

INSPECTION REPORT

BURSLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bradwell, Newcastle-under-Lyme

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124107

Headteacher: Mr S Cooper

Reporting inspector: Lynne Read
21199

Dates of inspection: 11-14 March 2002

Inspection number: 197653

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Bursley Way
Bradwell
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffs

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr B Critchlow

Date of previous inspection: 22 September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21199	L Read	Registered inspector	English Design and technology Religious education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? Schools results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9883	B Silvester	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27718	S Abrol	Team inspector	Mathematics History English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
7018	A Cogher	Team inspector	Art and design Music Physical education Foundation stage	How well does the school care for its pupils?
21245	W Lowe	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Geography Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Bursley Primary School is situated in the Bradwell area of Newcastle in Staffordshire. With 272 pupils on roll, it is about the same size as most primary schools. The school has a good reputation and is over-subscribed. Many pupils travel some distance from surrounding wards to attend. Nearby properties are mainly under the ownership of a housing association but several have been bought privately. Occupations are mixed with some parents in the professional and business sectors. Many others work in the local pottery industry or retail outlets. There is a small amount of unemployment that varies according to economic trends. On balance, social and economic circumstances are average. Children entering the Reception classes have a range of learning experiences that are average for their age group. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is close to the average at 17 per cent although many choose not to claim. Most pupils are of British backgrounds with a small minority having Asian, Middle Eastern or European heritage. All but one speak English as their first language. Four per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, of which one has a formal statement and both these figures are below national averages.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bursley Primary is a very good school. Very good teaching and learning lead directly to attainment that is above the national average. Pupils' interests are engaged through the provision of a rich, stimulating range of learning experiences. The headteacher and governors provide very strong leadership that is focused on constant improvement. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science for pupils aged seven and eleven are above average. Pupils' achievements in music are above the expected level.
- Provision for the young children in the Reception classes is very good. They enjoy a stimulating learning environment and are provided with a wide range of opportunities to develop their academic, creative and personal skills.
- Teaching is of a high standard and, in the majority of lessons seen, it was very good or excellent.
- The headteacher and governors constantly drive the school forward, providing a very good quality of leadership, ensuring high standards of attainment.
- The broad curriculum provides a very good range of learning opportunities for pupils in Years 1 to 6, which is enhanced by visiting specialists, trips to places of interest and very good links with the community and educational partners.
- The school places a strong emphasis on social and moral education. As a result, pupils have very good standards of behaviour, very positive attitudes to work and there are very productive relationships throughout school.
- Parents support the school well and are very satisfied with the standard of education and care it provides. They are well informed about the curriculum and their children's progress.

What could be improved

- Assessment of pupils' progress in subjects other than English and mathematics and the use of the information gathered to guide planning for future lessons.
- Systems for planning and keeping records of the work covered for those pupils who have special educational needs, and for involving their parents more fully in setting and reviewing learning targets.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in September 1997 and has made very good progress in tackling the issues identified for improvement. Detailed planning schemes are in place for all subjects, including information and communication technology, that outline the particular objectives to be taught.

Teachers use these as a good guide to help them plan lessons that meet all the needs of pupils of different ages in the classes. Assessment information is now very well used in English and mathematics and has contributed directly to the much improved standards in these subjects. Similar systems are not yet fully in place for the other subjects. Homework is set regularly and supports learning well, especially in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Subject managers are active in the evaluation of their areas and work well with governors to maintain good leadership and guidance for staff. The new library is a valuable resource and includes an inviting stock of books. Pupils enjoy using this facility and receive very good support in their studies from the librarian. As a result of the work done, teaching and attainment have both been considerably improved.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	C	A	A
Mathematics	A	A	B	A
Science	A	B	C	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Children in the Reception classes make very good progress in all areas except physical development where progress is satisfactory. Their achievements in reading, writing, mathematics and personal development are above expectations by the time they enter Year 1. There have been substantial improvements to pupils' attainment in Years 1 and 2 over the last four years and results for seven year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics were well above the national average in 2001. Around one half of pupils reached the higher level 3 in reading and mathematics with approximately one fifth attaining this high standard in writing. The results of teachers' assessments in science showed that the number gaining the expected level 2 was very high but only a few attained the higher level 3. During the inspection standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science were all judged to be above average with a good percentage working towards the higher level. Skills in speaking and listening and in reading are especially well advanced. In the tests for eleven year-olds, attainment in English and mathematics was above average with nearly a half of pupils in English and one third in mathematics achieving the higher level 5. In science standards were average. Inspection findings show that pupils are now achieving above average standards in all three subjects and making good progress. A talented group of pupils are attaining very high levels in English and mathematics that would normally be expected in secondary school. The very pleasing improvements in attainment are the result of a very focused approach over the last two years. Teachers have worked hard to establish a system of setting for pupils in Years 1 to 6 for English and mathematics to cater for the diverse learning needs of the pupils. In science, an added emphasis on experimentation and investigation has led to better standards in the classroom and more pupils working at the higher levels. Trends of attainment in all three subjects are rising faster than those nationally. The school exceeded its targets set for attainment in English and mathematics last year and is on track to achieve those set for 2002. Achievements in all other National Curriculum subjects and religious education meet expectations and they are above for music and modern foreign languages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to succeed, maintain very good levels of concentration and work hard to complete their tasks. There is a strong sense of pride in the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils understand and follow the school rules and routines with very little prompting by adults. They show respect and consideration for others.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good and make a significant contribution to pupils' progress and to the vibrant, secure atmosphere. Pupils are confident and show developing maturity as they take responsibility for their own conduct.
Attendance	Attendance is consistently high and pupils are punctual.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching is a strength of the school and underpins the very good progress made by pupils. A good emphasis is placed on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and personal education. This ensures that pupils acquire the basic skills well and that they become confident, independent learners. Pupils benefit from specialist teaching in music and some physical education lessons and this leads to excellent learning. Throughout the school, lessons have clear aims that the teachers share with the pupils. This helps to establish a clear purpose for the work and allows pupils to assess their own learning. As a result, they are enthusiastic and keen to do well. In the best lessons, teachers forge a good pace and have high expectations of what the pupils should learn. In the satisfactory sessions seen, there was less demand on the pupils and, sometimes, too much time spent listening to the teacher. Classroom support for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as a second language is effective, enabling them to make good gains in their learning. Very good attention is given to pupils who are capable of higher attainment in English and mathematics through extra challenge and special tuition. The success of the approach is seen in the good numbers of pupils attaining advanced levels by the end of Year 6.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad range of interesting learning opportunities to support pupils' academic and personal skills. The curriculum is enhanced by visiting specialists and trips out to places of educational interest. Lessons in French are included for the younger juniors and a good number of pupils take advantage of optional tuition in music.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils have suitable goals for learning, and enjoy good support in the classroom. Their progress is regularly reviewed. Parents help at home but are not involved in setting their children's targets. There are two different systems of record keeping and planning in place at present. Whilst they provide useful information for classroom support, the procedures are confusing for teachers and teaching assistants. All pupils have full access to all parts of school life.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Provision ensures that pupils make progress that is at least as good as their peers and benefit equally well from the school's emphasis on speaking and listening and drama. The school operates as a harmonious community.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	For social and moral education, provision is very good. Pupils have a well-defined sense of right and wrong and of fair play. They are polite, friendly and helpful. All age groups take care with their work and are proud of their school. Spiritual and cultural development is well promoted through assemblies and lessons. Pupils respect other people's beliefs, views and opinions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Adults in the school form very good relationships with the pupils and care for their individual needs effectively. Positive strategies and reward systems underpin the promotion of good behaviour. Established routines provide a good standard of safety. Progress in English, mathematics and science is constantly checked and the information gathered is effectively used to plan the next steps in learning and to maintain the high standards. Assessment strategies in the other subjects are not fully developed.

Parents have a high opinion of the school and support their children effectively at home. They have great confidence in the headteacher and his staff and appreciate the school's emphasis on personal as well as academic development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides active, focused leadership and is instrumental in maintaining the good standards of attainment. He is committed to providing clear, educational direction for the school and is highly regarded by governors and parents. The deputy headteacher ably assists in the management of the school and is equally dedicated to its stated aims and values. Curriculum co-ordinators monitor provision and attainment in their subjects effectively and are constantly seeking ways to improve further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors discharge their responsibilities conscientiously and are very supportive of the school. They have a good overview of the school's strengths and a clear idea of future developments. The efficient organisation of the sub committees ensures that governors have a strong role in shaping the direction of the school's work.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Subject managers for English, mathematics and science take an active role in monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects. They take action, where appropriate, to maintain the high standards. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors maintain an accurate overall view of performance. They use the vast amount of the information gathered to guide their planning for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Resource management is very good. The school's budget is carefully targeted to support the priorities for development. Best value is sought when ordering and governors evaluate expenditure in terms of improved provision, teaching and learning.

The accommodation has been extensively altered to provide sufficient space for teaching and learning. However, the siting of the main Reception classes at the opposite end to the pre-Reception unit reduces opportunities for shared experiences. There is no access to the outdoor play area for the Reception classes which means that physical activity is restricted.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good. • The school's commitment to personal development. Pupils are encouraged to be mature, responsible and well behaved. • The school is well led and managed. • Their children are expected to work hard and they make good progress. • All staff are approachable and available for discussions on request. • The school works closely with parents and provides good information for them. • The provision of pre-school education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities. • Provision for swimming.

The inspectors fully agree with the parents' positive views. Considering the size of the school, the team judges that there is a very good and diverse range of extra-curricular activities. Provision for swimming meets National Curriculum requirements and pupils achieve the expected levels of attainment.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2001 the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics was well above both the national average and that for similar schools. The teacher assessments for science were also well above average. In writing, mathematics and science, the excellent results put the school in the top 5 per cent in the country. Attainment at the higher level 3 was well above average except in science. When compared to similar schools, results are equally high. Trends over time show that attainment levels for Year 2 pupils at the school in reading, writing and mathematics are rising faster than the national average. Inspection findings are that attainment is above average in all three subjects. For this age group, there have been very good improvements in reading and science and good improvements in writing and mathematics since the last inspection.
2. Results of the tests for 11 year olds in 2001 show the number of pupils achieving the expected level 4 in mathematics was well above the national average and for English, it was above. In science, results were close to the national average. A good number of pupils achieved the higher level 5 in English and mathematics and for science the proportion at the higher level was average. Trends over time show attainment in English is steadily rising. In mathematics it has dropped slightly from a high in 1999 but trends are still better than the national one. For science attainment trends are similar to the average pattern. Inspection findings conclude that attainment in all three subjects is above average. Learning in science has improved due to a better emphasis on investigation and experimentation. These results represent good progress in mathematics and science since the last inspection, and very good progress in English.
3. Children enter the pre-Reception and Reception classes with widely varying levels of prior experience and learning. A number of them are confident speakers and a few have some prior knowledge of early reading skills. Attainment on entry for communication, language and literacy is average overall. In mathematical understanding, many can count and some can recognise numbers, but very few have a sound understanding of mathematical concepts. Children enter school with broadly average skills in physical, personal and creative development. Their knowledge of the world is in line with what might be expected at this young age but, again, there are wide variations. Some children's knowledge is relatively limited whilst others have good understanding. Taking into account the skills evident, attainment on entry to school is broadly average. By the time they enter Year 1 the vast majority of pupils have made good progress in all areas except physical development where progress is satisfactory. Many attain the early learning goals set for them and also push their skills, knowledge and understanding into the National Curriculum level 1 programme of study for English and mathematics. Skills in personal, social and emotional education are especially well developed and contribute to the enthusiastic response to teaching in future years.
4. In Years 1 and 2, pupils make very good progress in reading and science. In writing and mathematics learning is very good. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a very useful range of reading strategies that they use effectively to help them tackle new books. Their comprehension is very good and the higher attainers 'read between the

lines' to find shades of meaning. These factors directly account for the 50 per cent who achieve the higher level 3. Pupils' writing is well sequenced, and accurately punctuated in most cases. They spell words by splitting them into sounds and know many irregularly spelt key words from memory. In mathematics, pupils compute accurately using pen and paper methods and mental strategies. They achieve good levels of knowledge and understanding in all areas of the science curriculum and use their investigative skills very effectively. In information and communication technology, pupils have good word-processing and data handling skills. By the time pupils are seven years of age, attainment in music is above what is expected and they have made very good progress. In all other subjects, skills knowledge and understanding match national expectations and pupils have made at least satisfactory progress. Their skills of speaking and listening and investigation are especially well developed.

