and with the community. The direct involvement of parents and other volunteers in the work of the school makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
59. The quality of information provided by the school, particularly about progress, is satisfactory overall. The school prospectus is well produced. It is an informative document that gives very clear guidance to parents. It fully meets statutory reporting requirements. Newsletters to parents are well planned, informative and helpful. Pupils' annual reports meet reporting requirements and provide a satisfactory summary of pupils' attainment and progress. Parents find them useful and informative. However, whilst the reports provide appropriate information on what pupils have done and can do, they do not provide parents with sufficient information on how their child's standard of work compares with that expected for their age, except at the end of each key stage.
60. The most recent governors' annual report to parents satisfactorily reviews the work of the school although there are some minor omissions in respect of providing information about the school's arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils and staff development undertaken. It is particularly strong on giving information about progress on the school's action plan and in giving parents information about the work of individual governors.
61. There are regular opportunities, formal and informal, for parents to meet with teachers to discuss their children's progress. The headteacher makes herself available at any time to meet with parents, and teachers are happy to meet with them informally before or after school, or by appointment to ensure availability due to teaching commitments. A good partnership is established with parents when their children begin school. As a result children settle quickly into their new surroundings.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The previous inspection report identified a number of ways in which the school did not comply with statutory requirements. These formed the fourth key issue. Beyond that, the headteacher was judged to give effective leadership in many ways, subject co-ordinators were judged to be successful in their work and governors supported the

school soundly. Financial control and management were good and all forms of resources were put to appropriate use.

63. Today, the quality of the leadership given by the headteacher is good. Since she took over the post she has accurately analysed the strengths and weaknesses of the school and created a clear vision for its future direction. She has worked closely and effectively with the staff team and together they are improving the quality of education and pupils' attainment successfully.
64. The governing body are supportive of the school and fully meet their responsibilities. They have a satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are involved in reviewing progress on the school development plan. They meet regularly as a whole governing body and on separate committees. Curriculum documents are evaluated by the governing body as a whole. They are knowledgeable about the school's priorities from the information, which they receive from the headteacher, but they are still developing a strategic role in shaping the direction of the school. The headteacher's reports to governors give much useful information to help the governing body identify priorities for the future direction of the school.
65. Communications are effective in the school. The structure of staff meetings have helped to build a committed team of staff who work well together towards the goal of improved standards. The aims of the school are clear in its daily life.
66. There has been a steady development in the school's monitoring and evaluation of its work since the time of the last inspection. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning on a regular basis. She has developed and strengthened the role of the curriculum co-ordinators so that they are feeling more confident and successful in leading their subjects. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have monitored their subjects effectively. The headteacher delegates responsibility appropriately and has established a competent senior management team to help guide school improvement.
67. The money available to the school is well managed and controlled. The senior staff and the governors have a full range of information which guides their planning and decision making. When the priorities in the development plan have been settled then the budget is planned systematically and allocated. Financial planning is aided by the effective use of software and the finance assistant makes a good contribution to the process. The main focus is on improving standards, not only in attainment but in the pupils' personal development and behaviour as well. It is to the school's credit that standards are continuing to improve in all of these areas since the headteacher was appointed to her post. The funds available, which include specific grants, are well targeted and used to achieve the maximum benefit for the school and its pupils.
68. Decisions about non-contact time for members of staff are all directed towards monitoring standards and teaching, as well as improving the management skills of staff with specific responsibilities. This does have a positive effect on the standards reached by the pupils. Staff are well deployed, as are the classroom helpers. Their input makes a substantial difference to the rate of progress at which the pupils learn, and their contribution is crucial to the continuing learning successes of pupils with special educational needs.
69. Only a small amount of progress has been made in tackling the budget deficit accrued some time ago. It is reducing slowly, but there remains a long way to go before the debt is cleared. Small inroads are made annually. The most recent auditor's report (1999) made a number of recommendations, a minority of which are

still being tackled, with the remainder being successfully in place. The school is well run and it gives satisfactory value for money because pupils make good progress overall from a low starting point.

70. The school is appropriately staffed and there are a sufficient number of qualified staff to meet the needs of the curriculum. There is a mix of age and experience on the staff. There is appropriate use of the specialised expertise of some staff, which positively affects pupils' attainment and progress. The learning support staff are effectively deployed and make a significant contribution to children's learning. The non-teaching staff, including the office staff, involve themselves in the life of the school which makes a significant contribution to the routines of the school. The site supervisor is excellent and makes an outstanding contribution to the appearance and ethos of the school.
71. Satisfactory induction procedures are in place for the newly qualified teachers and all of the teaching staff have been involved in staff development interviews. They have written job descriptions, which reflect their roles and responsibilities. Appropriate members of staff have attended training in literacy and numeracy and the provision for in-service education within the school has been satisfactory.
72. Overall, the standard of the accommodation is good. It is spacious, attractive, well cleaned and maintained. The classrooms are large and well utilised and there are two halls for collective worship, and physical education.
73. Resources are satisfactory and support the teaching well. The level and quality of resources for learning in the school are satisfactory in all areas except for information technology. There is a good range and quality of books for literacy and resources are stored well and are easily accessible. Overall, resources are used well to support teachers in their teaching and to enhance pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

74. There have been a number of improvements made to important things in school, not least the quality of teaching, behaviour and pupils' personal development. There remain some weaknesses, however. The school has recognised most of these and built them into its development plan, but it is at different stages of completion with each one. To continue to improve standards across the school, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information technology, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
 1. Boost standards in information technology by
 - ensuring there are enough computers and other resources for the number of pupils and the demands of the curriculum
 - making sure computers are used enough
 - teaching the necessary skills and knowledge systematically through the school
 - providing a programme of work that meets all the requirements of the National Curriculum
 - using information technology to support and extend work in other subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science
 - monitoring standards, teaching and the curriculum to check that all is as it should be (Paragraphs 11, 29, 38, 73, 75, 102, 112, 128, 139, 144 and 147-154)
 2. Further improve assessment and its use by
 - checking that procedures for assessment are timely, but manageable

