

INSPECTION REPORT

CALDMORE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Walsall

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 104193

Headteacher: Mrs Nola Boulger

Reporting inspector: Dr Michael Best
10413

Dates of inspection: 18th – 21st June 2001

Inspection number: 197689

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Carless Street
Walsall
West Midlands

Postcode: WS1 3RH

Telephone number: 01922 721359

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Appropriate authority: The governing body.

Name of chair of governors: Mr Zahid Nawaz

Date of previous inspection: 29th September – 2nd October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael Best 10413	Registered Inspector	Science Art and design Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Patricia Edwards 10965	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
George Logan 11810	Team Inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Information and communication technology Music Physical education	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Trudy Cotton 3751	Team Inspector	English Geography History Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equality of opportunity	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Caldmore Community Primary School lies just over a mile from the centre of Walsall. The school draws its pupils from the local area, mainly from a mixture of private and rented homes. There are currently 166 pupils on roll, 91 girls and 75 boys aged between 4 and 11 years of age, who attend on a full-time basis. In addition, 41 pupils attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school is broadly similar in size to most other primary schools in England. Numbers have dipped in recent years as families move in and out of the area, but are now starting to rise.

At the time of the inspection, there were 27 pupils in the reception year. The school's own assessments show that attainment on entry to the school is well below that found nationally. Several of the present pupils joined the school after the age of five years, reflecting the mobility in the area. Seventy pupils (42 per cent) have free school meals, which is well above the national average and a high proportion of pupils (over 20 per cent) go home at lunchtime. The school receives limited support from School Regeneration Budget (SRB5) funding.

Ninety-two per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and nearly of all these pupils speak English as an additional language. The main home languages are Bengali, Urdu and Mirpuri. Nearly half the pupils in the school are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Fifty-eight pupils (35 per cent) are on the school's register of special educational need, which is above the national average. Of these, 12 pupils (7 per cent) on the register are at Stage 3 or above of the Code of Practice¹; they have differing learning needs. One pupil has a statement and this is broadly similar to the national average. Three more pupils are waiting for statements to be finalised.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that is working hard to raise standards. Compared with similar schools, the standards achieved by 11 year olds are well below average in English, mathematics and science. Taking into account the very low starting point at which they come into the school pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs, make steady progress. The leadership and management provided by key staff is good overall and is driving up standards. The overall quality of both teaching and learning are good. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are good. The school provides a supportive and caring learning environment. Its capacity for further improvement is sound. Taking all the available evidence into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good.
- Children in the foundation stage make a good start to their education.
- Relationships are very good.
- Its good partnership with parents and the community.
- The school provides a caring, supportive environment that encourages pupils to learn.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Standards in swimming and dance at KS2.
- Attendance and punctuality.

The deployment of teaching and support staff to enhance pupils' learning.

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

¹ The Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. Pupils at Stage 5 have a statement which details their needs and the support provided for them.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Standards are rising. The school has made satisfactory and, in some instances, good progress in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection report. Issues relating to staffing and professional development have been addressed appropriately within the extent of the school's responsibilities. The school has worked hard with welfare and support agencies to improve attendance. Although there is much tacit agreement from parents about the education their children miss, in reality pupils are often absent for long periods during term time due to visits to home countries. Home/school links have been particularly strengthened, particularly for those children entering the nursery. The children in the nursery and reception classes are keen to take work home to finish and show to their families.

Although the school's provision for extra-curricular sporting activities has improved, the take-up by pupils is limited. In physical education, standards in swimming and dance are below those expected by the end of the junior classes. Although some progress has been made, physical education in these classes remains unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E*	E*	E*	E
Mathematics	E*	E*	E*	E
Science	E	E*	E*	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

very low E

*

The above table shows that standards in English, mathematics and science are very low compared to all schools. The comparison with similar schools is based on pupils' free school meal entitlement. This is only one of a number of factors affecting this school and does not, therefore, provide a truly accurate comparison. The school estimates that the number of pupils eligible for free school meals is higher and reports that a significant number of pupils go home for lunch each day. The school has a very high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. This information is not used to compare schools on a like-for-like basis. Attainment on entry to the nursery is extremely low. By the end of the Foundation Stage children are still working towards the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning. The provisional results of statutory tests and assessments became available during the inspection. They show that the proportion of pupils gaining Level 4², has increased in each subject and an increased number of pupils have achieved Level 5³. Results are improving over time, but standards at both key stages remain well below average in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. In the infant and junior classes they make satisfactory progress overall. In physical education, progress is unsatisfactory in the junior classes. The overall standards achieved by pupils, and the progress they make, are suppressed by their difficulties in applying and communicating their knowledge. Number skills are, for the majority of pupils, satisfactory, but throughout the school they have difficulty in applying these to problem-solving situations. Scientific knowledge is also satisfactory, but pupils have considerable difficulty in applying it when planning, evaluating and interpreting their investigative work.

Standards are broadly in line with those expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years in art and design, geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and music. They are in line at the age of 7 in design and technology and physical education. At the age of 11, standards are above

² By the end of Key Stage 2, at the age of 11 years, pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in all National Curriculum subjects.

³ Those who achieve Level 5 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels.

expectation in design and technology, but below in swimming and dance. Attainment in religious education at 7 and 11 is similar to that outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are interested in the activities provided.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Overall, pupils are well behaved, but some instances of inappropriate behaviour were evident in an infant class.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good. Pupils care for, and respect, one another. Pupils' personal development is good. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and use their initiative.
Attendance	Poor. This is despite the best efforts of the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching in the school is good. This is making an important contribution to the school's work to raise standards. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 100 per cent of lessons seen. It was good in 45 per cent of the lessons and very good in 16 per cent of lessons. Two excellent lessons (4 per cent) were observed. No unsatisfactory or poor teaching was observed during this inspection. The quality of teaching reported at the time of the last inspection has been maintained and, with the unsatisfactory teaching eradicated, further improved. A particular feature of the teaching in the school is the way in which teachers value and respect pupils' cultural opinions and beliefs.

The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are keen to learn both in school and at home. The learning atmosphere is good and relationships are good. The overall quality of teaching in the infant classes (Key Stage 1) is satisfactory. Teaching in English and religious education is good. In the younger classes, teaching is predominantly good with some very good teaching seen. However, there are some shortcomings in the way in which pupils with behavioural difficulties are managed in the older infant class. In the junior classes (Key Stage 2) the overall quality of teaching is good. It is good in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, history and religious education. Some very good and excellent teaching is evident in this age group, notably in English and religious education. These lessons inspire pupils.

The teaching of literacy is good in both the infant and junior classes. In numeracy, teaching is satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the junior classes. However, teachers do not make sufficient adjustments to these strategies to cater for the particular language needs of pupils. Teaching for pupils with special educational need and those for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The Foundation Stage curriculum is good. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. There are weaknesses in aspects of physical education, namely swimming and dance.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils are provided with appropriate work and support to enable them to make similar progress to others.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The vast majority of pupils in the school are learning English as an additional language. The Ethnic Minorities Advice and Guidance (EMAG) provision is satisfactory.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Social and moral development are good. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is a caring and supportive place in which to learn. Staff know their pupils well and support them in their learning.

The school works well in partnership with parents and the community.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher provides clear direction for the school. The curriculum is well managed by the deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators. The management of special education needs and the provision for pupils who learn English as an additional language is satisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is supportive of the school. All statutory duties are fulfilled.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Performance management arrangements are in place. The school analyses results of national tests and assessments.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes appropriate use of the resources available to it. The school soundly applies the principles of 'best value'.