5. In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make rapid gains in their learning. Speaking and listening skills develop very well. Pupils' reading becomes fluent and expressive. They enjoy a very wide range of styles and have favourite authors. They investigate a range of story structures and are beginning to experiment with different techniques to improve their own writing. Pupils give their own views about books, justifying them with examples from the text. They examine non-fiction writing, analysing the structure and linguistic features effectively. Grammar and punctuation are both good. Higher achieving pupils have the confidence to experiment with extended sentences and the full range of punctuation to produce more sophisticated writing. A group of talented pupils reads and interprets the works of Shakespeare, achieving very high standards. In mathematics, pupils have a very good understanding of number. Their skills of mental computation are good and they have a useful range of strategies to use when problem solving. The highest achievers work with algebraic equations at a level that is way above expectations. In science pupils' skills of scientific enquiry, investigation and fair testing are now well developed and applied across the programme of study for the subject. Their knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes are good. Pupils have sound skills in all areas of information and communication technology. They produce material using word-processing programs, organise and analyse information using a database, explore mathematical models through the use of a spreadsheet and control a floor robot. Skills in this area are well applied to support study in different subjects. By age eleven, pupils' attainment in music is above expectations and they have made very good progress. In all other subjects of the curriculum, attainment meets national expectations and pupils have made at least satisfactory progress. Learning in French is very good for the Years 3 and 4 pupils and gives them a promising start to their modern foreign language work.
6. The improved level of pupils' attainment results from very good teaching, especially in the Reception classes and in Years 3 to 6. In English and mathematics, lessons are based on a thorough analysis and assessment of exactly what pupils can do and what they need to be taught next. The school's target-setting process ensures that pupils have good support and challenge. This helps to drive the pace of learning. Similar systems are being developed in science and some pleasing improvements have already been seen in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' commitment to hard work is another important factor in their learning. The school exceeded its statutory targets for attainment in English and mathematics in 2001 and is on track to achieve this year's very challenging goals.
7. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress in relation to prior learning and abilities. They achieve the goals that their teachers set and many will attain the national expected levels through focused, sensitive support. Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is good, ensuring that they

make good progress. At present, attainment for this group is above average. There are no lasting differences in trends of attainment between boys and girls. Teachers involve both genders fully in all the school's work and give particular attention to ensuring an exciting range of reading material to suit the boys. Those pupils who have particular talents are suitably challenged and have accelerated, separate programmes of learning for their specialist areas. Higher attaining pupils are well catered for and this leads to very good numbers of pupils who gain advanced levels in English and mathematics.

8. Good attendance at a range of extra-curricular and optional activities enhances pupils' academic and personal development, especially in music, games skills, spiritual and social development and French.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils are keen to attend the school and take full advantage of what it has to offer. They have very good attitudes to their work, showing a very high level of effort and determination. Relationships are very good and are well supported by the very good standards in personal development. These factors are a major strength of the school and contribute directly to the positive learning environment.
10. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers, concentrate on the work given and stay on task. The vast majority are enthusiastic learners and confidently rise to a challenge. They are quick to volunteer answers and are confident in posing their own questions. During lessons, they share resources and ideas, providing constructive suggestions for each other. For example in a design and technology lesson, some older pupils offered helpful advice to each other on the quality and finish of the slippers they were making.
11. Behaviour, in class and around the school, is very good. Pupils are polite, courteous and helpful to visitors. The working atmosphere in the school is calm and peaceful with pupils moving around in a sensible manner. Parents are very happy with the standard of conduct in the school. In returned questionnaires, 96 per cent agreed that behaviour in school is good and that 'the school is helping their children to become mature'. In the year before the inspection, there was one short-term exclusion.
12. Relationships amongst all members of the school community, regardless of social or ethnic background are very productive. There is a good level of mutual respect and trust. Teachers know individuals well and, as a result, pupils are confident to speak openly to adults or to share any worries they might have.
13. The personal development of the pupils is very good. They enjoy taking responsibility for jobs around school. Younger pupils have duties in their classes and older ones have school wide responsibilities. Year 6 pupils support their teachers by acting as prefects and helping the younger ones with paired reading. Pupils are encouraged to be independent learners from an early age. When they come into school in the morning, they organise their belongings effectively and take what they need to their sets. There is hardly any need for prompting or help from staff, even for the younger pupils in Years 1 and 2.
14. Attendance is well above the national average and there are no unauthorised absences. The main reasons for absence are illness and a few term-time holidays, which the school does its best to discourage. Most pupils are punctual. The very good attendance makes a very positive impact on the attainment and learning of the pupils.

Since the previous inspection, high standards of attitudes and behaviour have been maintained and pupils' personal development has improved.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching is a major strength of the school and this has a direct impact on pupils' learning and the high standards achieved. Over one half of the teaching is very good or excellent. Parents' returned questionnaires show that 99 per cent agree that teaching is good and 98 per cent say that the school expects their children to work hard. The same views were strongly repeated at the parents' meeting. Teaching was identified as a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection and it has continued to improve to the present very high standard.
16. Teachers have a good understanding of the most effective ways to teach literacy and numeracy and are very successful in supporting pupils to develop skills in these areas. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are taught in sets for English and mathematics, arranged according to prior learning. Lesson planning is carefully targeted to ensure good progress. Those in the higher sets have extension activities that often allow them to work at advanced levels for their ages, whilst those in the lower sets have good support from adults. Teachers check progress regularly and set new targets that include a good element of challenge to move learning on at a fast pace. They provide a clear focus to the lesson by telling pupils what they will be doing. At the end of the session, they assess learning, tackle problems and gather information to plan the next steps. These are useful strategies in creating a purpose for pupils' learning and ensuring continued motivation. Skills in information and communication technology are extended through recording of work in other subjects. Teachers encourage pupils to use the full range of research material, including CD ROMS and the Internet. Lesson preparation is very good. Resources are labelled and organised so that they are readily available, pupils' books and other consumables are always to hand and classroom routines are well established. This ensures that no time is wasted. The school uses the expertise and experience of its teachers to good advantage. In order to extend learning, the school employs specialist staff and arranges links with other institutions where pupils can have access to a wide range of resources and learning experiences. The music teacher who comes in one day per week provides an excellent level of tuition. Specialist English and mathematics teachers extend the higher attaining pupils and allow them to work at advanced levels. Their lessons are also excellent. Pupils experience the highest quality of teaching at a nearby sports hall and educational visits are carefully chosen to widen pupils' horizons. For example, the Reception class trip to the woods on a 'teddy bears' picnic' resulted in excellent learning about the natural world, in speaking and listening and in physical skills. It also provided stimulating opportunities for children to explore and investigate.
17. The Foundation Stage includes the four-year-old pre-Reception children who attend part-time and those in the Reception classes who are aged four and five. Here, most of the teaching is very good and, as a result, children make very good progress. Planned learning opportunities are well organised and include some direct instruction, exploration, investigation and play. Teachers allow children some free choice of activity and balance this with directed work where they focus on developing essential skills. Teachers plan a good range of experiences for the part-time children that are expertly provided by the nursery nurse and teaching assistant. All staff in the Foundation Stage place a good emphasis on creative and physical skills as well as academic achievement. Teachers use the outside facilities as well as they can. Unfortunately, the exciting adventure area is not accessible all year round because it gets too muddy and there is no direct access from the classroom to the hard surface

area for the Reception children. Those in the pre-Reception class do have good access to their dedicated play area but since the two classes are physically separated, this good facility cannot be shared. Physical development is not as good as the other areas of learning and could be extended if facilities were improved. Sensitive grouping of pupils promotes good collaboration on tasks. Good teaching of social and moral skills, together with high expectations of behaviour, leads directly to calm, productive, learning areas. All staff place an appropriate emphasis on developing speaking and listening skills and this is reflected in the very good progress made by the children. A good amount of time is dedicated to the teaching of letter sounds and helping pupils to blend different sounds into words. Teachers pay great attention to establishing routines and to developing personal skills in their pupils. This sets a very firm foundation for later learning. They have very high expectations and many children advance into the National Curriculum programmes of study in English and mathematics before they enter Year 1.

18. In Years 1 and 2 most of the teaching is good and just over one third is very good or excellent. There are no specialist teachers in these classes and that is partly the reason why the teaching grades are lower than in the other two age groups. In whole-class sessions, teachers direct their questions to involve all pupils across the age range and to ensure that every one is actively engaged. Pupils often use whiteboards that they hold up to show their answers. This is very useful in allowing the teacher to assess what they are learning as the lesson proceeds. Teachers emphasise the development of reading, writing and mathematical skills through their planning and teaching. They choose interesting books to share with the pupils that motivate them to learn. Some pupils had thoroughly enjoyed 'The Runaway Chapati', so much so that they quoted the favourite parts, mimicking the patterned language and using good expression. In mathematics lessons, teachers assess their pupils' progress and the information is fed into plans for the next session to promote good progress. During the introductory oral and mental sessions, teachers encourage pupils to use different strategies in their calculations so that they build up confidence and speed. There is a good balance between practical activity and pupils recording their work. In one mathematics lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils gathered information through questioning their friends, made a tally chart to record the results and then translated the information onto a bar chart; and all this in less than one hour. Trained teaching assistants play an important role in supporting those who need extra help and in providing short, focused sessions to develop particular skills. In one session the pupils extended their reading and spelling by playing the 'full circle' game. The whole group was actively involved and learning was very good. Where class teaching is satisfactory, the pupils often spend long periods listening to the teacher instead of engaging in active learning, as in the good lessons.
19. A commendable feature of teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is the challenging pace of lessons. For this age group, over a third of the teaching is very good and almost one quarter is excellent. Teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' books shows good emphasis on the extension and enhancement of reading, writing and mathematical skills in other subjects. For example, pupils recount experiments in science or events in history. They write instructions in design and technology and use explanatory texts when writing about geographical phenomena. Teachers often set open-ended tasks that allow pupils to ask their own questions, investigate and explore. In practical sessions there are good opportunities for pupils to try out their ideas, make mistakes and find ways to solve the problems encountered. Very sensitive support helps their skills of investigation. Teachers and teaching assistants encourage them to think the problem out. They pose some searching questions and skilfully channel pupils' thoughts towards a solution. The quality of marking varies.

Sometimes teachers include helpful comments that show the pupil how they can improve but this is not always the case. Feedback to pupils is often given orally but teachers do not routinely make a record of this in pupils' books for future reference. Teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils. An industrious atmosphere pervades the school and encourages an enthusiasm for learning. There is a very good balance between teachers instructing and explaining, followed by pupils working on tasks set. This ensures a very good pace to lessons and subsequently, very good progress.

20. The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs or who may be experiencing learning difficulty is good throughout the school and enables them to make good gains in learning. Individual needs are met through additional help or resources, based on a programme of support. At present, adults in school are informed about the needs of individuals through two different systems of record keeping and planning. This is cumbersome and needs refining into a unified approach to meet the new national guidance. Parents effectively help their children at home but are not involved in setting and reviewing targets. Good day to day practice ensures that all pupils from all ethnic groups are fully integrated into the life of the school community and that all develop good levels of self-confidence. Pupils who have learned English as an additional language are actually bi-lingual and are fluent speakers. Their needs are fully met and their progress is at least as good as the rest of the class. In modern foreign languages, their attainment is above average. The excellent, specialist teaching for talented pupils leads to accelerated progress and very high attainment.
21. Teachers make very good use of the local environment and community links, especially in the teaching of science, geography, art, history and physical education. They use information and communication technology well. Homework is used well to consolidate and practise learning, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.