- enhancing the assessment of pupils as they start in the nursery
 - recording the outcomes of assessment in easily digested form
 - evaluating the outcome to give direction to future learning
 - ensuring that planning includes clear and precise statements of what knowledge, skills and understanding are to be learned
 - using these learning outcomes to set specific targets for pupils
 - sharing these targets with the pupils in lessons and reviewing at the end whether they have been achieved
(Paragraphs 25, 51-52, 86, 94, 118 and 141)
3. Develop closer links between the nursery and reception classes so that the needs of all the children are met fully by
- taking full account of the appropriate curriculum for the under-fives in planning all the work for the age group
 - putting in place an effective system which identifies what the children know, understand and can do when they start school in the nursery and reception
 - monitoring what is happening to ensure that the necessary skills, knowledge, confidence and independence are developed for the age group
(Paragraphs 8, 22, 30 and 75-88)
4. Give all pupils enough opportunities to develop independence and responsibility for their own work by
- providing ample opportunities for individual research and study
 - allowing pupils to select their own materials, tools and resources for work in subjects such as science and design and technology
 - letting pupils devise their own ways of recording their plans, work, observations and work
 - encouraging them to find ways to improve their first attempts
(Paragraphs 22, 25, 85, 127, 146 and 149)

In addition to the above issues, there are one or two lesser concerns that the governors should include in their action plan:

Introduce effective procedures to monitor the impact of the system of withdrawing pupils with special educational needs from lessons.
(Paragraphs 32 and 33)

Ensure that skills and knowledge are developed progressively in all foundation subjects in the light of the requirements of Curriculum 2000.
(Paragraphs 132, 138, 146 and 162)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	22	36	40	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	177
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		88

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		74

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	160

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	60

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	10	16	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	9
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	23	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (72)	85 (64)	88 (68)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	9	9
	Girls	13	14	15
	Total	23	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (72)	88 (84)	92 (88)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	7
	Girls	11	9	7
	Total	18	17	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56 (37)	53 (29)	44 (46)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	11	9
	Girls	9	10	10
	Total	38	66	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (41)	66 (54)	59 (59)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	81
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	19
Pakistani	12
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	30
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	21.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	142.75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.0

Total number of education support staff	1.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	29.25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13.0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	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.

Financial information

Financial year	1998-9
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	£
Total income	474 806
Total expenditure	475 807
Expenditure per pupil	2 163
Balance brought forward from previous year	-26 793
Balance carried forward to next year	- 27 794

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	247
Number of questionnaires returned	41

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My Child likes school	78	22	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school	49	41	7	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good	41	36	15	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	27	37	20	10	7
The teaching is good	49	46	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	54	29	10	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	66	24	2	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	59	29	7	0	5
The school works closely with parents	44	37	7	2	10
The school is well led and managed	41	49	7	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	46	37	12	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	24	39	24	9	4

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

75. At the time of the previous inspection, children worked well in the nursery and they made good progress. In most respects, standards were above average in the nursery. This marked a considerable improvement, as the attainment of many children when they started in the nursery was low. The shortcomings of some resources, particularly large construction equipment, computers and the provision for outdoor activities placed limitations on the experiences provided for the children.
76. The nursery offers 26 full time places to children who will be four years of age in that school year. In the September following their fourth birthday the children move to the reception class within the school, or they leave the nursery to join other schools in the area. Other pupils are admitted into the reception class in the school year in which they are five years old. There are twelve children under the age of five in the reception class. The background of the children has changed in the years between the two inspections as there is now more deprivation amongst the local population and many more children come from re-ordered families. This very much affects their readiness for school.
77. The school does not carry out assessments of pupils on entry to the nursery class. Informal assessments are completed a few weeks after they have settled into full time education. Evidence available shows that on entry to the nursery, children's level of attainment in the six areas of learning is well below average. Many have limited social and language skills and they find the demands of school life difficult to adjust to. Many children have difficulty in responding to adults and other children when they start school. In addition, although half of them can count to five, very few are able to recognise numbers or shapes. Staff in the nursery have effective ways of settling the children into everyday routines and most children grow in confidence from day one, and show increasing enjoyment of their experiences. Teaching is good. The pupils are assessed again at the beginning of the second term and these results show that most pupils have made steady progress. Systems to assess pupils' attainment and to track their progress more regularly are not yet fully developed. Over their time in the nursery and reception, children progress at good rates. By the time they are five their attainment has improved considerably, although it is still below average overall because there is so much ground to make up.
78. Speaking, listening and basic skills of reading and writing improve during the children's time in the nursery and reception and the children make good progress in their work. Teaching is satisfactory in the nursery and good or better in the reception class. The staff give the development of language skills a high priority. When children start in the nursery, the great majority have very poor speaking and listening skills. Some opportunities are missed in the morning to discuss the weather, day of the week or the news. The children soon learn to enjoy listening to stories and there are tapes for the children to listen to, but this activity is not always as well planned as it might be and there is not always enough discussion to let children express opinions and preferences. Some play experiences are not structured tightly enough to develop speaking and listening skills systematically. The children enjoy reading big books such as *Elmer* with the teacher and are keen to act out the story line, rolling over when Elmer does. Every child has a reading diary and they know the pictures carry the story. In reception, some children are beginning to read and many use their finger

to follow the words. The development of writing skills in the nursery is slow and few children can write simple words. Play activities do not always give sufficient opportunity for children to copy or write simple lists of words. Notices and labels help children appreciate the need for writing and their names are clearly placed on a cupboard door. In reception, some are able to write their names either by copying or from memory.