Overall, the school is generously staffed for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation is, with the exception of the hatted classrooms, well suited to the demands of the curriculum. Learning resources are satisfactory, but need to be strengthened in a number of subjects to support the implementation of the National Curriculum 2000.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Prior to the inspection, 98 parents (47 per cent) responded to a questionnaire and nine parents and carers attended a meeting with the inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school expects children to work hard. The good teaching. The school's expectations for good behaviour. The information they receive on progress. Their children enjoy school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no major concerns expressed. <input type="checkbox"/>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school helps their children to mature. 	
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The inspection findings support parents' positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with skills and experiences that are very much below those expected for their ages and, for many, extremely low indeed. A significant number of children do not speak or understand any words in English when they start school and many have very little mother tongue language. Simple tests given to children when they first enter the reception class show that their attainment in all six areas of learning⁴ is well below that expected for their ages.
2. The findings of this inspection indicate that by the end of the Foundation Stage, most children in the reception class (aged five years and under) are still working towards the Early Learning Goals⁵ by the start of Year 1 in each of the six areas of learning. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in their acquisition of basic skills. They make very good progress in communication, language and literacy development and in the development of their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, mathematical and creative development. Children in the nursery make satisfactory progress in their physical development; those in the reception year make good progress.
3. Inspection evidence shows that, by the age of 7 years, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are well below national averages. Standards in English by 11 are below the national average with just over half of the present Year 6 class reaching the national average. Nevertheless, given their very low attainment on entry, pupils achieve well in English. There are two contributory factors to this. Firstly, the National Literacy Strategy has provided a framework for teachers to develop literacy in the school and secondly, the fundamental need for pupils to be fully proficient in English is recognised as the basis of improvement across the curriculum.
4. **Standards in literacy are rising. The basic skills in English are taught well and some very good teaching is raising standards in the junior classes. Pupils listen carefully. They enjoy opportunities to speak and their vocabulary develops as they move through the school. They read with growing fluency and expression. In their writing, pupils pay appropriate attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. Standards in writing are improving.**
5. **In mathematics, standards seen during the inspection are well below national levels at the age of 7 and 11 years. Pupils' numeracy skills are developing satisfactorily. Pupils enjoy mental mathematics. Their speed and accuracy with pencil and paper calculations is developing, but their skills in problem solving are more variable. A high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language have difficulty in understanding and interpreting mathematical problems. In consequence, overall progress is only satisfactory. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels is relatively low.**

⁴ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

⁵ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer to achievements children make in the six areas of learning (see previous footnote). There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

6. In science, standards are well below those found nationally at the age of 7 and below at the age of 11 years. Pupils' knowledge is sound and often good, but a large proportion have difficulty with the language skills required to develop their understanding. There is limited recording in pupils' note books of individual preliminary work in planning their experiments and in making predictions as to the likely outcome of their investigative work. Many pupils have particular difficulty in drawing conclusions and inferences from what they have learnt. This slows their progress.
7. In the 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the age of 7 years (the end of Key Stage 1⁶) results in reading, writing and mathematics were very low (that is, in the bottom 5 per cent) in comparison with all other primary schools⁷. For example, about three-quarters of pupils reached the national average in writing. Two-thirds reached the national standard in reading. When compared with schools in similar contexts results were also very low. This placed the school in the bottom 5 per cent in the country in each category. Teacher assessments in science in 2000 were also very low compared with all schools.
8. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests became available during the inspection⁸. These show an improvement upon the results achieved in 2000, but no pupil has yet to reach the higher levels. Over time, the trend is one of improvement.
9. In 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the age of 11 years (the end of Key Stage 2⁹) results, in comparison with all schools, were very low (that is, in the bottom 5 per cent in the country) in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, these results were well below average in English, mathematics and science.
10. The 2001 results show a significant improvement in standards. In English, the proportion of pupils reaching the level expected at the age of 11 has risen from 36 per cent in 1999 to 55 per cent in 2001, exceeding the school's target by 8 per cent. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils reaching this level has risen from 36 per cent in 1999 to 48 per cent in 2001, exceeding the school's target by 4 per cent. Science results have risen from 36 per cent achieving the standard expected at this age in 1999 to 64 per cent in 2001. The 2001 results also include a number of higher level results in English, mathematics and science. For many pupils currently in Year 6, these results indicate above average progress from the end of Year 2. Over time, the school's results show a steady improvement. From 1996 to 2000, the trend in the school's National Curriculum results was broadly in line with that found nationally.
11. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is similar to that expected nationally at the ages of 7 and 11. The new computer suite is making a significant contribution to the good progress made by pupils in developing skills. At present, opportunities for applying these skills across the curriculum are yet to be fully realised, but the achievement of pupils this far, particularly those in Year 6 preparing multi-media presentations, shows the potential for improvement.

⁶ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, are expected to reach Level 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁷ National Curriculum test and assessment results are compared with the national averages and schools in similar contexts at the ages of seven and 11 years. The comparison with the national averages is with all schools in England. The comparison with similar schools is based on the proportion of pupils having free school meals. It does not take into account pupils' ethnic background or their attainment on entry to school. The similar school context is therefore one of a number of comparators.

⁸ Although the results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests were available, the national comparators were not. Comparison therefore has to be made with the 2000 national averages.

⁹ At Key Stage 2 the nationally expected level for pupils to reach by the end of Year 6 is Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

12. Standards are broadly in line with those expected at the ages of 7 and 11 years in art and design, geography, history and music. At the age of 7, standards are in line with national expectations in design and technology and physical education. At the age of 11, standards are above national expectations in design and technology.
13. In these subjects, and in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, pupils make satisfactory, and often good, progress. The extent of the progress made depends to a considerable degree on two particular features. Firstly, pupils' understanding and use of language to interpret, develop, understand and apply their newly acquired knowledge and, secondly, good quality teaching that enables pupils to achieve their best.
14. Attainment in religious education at 7 and 11 is similar to that outlined in the locally agreed syllabus and progress is satisfactory.
15. Standards are below national expectations at the age of 11 in swimming and dance and progress is unsatisfactory. In other aspects of physical education, the rate of progress declines as pupils move through the junior classes. This may be linked with a low take-up of opportunities for extra-curricular sport due to commitments outside school.
16. The relatively small number of pupils in each of these year group classes makes an important contribution to pupils' rate of progress. The momentum in the current Year 6 has been affected by a large class and difficulties in finding replacement support staff at a crucial point in the school year. Nevertheless, progress has been made, as the improved National Curriculum test results show.
17. The school has a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN)¹⁰. One pupil has a statement for their special educational needs and three more pupils are awaiting the finalisation of their statements. Provision is good and this enables pupils to make similar progress to other pupils in their learning. Help in the classroom is well focused and teachers and classroom assistants use the pupils' individual learning targets to guide learning in lessons. Pupils achieve well in relation to the targets set for their learning in their individual education plans.
18. The majority of pupils come from minority ethnic groups and speak English as an additional language. In the nursery and reception classes, they make good progress with the acquisition of language and literacy skills. Progress across the curriculum in the infant and junior classes is satisfactory. Dual heritage, Afro-Caribbean and white pupils make similar progress. The school is very clear about the difference between having special educational needs and learning an additional language.
19. Inspection findings indicate that boys and girls achieve similar standards in English. In mathematics, boys achieve better than girls. In other curriculum areas, there is not a significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. However, it is noticeable that, in science and information and communication technology (ICT), boys have greater enthusiasm for these subjects, particularly in the older classes. The school is aware that parental expectations influence the achievement of some older pupils.
20. Analyses of statutory test results over the period 1997 to 2000 show that, over time, boys and girls make broadly similar progress. At the age of 7, pupils are generally five terms

¹⁰ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act. Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

behind the average in reading and four terms behind the average in writing and mathematics. At the age of 11, pupils are generally four terms behind the average in English, mathematics and science. These figures do fluctuate from year to year and from class to class, particularly as the number of boys and girls varies. It must also be borne in mind that the number of pupils in each cohort is statistically small and that the incidence of special educational need can have a significant impact upon such analyses. The school's evaluation of test results and the setting of cohort targets are helping to raise standards. The school is aware that, in order to meet their needs, it needs to identify smaller steps in pupils' learning, especially for those who are at the early stages of learning English.