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

22. The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of interesting and relevant learning opportunities. It covers all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study, meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and is enhanced through the provision of French as a modern foreign language. Lessons include contributions from outside specialists, visiting speakers and practical experiences arranged at other venues. The school fulfils its stated aims in providing equal opportunities for all pupils and ensuring that everyone feels valued. There have been good improvements since the last inspection, especially in providing schemes of planning for teachers to follow. In returned questionnaires, 98 per cent of parents said that their child likes school, which is a good indicator of the quality of learning experiences at Bursley.
23. In the Reception classes, the children receive a good grounding that prepares them academically, creatively and personally for their later learning. However, opportunities for physical development are not as good as they could be due to lack of direct access to the outdoor facilities.
24. The school has useful programmes of learning in every subject that provide detailed guidance for teachers in their lesson planning. Skills, knowledge and understanding are taught in a progressive way and topics are arranged to suit the different ages and prior learning in the classes. Tasks for pupils who have special educational needs are

well matched to individual requirements, thus providing good support. Work in the different sets is very carefully matched to the specified targets for learning. Bi-lingual pupils are well catered for and fully integrated into all aspects of school life. Systems for supporting pupils who are learning English as an additional language are established and effective. Subject managers regularly check the effectiveness of their planning schemes and receive feedback from colleagues where there are problems or particular strengths. They make alterations where required and ensure that there is a suitable range of resources to support learning.

25. Suitable emphasis is placed on developing competence in English and mathematics and teachers constantly seek opportunities for pupils to apply these essential skills when studying other subjects. For example, pupils write at length in their geography and history work and use their mathematical skills when handling data in science. The school seeks to enhance pupils' learning to the utmost of their capabilities. Talented pupils have enrichment classes in English and mathematics, good musicians are challenged through specialist lessons and those with a gift for sport or physical activity are recognised and extended. Useful booster classes are provided, both in and out of school hours, for pupils who would benefit from targeted help in preparing for their National Curriculum tests. The introduction of the 'springboard' project in mathematics and short, focused sessions in reading and writing are all contributing to better standards and increased confidence among the pupils concerned.
26. The curriculum is further enhanced by an extensive range of educational visits, visiting speakers and specialist tuition. For example, a music specialist promotes knowledge, skills and understanding through a variety of musical activities that combine performing, composing and appraising. His exciting lesson inspired older pupils to play various musical instruments, using a conventional musical score. Through his weekly visits he organises an optional recorder club and an after-school choir. Some higher attaining pupils benefit from a joint project organised with a neighbouring school to provide specialist teaching. Other visitors include local clergy who take assemblies, experienced football coaches and parents who share their interests with the pupils. There are numerous outings to extend experiences. These include trips to museums, visits to places of worship, lessons in the local secondary school, use of sports and gymnastics facilities and fieldwork studies. One excellent lesson was seen when Year 4 and 5 pupils visited a nearby sports hall and enjoyed a lesson given by the professional coach. Some high standards were attained. During the inspection week, Year 5 and 6 pupils visited the Council offices as part of their history work. They also took part in discussions regarding the council's responsibilities, learning about the collection of litter and recycling processes at first hand. The experience promoted pupils' personal and social development, as well as their understanding of local heritage and of civic pride.
27. Out-of-school activities enhance learning and extend pupils' horizons. Activities include French classes, sporting and musical activities, and a Quest club aimed at developing spiritual and social awareness. Varied opportunities are provided for pupils to compete with other schools and a team from Bursley recently won through to the finals of a local library competition at their first attempt. Pupils enjoy getting involved in fund raising activities such as the 'fun run' which is an annual feature of the school.
28. The school effectively prepares pupils for the transition to secondary education. There are good links with a high school nearby. For example, Year 5 and 6 boys and girls join in science explorations and pupils will be joining dance lessons in the near future.

29. Personal, social and health education is incorporated into the pupils' studies. There are opportunities for pupils to talk about their feelings and discuss topical issues. Aspects of health education are covered as pupils study the nutritional value of bread in design and technology or discuss hygiene issues in science. Specific projects such as that on 'healthy eating' also contribute to pupils' awareness. Every day pupils can buy toast or oat cakes with cheese for their morning break as an alternative to sweet things. The governors have a clear policy on sex education that includes attention to health issues. Representatives from the police force and emergency services contribute to the teaching of drug awareness and crime prevention. The school is now aiming to develop the curriculum for personal, social, citizenship and health education as a discrete subject with specific time allocated to it.
30. There are good links with the community. The school is well known to local businesses and has secured sponsorship for many projects. For example, business contacts have funded some of the refurbishment of the school and provided adventure play equipment in the school grounds.
31. The provision for pupils' moral and social development has improved further since the last inspection and is now very good. Pupils' cultural and spiritual development is well promoted.
32. There are opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness through the daily acts of collective worship during which they have time for reflection. In their religious education lessons, pupils tackle some difficult concepts that require much thought and consideration. For example, in a Year 5 and 6 class, pupils were discussing courage in defence of their beliefs. In Years 3 and 4 pupils acted out some scenarios on the theme of temptation showing a mature understanding of 'the conscience'. Pupils are given many experiences to appreciate the natural world. On a trip out for a 'teddy bears' picnic', Reception children showed great enthusiasm, curiosity, interest, pleasure and amazement in their learning. From an early age pupils are encouraged to consider the less tangible aspects in life such as the love and care they receive from friends and families.
33. Pupils' very good moral development is reflected in their exemplary conduct. The school successfully instils a strong sense of right and wrong in its pupils, and encourages them to contemplate the consequences of their actions on others. They demonstrate fair play in sport and during leisure time. The consistent, positive strategies for behaviour management result in an orderly atmosphere. Pupils act responsibly, following the code of conduct in the vast majority of cases. They are proud of their school and treat resources carefully.
34. Pupils are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their social skills. From the time they enter school they are actively encouraged to share, to take turns and to work co-operatively in groups. Teachers establish good relationships with their pupils, recognising their strengths and idiosyncrasies. They often put them into friendship groups for practical activity which helps them to learn from each other. Pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility, both in their class and, as they get older, around the school. They are encouraged to initiate ideas such as organising fund raising events for charities. Teachers foster a sense of community by organising numerous trips out to enhance academic, sporting and artistic development.
35. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The school promotes pupils' experience of English national heritage through local studies and visits. They become aware of the divergence of different beliefs and lifestyles around the world

through their work in geography, religious education, history, music and art. The school provides first hand experiences through visits to places of worship. There are some interesting displays in school about Judaism and Islam that show a good depth of understanding. Pupils learn about our multi-cultural society through focusing on issues from the world news and studying topics that affect us all, such as the destruction of the rain forests. There is a good selection of books in class and school libraries that provide material about local and world-wide culture.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. There have been good improvements in the consistency and use of assessment since the last inspection. The checking and tracking of pupils' progress in English and mathematics is now good. There are some informal methods of checking progress in the other subjects but no consistent approach is in place.
37. Children's prior learning is assessed shortly after they start school in the pre-Reception or Reception classes. Progress is recorded and regularly reviewed so that teachers develop a very good knowledge of individual children. They use this information very intelligently to plan lessons and activities that move children's learning on at a fast pace.
38. The school's arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are good for English and mathematics. Pupils' results in tests at seven and 11 are analysed to identify trends over time and to pinpoint where there may be possible weaknesses in the learning programme. The school records pupils' progress in English and mathematics through the results of tests during the year. This information, together with informal teacher assessment, helps to build a comprehensive picture of each pupil's achievement and is used to organise sets for learning. The teachers then produce targets that focus on what needs to be taught next and these are shared with pupils and parents. Pupils who demonstrate particular talents are provided with additional work through the provision of enrichment groups in which they are fully challenged. The thorough attention given to assessment and its subsequent use in planning is a major factor in the high attainment seen in English and mathematics. In science, teachers assess progress at the end of each unit of work and take action if the appropriate level has not been reached. Systems in this important subject are not as thorough as in English and mathematics and the school recognises the need to sharpen up its practice. Nevertheless, some useful analysis of learning has taken place and has been used to improve attainment in Years 3 to 6 which is now above average.
39. In all other subjects except music and religious education, formal procedures for assessing pupils' progress are in place. However, they are in the very early stages of implementation and are not yet fully developed. This is recognised in the school development plan and the required action is noted. At the end of each unit of work pupils are assessed and teachers make a record of those who achieve above or below the expected levels. Subject managers review this information to establish the success of each unit. Currently there are no established procedures for tracking and recording individual pupils' progress over a longer period of time, or for passing this information between teachers as pupils move through the school. As a result, this valuable information is not used as effectively as it could be to guide planning.
40. For those pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, assessment is carried out at regular intervals and the results inform future lesson planning. However, there are two different systems operating in school and neither fully meets the new national guidance. The headteacher is aware of the difficulty which has arisen due to temporary measures taken during the manager's long term absence. Whilst both sets

of procedures work satisfactorily and pupils are making good progress, there is a need for a unified approach that all staff can follow.

41. Marking of pupils' work is inconsistent across the school, and staff are currently working on this issue. The best marking congratulates pupils on what they have learned or clearly indicates how they can improve.
42. Procedures for ensuring all aspects of pupils' welfare, health and safety are good and are explicitly detailed in the useful staff handbook. The teachers know their pupils well, recognise their needs and give them good support and guidance. The governors take a keen interest and conduct a regular tour of the buildings and grounds to check for any hazards. Risk assessments are routinely carried out, recorded and appropriate action taken when necessary. Pupils are clear about emergency evacuation procedures and practices are well documented. All staff are trained in emergency first aid procedures recommended by the local authority and a fully qualified first aider is on duty over lunchtimes. There is an appropriate child protection policy in place that follows the local education authority's guidelines. The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the policy and has received the necessary training. All staff are aware of the procedures.
43. The school's systems for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are largely informal but good. Due reference is made to this area in the annual reports. The pupils' developing maturity is supported through the school and class jobs that they accept. Prefects act very responsibly and take their duties seriously. The house system helps to create a sense of belonging and pupils are proud when they receive house points towards their team's total. Pupils of all ages are encouraged to co-operate and they have a good social rapport. The school nurse plays an important part in the work when she visits to carry out health checks and talks to the pupils on personal issues such as sex education. The school encourages healthy eating at break and lunchtime and is in the process of setting up a 'walking bus scheme' to encourage exercise.
44. All staff have high expectations of pupils' conduct and positively promote good behaviour. The school's 'rewards and sanctions' policy is well known and respected by the pupils. Teachers successfully emphasise the importance of self-discipline. Incidents of bullying are infrequent and, when they do occur, are mainly verbal. They are dealt with speedily and both pupils and parents are generally happy about the outcomes. There is no evidence of any racial incidents in the school but there are measures in place to deal with any that might occur.
45. The school has effective procedures for monitoring attendance that contribute to the high rates seen. On the rare occasion where patterns of absence are causing concern, the headteacher makes swift contact with the parents, calling on the services of the educational welfare officer, whenever necessary. The school emphasises the need for good attendance and punctuality and parents co-operate well. Few pupils are taken out of school for holidays in term time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents are very supportive of the school and links with home have a very positive impact on the pupils' learning and attainment. Good relationships have been maintained since the previous inspection when links with parents were reported as very effective.