79. Pupils make good progress in mathematics during the first term in the nursery and an increasing number count to fifteen and recognise the numerals one to five. Children are beginning to count in twos to ten and back from ten to zero. To reinforce this, they sing ten *fat sausages sizzling in a pan*. Children are helped to understand the difference between heavy and light using a see-saw and are later introduced to a balance with buckets. This activity links well to the weighing of parcels in the post office. By the time they are in reception they can count with confidence. They make patterns with objects and understand the sequences. The teaching of mathematics is good for all the under fives as teachers have high expectations and make lessons enjoyable for the pupils. In reception, a group were observed investigating beads, threading them on to strings to make patterns. Children were then given different sizes and colours of beads to make a pattern. This activity was very successful in letting the pupils work at their own level. The approach in reception to keep a close eye on all pupils allows them to make good progress and learn well in all lessons.
80. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world develops very well in both classes and children make very good progress. Teaching is good in the nursery and very good in the reception class. Children in nursery are learning about people who help us. They can identify the police officer or lollipop lady and such visitors promote learning well in this aspect. The experiences in art encourage the love of the environment, with sunflowers, frogs and ladybirds on display in the classroom helping them to develop their understanding of nature. Children look closely at similarities and differences and think about why things happen. Most understand that a feather, leaf and pencil will float, but that a stone, money, spoon and scissors will sink. They are able to record how far up the sugar cubes the liquid has travelled as they experiment with vinegar, hot and cold water and orange squash. Reception children use the environment well and plan their visit to the One Stop shopping centre using a simple map. Teachers plan to use the outside to look for patterns in mathematics and children's understanding of places is developed further through the hospital and post office play areas in the classroom. Children use the mouse successfully to control computer software effectively.
81. Pupils enter the nursery with poor physical skills and many have little experience of constructing or drawing. Teaching is satisfactory, with the children making satisfactory progress in developing the skills needed to play and build in both the nursery and reception classes. Physical development progresses effectively in reception and by the age of five, children are able to run, walk, jump, skip and hop. The use of the outside play area was restricted during the inspection. Overall, children meet the expectations of the desirable learning outcomes in the physical area of learning. In their creative development it is evident that children have considerable difficulty in controlling small tools and writing implements when they start school. Many children take a long time and find it difficult to align glue sticks, brushes or pencils to trace a straight line. They rely on adults to help them do these things properly and the classroom assistants give good support in helping the children master techniques and skills when painting, drawing and colouring. By the end of reception, many children use small implements successfully and independently. Music is timetabled once a week and they use paint and other materials in a range of ways as shown in the

effective displays around both classrooms. Children know the primary colours and all can recognise grey after their story of elephants.

82. The personal development of the children is good because it is given strong emphasis by staff. When they start school, children have poor social and personal skills, they find difficulty in being part of a group, are unable to manage their clothing or make strong relationships with adults or other children. Many of the youngest pupils have not yet established firmly their understanding of turn taking or sharing. The pattern of activities each day does not always provide the opportunity for learning to talk and play alongside each other in small and larger groups. By the age of five children their personal and social skills improve so that they are able to share toys and resources well, take turns and behave well in lessons. Teaching is very good for all the under fives. It is evident that the staff have a good impact in helping the children to develop effectively as people and in relating well to others. Progress is very good in this aspect of learning. All pupils are eager to do well, they respond positively to praise, achievement certificates and to the sad and happy faces. A good feature is the opportunity for a representative from both classes to attend the school council meeting.
83. Staff have worked hard to produce detailed plans based on the literacy and numeracy strategies, though this planning does not always identify sufficiently the intended outcomes of the activities described or the ways in which they will be assessed. At times in the nursery there are not enough opportunities for the pupils to interact when learning or for staff to observe their learning in a variety of ways. Occasionally, when children are left to work independently, not enough learning takes place because there is not enough monitoring to see what is happening.
84. In general, children have enough opportunities to develop knowledge, skills and confidence in the early stages of language and literacy, mathematics and of the world around them. Their creative, physical, personal and social development is promoted effectively and children progress well in all these aspects. However, some work is rather too formal for such young children and this makes them more dependent on the staff than is usual even at this age. School managers acknowledge these shortcomings and have already made plans to redress them and to help the children become less dependent on adults.
85. The quality of teaching is effective, and often good in all six aspects of the curriculum. Teachers have sound levels of knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under five. Teachers move the lessons on at a brisk pace, they manage pupils effectively and the support staff give good service and help the children to get good benefit from their learning. Teachers and other staff are particularly effective at enabling children to make very good progress in personal and social development and their attainment in this is better than expected for their age.
86. At present, the school has little information about the level of attainment when children start in the nursery. Baseline assessment is completed in October and November although the school believes that some of the information produced by baseline assessment is limited in value. School managers recognise this is a shortcoming and are looking for better ways to find out the starting level of each child so that nursery and reception staff can provide appropriate learning experiences for them.
87. The management of the education of the under fives is satisfactory overall. There is little formal monitoring of teaching and the curriculum against clearly stated criteria

and so the strengths and weaknesses of the work in the nursery and reception are not all known.

88. The school is determined to provide a consistently good level of support and provision for the under fives to form the basis of the revised curriculum for the foundation stage, due to come into force in a few months time.

ENGLISH

89. Standards in speaking and writing at Key Stage 2 were a key issue of the last inspection. This was especially the case for pupils with English as an additional language. It was judged at that time that standards were average at the end of Key Stage 1, but below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards of reading were satisfactory through the school. Some improvement is evident today, particularly in reading and writing at Key Stage 2.
90. The 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 show that attainment was well below the national average at both the expected level 4 and the higher level 5. When compared with the results obtained by pupils in similar schools, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average.
91. In 1999 the results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading at level 2 were above the national average. They were close to the national average at the higher level 3. In writing, standards were close to the national average at both level 2 and at level 3. Attainment in reading was very high compared with the results of pupils from similar backgrounds. It was well above average in writing.
92. Taking the four years 1996 to 1999 together test results show that there was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
93. The evidence from the inspection shows that children enter the school with well below average standards in English. They make good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is close to national expectations for most pupils, with good standards in reading. The higher attaining pupils reach good standards in both reading and writing. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards are below expectations in writing and in line with expectations in reading and speaking and listening. The current work to improve pupils' skills in all classes has not yet impacted as much on the older pupils as it has those in Key Stage 1. This is largely because the oldest pupils have had relatively less time to benefit from initiatives such as the literacy strategy. However, improvement is more apparent in Years 3 and 4 and there is an overall trend to improved standards in English.
94. The school is very aware that standards tail off in Key Stage 2 and has taken effective measures to redress this. Managers have worked consistently and successfully to improve pupils' literacy skills across all year groups. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has been well handled and it is already having a positive effect on pupils' language skills. This has benefited the younger pupils more than the older ones at present because Key Stage 1 pupils have had relatively more experience of the literacy strategy. Subject monitoring is successful in identifying what needs improvement and managers have taken good measures to ensure that planning is effective with clear objectives for learning.