21. In conjunction with the local education authority, the school sets targets for pupils to achieve by the age of 11 in the National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics. These targets are suitably challenging for the school. The proportion of pupils achieving the national average in English at the age of 11 is set to rise from 35 per cent in 1999 to 60 per cent by 2003. In mathematics, the target is to achieve an increase from 30 per cent in 1999 to 60 per cent in 2003. The 2001 results show that the school has already exceeded its 2002 target in English and has exceeded its 2001 target in mathematics.
22. At the time of the last inspection, progress was satisfactory in the nursery, reception and infant classes (Key Stage 1). Standards were judged to be below average in English, mathematics, science and design and technology. In the other National Curriculum subjects and religious education, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations, but progress in music was unsatisfactory.
23. Progress in the junior classes (Key Stage 2) was good in science with standards in line with the national average. Progress in English and mathematics was satisfactory, although standards were below the national average. In physical education and design and technology, standards and progress were unsatisfactory. Standards in music were in line with national expectations, but progress was unsatisfactory.
24. **The 1998 National Curriculum tests were taken at the end of the year in which the school was last inspected. The results showed that the attainment of pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years were very low in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2. At the end of Year 6 they were very low in English and mathematics and well below average in science. Pupils for whom English is an additional language made satisfactory progress as did those with special educational needs. However, inspectors commented that there were occasions when pupils withdrawn for additional help missed valuable language experience as well as important subject knowledge in their classes. The school has worked hard to address the weaknesses identified in the last report and standards are rising.**

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

25. Throughout the school all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, have good attitudes to their learning. This is in line with the findings of the previous report.
26. Children have few personal and social skills at the start of nursery and need time to become accustomed to the range of experiences provided. Adults foster children's confidence in learning. They make good progress as they learn to talk to each other and begin to share toys and books. By the end of the reception class, children listen with increasing care to adults and to each other, and follow instructions and class rules.

27. The majority of pupils in the infant and junior classes respond well and show interest in the activities provided. They listen carefully to their teachers and sustain good levels of concentration. For instance, in a Year 5 music lesson pupils took part in an activity choosing appropriate instruments to represent a descriptive passage. The majority of pupils work hard in lessons and try to do their best. Parents express strong agreement with the positive attitudes and values promoted by the school. The majority agree that their children enjoy coming to school.
28. Standards of behaviour are good overall although there are some pupils who are potentially troublesome. These pupils are not permitted to hinder the learning of their classmates except in one of the infant classes where teachers' strategies are not always effective. Pupils are courteous and treat staff, parents and visitors politely. They demonstrate their acceptance of a clear moral code and show care for one another, their belongings and school property. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection. Pupils develop personal and social skills well and the reward of trophies and certificates successfully motivates them.
29. Relationships between all members of the school community are very good. The majority of pupils know that all the adults want what is best for them. This has a positive impact on the way the pupils treat other people. They respect and value each other's contributions, as seen in a Year 6 religious education lesson where pupils were writing a prayer for children. They willingly accept responsibilities when given the opportunity and enjoy helping with the routine of class and school, such as setting up the computer suite each day and acting as register monitors. The ability of pupils to use their own initiative and take responsibility for their own learning in lessons is limited by the range of opportunities provided by teachers. However, a good example of pupils working independently was seen in a Year 6 information and communication technology lesson in the computer suite.
30. At 91 per cent, attendance was well below the national average for the last reporting year as many pupils continued to take extended visits to families living abroad. However, 34 per cent of pupils have attendance of 95 per cent and over and this high level of attendance positively enhances their learning and is a cause for celebration. The level of punctuality in the school is unsatisfactory and activities at the beginning of each session are constantly being interrupted by late arrivals. This distracts others and adversely affects their progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

31. Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching in the school is good. Teachers are working hard to implement a broad and balanced curriculum in a way that meets the particular needs of pupils in the school where a very large majority have English as an additional language. This is making a significant contribution to the drive to raise standards.
32. Sixty-one lessons or part lessons were observed during the inspection. In 100 per cent of these teaching was satisfactory or better. Teaching was good in 45 per cent of the lessons seen and very good in 16 per cent. Two excellent lessons (4 per cent) were observed. No unsatisfactory or poor teaching was observed during this inspection. The quality of teaching reported at the time of the last inspection has been maintained and, with the unsatisfactory teaching eradicated, further improved.
33. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Children are keen to learn both in school and at home. The school's policy of providing work for children to finish off and share with their families is very popular with the children and is doing much to promote

their learning. Children work at a good pace and make good progress in developing basic skills. The learning atmosphere is good and staff provide a wide range of activities that readily capture children's interest. Relationships are good and children readily help each other. Children's learning is enhanced by the contribution of support staff.

34. The overall quality of teaching in the infant classes (Key Stage 1) is satisfactory. Teaching in English and religious education is good. In the younger classes, teaching is predominantly good with some very good teaching seen. In these lessons, the pace is good and learning focuses well on pupils' needs. In the older class in this age range, lessons are carefully planned and appropriate attention is paid to providing for the needs of pupils who learn at different rates. However, there are some shortcomings in the way in which pupils with behavioural difficulties are managed in the older infant class. This results in the pace of learning slowing for all pupils and, therefore, the amount of progress they make.
35. In the junior classes (Key Stage 2) the overall quality of teaching is good. It is good in English, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, history and religious education. Some very good and excellent teaching is evident in this age group, notably in English and religious education. These lessons inspire pupils. In an excellent English lesson seen in Year 6, the teacher's exceptional knowledge and understanding of teaching literacy enabled pupils to very successfully explore the literary style of Ann Fines. Their learning was very good because their teacher successfully identified the small steps in learning they needed to take. She provided them with the strategies they needed to develop their skills of analysis.
36. In these high quality lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are high. Pupils' approach to learning is good and they work hard to apply themselves to the tasks they are given. Pupils work hard to meet the high expectations their teachers have of their work and behaviour. This was evident, for example, in science lessons in both Years 3 and 5. Good questioning by teachers focused pupils' thinking and successfully led them, step-by-step, through the investigative process. This enabled pupils who were finding some difficulty with organising and expressing their ideas to share their observations and predictions. Discussion at the end of both lessons indicated that good learning had taken place. It is this high quality of teaching that promotes good learning and enables pupils to achieve higher standards.
37. A common feature of the lessons seen during the inspection is how much teachers and pupils value the contributions made by other pupils. This helps to raise pupils' feelings of self-worth and success. Teachers share learning objectives at the start of most lessons and this helps pupils to have a good knowledge of their own learning.
38. The vast majority of pupils, including those who have difficulty in learning, are keen to work hard. They are fully aware of the routines of the class and the high expectations their teachers have of their behaviour. The majority of pupils conduct themselves well and teachers manage them positively. However, on occasions, a small group of pupils in Year 2 disrupt the learning of others. Although teachers generally use appropriate strategies to deal with these instances, there are times when teachers do not fully meet pupils' specific learning and behavioural needs. The pace of these lessons slows and this exacerbates the pupils' inattention. In the vast majority of lessons, lessons are conducted at a good pace and pupils successfully maintain their interest.
39. Teachers' use of questioning to test and develop skills and understanding is good. Pupils are keen to answer, but language constraints limit their capacity to discuss and debate issues. Many lack confidence in working independently or in undertaking personal study.