47. The quality of information provided is very good. Parents receive regular newsletters and good use is made of the school notice board to pass on information. Teachers send out useful advance information to parents about the topics that their children will study over the forthcoming term and many parents successfully support the work at home. The homework diaries record the work set and completed and also act as a useful line of communication between school and home. Helpful meetings are organised for parents of children before they start school. They receive an information pack and children are invited into the school for 'taster sessions' before entering the Reception classes. Parents value the curriculum presentation evenings where subject managers talk about teaching and learning in specific areas and answer questions. Prior to the yearly Standard Assessment Tests for seven and 11 year-olds, parents are advised about the procedures and told how they can help. They are invited to many special events during the year, such as assemblies, sports days and productions.
48. Parents have plenty of opportunities to talk with teachers, managers and governors. The chairman of the governing body and the headteacher make themselves available to chat with parents on any topic they choose for one night each term. There are two parents' evenings in the autumn and spring terms and one in the summer term and these are very well attended. Parents are able to discuss their children's progress in detail with their class teachers and with those who take the relevant English and mathematics sets. The pupils' annual written reports are informative and detailed. They tell parents what their child knows, understands and can do and set some targets for improvement. However, parents of pupils who have special educational needs are not as closely involved in setting specific targets for their children or in reviewing progress.
49. The Parents Teacher Association is very active and supportive. Committee members arrange fund raising and social events that are well attended by families and support pupils' developing personal skills. The money raised is used to fund improvements in learning resources in the school, such as the moveable stage, curtains, musical instruments and computers. Parents are encouraged to help in school and with extra-curricular activities, and a small number take up this opportunity, providing additional support for pupils.
50. An analysis of returned questionnaires shows a strong endorsement for the school's work and 95 per cent of parents agreed that there are good, established links with home. Parents appreciate the teachers' commitment to open communication and feel well informed about their children's progress. A total of 99 per cent said they would feel comfortable about approaching school. Many at the meeting expressed confidence in the way that teachers deal with issues quickly and to the satisfaction of all parties. A small minority of parents disagreed that there is an interesting range of extra-curricular activities. The inspection evidence does not support this view and shows that the provision of out-of school activities is very good for a school of this size. A few parents were also concerned about the provision for swimming that has decreased over the years because of budget limitations. However, pupils attain the expected level of attainment in their swimming and have a good allocation of time for physical education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership and management of the headteacher is very good and he is held in high esteem by parents. Together with a very effective board of governors he has helped to develop an ethos of pride in the school and a commitment to continuous

improvement. Whilst recognising the importance of high academic standards, the headteacher, governors and staff also place a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. As a result, there is an atmosphere within the school of mutual respect, understanding and high expectations. The headteacher, senior management team and chair of governors work very closely together on a day to day basis and share a vision of excellence. In returned questionnaires, 96 per cent of parents agreed that the school is well led and managed.

52. The leadership has been very successful in ensuring a clear educational direction for the school by setting targets that are appropriate to its own needs and the demands of wider changes in education. This has been achieved, in part, through a detailed school development plan that sets out how the stated goals can be achieved and yet allows for change as circumstances demand. Another important factor in the school's success has been the very good level of financial planning exercised by the governors and headteacher. Spending is carefully targeted on the priorities of the school development plan. The school's day-to-day finances are very well managed by the administrator who provides detailed reports directly to the headteacher and the governors' finance sub-committee. This frees up the headteacher's time to get involved in educational rather than financial matters. All the recommendations made in the last local authority audit report have been dealt with. Specific grants are used effectively by the school for the purposes for which they are given and best value for money is routinely sought when making purchases. The high reserve brought forward to this financial year was targeted for improvements to the accommodation. The carry forward for next year is more in line with recommendations at around 3 per cent.
53. The level of delegation of responsibility to subject managers is good. They check the quality of planning, and of pupils' completed work. All have a good insight into the teaching and learning in their subjects and have worked hard to develop resources. The managers for English, mathematics and science constantly check on levels of attainment and take action where needed. This contributes to the good and rising standards. The use of assessment information in the other subjects is not fully developed and is a priority identified in the school development plan. In music and religious education the subject managers have yet to implement procedures for checking on pupils' progress. Responsibility for the management of special educational needs is currently shared between the headteacher and a temporary member of staff, following the long term absence of the permanent post-holder. Classroom practice for supporting these pupils is good and they make good progress. However, the record keeping and planning system is in need of review to bring procedures up to date with national guidance and to provide a consistent approach that teachers and teaching assistants can readily follow. While both systems work, that in Years 1 and 2 is much more detailed and useful than the one used in Years 3 to 6. Subject managers keep very detailed action plans of developments in their areas and of the outcomes. They have initiated a series of regular curriculum evenings for parents and governors that are well attended. For example, there have been informative evenings focussed on the teaching and learning of literacy, numeracy, art and information and communication technology. Subject management is continuously being developed within the school and is an important factor in the high standards attained.
54. Governors are very effective in fulfilling their statutory duties and they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It is clear that they have a shared vision for the future. They are intensely proud of the school's achievements and yet are constantly looking for ways to improve further. They are active in general management through their work in various sub-committees. This

system is efficient and effective in helping them to discharge their duties. There is strong involvement in curriculum issues. Link governors work alongside their respective subject managers to produce and review curriculum statements. The school benefits from the wide range of experience, expertise and local knowledge that the governing body represents. They undertake training in educational developments, make regular visits to classrooms and help out on educational visits. After the inspection of September 1997 governors responded very positively to the key issues for action set out in the subsequent report. They have worked hard, in co-operation with the senior management of the school, to ensure that appropriate action has been taken and have kept themselves fully informed about the good progress made.

55. The headteacher takes his responsibility for the professional development of the staff very seriously and there is a good level of teacher performance management within the school. Personal targets for improvement are discussed and agreed with individual teachers and non-teaching staff as a result of classroom observations or requests. There are good systems for sharing expertise. Aspects of the best classroom practice are identified, discussed at staff meetings and, often, demonstrated by the staff concerned. New staff are introduced to the school through good support procedures. The headteacher acts as a mentor, the staff handbook is very helpful and they are encouraged to take full advantage of any training available. The school is very active in the training of new teachers and has a good reputation with the local college. This brings benefits to the pupils as they experience new contacts who often provide added enthusiasm, support and interest to lessons.
56. There is a good number of teachers and teaching assistants to cover expertise across all areas of the National Curriculum and to provide modern foreign language teaching and out-of-school activities. The school finds creative solutions to staffing issues. For example, when the music teacher left, the headteacher secured the services of a specialist who visits for one day each week, delivering an excellent standard of tuition. The staff work very successfully together, planning and sharing information. This is especially important in a school where English and mathematics are taught in sets and pupils work with several different teachers. Experienced teaching assistants provide good support for pupils and their focused sessions for English and mathematics result in good progress. Bursley School is well served by non-teaching staff who are committed to its aims. There is a good level of supervision at lunchtimes and adults know the pupils well. The kitchen staff are keen to support the health programme and provide a tasty selection of home-made snacks at breaktimes. School administration is very effective and the school secretary discharges a varied range of responsibilities and is flexible in her approach. She maintains good relationships with outside agencies and parents and extends a warm welcome for all visitors, ensuring that public relations are good. A high standard of cleanliness is maintained by the cleaning staff who take a pride in their work. The caretaker is adaptable and carries out jobs such as grounds maintenance and painting to keep spending within tight limits.
57. The school has adapted itself very well to the introduction of new technology in enabling it to function more efficiently. For example, the use of optical marking to monitor attendance and a computerised assessment programme to record pupils' progress releases time for added contact with pupils. Overall, there is a satisfactory supply of resources for teaching and learning and in mathematics, geography, physical education and religious education, they are good. Since the last inspection, resources in computer software and art have improved. The provision of the new library, with its well chosen stock has greatly assisted pupils' learning. Very good

research facilities are now established and include computer software with Internet access planned for the near future.

58. The accommodation is satisfactory and has been imaginatively adapted to provide adequate space to deliver the curriculum. Tremendous efforts have been made to improve the internal and external appearance in the last six years and it is now very attractive and welcoming. Plentiful areas for displays of work are used well to celebrate pupils' achievements. The area for the Reception classes is spacious and well organised but is at the opposite end of the building from the pre-Reception group classroom. This is not helpful and restricts opportunities for sharing of resources and good practice. Teachers try hard to overcome the problem and there are timetabled visits but the situation is far from ideal. The Reception classes have no direct access to the outdoor learning area and therefore physical activity has to be separately timetabled. This reduces children's opportunities to progress, especially those with relatively poorer skills. The adventure play equipment is a valuable resource but is only accessible to pupils when the ground is dry and this restricts its use.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to ensure that standards remain high and to assist in the continuous drive for improvement, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- improve assessment systems in subjects other than English and mathematics and use the information gathered to plan future lessons, as identified in the school development plan;
(Paragraphs 39,53,90,106,111,116,126,131,137)
- review the record keeping and planning for pupils who have special educational needs to ensure a consistent approach that follows the new national guidelines; and take steps to involve the parents of these pupils in setting targets for learning, as identified in the school's action planning.
(Paragraphs 40,48,57,75)

In addition, when drawing up their action plan, the governors should give consideration to the following:

Improve facilities for, and access to, the outdoor learning environment for children in the Reception classes.
(Paragraphs 3,58)

Altering the height of the computer trolleys for children in the Reception classes.
(Paragraphs 61,67,114)

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	40

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	11	20	22	5	0	0	0
Percentage	19	34	38	9	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents just less than 2 percentage points..

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	272
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	46

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	11

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	16	19	35

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	33	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (87)	100 (91)	100 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	16
	Girls	18	19	19
	Total	33	35	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (87)	100 (98)	100 (89)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	16	23	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	14	13
	Girls	23	20	23
	Total	33	34	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	85 (91)	87 (88)	92 (94)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	16
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	33	36	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (84)	92 (85)	100 (94)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	267
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.6
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	79.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	517,513
Total expenditure	522,879
Expenditure per pupil	1,922
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,870
Balance carried forward to next year	32,504

Recruitment of teachers

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

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	272
Number of questionnaires returned	114

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	33	1	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	35	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	50	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	53	9	1	0
The teaching is good.	64	33	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	37	7	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	28	0	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	26	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	49	46	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	36	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	4	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	43	11	3	8

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Children enter the pre-Reception class after their fourth birthday and the Reception class in the Autumn term before they are five. These classes form the Foundation Stage at Bursley. Children's experience of starting school is a positive one and they settle quickly to the daily routines because they have made several visits beforehand. The pre-Reception class makes a positive contribution to the overall provision by providing education from a very young age in a school where there is no nursery. Children are assessed on entry to the school to find out what they can do. The results of these assessments show that the attainment is variable, but overall is average. Most children reach the expected learning targets by the end of their Reception year, and a significant number exceed them. All children, including those with special educational needs make good progress in all areas of learning. Classrooms for this age group are stimulating and caring places where children feel safe and secure.
60. Teaching is very good in all areas of learning. Teachers are knowledgeable about how young children learn. They are very skilled in the teaching of basic skills, such as reading, writing and mathematical understanding. Classrooms are organised effectively and there is a brisk pace to learning. Activities are well matched to the interest levels of the children to ensure that they are appropriately challenged. Teachers constantly check children's learning and monitor how well they are doing over time. They use the information gathered to plan future work. This ensures that activities closely match children's learning needs.
61. Classrooms are effectively organised to provide areas for free choice and for focused work with the teacher. Displays of work are stimulating, well labelled and inviting, showing that children's efforts are valued. The Springtime display includes an invitation for children to observe the plants, using the magnifying lenses. There is an appropriate range of resources that are used well to support learning. They are well labelled to encourage children to find them and tidy away for themselves. This has a positive impact on the development of children's independence and their developing sense of responsibility. However, computers are currently located on trolleys that are too high and children have some difficulty in using them effectively. The outdoor play area is well equipped with a range of large adventure-type equipment. However, children do not have free access to the area and, because of the surface, it can only be used in good weather. In addition, the lack of a covered hard play area means that opportunities for children to play outside are limited to set playtimes or timetabled sessions. These limitations have a direct effect on children's physical development where learning is not quite as good as in the other areas.
62. The manager for this age group provides strong leadership, and has ensured that improvement has been good since the last inspection. She is knowledgeable and manages provision for children in the Foundation Stage very effectively. She provides good support for other teachers and assistants and they work together very well to provide a consistent approach. The location of the pre-Reception group, which is at the opposite end of the building from the Reception classes, restricts the opportunities for the sharing of equipment and contact between children and staff in this key stage of education.
63. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children's learning. They receive regular information about the topics covered and about the progress that children are

making. Some regularly help in the classroom, and on school visits. They make a good contribution to learning by helping with reading at home.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children's skills in this area develop very well. Relationships are good and teachers' expectations are high. All staff place a strong emphasis on developing a positive attitude to learning and on promoting social skills. As a result, children share readily, take turns fairly and are polite. Children behave very well and work very hard. They concentrate for long periods of time and work well on their own or in small groups, showing a good sense of purpose. For example they play games in pairs to support their mathematical development. They take on different roles when acting out scenarios in 'The Three Bears' Cottage', showing good imagination and using creative language. Children care for themselves well, for example, dressing for physical activity and organise their belongings efficiently. They make decisions about what to do next when given a choice of activities, and negotiate effectively with each other when they want to take their turn on a chosen task.