95. Activities are well matched to pupils' abilities and pupils have many planned opportunities to develop their speaking skills, both in small groups, to the whole class and in public debates with pupils from other schools. Teachers make good use of fiction and non-fiction reading tasks as well as guided reading to provide regular support for developing reading skills. The school has made extra time available for writing and pupils produce stories and poetry. Pupils steadily develop literacy skills and are learning to apply them successfully across the whole curriculum.
96. When children start school, they know few words and their ability to talk to one another is limited. The children soon settle to their learning because of the effectiveness of teaching, and they make good progress in building skills and knowledge. In Key Stage 1 pupils share ideas and answer questions fully. They listen carefully to one another and to their teachers. In a Year 2 lesson pupils were keen to explain what sort of character they thought the wolf had. In a science lesson on 'sight' they clearly explained which colour would be the best to wear in the dark. Good questioning by teachers ensures that all pupils are drawn into the subjects being studied and are given very good opportunities to contribute their own ideas. They express their thoughts with a good range of vocabulary. They benefit enormously from the friendly and encouraging atmosphere created by teachers, and by the age of eleven standards in speaking and listening are average.
97. Pupils debate and discuss methods of working and are using technical language effectively. In a Year 6 English lesson they had an interesting debate as to whether fox hunting should be banned. A small group in the same class debated whether or not chewing gum should be allowed in school.
98. Reading is an important part of the school day and teachers use every opportunity to develop and use pupils' reading skills across the curriculum. Pupils in reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are enthusiastic listeners to stories in the shared reading sessions of the literacy hour. They are eager to use their knowledge of phonics and to blend sounds. These skills are effectively developed so that by the end of the key stage the majority of pupils attain above average standards in reading. All enjoy reading and regularly take books home. Teachers make extensive use of books to extend pupils' learning in both literacy lessons and in other subjects such as science, geography and history.
99. Year 2 pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and confidently find books in the class library. They have a good understanding of the alphabet and apply their knowledge well when locating words in dictionaries.
100. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is average in reading and satisfactory progress is made across the key stage. When necessary, most pupils use phonic cues for difficult words. Older pupils use contents, index and glossary successfully. The pupils in Year 3 can explain that recipes convey information and contrast this to instructions that need to be followed when making a 'pop-up' card. Year 6 pupils read the extract *The Sport of Kings* fluently and expressively. Pupils know how to use the library and are confident when selecting books for information and for pleasure. Throughout the school pupils use a very good home school reading diary, which is a positive step in the development of children's reading. By Year 6 pupils are writing valuable book reviews based on books they read and are developing good reading habits.
101. In writing, pupils achieve average standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and below average standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress throughout Key Stage 2. Younger pupils copy

sentences and create their own simple accounts of things they have done. By Year 1 pupils know that sentences begin with capital letters and end with a full stop and Year 2 pupils have been introduced to using speechmarks. Pupils' writing is wide and the range of their work includes letters, stories and poems as well as factual accounts of work in science. They are beginning to sequence their ideas and plan the structure of their writing by Year 2. Key Stage 2 pupils write for a range of purposes and are adapting their style of writing in history, geography and science. In Year 3 they explain how to load a computer while in Year 6 they express opinions for and against cruelty in sport. They write up recipes and produce interesting poetry in different styles. Most pupils observe correct punctuation including speechmarks. The standard of spelling is satisfactory for the average and higher attaining pupils in Year 6. The use of word processing programs for the drafting, redrafting and editing of writing has not yet been developed to its potential.

102. Pupils of all ages practise their handwriting regularly and are developing a clear joined-up style. The quality of handwriting and presentation is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. There is little use of information technology to help pupils develop their literacy skills and knowledge, particularly in writing at Key Stage 2.
103. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language learn well and make good progress throughout Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Their work is matched well to their ability and they receive good support throughout the school.
104. The pupils enjoy their English lessons and they are well motivated and eager to learn. They participate fully in discussions, and work well together when they are writing shared accounts on carrying out scientific investigations. Year 6 pupils share their ideas sensibly on various topics, while Year 2 pupils enjoy sharing their spelling work with one another.
105. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understanding. Staff are confident in delivering the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils' progress is accelerating and their standards are improving across the school. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is very good and it is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. At both key stages there are many planned opportunities to develop speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Teachers are consistent in their management of English lessons so that learning is built upon and developed. Where teaching is very good the objectives are clear, tasks are matched well to pupils' abilities, and teachers make skilful use of questions to test pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work covered. For example in Year 2 effective use was made of questions at each stage of the story *Oops!* by Colin McNaughton – 'Who is this?', 'What do you think is going to happen?' 'Why did he duck down?' The structure of English lessons enables teachers to focus on particular skills and to build on them in subsequent lessons. Regular homework supports the work done in class. Teachers check what pupils' understand on a daily basis and satisfactory use is made of assessments so that attainment and progress are monitored successfully. Marking is carried out regularly and pupils receive encouraging comments especially at Key Stage 1. Marking is especially effective where it is focused on pupils making improvements, though it is not consistently of such quality across the school.
106. Resources acquired to promote the introduction of the literacy hour are of good quality and have been carefully chosen. The quality and quantity of library books is satisfactory overall and support positively the development of English.

107. The Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 co-ordinators provide very good clear educational direction for English. They are keen and enthusiastic and regularly monitor planning and pupils work. They have good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of English throughout the school because their monitoring has been successful. The school is on track to meet the challenging targets set for English to 2002 and it is judged to have good capacity for improvement in the future.