40. Class teachers provide full equality of opportunity for all pupils to participate in lessons. They include pupils from minority ethnic groups in discussions and review the make up of groups to ensure best possible match of work to needs. The quality of the specialist language teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is sound. Pupils who do not speak English at home have their language needs appropriately assessed. There is a significant number of pupils at the early stages of learning English and they are given extra support by teachers with the expertise to develop speaking and writing skills (EMAG teachers). They provide appropriate support when they work alongside pupils in lessons. The expertise of these teachers is also used to provide help for pupils from dual heritage and Afro-Caribbean homes to help them learn with greater confidence and competence. At present, however, there are not close enough links between the EMAG provision and, in particular, the school's literacy teaching and this is having an impact on pupils' achievements.
41. The deployment of support staff is good. Teachers involve support staff in the planning of what they are to do to support pupils' learning. Support staff have a clear picture of their role and engage with pupils throughout the majority of lessons. Through this, pupils' learning is enhanced. Overall, teaching time is used well in the Foundation Stage and infant classes. However, in some lessons in the juniors, the organisation of the timetable is such that some lessons, particularly physical education and information and communication technology, are too long with the result that the impetus is lost.
42. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Relationships with pupils are good and staff encourage them to participate in lessons. Lessons have work planned at different levels and this helps pupils to understand what they are learning. The targets in pupils' individual education plans are clear and staff make appropriate use of these plans in lessons.
43. The standard of teaching in English is good in the infant and junior classes. In mathematics, teaching is good in the junior classes and satisfactory in the infant classes. Literacy and numeracy skills are carefully planned for and, in the vast majority of lessons, well taught. The recommended planning formats are used at both key stages. Whilst the school follows the national strategies it does not as yet make sufficient adjustments to cater for the particular language needs of pupils. As a result, teachers do not consistently plan small enough 'next steps' in learning for their pupils.
44. Teachers' planning for other areas of the curriculum is good overall. Clear and detailed planning is evident throughout the school, but in the nursery it is not always clear as to how pupils' skills of independence will be developed. The link between the longer term and shorter term planning is secure.
45. Teachers' planning shows a growing awareness of how information and communication technology can be used to develop pupils' learning. Teachers are still receiving training in this themselves and some opportunities are missed; however, pupils' skills are being developed and teachers are positive in their approach and understanding in this area.
46. Pupils' work is regularly marked and most comments help pupils to develop their work further. A comprehensive assessment policy is in place. All teachers know their pupils well and they use assessment information well to inform their planning for future lessons.
47. Homework was identified as a weakness in the previous inspection. It is now set regularly and the majority of parents are satisfied with the amount of work that is done at home. Pupils, particularly the children in the nursery and reception classes, are very keen to take work home. This is having a positive impact on the school's encouragement of higher standards.

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

48. The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for pupils in the infant and junior classes (Key Stages 1 and 2). The curriculum planned for children under five in the Foundation Stage is good, providing a broad range of experiences for the children. It is based on the six areas of learning recommended for young children, with good support for the development of basic skills. The provision prepares children effectively for the National Curriculum and the next stage of learning. The majority of children make good progress in relation to their very low level of attainment on entry to the school.
49. The curriculum for the older pupils has been a recent area for development within the school. It satisfactorily meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for pupils aged 5 to 11. The school responds to its particular circumstances by placing considerable emphasis upon the teaching of mathematics and literacy and this is leading to improving standards in these key areas. Limited language skills, however, constrain the depth to which pupils are able to access the wider curriculum. Speaking skills are not developed sufficiently. The provision for the development of investigative skills in science is limited in some classes. There are weaknesses in the standards achieved in elements of the physical education curriculum, particularly in swimming and dance. Recently implemented whole-class sessions in information and communication technology are successfully supporting the development of pupils' skills. Pupils demonstrate improved confidence across the school when working with computers.
50. The allocation of curriculum time to individual subjects is satisfactory overall. However, there is some inflexibility in the construction of the timetable and this results, on occasions, in excessively long taught sessions. This occasionally occurs in the infant classes but was also seen, for example, in a particularly long information and communication technology session in Year 3 and a lengthy physical education lesson in Year 4. Too often, such sessions lose pace and the quality of learning deteriorates. On other, less frequent, occasions the allocation of an extended block of time to projects in, for example, design and technology, has enabled staff to focus successfully on the development of specific skills.
51. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. A satisfactory curriculum has been developed to support pupils' personal, social and health education. Although there is no formal written policy, all the necessary elements are in place. These include sex education, drug awareness and citizenship. Some elements are taught discretely, or in circle time¹¹, where pupils have an opportunity to discuss their concerns and to listen to others. However, circle time is not yet provided in all classes and is an area currently being developed. Other aspects, such as sex education or health education, are more closely linked to the science or physical education lessons. The school's curricular provision prepares pupils successfully for the next stage of their education at secondary school.
52. The quality of the curriculum has continued to improve since the last inspection, particularly in the provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The school has adopted the strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy with success. The Literacy Strategy is securely established with good practice evident at both key stages. The school uses bilingual support successfully within the literacy structure to support the very high number of pupils who learn English as an additional language. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy

¹¹ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

effectively. This has had a positive effect upon standards in mathematics. Many pupils have secure number skills. However, the application of these skills is constrained significantly by restricted language skills. There are consequent difficulties when mathematical tasks are embedded in sentences and when it is necessary to make crucial inferences as to what strategy should be used. The use of numeracy skills is evident in science and geography.

53. There are high quality, recently revised policy documents in place for all statutory subjects. Customised and fully updated mid-term planning has been implemented. These are closely aligned to the school's particular needs. All plans include a 'specific language' section to ensure that staff focus appropriately on the pupils' key language needs within each subject. There is a strong emphasis on the development of cross-curricular links so that time is used efficiently. Therefore, art activities will often be closely aligned to work in, for example, history. The school has developed a whole-school plan that provides an overview of what is to be taught to each year group. Planning is thorough, provides a clear framework for the teaching and is supportive to teachers, including those with limited specialist skills in subjects such as music, design and technology or physical education.
54. All pupils have satisfactory equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum. This is an inclusive school which takes appropriate account of pupils' ages, attainment, gender, ethnicity and needs. The school successfully meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs and implements the Code of Practice¹² fully. Pupils on the register of special needs are set appropriate, focused targets in their individual education plans. The in-school support for pupils with statements of special educational need is good. The provision for children who may have special educational needs in the Foundation Stage is good, with planned support for pupils who require additional input in order to promote progress.
55. The programme for extra-curricular activities, a weakness at the last inspection, is now satisfactory. The range of activities during school time includes football, athletics, multi-sports, choir and instrumental tuition. The curriculum is enhanced by a programme of visits outside school and a range of visitors to the school. The school has satisfactory links with the community and with neighbouring schools and partner institutions. Procedures for welcoming new children to the school are well established and there is effective sharing of information with parents.
56. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. A wide diversity of cultural and religious beliefs is represented in the school. Staff value and respect these. They work successfully to reflect a broad spiritual and cultural perspective in their work.
57. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is satisfactory. The promotion of pupils' spiritual development across the curriculum is incidental rather than coherently planned. However, there were good instances, for example, when the youngest children squealed with pleasure as their balloons were carried away on the wind. In religious education in Year 5, pupils were captivated by the teacher moving into role as she retold the story of David and Goliath. Spiritual awareness is extended in Year 6 when pupils debate ethical issues. The spiritual dimensions of some areas of the curriculum, such as music and dance, remain less well developed.