Communication, language and literacy

65. Children's attainment in this area of learning is very good. Most children reach the expected targets in speaking, listening, reading and writing by the end of their Reception year and many progress into the National Curriculum programmes of study. Children make good progress because activities build accurately on previous experiences, thereby moving learning forward at a fast rate. Children use appropriate vocabulary and talk in well-constructed sentences. They respond confidently to their teacher's questions, listen attentively and show respect for each others' views. Children benefit from focused literacy sessions with their teachers. Before the Teddy Bears' picnic, one group made a list of food that they would need. The teacher demonstrated the writing as children made good attempts to spell the words. The programme of learning places great emphasis on teaching the sounds that letters make and how to write them. This work starts in the pre-Reception class and some very young children write their names accurately and even 'have a go' at simple words. All children are encouraged to write for themselves. The youngest make marks on paper and, by the end of their Reception year, the higher attainers confidently write their own sentences and spell simple words. Opportunities are provided for children to practise their writing in play situations, and they take pride in showing their work to their classmates. Children listen attentively to stories and talk confidently about the plot. The reading areas contain an adequate range of material but are not as well used as they could be. Children take their books home regularly to share with their parents and family. This is a well-established routine that helps them to gain confidence and enjoyment in reading.

Mathematical development

66. Children achieve well in this area of learning and most exceed the expected goals by the end of their Reception year. A variety of interesting activities invite children to solve problems and to explore the world of mathematics. For example, children learn about subtraction in practical activities using counting apparatus and through playing games. Many children count confidently beyond 50 and use simple mathematical strategies. They confidently explain how they have arrived at a given answer to a problem using appropriate mathematical language. When working on a counting stick, children realise that the term 'one less' means 'one before' and then they progress to using the word 'subtract'. Classroom displays encourage children to count, recognise

numbers and learn the language of position and order. For example, effective labelling of a display invites children to count how many teddy bears are having a picnic. Creative activities are used well to support children's mathematical knowledge and understanding. For example, they develop an understanding of shape and pattern through printing activities. Children compare, order, sort and match objects by colour and size. They discriminate shape well as they work on jigsaw puzzles, estimating whether the piece will fit the space. When playing with sand and water children learn about capacity. One group talked about the concept of 'full' with one child quite adamant that the jug could not be full until it had over-flowed.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

67. Teachers plan a very good range of topics to interest children in learning about the world around them, and most reach the expected goals in all aspects of this area of learning, by the end of their Reception year. Children use their senses to observe and investigate natural objects. For example, they use magnifying lenses to study the similarities and differences between old and modern teddy bears. Excellent use is made of visits to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of living things. When visiting a local wood, children learn about the animals that live there, and how they survive. They develop an understanding of how things change over time when they order bears according to their age. Children make models of teddy bears, and use split pins to make their legs and arms move. They use a range of construction materials to create models for their imaginative play. Children are learning to use the computer. They enjoy this work and most accurately control the mouse to select items from the screen. A group of children in the pre-Reception class were intrigued with one programme where they could command the characters to speak and choose which part of the story they went to next. There was much laughter as they appreciated the silly antics on screen. However, the computers are placed on high trolleys and children need to stand up to use them which is not conducive to learning. Children find out about the cultures and beliefs of other people. For example, they make large dragons and eat Chinese food with chopsticks when celebrating the Chinese New Year.

Physical development

68. Overall children have satisfactory control over their bodies and show a developing awareness of space and each other. For example, when visiting local woodlands they run and jump, successfully negotiating uneven paths and banks. However, a significant minority of children lack confidence in their work and have difficulty in hopping and changing direction. Opportunities for children to practise these skills are limited to planned sessions. High quality large play equipment is located outside the Reception classrooms. However, there is no door leading directly from the classrooms so the activity is not available during free choice time. The grassed surface often becomes muddy and therefore can only be used when the weather is fine. Consequently this valuable outdoor learning facility is underused. There is no covered all-weather play area for the Reception classes. The pre-Reception class does have access to outside, but the area is uncovered and contains no large play equipment. As a result there are limited opportunities for children, in all classes, to improve their physical skills. Children have many opportunities to develop their control over small objects. They build with small equipment and handle paintbrushes, scissors and pencils with increasing skill.

Creative development

69. Children achieve well in this area of learning because activities are planned that allow them to communicate their feelings and use their imagination. Adults are skilled at using open-ended questions to encourage children to talk about what they can see, feel and think. Children work co-operatively in their role-play and use their imagination to act out the parts played by different characters in their story. They are particularly imaginative when playing and working outside. For example, they showed great excitement and enthusiasm as they hunted for their teddies in a local wood. As they searched for clues they explored and investigated the outdoor environment, talking about the way natural objects felt and looked. Children explore shape, texture and form. They paint, print and handle moulding materials confidently. Children sing a range of songs and rhymes from memory. They show very well developed skills in music sessions. For example, they are able to copy challenging clapped rhythms, and alter the volume of the sounds they make. They explore how instruments can be played, and use them to make sound patterns.

ENGLISH

70. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds were well above average when compared to the national average and to similar schools. Inspection findings show that attainment for the present group of Year 2 pupils is above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing. For the eleven year olds, the results were also well above average when compared to similar schools and the national average. High standards were seen during the inspection with a group of talented pupils working at levels normally expected of fourteen year-olds. Over time, attainment in English is improving at a faster rate than the national trend. The school provides good support for pupils who have special educational needs, speak English as an additional language or who are experiencing some difficulty with the subject. The majority of pupils are on line to achieve the expected level 4 and the school looks well set to attain its challenging statutory target for attainment. Standards have improved considerably since the last inspection.
71. Skills in speaking and listening throughout the school are very good. Pupils express their ideas clearly and listen well to others. All eagerly talk about their work. In a Year 1 and 2 middle set pupils accurately recalled the plot of a traditional tale they had read together. They used similar patterns of language to those written in the book, showing that they can quickly adapt their speech according to the occasion. Pupils organise their thoughts to focus on exactly what they want to say and often rehearse their sentences out loud to make sure that they make sense before writing them down. In Years 3 to 6 pupils talk at length about a range of topics and respond enthusiastically to their classmates' ideas and opinions. Some Year 6 pupils in a booster class, for example, expressed their clear preferences for books, stating exactly what interests them. Drama techniques are used very well in many lessons and this contributes significantly to the overall progress that pupils make. For example, older pupils in a high achieving set debated the pros and cons of mobile phones. They improvised short scenes, to illustrate different points of view. They very successfully adapted their speech to the informal setting of a discussion between parent and child. Afterwards pupils used a more formal tone in standard English as they developed their ideas for a written argument. Some talented pupils enacted short scenes from Macbeth after studying the text in depth. They adopted different dramatic approaches to illustrate the changing emotions of the main character. When pupils interrogated their fellow actors to find out what their 'freeze frame' pose was meant to convey, they received answers such as 'I'm plotting and scheming' or 'I'm not sure what to make of all this'. The work was of an exceptionally high standard for pupils of this age. In one religious education lesson for Year 3 and 4 pupils, they improvised modern-day

scenes to examine the idea of temptation. Through imaginative language and drama, they tackled a very difficult subject in a confident way and learning was enhanced.

72. Pupils' achievement in reading is very good. Those who have special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate in relation to prior learning and make good progress. Shared class reading is used effectively in Years 1 and 2 and there is a good match of texts to pupils' prior attainment and interests. By the end of Year 2, pupils discuss the plot and characters in a story, often predicting what will happen next. Pupils are confident when reading non-fiction books. They use their knowledge of alphabetical order to quickly find the information they need. They are confident in using the contents, index and glossary and efficiently find words in the dictionary by estimating which pages will be relevant. The higher achievers were particularly efficient at this task. Pupils' skills such as the recognition and articulation of letter sounds are very well developed from the earliest stages. They blend sounds together to read new words and then check the meaning with reference to the sense of the story, or by using picture clues. In one small group session, pupils enjoyed a challenging book called 'Suddenly' and tackled some hard text by remembering the pattern of words used by the author. They used very good expression and followed a range of punctuation well. For example they knew that the ellipsis should be read with suspense and raised their voices slightly to achieve the desired effect. They fully appreciated the humour in the story and showed great enjoyment in their work. Without exception, pupils take reading books home regularly and are well supported by parents. This makes a significant contribution to learning.
73. By the end of Year 6, pupils read fluently and show advanced levels of comprehension. The majority recall in detail what they have read, and skills of inference and deduction are very well developed. Talented pupils appreciate classic fiction and poetry. They have a good understanding of English literacy heritage. They identify layers of meaning and interpret text to identify the writer's intentions. Pupils have favourite authors and justify their choice of book with reference to the writing style, the type of story, and whether they can empathise with the main characters. They extend their reading experiences by borrowing from the well stocked school library where books are specifically chosen to meet pupils' tastes and to interest both boys and girls. Pupils are very discriminate when choosing books to read. They check the book description and part of the text to see if it appeals. Their experience of reading is enhanced by library sessions where the school's librarian introduces them to new material and encourages them to try out different authors. They understand library classification systems and can locate information effectively and efficiently. Many use the facilities at lunch time when they have opportunities to browse and chat informally about 'what's new' on the shelves. In a recent inter-school library competition, the Bursley team reached the finals on their first attempt. Boys and girls develop a love of literature and good reading habits due to the very good quality of teaching and the very positive attitudes fostered by the school. In the older classes, pupils always have books to hand and enjoy the opportunities provided to read for pure pleasure.
74. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' writing is well punctuated and thought out. They write humorous instructions for a good night's sleep that include such ingredients as a 'cuddly teddy bear' and a 'good story'. They try hard to include interesting words and often use the ideas from books they have read. Some pupils extended their skills by using techniques from 'The Runaway Chapati' for inspiration. They know how to spell many common words and apply their knowledge of letter sounds effectively when putting together simple words. By the end of Year 2 writing is well structured and higher achieving pupils are using speech, question and exclamation marks to make

meaning clear. Writing extends across a good range of fiction and non-fiction work. Pupils often write at length in other subjects and this helps to consolidate their developing skills. Handwriting is becoming well formed and legible. In Years 3 to 6 pupils write imaginatively in different styles, including poetry and playscripts. Their non-fiction writing covers a good range, including reports, recounts and persuasive texts. By Year 6 pupils' writing is often lively and imaginative. Some higher achieving pupils produced convincing arguments entitled 'Is Bursley School the place for you?' They employed some sophisticated techniques that they had discovered in their research of persuasive techniques. Pupils have a secure grasp of punctuation and grammar. They use longer sentences that contain detail to engage and interest the reader and to add imagery. They also know how to use short, punchy sentences to very good effect in their suspense stories. They use simile and metaphor creatively. Some poetry on display described different emotions as 'like silk running through your hands' or 'red hot blood'. Most pupils spell accurately, using a range of appropriate strategies. They investigate how root words can be changed by adding a prefix or suffix. This helps them to tackle longer words with several syllables. Through learning about the origins of words, they recognise those that are derived from other languages and know that the spelling patterns may be different. They make very good progress in spelling as they identify how the language rules work. Handwriting is of a high standard in the practice books but varies on a day to day basis. Some pupils develop their own style and most pay good attention to the presentation of their work.

75. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual programmes of learning are used to plan work and pupils have additional support to help them meet their targets. The setting system caters well for their needs and they are often taught in smaller groups to allow for more direct intervention in learning by the teachers and assistants. However, the record keeping system is not uniform throughout school and is difficult to follow. Parents are not fully involved in setting targets for their children or in reviewing their progress between termly meetings. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make consistently good progress. At present, evidence shows that their attainment is above that expected.
76. The literacy hour has been very successfully implemented in the school and planning is very accurately targeted to ensure that pupils are achieving their best. Teaching is mainly very good with some excellent practice seen. The high quality of teaching positively and directly impacts on pupils' learning, resulting in the high standards of attainment in the school. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use it very effectively to plan and prepare lessons. Expectations are very high. Consequently pupils are challenged by the pace of learning and the work prepared for them. Careful planning ensures that tasks are matched to pupils' prior learning and are set at different levels. Very good relationships are established. As a result pupils are attentive, understand what they have to do and work hard. Resources are used very effectively to support pupils' learning and time is never wasted. During shared writing sessions, teachers demonstrate effective techniques and support pupils in their compositions, extending their thinking and helping them to create the desired effect. There is a strong emphasis on the extension of vocabulary and in developing non-fiction reading and writing skills in subjects such as science, history and geography. Marking is thorough but does not always contain useful comments to tell pupils what was good about the work or how they might improve. There is a good emphasis on self-evaluation and pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by reviewing their success at the end of lessons. The information gathered from regular assessments is used to track each individual's progress and to ensure that all are achieving what their teachers expect. Class, group and individual targets are very useful in pointing the way forward and focusing pupils' attention on

the specific areas for improvement. These are shared with parents at the termly meetings so that they can help at home. This results in a unified effort that brings good results.

77. The drive towards higher attainment in English has been managed very well by the subject manager. The current emphasis is on further analysis of writing and reading skills to improve planning even further. The manager produces appropriate action plans and tackles issues promptly as they arise. A new initiative for the highest attainers involves a partnership with a neighbouring school and is proving very successful in providing extension and enrichment for these pupils who are working well above expected levels.
78. The use of information and communication technology to support learning is good, especially in the application of word-processing and in developing research skills. Teachers have a good range of resources for English but there are some shortages in class lessons where material has to be photocopied or books shared. There is a satisfactory selection of big books and guided reading sets that teachers use within the literacy hour. All are very carefully stored and easily accessed. The quality and range of books in class reading areas are good and texts cover an interesting selection of narrative and non-fiction material. A new school library has been developed under the management of the school's librarian and provides a very good resource for learning. A wide selection of non-fiction and reference material is well organised according to the Dewey system and books are constantly checked to ensure that material is up-to-date and relevant. The two computers provide additional resources for study but are not yet connected to the Internet. This limits the use of the 'Internet' books that have been bought to link printed information with that stored electronically. The librarian carefully chooses story books after consulting the pupils to ensure that all tastes are met. The success of the approach is seen in the wide range of books to suit both boys and girls and the different age ranges. She also selects new material by significant authors and introduces it in the timetabled workshop sessions. This is a very effective strategy in encouraging pupils to extend their horizons. The development of the library represents a very good improvement since the last inspection and it is now a central feature of the school.

MATHEMATICS

79. The standards attained in national tests in mathematics at the age of seven are well above the national average and that for similar schools. For the 11 year-olds results are above national averages and well above those for similar schools. Taking the last three years 1998 to 2000 together, the figures show that performance in mathematics has been rising. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainments. Pupils who learn in English as an additional language make similar progress to others. Some very high attaining older pupils are working at advanced levels, normally expected of fourteen-year-olds.
80. Inspection findings show standards of work are above average at the age of seven. Pupils count with accuracy in 2's, 5's and 10's. They recall number facts that they have learned when working on calculations. Pupils explain the strategies they use when solving simple addition and subtraction problems. For example, some prefer to round up the numbers to the nearest ten whilst others choose to find doubles to make

the calculation easier. Some of the high attaining pupils investigate the patterns and relationships in a number sequence, identifying whether numbers have been taken away, added, multiplied or divided. Pupils measure accurately. In a Year 1 and 2 below average set pupils tackled the problem of measuring a wavy line. They showed good attention to detail as they matched a piece of string carefully to the contours before checking the length. They are confident in gathering data, analysing it and then presenting their findings in a graph. In a Year 1 and 2 middle set, the pupils interviewed people to discover their favourite lessons, recording the answers on a tally chart. The older ones then decided on the scale of the axis on their graph and produced a bar chart to show their results. Very good planning and challenging teaching contributes to the pupils' developing mathematical language. For example the Year 1 and 2 top set followed some complex directions in their quest to find hidden treasure. Most of the pupils are confident in working out problems involving money and time.

81. In Years 3 to 6 pupils continue to make good progress in number work. They confidently work on long multiplication and use strategies to check their results by reversing the operation or estimating the answer. Mental computation is good and pupils enjoy the challenges set in the quick-fire opening sessions to lessons. Year 3 and 4 pupils interpret and present data in various forms including computer-generated graphs and charts. In a middle set for this age group, pupils worked confidently on fractions. Through practical investigation they found equal parts of a whole. For example, they knew that one half was equal to two quarters and then discovered that this was the same as five tenths or four eighths. One higher attaining group also found that they could 'reduce' the fraction numbers by dividing the top and bottom numbers by the same amount. In this way they cancelled four eighths down to one half. Pupils have a good knowledge of geometric shapes, measuring and drawing angles accurately. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 understand negative numbers and use them in calculations. Those in the higher attaining set match fractions, decimals and percentages. For example, they know that $\frac{1}{5}$ is 20% and can be converted to a decimal of 0.2. Their developing mental agility enables them to work quickly and to check their results through approximation. A group of talented pupils benefits from a shared project with another school where a specialist teacher extends their learning into the curriculum for secondary school. They were working on demanding problems that included the use of algebra in linear equations. They confidently tackled work on graphic calculation, recognising symbols and learning new vocabulary. These pupils are achieving well in advance of their years and making very good progress.
82. The teaching of mathematics is very good and is the key factor in the improving standards. The school has successfully implemented the national numeracy guidance. The mental opening starter sessions are lively and challenging and pupils thoroughly enjoy them. Teachers tell pupils what they will learn at the start of lessons and usually check to see if they have been successful at the end of the session. The pupils' learning is supported very well by the good quality of teachers' questioning that probes their thinking. Pupils have positive attitude towards mathematics. Lessons are interesting and inspiring so they listen attentively, volunteer answers readily and co-operate productively in groups.
83. The school uses information and communication technology well to support the pupils' learning in mathematics. In Years 3 and 4 for example, pupils designed a database to record their information on 'wash days'. With some help, they then constructed block graphs and pie charts from which to illustrate their findings. Pupils are encouraged to apply their mathematical skills through other subjects. For

example, they measure accurately in design and technology and use their numerical skills during scientific experiments.

84. Mathematics is well managed by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable teacher. She is committed to raising standards even further and evaluates teaching and learning throughout the school. Teachers regularly check on pupils' progress through various assessment tasks and then plan work to build on what pupils know and can do.

SCIENCE

85. In the 2001 National Curriculum teacher assessments for pupils aged seven, the percentage who attained the expected level 2 was well above average when compared to national and similar school results but few pupils achieved the higher level 3. Test results for pupils aged eleven were close to the average when compared with schools nationally and in like circumstances. The school has taken action this year aimed at returning its attainment results to the previous above-average levels of 1999 and 2000. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils of seven and eleven are on course to achieve standards of attainment that are above average by the summer of 2002. Higher attaining pupils are working at advanced levels to stretch their learning. Evidence from lesson observations, the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with teachers clearly demonstrates good pupil progress in the acquisition of science skills across the school. There is no evidence to suggest that pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language make any less progress than their peers. Nor is there any significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls over time.
86. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are using their senses to identify materials, make simple predictions and draw conclusions from data that they have collected. They describe objects in terms of their properties, for example, a ruler was described as smooth, hard, light and dull in colour. In one very good lesson about materials and changes, pupils showed good skills in drawing conclusions from what they saw when different substances were cooked. In their work on physical processes they describe the elements necessary to complete a simple battery circuit. In a lesson about life and living things, they come to a simple understanding of the way things grow and the basics of healthy living. In Year 6 pupils have made a study of plants and understand the process of photosynthesis. They can name some of the main parts of a flower, for example, stamen and carpel. In work on filtration pupils have produced some well recorded experiments. They used the results intelligently to draw sensible conclusions. During their time in the school pupils are given many opportunities to explore and investigate, first making predictions and then recording their findings in a number of different ways such as tables and graphs. For example, through practical work, they found the average pulse rate of pupils in the class and recorded the results on a line graph. This forms a good link to the work done in mathematics. When carrying out their experiments pupils have a good understanding of the concept of fair testing. They know that many factors can affect the accuracy of their results and they take steps to eliminate them.
87. The standard of teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection and has a positive effect on pupils' learning and attitudes towards the subject. Teachers plan their lessons in detail. There is a good balance between practical and written assignments. Work is marked well and teachers usually insist on a good level of neatness. However, in the case of some of the higher attaining pupils the standard of presentation of their work is only just acceptable. The school has worked hard to improve teaching and learning in the subject since the last

inspection. The good improvements have impacted positively on pupils' progress. The subject manager has worked successfully to ensure that lessons follow a logical progression and include opportunities for pupils to ask their own questions. Pupils with special educational needs are given work that is appropriately challenging and teaching assistants support them very effectively. Teachers routinely check on the use and meaning of scientific vocabulary and this helps pupils who speak English as an additional language.

88. Pupils demonstrate good attitudes towards their work in the subject. They respond well to questions from their teachers and follow safety instructions. During lessons they are very well behaved and remain on task. This very good conduct was well illustrated when pupils went to a lecture at a local high school. They were enthralled and gave the lecturer their complete attention for about an hour. Wonder in learning was seen during the inspection in an assembly taken by a local clergyman. In order to make his point about keeping an open mind, he performed a number of science experiments concerned with air pressure. The pupils gave him their full attention and a number of "wows" were heard when the experiments worked. The pupils were keen to offer their own explanations for what happened suggesting, for example, that air pressure, gravity or suction may be involved.
89. Lessons allow pupils to apply their skills in other areas. For example, there are opportunities to extend speaking and listening skills during discussions. Pupils write down their hypothesis and findings when recording experiments. Skills in information and communication technology are enhanced through the use of computer programs such as 'Science Explorer' or 'The Ultimate Human Body' for research purposes. Pupils enter, analyse and interpret data using databases, graphs and spreadsheets.
90. The subject manager maintains a good overview of provision through lesson observation, talking to staff and looking at lesson planning. She has analysed the results of standard assessment tests, identified areas of weakness and shared her findings with colleagues. Evaluation is therefore good. There is some use of assessment information to guide future planning but this not yet fully established because the manager and staff are presently developing the systems for tracking pupils' progress in science. Nevertheless, inspection evidence indicates that teachers successfully fill in the gaps in pupils' knowledge as identified in tests. There are sufficient resources to cover all the programmes of study.

ART AND DESIGN

91. Due to timetable restrictions no lessons were observed during the inspection. Consequently, it was not possible to make any judgement in relation to the quality of teaching. However, evidence from samples of assessed work, the thoughtfully displayed work around the school, and discussions with staff clearly indicates that pupils aged seven and 11 attain the standards expected nationally. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. This represents a similar finding to that in the last inspection.
92. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore texture, shape and pattern through the study of buildings. They make rubbings of different materials and identify the dominant shapes in a variety of structures. They use these shapes to create repeating patterns. Teachers make good use of the work of famous artists and photographs to help pupils understand different forms of construction, and the way they can be represented in paintings. For example, pupils study the work of Lowry and Paul Klee,

providing them with inspiration for their own work. They compare and contrast Chinese buildings with those of a western industrial landscape. Pupils use a range of drawing media effectively in their observational drawings. Their self-portraits are detailed and show a developing understanding of shape and proportion. Pupils use sponges, rollers and a range of brushes to create different paint effects.