MATHEMATICS

108. Standards in mathematics were at the expected level at the end of both key stages in 1996. There was a range of teaching quality, from very good to unsatisfactory, support assistants gave good support and the setting of pupils in Key Stage 2 was working well to raise attainment levels. However, the report identified that standards were not high enough at the end of Key Stage 2. Since that time there has been a steady improvement in standards though the current initiatives to improve standards have not yet brought the oldest pupils up to the expected level. There is also a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 and this is impacting on standards at the end of Key Stage 2.
109. At Key Stage 2, attainment at level 4 or above, which was above the national average in 1997, fell significantly in 1998. In the end of key stage tests in 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected level 4 was below the national average, while the proportion achieving the more challenging level 5 was also well below the national average. Standards in mathematics at Key Stage 2 were, however, in line with those achieved in similar schools. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6 is around one third of the year group. The school anticipates that, with the planned additional support for targeted pupils, levels of attainment similar to the 1999 figure may be achieved in 2000.
110. Attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 1 has increased steadily over the last three years. In 1999, the proportion of pupils achieving level 2 or above was around the national average. However, a high proportion of these pupils were achieving at the lowest tier of level 2, with too few achieving the higher tiers of level 2 or the more challenging level 3. Standards were, however, around the average in relation to those achieved in similar schools in 1999.
111. The school supports the development of secure standards of numeracy and has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy with some success. However, there are inconsistencies in the oral session which starts each lesson. Pupils have access to the breadth of the National Curriculum in mathematics and there is a good balance of experiences. In Key Stage 1 pupils acquire a secure foundation in mathematics. They add and subtract with numbers of increasing size, perform simple multiplication and division calculations based upon familiar tables and weigh and measure accurately with standard and non-standard units. They recognise time and clock-faces, understand symmetry and produce simple bar charts based upon data that they have collected. There is good provision for practical mathematical activities throughout Key Stage 1. The higher attaining pupils, although a small proportion of the group, are working towards level 3; many of the remainder are confident at level 2, although a significant number are still working at the lowest tier within level 2.
112. The emphasis upon number continues in Key Stage 2. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils have worked on fractions and decimals, long multiplication and division, ratio, the attributes of two-and three-dimensional shapes, area and perimeter of regular and

irregular shapes, co-ordinates, rotational symmetry, negative numbers, approximations and basic geometry. There is a good balance between the different elements of the mathematics curriculum. Data handling is covered in part through information technology but, on the whole, computers are not used enough to support the development of mathematics skills and knowledge. By the end of Year 6, pupils are familiar with pie charts, bar charts and line graphs.

113. There is good use of practical activities within the numeracy structure. Provision for investigative work is not, however, strongly developed. Challenging investigative work does not at present make a significant contribution to the development of pupils' mathematical thinking.
114. Pupils have positive attitudes towards mathematics. They are attentive and co-operative. This is evident throughout the school, although small groups of pupils are occasionally disruptive of lessons in Years 3 and 4. Pupils' generally good behaviour has a positive effect upon their learning.
115. The quality of learning is satisfactory across the school. It is good, however, in Key Stage 1. The most effective learning is promoted by clear objectives identified in planning, high expectations of teachers and the brisk pace of the better lessons. The oldest pupils show a secure grasp of tables and of the strategies necessary for accurate mental calculations. Teachers emphasise the importance of such skills and provide regular opportunities for practice. The development of mental mathematics is now well established. Practical activities are used effectively to support this. In one very good lesson in Year 2, on doubling and halving given numbers, pupils were initially involved in a challenging oral session which had a very brisk pace and a high level of participation by the teacher. Working later in small groups with others of similar attainment, they investigated pairs of two digit numbers and decided which was greater or smaller. The participation of the teacher with specific groups and the high quality of her questioning is very motivating for pupils and promotes learning effectively.
116. Elsewhere, and particularly in Key Stage 2, learning is more variable. Teachers' expectations are less secure and factors such as pupils' behaviour affect the quality of pupils' experience. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were engaged in an activity on co-ordinates in the first quadrant. The use of careful questioning to test pupils' level of understanding enhanced the quality of pupils' learning. They demonstrated a secure understanding of the underlying principles. However, too much support was given as the teacher took pupils through the tasks one section at a time. This did not support pupils' personal development, or provide appropriately for the differing attainment groups in the class and the quality of learning was constrained as a result. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are supported effectively within classes and make good progress in relation to the targets of their individual education plans.
117. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Their expectations of most pupils are appropriate, although lessons are often directed towards the average and below average attainers, with insufficient awareness of the potential higher attainers. Where teaching is best, teachers communicate their enthusiasm for the subject, so inspiring pupils to greater efforts. There is effective use of both whole-class teaching and group work within each class. The quality of teachers' planning is satisfactory. Learning objectives are often shared with the pupils as the session begins. The school emphasises the use and application of mathematics and teachers provide

some opportunities for the use of mathematics in other subjects of the curriculum. There was evidence of mathematics being used in science, history and geography.

118. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory. There is regular use of standardised and other test material. Teachers set regular targets for year groups. Most teachers mark pupils' work carefully and developmentally. There is some emphasis upon the quality of presentation. The use of assessment to set targets for learning is not widespread.
119. The co-ordinator is well aware of the standards being achieved across the school, and particularly by the older pupils. Standards are rising and realistic targets for attainment to the year 2002 have been set. The school is well set to meet these. Managers have ensured that improvement has been made to teaching and learning in mathematics and they know that more has to be done, especially in Key Stage 2. Inspectors judge that the school is in a strong position to lift standards further, particularly by the end of Year 6.