¹² Code of Practice - this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

58. Opportunities are provided for the study of beliefs both through the religious education curriculum and some daily assemblies. The acts of collective worship are widely based and usually provide adequate time for reflection and prayer. The school has been granted a determination to provide collective worship other than of a broadly Christian nature. The acknowledgement of festivals from other cultures is strongly developed throughout the work of the school.
59. The provision for pupils' moral development is good and pupils are clearly taught the principles of right and wrong, and of care of property and the school environment. The school has comprehensive personal, social and health education provision, which includes the teaching of moral and social issues. Teachers actively promote opportunities for such discussions, encouraging pupils to develop a caring and tolerant attitude.
60. Provision for pupils' social development is good and they are given encouragement to relate effectively to others. Social relationships within the school are good. Pupils learn to take responsibility for themselves and others. They have all contributed to the revision of the school Children's Charter. They undertake jobs such as taking registers and learn to care for others. The school works hard to build up pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils raise money for charity and learn about caring for those less fortunate than themselves.
61. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory and the school provides good opportunities for pupils to appreciate the cultural traditions of other pupils represented in the school. The school provides access to a range of experience in the arts and pupils go on a number of trips and visits, such as the theatre in Birmingham, local galleries and the Walsall Leather Museum. They also participate in performance opportunities such as concerts and religious festivals.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

62. The school has maintained its effective care of pupils reported at the time of the previous inspection. It provides a most caring environment where teachers know their pupils well and value them as individuals. Parents are proud of the caring ethos of the school and have confidence in the ability of the school to meet the needs of their children.
63. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress and personal development are good overall. There is a comprehensive programme of assessment, which is well known by staff. The school builds informative collections of each pupil's attainment and progress towards targets. It uses test results to track the progress of pupils and consequently has a reliable means of judging the effect of curriculum planning on pupils' achievement. As a result, it is able to identify the area of the curriculum for a focus to raise standards.
64. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is regularly monitored by reference to their individual education plans. This is a school where there is a high proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language. Staff are particularly conscious of pupils' particular needs but, as yet, there is not a fine enough analysis of the specific next steps in learning of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English.
65. The agreed behaviour policy successfully promotes good behaviour. It is applied consistently by all staff. It is well supported by the school charter and home school agreement, which were signed and returned by all parents. Staff deal promptly and effectively with incidents of reported bullying.

66. The school monitors attendance daily. Teachers call the registers promptly at the beginning of every session. The school works very hard to promote punctuality and good attendance. Parents and pupils are continually reminded of the importance of these. The education welfare officers work closely with the school in its efforts to raise attendance levels
67. The school has a clear child protection policy. Procedures comply with those of the area child protection committee and all staff are fully aware of these procedures. Appropriate training is regularly undertaken.
68. The school successfully looks after pupils' health, safety and general wellbeing. Lessons in sex education and drug awareness form part of the school's personal, social and health education programme which is appropriately supported by outside agencies. The school maintains an accident book for recording incidents. First aid boxes are appropriately sited and stocked and parents are informed of accidents involving their children and of any treatment given. The governors have approved a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessment is undertaken.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

69. The vast majority of parents indicate that they are pleased with what the school provides and achieves. Most parents and the community it serves hold the school in high regard as found at the time of the previous inspection.
70. The information provided for parents is useful and the majority of parents express satisfaction with the quality and quantity of information they receive in newsletters and at parent-teacher consultation meetings. They know they are welcome in school and that they are able to receive a verbal translation of any information they need. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are detailed and helpful. Pupils' annual progress reports are detailed. They contain information on the curriculum covered, the progress made and any areas for development.
71. Parents are encouraged to take an active part in the education of their own child. The school hosts courses for parents in English and mathematics to enable them to better support their children in their learning. The school has a homework policy based on government guidelines and the majority of parents are happy with the amount of homework their children receive. Children in the nursery are eager to take home and complete their homework sheets in order to obtain a smiley face on the classroom wall chart. The school has successfully addressed the issues raised in the report of the last inspection.
72. The school tries hard to involve parents in its life and work. Parental involvement is slowly gaining momentum. Governors have consulted parents by questionnaire to enable the governing body to have an insight into parental expectations of the school. More parents are attending school assemblies and a small number help regularly in school. Staff much appreciate this help. Parents willingly support the sponsored summer games and the money raised is well used to help resource the school and to enhance the learning of pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

73. The headteacher continues to provide effective and caring leadership for the school. She is managing the temporary shortfall in the number of pupils on the school's roll soundly. She is making good use of monitoring of teaching, learning and pupils' attainment and progress to maintain and encourage the overall improvement in attainment sustained since the last inspection. She has a secure understanding of the direction in which the school is going and has worked hard to ensure that, within the circumstances that are in her control, staff are deployed to their strengths.
74. The deputy headteacher, who had just taken up her appointment at the time of the last inspection, has worked successfully with staff to develop the curriculum and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Gaps in the management of individual subjects have been filled and co-ordinators are providing good guidance for their subjects. There is a much better balance of responsibilities than was the case at the time of the last inspection.
75. The management of special educational needs is in a period of transition. The headteacher has very recently taken over the strategic responsibility for this area of the work of the school. This is in order to bring about closer links between the school's provision, its curricular provision and the provision made for pupils for whom English is an additional language.
76. Overall, the quality of leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff is good because standards are rising in response to the strategies that have been put in place to develop the curriculum, teaching and learning.
77. The aims of the school are clear and are evident in all aspects of the work of the school. The good relationships between members of the school community are at the heart of the school's strong ethos. The teaching and non-teaching staff are committed to the effective and efficient organisation of the school and to raising standards. The day-to-day routines of the school are smooth. Individual achievements are both valued and celebrated. This has a positive impact in raising pupils' feelings of self-worth. The learning environment is calm and stable. All this makes a good contribution to the progress pupils make and the standards they achieve, given their very low starting point.
78. The school analyses statutory and non-statutory test results carefully. These are particularly helpful in setting targets for groups of pupils and for raising teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving. The school has put appropriate systems in place to track pupils' academic progress and personal development. This information helps teachers to plan to meet pupils' needs but further, more specific analysis and evaluation is required
79. The school has made satisfactory and, in some instances, good progress in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection report. Issues relating to staffing and professional development have been addressed appropriately within the extent of the school's responsibilities. The school has worked hard with welfare and support agencies to improve attendance. Although there is much tacit agreement from parents about the education their children miss, in reality pupils are often absent for long periods during term time due to visits to home countries. Home/schools links have been particularly strengthened, especially for those children entering the nursery. The children in the nursery and reception classes are particularly keen to take work home to finish and show to their families.
80. National strategies for literacy and numeracy have been successfully implemented in the

school. In some respects, staff adhere too closely to the strategies, sometimes at the expense of developing pupils' specific needs. They do not consistently identify small enough steps in learning that are required by the high proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is necessary in order that pupils may develop the skills required to apply, consider, use and evaluate their knowledge of facts and procedures across the curriculum.

81. The school has a well-developed approach to planning the curriculum. This, together with the scrutiny of pupils' work, provides a firm basis for curriculum co-ordinators to undertake their management role. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have undertaken observations of teaching and learning and it is envisaged that, over time, all co-ordinators will have the opportunity to do this. Standards are rising, albeit slowly, as a result of the determined efforts of the staff.
82. The governors are most supportive of the work of the school. They look to the headteacher to help them in shaping the future direction of the school and to identify where the school's strengths and weaknesses lie. They have an appropriate overview of the work of the school. Their involvement within the local community does much to ensure that there is a secure working relationship evident between parents, governors and staff. The governing body satisfactorily fulfils its statutory duties. There are, however, some minor omissions from the annual parents' report and the school prospectus.
83. The school is successfully implementing its performance management policy. All key dates have been met. The headteacher reports that teachers' objectives have successfully balanced individual needs and the priorities of the school.
84. The future development of the school is identified in the school's development plan. Its structure pays appropriate attention to identifying costings, time scales, responsibilities and success criteria. Provision is made for initiatives to be monitored and for the governing body to evaluate the outcomes.
85. The quality of financial planning is satisfactory. The school has successfully budgeted to maintain a higher staffing ratio during the temporary reduction in pupil numbers. Spending decisions are costed and the school makes good use of the specific grants and provision available to it.
86. Financial management is sound. Appropriate procedures are in place. The school keeps appropriate track of its income and expenditure. It successfully applies the principles of 'best value' to its purchases. Pupils benefit from carefully targeted spending. The school is supported by parents' fund raising efforts and values the contribution this makes to the provision of learning resources. The recommendations made in the latest audit report are being put into practice.
87. The school's income from public funds is well above the average for all primary schools. Taking all factors into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.
88. Satisfactory use is made of new technologies in supporting the administration and management of the school. The school uses a computerised accounting system and appropriate safeguards are in place to protect data.
89. The school is well staffed to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the curriculum for children aged five and under. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good match of support staff to pupils' needs.

90. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' education was disrupted as a result of a high turnover of temporary staff. These were employed to cover for a significant amount of staff absence through illness. Inspectors expressed concern at the lack of balance of expertise and responsibilities across the whole school due to the lack of permanent staff. A key issue for action was for the school to ensure a sufficiency of permanent, full-time teaching staff with the necessary expertise to effectively promote higher standards of attainment across the school.
91. Since the last inspection, the number of temporary staff has been significantly reduced and a much better balance of responsibilities has been achieved. However, despite its best efforts, the school has experienced considerable difficulty in attracting appropriately qualified and experienced teaching staff to fill some subject co-ordinator positions. In science, a new co-ordinator has recently been appointed, but there is much now to be done as, in the interim period, the subject has not been given a high enough profile.
92. Many of the present staff have worked in the school for much, if not most of their careers. Many were appointed to undertake specific roles in the school. The introduction, in particular of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, made new demands on staff. The school is deploying staff as far as possible to their strengths. However, there is some inflexibility as to how staff, particularly those whose role has traditionally been that of pupil support, can be deployed to best meet the needs of the pupils in the school at the present time. This is particularly true for those pupils who have the potential for higher achievement.
93. Difficulties with staff recruitment still face the school. For example, the contract of the support teacher working in the current Year 6 had to be terminated at the end of the Autumn term. The headteacher was unable to secure a replacement teacher and, with a cut back in the funding provided from the start of the new financial year, a full-time classroom support assistant has only been appointed in recent weeks. As a consequence, and despite the best efforts of the staff concerned, a large class of Year 6 pupils have been without learning support at a crucial time in their school careers.
94. The school's accommodation has improved significantly since the previous inspection. One demountable classroom has been replaced by the incorporation of one of the quadrangles into the building for use as the reception classroom. The remaining two demountable classrooms are of sufficient size, although one block lacks running water and toilet facilities and the exterior fabric is in need of attention. Access to these rooms is impossible for anyone with physical disabilities. Teaching areas in the main building are of sufficient size for the number of pupils on roll with attractive displays celebrating pupils' achievements. The caretaker and his staff work hard to provide a clean, tidy and well maintained site. The grounds are spacious with a well marked out playground and a separate secure play area for children in the Foundation Stage.
95. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. The new computer suite is well equipped. There are some shortcomings in the provision of learning resources, particularly in the Foundation Stage and in science.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

96. The governors, headteacher and staff should now raise standards further by:

- (1) improving standards of attendance and punctuality; (*paragraph 30*)
 - (2) building upon the school's strong literacy strategy and establishing closer links with its EMAG provision. Do this by:
 - using assessments of the specific language needs of pupils, as they develop their confidence and competence in spoken and written English, to plan their next steps in learning;
 - focusing clearly on speaking and communication skills;
 - exploring books in greater depth for the average and above average readers;
 - using and sharing good models of English through literature;
 - considering how the specific skills of pupils with English as an additional language are best adapted and developed in the school's literacy strategy; (*paragraphs 3-4, 13 and 113-127*)
 - (3) in mathematics, developing:
 - pupils' application of numeracy in problem solving situations through a better command of language;
 - the achievement of those pupils who have the potential for higher attainment at the end of both key stages; (*paragraphs 5 and 128-139*)
 - (4) in science, developing:
 - pupils' application and understanding of scientific knowledge in planning, obtaining, considering and evaluating evidence;
 - pupils' use of language in explaining what they know and can do; (*paragraphs 6 and 140-159*)
 - (5) in physical education, improving:
 - the proportion of pupils able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6;
 - the provision of dance in the curriculum; (*paragraphs 15 and 212-219*)
- and
- (6) across the whole curriculum in all subject areas:
 - ensure that communication, language and literacy skills are rigorously developed and practised. (*paragraphs 13, 18, 36, 40, 52 and in particular 127, 138 and 152*)

In addition, the school should also:

- make full use of information and communication technology to support learning; (*paragraphs 11, 122, 138, 154, 204, and 227*)
- ensure that deployment of teaching and support staff meets the learning needs of all pupils; (*paragraphs 40, 92 and 93*)
- that all subjects have appropriate learning resources to support Curriculum 2000 and religious education. (*paragraph 95*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	53

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
4	16	45	35	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	21	166
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	70

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	1	58

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	168

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year ¹³	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	8	13	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	9	9	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	43 (65)	43 (61)	38 (70)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	10	8	N/a
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	48 (61)	38 (65)	N/a (22)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	19	34

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	7	6	8
	Total	15	14	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (36)	41 (36)	53 (36)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	8	9
	Girls	8	6	6
	Total	15	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	44 (36)	41 (27)	44 (36)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

¹³ The existing guidance from OFSTED is that test and examination data should be excluded from inspection reports if the year group is 10 or fewer. This also applies to year groups of boys and girls separately.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	11
Pakistani	44
Bangladeshi	66
Chinese	0
White	11
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	189

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	475,256
Total expenditure	507,087
Expenditure per pupil	2,415
Balance brought forward from previous year	64,458
Balance carried forward to next year	32,627

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 47%

Number of questionnaires sent out	207
Number of questionnaires returned	98

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	80	16	1	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	59	38	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	69	25	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	36	3	2	2
The teaching is good.	71	26	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	35	2	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	23	2	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	16	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	65	32	0	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	65	33	1	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	28	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	35	2	1	7

Other issues raised by parents

Parents did not express any major concerns about the school.

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

97. At the time of the inspection, there were 42 part-time children in the nursery and 27 full-time children in the reception class. The staff team of one teacher and three nursery nurses (NNEBs) provides a safe and caring environment. Children are happy to come to school and have a good start to school life.
98. The bilingual skills of the nursery staff are of great benefit, as over 90 per cent of children come from homes where English is not their first language. Few children start school with the ability to speak English and many also have poor skills in the language spoken at home. Through daily contact, staff establish good links with parents, who are encouraged to help with learning. A sign of success is the way in which children are keen to learn and enjoy taking work to do at home.
99. Children enter the nursery with very low skills in all areas of experience. Once they gain in confidence and begin to understand English, they make very good progress. By the end of the reception class they are working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals in all areas.
100. The nursery staff has a clear understanding of how young children grow and learn. They use ongoing checks to build up a clear picture of the children's achievement. This helps with planning work linked to the steps for learning and also to meet any specific or special needs the children may have. Experiences are well planned and there is a balance between activities the children choose themselves and those with a greater adult support. However, there is not a clear enough focus on what is to be taught and learned and how language skills are to develop in child-chosen experiences.
101. Children are given simple tests at the start of the reception class. Results show that attainment in all six areas of experience is low. Most children are still learning how to communicate in English and although they have enjoyed sharing books and experimenting with writing in the nursery, most are still working through the early stepping stones for learning. Children are still developing their social skills as they learn how to share, take turns and work with others. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is also limited because few children move outside the community. Nevertheless, over the course of the school year, the children make very good progress. This is linked to the high quality of teaching in the reception class and a clear focus on developing language and communication skills. Progress in creative and physical development is also good.
102. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. Experiences are well planned and reflect the steps in learning towards the Early Learning Goals. The nursery staff help children to settle in well; they slip in and out of the children's home language as they encourage them to learn the names of everyday objects and to understand school routines. This good start is built upon successfully in the reception class. Lessons are well managed and exciting. The children are eager to learn and so progress is rapid. More confident learners are reading simple stories, writing sentences with help and working well in small groups by the end of the reception year.
103. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is appropriate for the children's learning. The staff team is trying to link learning throughout this stage by enabling nursery and reception children to share experiences. The school is wisely considering adaptations to the nursery and reception area, particularly the access between the two, to help staff to further plan experiences and share expertise.