93. In Years 3 and 4 pupils study pattern through the use of stencils and templates. They make their own blocks to print onto material. They continue to develop their drawing skills and use a wide range of materials to create imaginative collages of outdoor scenes. Teachers link art work with other subject studies. For example, while learning about the rainforest pupils draw the animals that live there. They use chalk, paint and pastel to create the desired effect, using blending techniques to effectively match colours to those found in nature. Work linked in this way allows pupils to try out their skills in different contexts. Pupils extend their studies of famous artists. They compare paintings of the sea by the Japanese artist Hokusai and the French artist Andre Derain, creating their own work by incorporating the new ideas discovered. Pupils' drawing skills develop well in Years 5 and 6. Pencil drawings of characters from the Victorian era demonstrate pupils' increasing skills through the accurate use of line and shading. They draw people in action, and many are able to draw portraits of people whose facial expressions show emotions such as anger. Working in pairs, pupils design and make hats for a range of occasions. The designs are detailed, showing flair and imagination. While studying the Incas pupils explore printing techniques. They generate animal designs from which they make printing blocks and create repeating patterns in the Inca style. The quality of pupils' work indicates that they enjoy art and design. Work is carefully executed and pupils use a range of media and tools with increasing skill.
94. There is a positive approach to art across the school. Good links are made to other curriculum areas such as history, geography and religious education but limited use is made of information and communication technology. All pupils have sketchbooks but they are not used consistently as a way of providing pupils with the opportunity to practise their skills, and experiment with design, different media or new techniques. Teachers plan interesting opportunities for pupils to study the work of artists, including art work from around the world, and from different time periods. This makes a positive contribution to their understanding of other cultures. Overall, more emphasis is needed for pupils to critically evaluate their own work, or that of others.
95. The subject is managed effectively. The scheme of work has been improved since the last inspection through the adoption and implementation of the national guidelines. Examples of pupils' work are being compiled to provide teachers with a useful resource to guide their planning and to use for inspiration. Pupils' achievements are assessed at the end of each unit of work. However, teachers do not use this information to guide their future planning. Better use could be made of the information collected to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' achievements, or to help shape the development of the subject in order to raise standards further. Resources are adequate and used well by teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. From the evidence gathered through lessons seen, by looking at finished products and talking to pupils and teachers, it is clear that attainment is as expected at the ages of seven and eleven. There are strengths in making and in the quality of finish. Pupils from an early age are taught the correct design processes. They plan their

work, consider materials and adapt their ideas to overcome problems. Standards have improved since the last inspection, especially in design and evaluation.

97. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use different fastenings, tools and materials when working on their 'vehicle' topic. They examine different types of toy vehicles to see how they are made, how they are adapted to suit specific purposes and how they are painted. Pupils work on the logos for the side of their lorries, using ideas from the commercial vehicles they have studied. They have a sound understanding of how wheels are attached to the axis and experiment with different ways to fasten parts together. As they work on their designs, pupils constantly evaluate their success and identify where there are problems, changing their original intentions where needed. In a link with religious education lessons, pupils design and make diva pots using clay, carefully planning the cultural designs on the basis of research.
98. In Years 3 and 4 pupils investigate an interesting collection of moving parts used in books and greetings cards. They try making some of the mechanisms to find out how they work. In a good lesson seen, they took great care in making their designed product, including flaps, pop-ups and turning wheels. Pupils paid very good attention to the finish of the page, bearing in mind the readers that they wanted to attract. Year 5 and 6 pupils had made some very good hats, specifically designed for purpose. The wedding hats were suitably decorated for the ladies and the safety ones showed good attention to reinforcement and comfort. Much of the design work was linked with the art project and provided additional opportunities to enhance skills in this area. In one very good lesson, pupils made slippers according to their detailed designs. Again, the pupils had engaged in extended research to ascertain how manufacturers achieve comfort and attract their customers through innovative ideas. A wide selection of designs showed good imagination and the pupils had paid great attention to finding exactly the right materials to produce the required effect. Homework time had been well used for research. The quality of fastening was very good with skilful stitching and sticking constantly checked for strength and wearability. Pupils have a good understanding of food technology and have investigated different types of bread in terms of nutritional value and taste.
99. Pupils collaborate very well on their tasks, readily sharing ideas, equipment and resources. They critically evaluate their own and other people's work, suggesting ways to improve. They have a good knowledge of their own learning and show perseverance in completing their assignments.
100. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good practice seen. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting tasks, carefully mapped out over several weeks to give pupils plenty of opportunity to evaluate their work and change it where necessary. They pay good attention to the development of essential skills in the subject. In the Year 5 and 6 classes, teachers realised that pupils' skills in stitching were quite poor so they inserted extra time to teach the craft before starting on their 'slipper' project. This contributed well to pupils' overall progress. Pupils are often grouped with their friends for the work, enabling good interchange of ideas and sharing of expertise. Information and communication technology is used well, especially through using computers for research and by taking photographs to help in the making and evaluation processes. Teachers link aspects of design and technology work with topics in other subjects, especially science and art, and there is very good use of mathematical skills in the designing and making processes.
101. The manager for design and technology offers very good support to staff in providing ideas and inspiration. Resources are well stored, readily available, and intelligently

used. Staff and pupils often supplement them using their own possessions from home, bringing in an even wider range of materials. The scheme of planning provides good progression in learning throughout the school. Topics cover all areas of the subject with a good emphasis on design and evaluation. They are imaginatively planned to ensure that there is no repetition in work and that pupils of different ages and prior learning are challenged and interested.

GEOGRAPHY

102. The inspection of 1997 found that attainment for pupils aged seven and eleven was in line with national expectations. Lesson observations, discussions with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of work and school displays and folders indicate that this average level of attainment has been maintained. Pupils make good progress in their acquisition of skills and knowledge over time. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good overall. Older pupils have a good understanding of places and of environmental change.
103. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the area around their school and have produced maps showing the route they take from home. They make good use of information and communication technology to reproduce some of these maps in a clear format. They carry out a survey to find out how people travel to school, analysing and presenting the results through computer generated graphs and charts. Pupils study their local environment and investigate some of the factors that enhance or spoil it. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have produced some well written work on continents and deserts and have linked it to map work, showing these features in detail. They know how different peoples adapt to their environments, for example through their research on the Inuits of Canada.
104. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are able to discuss environmental issues knowledgeably. They consider the effect of over-population on land use, pollution and the destruction of the rainforests. They know many of the adverse effects that motor transport, factories and other human activity has on their immediate environment and put forward their ideas about how these factors can be alleviated. Pupils describe the importance of water for life, and are aware of the importance of trees in the production of clean air. When discussing the rainforests they show an awareness of their importance as a source of medicines and as habitats for a large number of animals and plants. Much of this work contributes to pupils' developing spiritual and social awareness. Pupils demonstrate a good attitude in their lessons by responding well to the challenges offered, producing work of good quality, trying hard and behaving very well.
105. Teachers effectively use other subject studies to support learning in geography. Pupils in Year 6 use the Internet to find pictures to illustrate their work on mountains. Those in Years 4 and 5 apply their knowledge of mathematics to produce useful charts showing the daily use of water. Pupils use their literacy skills well within the subject. They are encouraged to put forward their ideas during lessons, thus enhancing their speaking skills and they record their work using different styles of non-fiction writing. Teaching within the subject is good overall. This has a positive impact on the progress of pupils. Teachers choose their resources carefully. For example, in a Year 1 and 2 class the teacher used a big book entitled "Morag and the Two Grandmothers" to develop pupils' observational skills and to help them understand what an island looks like. During the same lesson the teacher made very

good use of information and communication technology to represent a three-dimensional view.

106. The subject manager is developing her leadership role well and has been receiving advice from a local advisor to help with action planning. A new assessment scheme is now in draft form and ready to be introduced. The scheme of work is thorough and ensures that topics are studied in a logical progression that suits the various ages and prior learning of pupils. The subject manager has worked hard to gather samples of work together and put them into a portfolio for the subject. Although it provides a good source of information to teachers about what has been covered within the subject, it could be further developed as an aid to assessment. The resources available to teach the subject are generally good.

HISTORY

107. Only one lesson was available to be seen during the inspection week. Judgements were made from discussions with the manager, talking to pupils, looking at completed work and viewing a range of displays around the school. Overall, pupils' attainment matches national expectations at ages seven and 11 and there are strengths in skills of historical enquiry throughout school. Higher attaining pupils are working at levels above expectations. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 to 6 there is a better emphasis on practical learning and personal study.
108. In Years 1 and 2 pupils learn about the passage of time and how things change. They study old and new teddies to investigate the effect of time and use. They find some interesting clues that give an insight into the toys' history. They learn about people in the past and how they have shaped our present day lives. For example, they find out about Florence Nightingale's work and link this with modern day medical practice. The good use of artefacts helps the pupils to understand how people lived in the past and develops their skills of enquiry. Pupils gain an awareness of time by sequencing events. For example, they investigate their own family history, putting major events in order.
109. By the end of Year 6 pupils have studied life at various times in history, comparing and contrasting the main characteristics of the different eras. They recall facts accurately and ask their own questions. They have a good knowledge of Victorian times and confidently discuss the fashions and inventions of the nineteenth century. As part of their social development, they investigate the lifestyles of rich and poor children of the time. Through this enquiry, they realise the present opportunities of education, health and recreation that they have today. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the Tudors and recognise distinctive features of their buildings. They learn about past invaders to our shores and identify the legacy that the Romans left. There is a good emphasis on research in this subject with pupils efficiently using artefacts, records, books, CD ROMS and the Internet as sources of information. Teachers arrange many visits to places of historical interest that bring the subject to life. For example, during the inspection, some pupils went to the Council Offices to learn about local history at first hand. These experiences help to maintain pupils' keen interest in the subject.
110. Teaching is good. Activities are very well planned and prepared with a practical emphasis. Pupils have good opportunities to extend their mathematical skills by looking at patterns on Tudor buildings or studying the geometrical designs of the Incas. They sequence events over along period using a 'time line'. Pupils study life in

Britain during World War 2 and write some moving letters home as they pretend to be evacuees. Their informative accounts of rationing and the Blitz show a good understanding of everyday life at the time.

111. The manager for history is hard-working and has developed a good scheme of planning based on national guidelines. It is well organised in a two-year cycle to take account of the mixed ages in the classes and the varying levels of prior learning. Teachers check pupils' attainment at the end of each topic unit and the information is used to evaluate the success of the planning. It is not used, at present to guide future lesson planning in order to improve standards further.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Attainment in information and communication technology matches national expectations. This is a much better level of attainment than that noted in the inspection of 1997 when it was judged to be well below national expectations for 11 year-olds. Pupils' progress is good with some examples of very good and excellent learning. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language is the same as that of their peers.
113. By the time they reach seven years of age pupils are aware of the uses of information and communication technology in the world at large. For example, they have a basic understanding of its use in shopping, credit cards, the Internet and e-mail. They are proficient in the use of the standard keyboard and the mouse. When using computers they access the initial menu and find the facilities or programs they require by using the on-screen prompts. Pupils use tool bars efficiently to change font sizes and print. They experience the use of control technology, for example, when entering a series of instructions to direct a floor robot.
114. Pupils in Year 6 have produced some very good designs of the school playground, using a graphic modelling program. They are confident in using information and communication technology to handle, analyse and present information. In an investigation, they collected and recorded data manually using stopwatches and thermometers. They then compared this system for effectiveness and efficiency when compared to computer-based facilities. By attaching sensors to their machine and using a data base, they were able to carry out the same work much more easily. Pupils have a good level of awareness about the use of technology in their everyday lives. They know that it is important to ask the right questions and follow the right path if you want to interrogate a data base or find information from the Internet. They are discriminate in their use of computers and evaluate whether manual systems might be better before choosing their method of work. Pupils have a basic understanding of multi-media applications, for example, they can combine text and pictures, but this area of their work needs further development.
115. The school has done a great deal to improve its provision for the subject and this work is beginning to impact positively on the level of pupils' attainment. Pupils now experience the full range of learning experiences within the subject outlined in the National Curriculum. One of the strengths of the school's provision for the subject is the emphasis now placed on practising skills when studying other subjects. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. There is good, direct teaching of information and communication technology skills now that teachers' knowledge and confidence have improved. There is a good level of subject knowledge and teachers explain quite complex concepts in ways that are easily understood. Adult help is used well and targeted at the pupils who need most support. Teachers use revision

sessions effectively to remind pupils about what they have covered in previous lessons. They encourage the application of skills developed in other subjects. For example, in a lesson on the recording and interpretation of data, Year 5 and 6 pupils were given the opportunity to read and interpret graphs, use tables to record their findings, develop their ability to read instruments and enhance their speaking and listening skills. In a Year 1 and 2 lesson pupils used their reading abilities to identify objects and people from descriptions. The lesson also developed their ability to recognise key pieces of information. The pupils are very enthusiastic in their approach to the subject and work with sustained concentration.