SCIENCE

120. The previous inspection report judged that standards in science were similar to the national average at the end of both key stages, but that in some classes, standards were higher than this. Pupils made satisfactory progress in science from reception to the middle of Key Stage 2, but progress flagged after that. Teaching was judged to be good in both key stages and subject management was effective. Since that time, there have been some improvements to this situation, as outlined below, but some characteristics of science at Holy Trinity School have remained the same.
121. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, standards in science were well below the national average and well below the average found in similar schools. The four year trend since 1996 has seen standards in science vary at this key stage. Standards were best in 1997, when they were above average, but below average in the other three years. There has been a slight improvement in standards in science at Key Stage 2 overall during these four years, but not at the rate seen in English or mathematics.
122. In the Key Stage 1 teacher assessments for science in 1999, pupils achieved at levels that were little different from the national average but which stood much better comparison with the average for similar schools, as they were well above average.
123. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests, boys did much better than the girls. This pattern is not much different from the national situation. However, during the last four years it has been the girls at Holy Trinity School that have tended to do better in science, which is against the national trend. Inspectors found little evidence for the differences in performance between girls and boys, though it is clear that a small number of boys in the later part of Key Stage 2 lose interest in lessons, though teachers deal with this effectively in the main.
124. As in 1996, science is taught better in some years than others and this has a profound impact on standards. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Some excellent teaching in science was seen in Year 2 where the highly successful partnership between the class teacher and the support assistant enthused the pupils to find out much about the eye and sight. Learning in this lesson was brisk, and not only did the pupils learn more facts about eyesight, they began to understand

how the physical components of the eye work because of the powerful imagery used by the teacher. There was a good level of analysis by the pupils. This was at a level beyond their years.

125. There are contrasts in teaching and learning though. In Key Stage 2, teachers tend to control the lesson more closely. This is shown particularly in the way in which teachers set up an investigation. Pupils are told how to do the work, what materials and resources to use, how to set out the written work and, in general, are given information that they repeat rather than apply. Thus, in one lesson, pupils were told that the jar of water could prove messy. They were then told how to draw water from the jar and what to do if there was a spillage. They were not presented with this as a problem that they could solve themselves by suggesting ways to handle the water carefully. This example is indicative of the thinking that teachers often do for the oldest pupils in science lessons.
126. Despite this shortcoming in teaching, teachers are generally successful in their work to consolidate and build skills and knowledge. Because there are high proportions of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, standards are not as high as in some schools. Both of these groups of pupils are given good support in lessons and this enables them to make appropriate progress, but many pupils find great difficulty in explaining their ideas, observations and knowledge in spoken and written form. This hampers their overall attainment.
127. Pupils usually behave well in science lessons and they show a keenness and interest in their learning. They work well with other pupils and are given some, if not enough, responsibility for their own work. At present, the school does not build enough on pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour in science lessons because opportunities to work independently are few.
128. The co-ordinator for science is not only well informed about the school, she also sets a good example in her own work. She has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in science and has had a positive influence on colleagues in the promotion of better teaching methods. Science has been something of a backwater whilst literacy and numeracy have been to the fore. The development of science skills and knowledge is not well supported by the use of computers, for example. The co-ordinator is determined that the time is now right for science to take a greater priority. She is supported well by senior managers and the staff in this resolve. There are enough successes in science teaching at Holy Trinity School to build on so that the subject moves forward. The task is now to spread these across all classes to boost standards. Progress is clear in some classes. The co-ordinator has the experience, knowledge and skills to ensure that science is developed more consistently through the school.

ART

129. Since the last inspection standards have improved at the end of Key Stage 1 and they are now good. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards have been maintained at a satisfactory level. Work is stronger at Key Stage 1 than it is at Key Stage 2.
130. In Key Stage 1 the teachers are very clear about what they expect their pupils to achieve and this helps them to learn effectively. Teaching is very good and the skills pupils need are well taught. Right from the beginning in the reception class pupils are taught how to mix paint to achieve a range of colours and tones, how to select and use various sized brushes and equipment, and how to create the desired effect in

their paintings and drawings. These skills are used to good effect in subsequent two and three-dimensional work. New learning is consolidated successfully, as in a Year 1 class where pupils had experimented with repeating patterns. They used their new skills to achieve the desired effect for their wallpaper designs, having first tried out their printing patterns.

131. This approach starts in the reception class and is extended in each successive year so that by the time they reach the end of Year 2 most of the pupils are extremely competent at using a range of media to create imaginative pieces. Some good examples in Year 2 include the strong use of line and blocked colour, individual sketches using willow charcoal, and pastel work based on the style of Cezanne. Working together with their teacher, and under the direction of the classroom assistant, the pupils have created a large painting based on Cezanne's *Mountains in Provence*, with each pupil working at a grid rectangle which is part of the main picture. The finished piece of work is very high quality which demonstrates the pupils' skills very effectively indeed.
132. Progress through Key Stage 2 is not so good, and there are variations in the pupils' experiences across the key stage. No direct teaching was seen so judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays and planning. Year 6 pupils have created their own paintings of God in a combined art and information technology project, which also supports their work in religious education and also gives them the opportunity to portray their own feelings about a greater being. Some of these paintings are very personal and evocative, with the main figure in the painting depicting pupils' own experiences. However, pupils' skills are not developed as consistently as they are in Key Stage 1 and earlier learning is not extended as well as it could be. One reason for this is the lack of a coherent whole school approach which outlines the skills pupils need if they are to make effective progress in all aspects of their creative work.
133. Art activities are enjoyed. Pupils concentrate for long periods of time to complete their work to the required standard and this is one reason why standards are high at Key Stage 1. Another reason is the high quality of teaching for the age group. Pupils are excited by their tasks, they want to do well and they succeed in producing good quality work. This is less evident at Key Stage 2, but the pupils themselves talk at length about their art activities and how much they enjoy the subject. The recently appointed co-ordinator has some good ideas for moving the subject forward at Key Stage 2.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

134. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were above average in design and technology. Because of the changed balance to the overall curriculum, not as much time is now spent on the subject and standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are now satisfactory overall with some good achievement evident. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards are below the level expected for the age group.
135. Pupils have a good beginning in Key Stage 1. The skills they need are very well taught and the pupils draw on their own ideas when talking about, planning and drawing their designs. Some good work in Year 1 clearly demonstrates that pupils have thought through their ideas for planning and designing their own room. Plans are modified and colours changed as the pupils work through their ideas. This is successful because the classroom assistant working with them encourages them to try out new ideas, shows them how to tackle difficult cutting and joining jobs, and asks

questions such as “If you do it that way what do you think is going to happen?” Pupils’ skills are developed successfully and their learning is productive because of the very good teaching.