Personal, social and emotional development

104. Throughout the Foundation Stage the children are building their competence and confidence to communicate in English and to take part in activities. They have few personal and social skills at the start of nursery and need time to become accustomed to the range of experiences provided. Adults' relationships with the children are very good and they foster confidence in learning. Provision is good. The children make good progress as they learn to talk to each other and begin to share toys and books. There is a marked difference between the social and emotional development of the older and younger nursery children and this is reflected in the way they make friendships, show initiative and help to tidy away after activities. By the end of the reception class, children are working towards the Early Learning Goals. They listen with increasing care to the teacher and to each other, and follow instructions and class rules. They are confident to add to group discussions, for instance, deciding 'where bubbles go to' in their experiments linked to the weather.

Communication, language and literary development

105. On entry to the nursery, the children's communication, language and literacy skills are very low indeed – far below those expected for their age. Most children respond in gestures and only the more confident children speak a few words in English. Nevertheless, they make very good progress with their speaking, reading and writing skills throughout the Foundation Stage. This is because of the good provision of bilingual support in the nursery and well-planned learning experiences that offer challenge in the reception class. However, few children achieve the Early Learning Goals in this area of experience because of their very low starting point.
106. Progress in writing is good. In the nursery, children learn to use pencils and crayons and experiment with making marks. In the reception class, work is planned at different levels and meets the children's learning needs well. Confident writers explore non-fiction books and produce a contents page for their own information books. They begin to use and identify letters of the alphabet and can write words to label objects, such as 'windmills'. Most children can write their names independently.
107. Teachers plan successfully from the steps in learning and also use aspects of the literacy hour well. Nursery children begin to memorise stories and use the pictures as clues. They enjoy using the story puppets and act as 'teachers' in role-play. In the reception class, they explore books in guided reading time and spend time exploring stories so that speaking skills are practised and developed. More competent readers are able to identify well known words and recall simple stories such as 'My Pet' in the correct order.

Mathematical development

108. By the end of the Foundation stage, children are still working towards achieving the Early Learning Goals. Good use is made of incidental learning in the nursery. Children count those present at the start of school, how many frogs are sitting by the pond and identify the number of boys and girls in their group. They are starting to match and sort small toys in order of size and colour. Teachers encourage children capable of reaching higher levels to order and write numbers to five and above. Children in the nursery make good progress with number. Progress in the reception class is also good. Children count onwards and backwards and recognise and write numbers to 20 and above. They can use mathematical language such as 'bigger than' and 'smaller than'. The provision is good. Good teaching relates well to everyday objects, such as a clock face, as children identify patterns in numbers and put them in order. At other times, children make cakes

and use simple bar charts to show which are their favourite ones. Effective classroom support is focused on providing help in small groups, especially for children needing English language support or those with special educational needs.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

109. Both the provision and the teaching for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world are very good. This, in turn, is helping children to make very good progress. They gain in knowledge about the world around them as they study the weather. Experiments with windmills and bubbles encourage children to use their senses and to explain how they know it is a windy day. In the nursery, children grow plants and decide they need water and soil to grow. They talk about their own community and people who help them. Skills with the computer are developing well as younger children learn to control the mouse and join dots to produce patterns and pictures. Teachers build upon the children's natural curiosity. Children are very keen to explain how rain bursts from clouds and rushes out of sight down drains and gutters. Learning is moved on by questions about whether the wind disappears in the same way. Displays effectively bring together learning from different experiences. For example, experiments with growing plants and creating paintings of different flowers or creating models of Noah's Ark after hearing the story. By the end of the Foundation stage children are still working towards the Early Learning Goals.

Physical development

110. Children in the Foundation Stage have easy access to a safe area for outside experiences. They also use the school hall. Teaching and progress are sound in the nursery and good in the reception class. Younger nursery children are learning to work with others, share the small apparatus and toys, and to move confidently in a large space. They are making steady progress as they learn to follow simple instructions, pedal and guide wheeled toys and throw and roll small balls. Few nursery children have appropriate footwear for running, hopping and skipping activities. Reception children are more confident and aware of working with others. They develop finer co-ordination by catching and throwing small apparatus and with practising their skills with cutting, modelling and handling tools. By the end of the Foundation Stage children are working towards the Early Learning Goals.
111. Some of the large, outdoor toys are well worn and tired looking. When the whole Foundation stage shares outside experiences, resources are stretched. Overall, the provision is satisfactory.

Creative development

112. Teaching and progress are good. The range of experiences and the resources available are appropriate to meet the children's learning needs. Many younger nursery children are still at the experimental stage as they explore through painting, collage and printing. For instance, rolling and cutting play dough, layering paint, learning how to hold scissors and to use them for cutting. By the end of the reception class, children have greater dexterity. They make sensitive free-standing models of animals and learn how to mix colours and apply paint. Children are encouraged to make choices of the materials they are going to use and start to plan and make designs for the windmill they are going to produce. They enjoy singing their favourite songs and rhymes. Most children are working towards the Early Learning Goals.

ENGLISH

113. Nearly 90 per cent of pupils are developing bilingual speakers who are still gaining confidence and competence with their spoken and written English. Most pupils are from Bangladeshi and Pakistani heritage and start their school life with only a few words in English and limited skills in their home language.
114. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, the standards achieved by 7 year-olds were very low compared with both national and similar school averages in reading and writing. At the age of 11, pupils' results in English were very low compared with the national average and well below in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of Year 6 pupils in the school achieving the national average in English at the age of 11 has risen from 36 per cent in 1999 to 44 per cent in 2000. Provisional results for 2001 show that 55 per cent of Year 6 pupils have reached the national standard, with one in ten achieving the higher level.
115. The findings of this inspection indicate that although standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing remain much lower than those achieved by 7 and 11 year olds nationally, in most year groups pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when progress was judged to be satisfactory. Progress has improved because staffing is above average and pupils can work in smaller groups, where their needs are met more readily. Basic skills in reading, spelling and handwriting are taught well. Most pupils are well behaved and keen to learn. High quality teaching in English in Year 5 and Year 6 is helping to accelerate the rate of progress at the end of the junior classes. Many pupils in Year 5 are reading at a similar level to other pupils of their age nationally and the proportion of pupils reaching the national average has risen significantly over the past two years.
116. The literacy hour is well established in each year group and teachers use its structure confidently to develop reading and writing. This is of particular benefit to more confident speakers and writers. In Year 1, for instance, pupils who learn at a faster rate enjoy modelling the story of 'The Bear and the Honeybees' with their teacher. They have the appropriate language and writing skills to add to the story on their own. However, other pupils in this year group (nearly 50 per cent of the class) are still learning to speak and use English as an additional language and, therefore, need more time to hear and talk about the story. It is more relevant for them to practise their speaking skills and experiment with forming sentences and answering questions in English at this stage than for teachers to follow prescribed literacy plans too closely.
117. The school supports the needs of different groups of pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) work towards clear targets set for their individual learning needs and make steady progress with their work. Teachers understand the difference between learning an additional language and having special educational needs and apply this knowledge when planning lessons. There is no marked difference between the achievements of boys and girls in this subject. Pupils from dual and African heritage make similar progress to others in their classes.
118. Very few pupils start school with the skills to speak in English. They listen carefully and by gesture and using single words, show a growing awareness of spoken English. Bilingual assistants help pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English to identify and understand new words, such as 'windmill' and 'stalk' and to use them in meaningful way. In Year 1, more competent speakers answer questions with growing confidence and can recall clearly the main points of the story about 'The Boy who cried Wolf'. However, they still need bilingual support to clarify the difference, for example, between 'fox' and 'wolf.'