116. The subject manager is working hard to develop the use of information and communication technology even further across the whole curriculum. The recently introduced record folders will provide useful tracking information once they are established. All the teachers have an action plan for individual development within the subject. However, the assessment and recording of pupils' progress is still not developed enough to provide information about the progress of individual pupils over time. The resources available to teachers are, on the whole, satisfactory but a recent audit indicated the need for additional software for the younger pupils and a more up-to-date computer in the Reception classes. The trolley height is inappropriate for the young children and this also requires attention. The school is seeking to raise the standards of attainment within information and communication technology and the improvements already undertaken provide a good foundation for future success.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

117. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn French and the school also runs a weekly after-school club. This is a new development since the last inspection and is providing good opportunities for pupils to extend their experiences. Learning is good and attainment is above that normally expected in primary schools.
118. Pupils communicate with the teacher in a confident way and most of the lesson is conducted in French. All pupils listen attentively and work hard to interpret meaning from context and other clues. Learning of the language is based on familiar themes, such as colours, parts of the body or animals. Pupils remember familiar words and short phrases and imitate pronunciation and intonation. They begin to read some words, answer questions, request clarification or repetition and engage in basic conversation with the teacher.
119. In the lesson and after-school club seen, pupils showed great enthusiasm for the subject. They are confident in their abilities and are prepared to persevere in order to achieve the required standard. There is good mutual support amongst pupils so that all are prepared to 'have a go', knowing that effort is valued. They show a great sense of achievement and enjoyment in their work.
120. In the lesson observed during the inspection, teaching was excellent. The pace was demanding and the teacher's expectations were high but tempered with a very good level of support and excellent use of praise. A touch of humour raised pupils' confidence and helped to maintain a good learning environment. An element of fun emerges as pupils help each other with difficult pronunciations or points of grammar. The learning opportunities are instilling interest and confidence at an early age. Pupils are developing a firm foundation of skills that will provide a valuable start to their modern foreign language education.

121. The subject provides a good contribution to pupils' cultural development as they learn about the French way of life.

MUSIC

122. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are now above those expected nationally for pupils aged seven and 11. The school is committed to providing high quality learning experiences for pupils, and the use of specialist teachers has succeeded in raising attainment in music throughout the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language, make good progress.
123. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore the sounds that they can make with their voice and musical instruments. They learn to use their voices to add effect when singing. They develop very good control and are able to sing loudly and quietly whilst maintaining the quality of sound. When playing percussion instruments, pupils explore ways of controlling the sound they make. They play instruments individually and as a group, responding appropriately to the signals given by a conductor.
124. In Years 3 and 4 pupils explore rhythm and develop the skills of composing and performing. They skilfully repeat complicated rhythms. Using glockenspiels and xylophones, pupils work in pairs to compose their own pieces. They read basic musical notation and play their instruments well when performing to others. Pupils' listening skills are well developed. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have a well-developed sense of pitch and good control over their voices. They sing simple melodic patterns to a variety of phrases. When singing songs in three parts they include bass, harmony and melody and are skilled at maintaining their own part. All pupils are able to read musical notation and organise sounds in different ways to create effect. They compose and appraise their work, finding ways to improve through rehearsing. They are confident performers when playing individually, and adapt to others' technique when playing in a group.
125. Pupils are taught by a very skilled specialist music teacher. Consequently, the quality of teaching is excellent. Lessons are very well organised and move at a brisk pace. Each activity successfully builds on the previous one, which ensures that pupils learn fast. Resources are used very effectively to support pupils' learning and to give them a good breadth of experiences. The use of praise and the organisation of challenging, exciting activities encourage pupils to work hard and enjoy their lessons. Music makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.
126. Due to recent staff changes the school is currently without a permanent subject manager for music. The previous manager succeeded in ensuring that music had a prominent place in the curriculum. The decision to employ a music specialist while the process of recruitment is being pursued has ensured that the high quality of learning experiences provided for the pupils has been maintained. Good quality instruments are available in sufficient quantity, and are used very effectively in lessons to support pupils' learning in composition and performing. However, the range of school-based recorded music is not as extensive. The work planned for pupils is very effective in developing knowledge and skills in composing and performing, and they regularly listen and respond to their own work. However, opportunities for pupils to listen and respond to the work of composers are not as well developed. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress from one year to another are not in place.

127. Out-of-school activities make a positive contribution to pupils' experiences. Those in the recorder club confidently play together and practise at home. The school choir performs regularly at local events. Its members learn difficult songs quickly and sing with expression, using their voices to create mood and feeling. Older pupils have the opportunity to undertake regular instrumental tuition in brass, woodwind and strings. These lessons are taken by specialist teachers, from the local authority's music department. Pupils show perseverance in these sessions and a commitment to succeed. School productions provide pupils with the opportunity to perform to large audiences. For example, in the school pantomime pupils showed their ability to adapt their singing to give contrasting performances of lively tunes and slower, more serious music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Pupils aged seven and 11 attain the levels expected nationally and games skills are especially well developed by the end of Year 6. There have been good improvements in the provision for physical education, as the school has continued to build on the strengths reported in the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve very well in lessons.
129. In gymnastics lessons pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a variety of ways to travel on the floor and on apparatus. Pupils work hard and successfully develop sequences of movements and balances. They slide, hop and jump and make long, wide and curled shapes. Pupils' performance improves as they focus on body tension and incorporate starting and finishing positions. They work confidently on apparatus and use it safely. In Years 3 and 4 pupils create and perform a dance in response to a poem about machines. They work collectively to devise movements to demonstrate power. Pupils use space well, and work at different heights and speeds to imaginatively interpret the words of the poem. Year 5 and 6 pupils continue to develop their skills. They are creative as they devise sequences of movements. Pupils begin to evaluate their own performance and respond positively to suggestions as to how it might be improved. They work safely and are aware of the effect that exercise has on their bodies. They co-operate very well when they work in pairs and when organising apparatus. The additional expertise in teaching provided by a professional gymnastics coach has a very positive impact on pupils' learning. In these lessons pupils make excellent progress. They work at a very brisk pace to create movement sequences, that include balances, tucks and rolls. Pupils concentrate fully on each activity and their co-ordination and confidence improves significantly. Throughout the school, pupils enjoy their lessons. They take part with enthusiasm and work very hard. Pupils co-operate, and work well individually, in pairs and in small groups. All pupils have equal access to the subject and lessons make a significant contribution to their enjoyment of physical exercise.
130. Good links with the local football club provide pupils with further excellent opportunities to develop their co-ordination and team skills. In these lessons pupils are challenged to improve their own personal performance and to appreciate and respect the efforts of each other. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 worked extremely hard and made excellent progress in their ability to co-ordinate their feet. The importance of team-work is a strong feature of these lessons. This approach makes a very valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development. The swimming lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6 are well organised and meet the requirements of the physical education curriculum. All but a very small minority of pupils, learn to swim at least 25 metres by the end of their time in Year 6. Pupils are taught by qualified swimming teachers and

receive achievement awards as their skills progress. These awards include elements relating to safety and hygiene issues.

131. Teaching is very good overall. A structured programme of work is supporting teachers well in their planning of a comprehensive range of activities. Good links with the local community hall ensures that lesson time is not lost when weather conditions prevent the use of the school playground and field. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that build on pupils' previous experiences. Teachers give clear instructions and make effective use of pupil demonstration to illustrate good skills and performance. Health and safety issues are clearly communicated to pupils who respond positively. Teachers assess pupils at the end of each unit of work. However, these assessments are not yet used sufficiently to inform the planning of future lessons.
132. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities that enhance pupils' experiences. School teams for a range of sporting activities are regularly involved in local tournaments and enjoy a good degree of success. The subject manager provides good leadership and has a clear vision for the further development of the subject. She has observed lessons to check the effectiveness of the programme of work and has organised training for teachers. In addition she has given presentations about physical education to parents and governors. A systematic approach to developing the subject has ensured that its profile has been raised, and pupils have access to an improved range of physical education opportunities. Resources are good overall because of the informed choices made when purchasing new equipment and apparatus.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. Attainment in religious education, for pupils aged seven and 11 fully meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection and the breadth of study has improved.
134. By the age of seven, pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories and of their significance to everyday life. Pupils have a developing awareness of the differences between religious beliefs and practices. They compare and contrast different customs, places of worship, symbols and significant artefacts between the Christian, Hindu and Jewish faiths. In one good lesson, they talked about preparing for a special event as part of the work on the advent of Easter. They know about the main festivals and how they are celebrated around the world. Some pupils have studied the story of Rama and Sita and made divas in their work on Divali. Pupils recognise the special people in their lives and consider the less tangible aspects of their world. For example, they talk about the value of families and friends. Through their work in raising funds for charity, they come to appreciate the plight of those less fortunate than themselves and show a keen desire to help.
135. By the end of Year 6 pupils gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of different faiths. They explore the use of light as a symbol and investigate its significance in different religious festivals and celebrations. Some Year 6 pupils studied the symbolism in a sculpture of the cross and then designed their own crosses to represent the Christian belief of everlasting life. The finished work was of a high standard and clearly showed how pupils had understood a difficult concept. Pupils study the creation as represented in Christian and other faiths, drawing out similarities and differences in beliefs. Pupils learn more Bible stories and begin to explore their significance in our modern world. Some Year 3 and 4 pupils learned about the 40

days in the Wilderness and then explored temptation in their own lives through role play. In a mature way they talked about right and wrong actions and explained that 'your conscience can help you through some hard choices'.

136. The daily acts of worship supplement learning and provide some opportunities for reflection. A visiting clergyman had the pupils in awe as he held water in an upturned glass using just a piece of paper. After gaining their full attention, he delivered the main message about keeping an open mind. The spiritual and moral element was delivered in an interesting and relevant way so that pupils fully understood. In another assembly the headteacher told a story about Guru Nanak and drew out the underlying message that 'there is always space for love and compassion'. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the tale and remembered its significance.
137. Pupils' attitudes in lessons and assemblies are very good. They take part eagerly and listen well, showing a developing respect for beliefs, opinions and traditions that are different from their own. Most offer views and opinions confidently and their responses to questions are thoughtful. Learning is enhanced for those pupils who attend the lunchtime 'Quest Club' where they learn more about the subject. There is no system for assessment in place as yet but the manager is working on this aspect.
138. Overall, the quality of teaching seen is good. Teachers follow the very good scheme of planning that has been developed by the subject manager to cover all aspects of religious education as detailed in the locally agreed syllabus. The range of topics studied is interesting and lessons include contributions from outside speakers, and visits to places of interest, such as a local synagogue. Resources are good and enriched by artefacts from different cultures and religions so that pupils have opportunities to explore and investigate. The subject manager is very knowledgeable and provides informed support for colleagues.