136. This continues into Year 2 where pupils successfully put their ideas into practice when making puppets to support work in religious education. The very good teaching by the classroom assistant extends the pupils’ existing knowledge about assembling and joining two pieces of wood to form a cross-frame which supports the head and body of the puppet. The pupils experiment with adhesives before deciding on the most suitable method to use, and this helps them to evaluate what is needed if the wood is to remain joined. Their plans clearly outline how they would set about making the head and body of the puppet, as well as some materials they might use, demonstrating their understanding of the task in hand.
137. In both these lessons the pupils used their previous knowledge effectively, they had clear ideas about what would and would not work, and they understood that the finished product had to be as good as they could make it. This is because the teachers understand the subject, the tasks are challenging and well organised, and the pupils are well supported. As a result the pupils are keen and eager to learn, their concentration is very good indeed, and they always try hard to do their best. They use their numeracy skills to count, measure and estimate very effectively indeed.
138. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 2, but the plans and the work looked at show that the skills which are developed in Key Stage 1 are not being extended as pupils move through the school. This is a weakness. Pupils have limited ideas about how to generate effective designs and plans, although better work in Year 4 has some promising designs for a buggy. Progress is unsatisfactory because the subject is not tackled effectively across the whole school.

GEOGRAPHY

139. In 1996 it was judged that standards in geography were average and that pupils made satisfactory progress in the subject. Whilst teaching was satisfactory, there was not enough use of information technology and teachers often controlled the work too heavily. Three and a half years later, there has been improvement in geography teaching and pupils progress at the expected rate.
140. No geography lessons were observed during the current inspection and so judgements have been formed on the basis of the scrutiny of work and on the examination of planning and discussion with staff. From this, it is evident that pupils make the necessary gains in knowledge and skills as they move through the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 build sound knowledge of the area around their homes and the school and begin to compare their own area with places further afield. They give directions using left and right, and learn to use simple plans and maps effectively. Skills are developed well through the visits made to the One Stop shopping centre, a garden centre, Sutton Park and Handsworth Park. Key Stage 2 pupils broaden this knowledge to include more detailed comparison and contrasting of places overseas. They can identify the main features of Britain on a map and their map reading skills increase at an appropriate rate. As a result of studying the theme ‘weather’ in detail, pupils in Year 6 can explain the effect of weather conditions in different areas of the world.

141. From the scrutiny of work it is clear that pupils are interested in the work and put in appropriate effort to complete their tasks. Teaching is satisfactory on this evidence as geography has consistent curriculum coverage, the work is planned effectively and there is less evidence of teachers controlling the work as much as previously. Management of the subject is successful in ensuring consistent provision in geography through the school, though assessment is an aspect that requires improvement. Good links are made to the literacy strategy and with history to the benefit of attainment in each subject. A strength of geography is the programme of visits and field trips to give pupils first hand experience of the environment and contrasting places, for example, Bell Heath Field Study Centre, the weekend camp at Broadstairs and the ferry trip to France.

HISTORY

142. Pupils made sound progress in history at the time of the last inspection. There were several strengths identified, including cross-curricular planning making strong links with geography and art, good use of questions to develop pupils' knowledge, and the pupils worked well in lessons. There was some over-reliance on copying from the blackboard which restricted the progress of lower attaining pupils. Today, the school has eliminated the weaknesses and built well on the strengths in history.
143. Three lessons in history were observed during the inspection. When these observations are added to the evidence from the scrutiny of work and planning it is clear that teaching is good and that pupils make good strides with their learning. History has a clear identity in school, it is well planned and teachers and pupils alike enjoy the work.
144. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop good knowledge of how life in the past differs from that today. They begin to understand that the past can be measured and that things change over the years. There is a good programme of visits to support the work in both key stages and to help pupils gain greater knowledge and understanding of their history topics. During the week of inspection a visitor spoke to pupils in Years 1 and 2 about the work of Dr Barnado and how his charity has changed through the years. Key Stage 2 pupils build knowledge of past civilisations and periods of history well. They learn that information can be found in a number of different sources, though the use of information technology to aid history research is a weakness. During the inspection week, the work on citizenship in Year 6 helped pupils build satisfactory knowledge of Birmingham in the past.
145. Teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and history planning is good. There is clear identification of objectives and good links to other subjects. For example in Year 3, in studying the Romans, the pupils learn not just what Roman Britain was like but also how the Romans controlled Israel during the time of Jesus. Year 4 study the common strands in their work on Ancient Greece and work in religious education about Paul's imprisonment in Philippi. The school's Christian ethos is well served by such links. Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided, they are well behaved and work hard.
146. The management of history is effective in promoting improved standards and rates of progress. School managers accept that pupils need even greater opportunities to take more responsibility for their own learning in history and to take part in more independent research, particularly as they move through Key Stage 2. The stock of resources for history is rather limited, particularly artefacts, though the school has plans to remedy the shortcomings.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

147. At the time of the last inspection, the school was required to improve its provision for information technology. The standards attained and the progress made by pupils, while satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in one class in Key Stage 2, were unsatisfactory overall. Some improvement has been achieved in the interim, mainly in the last two terms. The appointment of an enthusiastic co-ordinator has given new impetus to the teaching, although the school lacks sufficient high quality computers to enable the subject to be taught effectively. While attainment is now improving, there has not been sufficient time for pupils' skill base to be fully developed and the older pupils in particular are not yet achieving the standards which they should.
148. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment is average overall. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve standards in line with their prior attainment. Attainment is, however, inconsistent across the National Curriculum areas: using, exploring and examining equipment, communicating and handling information and controlling and modelling. There is, for example, no opportunity to represent information graphically or to control a floor turtle. However, pupils can log on to the computer, identify and use the different tools within specific programs and use mouse and cursor controls to move windows round the screen. They can retrieve and change text, correct errors, delete and use the shift key in Year 2. Year 2 pupils have matched words and pictures in a program which supports their work in literacy.
149. In Key Stage 2 attainment remains below average overall. The current input to develop pupils' skills across the school has not yet brought the oldest pupils up to an appropriate level. Relatively few Year 6 pupils possess appropriate, independent skills and higher attaining pupils are not consistently achieving their potential. There is limited access to computers outside school. There is no difference in attainment relating to gender or ethnicity. Pupils can open programs, find their work in a file, insert art and pictures into their work and use tools on the program toolbars to draw, fill, write text, change fonts and point sizes and insert clip art. There is some evidence of word processing across the year groups although this is more evident in some years than others. They enter commands to print in black and white and in colour. They successfully match text and pictures in a story-building program which supports literacy work. Pupils in Years 3 have started to learn about electronic communication and those in Year 6 are accessing the Internet when researching topics in history. They are familiar with search engines and their potential to support learning. Currently there is no provision for introducing databases in Year 3, although this is provided in Year 6. There are a number of omissions from the curriculum in Years 4 and 5, including graphical modelling, introduction to spreadsheets, modelling effects on screen and control work.
150. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory and is improving as the focus on skill development continues. They benefit from tight lesson planning, which targets specific skill weaknesses. Clear learning objectives ensure that pupils make good progress in developing manipulative skills using the mouse and cursor. Pupils are learning to use tool bars and palettes in different programs. Previously taught skills are being consolidated. Lessons provide opportunities to practise each step, ensuring sustained progress. Easy access to the Internet is enabling pupils to undertake research.

151. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are keen, generally attentive and willing to answer questions. They are enthusiastic in their approach to work. They work hard and apply themselves, concentrate and persevere especially when developing their manipulative skills. Pupils frequently take care of less confident partners. When they complete a task they are proud of their achievement and use resources with care.
152. On the basis of the small number of lessons observed, teaching as a whole is satisfactory. However, although there has been some input to staff training and the co-ordinator supports her colleagues well, there is acknowledged to be a need for continued staff training. In the focussed skill sessions, teachers give careful instructions, so enabling pupils to make at least satisfactory progress. Teachers use time well and this leads to better rates of progress.
153. There has been good improvement in the management of information technology recently. A new scheme of work is being assembled, based upon current national guidance. The co-ordinator is building up a portfolio of pupils' work. She is building upon the progress made so far, encouraging staff to prioritise the use of information technology in subjects across the curriculum. Procedures for assessing pupils' competencies are being trialled in the present term.
154. While recent progress in information technology has been good and the school is, in some respects, well placed to build upon recent achievements and raise standards further, the lack of modern high quality computers is a significant constraint to the school's work. A comprehensive development plan has been put in place to improve this.

MUSIC

155. Music was taught soundly at the time of the 1996 inspection and pupils made appropriate progress. Standards were at the expected level throughout the school. This pattern has been maintained since then and, today standards are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Pupils continue to make satisfactory progress across the school.
156. Opportunities for the observation of music teaching during the inspection included two lessons in Key Stage 1 and two lessons in Key Stage 2. Pupils show enthusiasm for, and an enjoyment of music and singing in assembly is good and words are clearly articulated.
157. At Key Stage 1 singing is tuneful and expressive. Children in reception enjoy listening to music such as Bob Marley's *Lively up Yourself* and move in time with the rhythms. They describe how the music makes them feel using words such as 'laugh, dance, tiggly and happy'. In Year 1 the teacher uses pupils' wallpaper patterns to introduce new rhythms and this is a good introduction to notated music. By Year 2 pupils can imitate a rhythmic phrase and sustain accurate pitch and rhythm when singing. Musical appreciation skills are steadily developed and pupils respond with sensitivity to the mood of a range of music. They learn to handle and use percussion instruments with increasing effectiveness.
158. At Key Stage 2 pupils sing in tune and display a good sense of rhythm and control. The children in Year 3 know the difference between high and low sounds and are able to recognise common musical instruments. In Year 4 they are able to compose music based on the moods in the story of *Theseus and the Minotaur* and they are able to explain their preferences. Pupils sing tunefully, and their skills of critical listening,

appraisal and percussion work are developed well throughout the key stage. In Year 5 they sing tunefully in their lively performance of a medley of songs from 'Oliver', and listen appreciatively to music from a variety of traditions.

159. Throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, the children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in developing their skills in listening, appraising, composing and performing. Their attitudes to music are good. They enjoy music lessons, co-operate well and work hard to improve their performance.
160. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection where it was described as satisfactory with good features. It is due to the implementation of the good policy document and scheme of work which help teachers structure their lessons well, and a careful choice of suitable resources. During the inspection the quality of teaching music was good. Teachers have clear expectations of the pupils' performance. Planning is comprehensive with clear objectives and effective use is made of resources. Pupils are suitably challenged and there is a brisk pace to the lessons. The teachers have high expectations of standards and behaviour. The music co-ordinator leads the subject well and there is a thriving school choir which meets weekly. Pupils are involved in productions with other schools such as 'Led by a Star' and are currently working on 'New Millennium Heroes'. All this supports pupils' personal and social development well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

161. In 1996 inspectors judged standards in physical education to be at the expected level and progress to be satisfactory. There was good provision for swimming at that time and an appropriate range of sporting activities outside lessons, with competitive games played against other schools. In most respects these qualities have been maintained, though the programme for swimming that was judged to be good last time, has been cut because of the high cost of transport and tuition.
162. Today, standards in physical education are satisfactory at the end of both key stages. Pupils build knowledge and skills at a sound rate through the school, though the loss of opportunity to take part in swimming lessons has a profound impact on standards of water safety and skill. In previous years most pupils achieved the expected level of swimming but this year, the lack of swimming means few pupils will achieve the 25 metre target.
163. There were not many opportunities to observe physical education lessons during the inspection. In those lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory and pupils worked hard, were well behaved and they practised their skills with good interest. There was appropriate development of skills and knowledge because teachers were clear in their explanations and made effective use of demonstrations.
164. The school has two halls. This means that gymnastics, dance and other indoor physical education activities can be timetabled with comparative ease. All pupils have good access to the necessary curriculum for physical education, with the exception of swimming. In the main, lessons are planned successfully to build skills and knowledge. The co-ordinator of physical education is an effective manager of the subject and she has good knowledge of the provision in school, though she has not had opportunity to monitor teaching, the curriculum or standards directly.