119. In Year 2 there is still a wide range of ability with spoken and written work. Standards are well below those expected for this age. In class lessons, 40 per cent of the more competent speakers regularly take the lead in lessons, but they, along with others, still need help with structuring their sentences. For example, whilst explaining the difference between fiction and non-fiction books, a pupil stated, 'They telling you something you don't know'. At times, however, the disruptive behaviour of a very small minority of pupils, mainly with special educational needs, interrupts the flow of learning in lessons and this affects the progress the whole class makes.
120. In the junior classes, rates of progress in learning English differ in each class. Whilst many pupils can communicate successfully at a social level, a significant number find it difficult to explain and describe in English. They need time to explore and understand a wider range of vocabulary and idioms. This is evident in Year 4, when pupils study 'Tracey's Poem' by Wes Magee. Most pupils sense the sad mood of the poem but, at a deeper level, very few can explain what a sapling is, what it is to 'feel forlorn' or why Tracey's tree appears 'blurred'. A high standard of teaching in English is moving learning on well in Year 5 and 6. Teachers use questions successfully to encourage pupils to contribute in lessons and to add their point of view in discussions. By 11, most pupils speak fluently and with some expression, but overall standards remain below those expected for this age.
121. Despite standards in reading being well below average by 7 and below average by 11, pupils make good progress. In Year 1, pupils learn to link letters with sounds and recognise words by sight. They enjoy sharing stories in class and can recall the main events in a story. Progress in Year 2 is satisfactory, but the higher number of pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties can take up too much of the teacher's time and slow down learning.
122. By the end of the junior classes, a growing competence with spoken English enables most pupils to read with understanding. More capable readers read accurately and fluently with some expression. They make choices about favourite authors, such as Ann Fine, and understand character and plot more deeply. As one pupil comments about 'Loudmouth Louis', 'He learns to stay quiet and find out what it's like standing in someone else's shoes'. Skills in researching information are built on in each year group. Older pupils can skim and scan for information and use the index and glossary with ease. As yet, however, there is limited use made of computer programmes to develop reading and research skills. In all year groups there is no longer a reluctance to read at home and this is an improvement since the previous inspection.
123. Standards in writing are well below the national average at 7 and below the national average at 11, but progress is good overall. Pupils in all year groups work hard to produce neat and tidy handwriting and to present their work well. They make good progress with their spelling and learn to use spelling patterns and rules more consistently in their written work. Teachers encourage pupils to 'have a go' when spelling unknown words and expect older pupils to use their dictionaries for support. Teachers' good skills with modelling writing are paying dividends by enabling pupils to improve the standard of their own written work.
124. Pupils in Year 1 write their own stories with help and begin to understand traditional story settings and predict their endings. In Year 3, pupils write letters of thanks to their favourite author and use connectives to join sentences and ideas so that their writing flows along. In Year 6, learning develops successfully as pupils identify and use clauses to enrich their descriptive writing. An example from an average attaining pupil shows the good progress being made: 'Dragging himself wearily out of bed, Simon moaned, 'Yet

another bad dream. I can't stand this!" These older pupils are beginning to write at greater length, read through and draft their ideas.

125. Overall, teaching is good in English and this is supporting the good progress pupils make from when they start at the school. In Year 6, the expertise of the English co-ordinator comes into play and teaching is of a high quality. The challenge and high expectation in lessons is improving standards rapidly. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage their classes well. As a result, pupils are keen to learn and concentrate well in lessons. The few instances of poor behaviour are linked to lessons which are slower paced and do not hold the pupils' interest.
126. Teachers' planning follows the literacy format well, but does not always reflect fully the specific language needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The school does not, as yet, undertake the finer assessment of the needs of pupils at the early stages of learning English and those who still need extra support. This would provide a clearer picture of pupils' language needs and help with the next step in learning. Links between specialist language support teaching (EMAG) and the school's literacy provision are not yet strong enough.
127. The English co-ordinator has many years' experience in teaching pupils for whom English is not the home language and is committed to raising standards. To do this the school has given speaking skills a key focus in the literacy hour. By providing the time to use literature for sharing good models of English, pupils can more easily explore the links between spoken and written English. Developing these speaking, reading and writing skills in other subjects is another step that the school recognises it needs to take. The practice in Year 5 provides a successful model, when pupils learn how to use their reading skills to research for information about the 'Victorians' in history lessons and then act out in role play their case against child labour. Resources are appropriate for the pupils' needs with a wide range of books provided for reading in groups with adults.

MATHEMATICS

128. When the school was last inspected, standards in mathematics were reported to be below average at both 7 and 11 years. In the national tests in 1998, following that inspection, this judgement was found to be over-optimistic and the standards were shown to be well below average. Pupils were making steady progress across the school, given the clear expectations of the staff. A number of changes have occurred since that time, in particular the introduction of the daily numeracy lesson, which is having a steady and positive effect on standards.
129. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 in 2000, pupils achieved standards which were very low when compared to those being achieved nationally, and in the bottom 5 per cent of schools. Standards were low at the age of 7 and well below average at 11 in relation to those achieved in similar schools. There has, however, been a steady rise in attainment in mathematics over a five year period. The 2001 test results, received by the school during the inspection, are the highest ever achieved by 11 year old pupils at the school. They show that the proportion of pupils achieving the national average at the end of Year 6 has risen from 36 per cent in 1999 to 48 per cent in 2001. Although standards during the inspection indicate that, in terms of the national average, attainment is still well below average by the ages of 7 and 11, this masks the significant progress which has been made.
130. Standards in all year groups are weakened because only a small proportion of pupils achieve the challenging higher levels. This is principally because of the poor language skills of the pupils from when they enter the school. This means that, while skills at

working out calculations are often satisfactory, pupils have significant long-term difficulties with the language of mathematical 'problems', where the text often conceals the task which has to be carried out. Overall, the progress made since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, has been satisfactory.

131. Standards are currently well below average for both the 7 and 11 year olds in numeracy and the other aspects of mathematics. Overall, pupils are making steady progress, although there is some variability across the school. From the very low levels of prior experience of mathematics evident when children enter the nursery, they make good progress through the Foundation Stage. Infant pupils make steady progress, although there is insufficient time for them to catch up, by the age of 7, for their restricted mathematical experience on entry to school. In addition, the pace of progress slows in Year 2, due to teachers not building effectively upon prior skills and knowledge, and this further depresses standards.
132. The progress made by the older pupils is now improving. There is a brisk pace to learning in Year 4 and particularly in Year 5. However, some of this benefit is lost in the current Year 6 where the class size is larger. Although the majority of pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics, evidence from observations during the inspection suggests that boys are achieving better than girls in mathematics, which is against the national pattern. Pupils with special educational needs have sound support and make similar progress to the others. Pupils with English as an additional language, almost all the pupils in the school, are supported well in most year groups by the assigned support staff.
133. By the age of 7, a small number of more able pupils understand place value to one hundred. They correctly add two digit numbers together. They estimate length and weight in appropriate units and then measure quantities accurately. Most pupils sequence in twos, fives and tens. They are learning simple tables bonds and the more confident are developing strategies for mental calculations involving addition and subtraction. They read simple clock faces accurately and some recognise odd and even numbers and simple fractions. They recognise key features of two- and three-dimensional shapes. They generate number sequences. They use mathematical vocabulary, such as 'lighter' and 'heavier', accurately. Provisional National Curriculum results for 2001 show that some three-quarters of Year 2 pupils have achieved the expected standard for their age, but with none achieving at the highest level. The positive benefits of the structured daily mathematics lessons are gradually beginning to move standards forward.
134. In the junior classes, there is evidence of more consistent improvement. By the age of 11, pupils are increasingly confident in their approach to mental calculations and many perform these accurately. This was seen, for example, in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were consolidating their knowledge of fraction and decimal equivalents through quick-fire questioning. It was also seen in Year 6 where the teacher used a number target board as a stimulus to challenge pupils on their knowledge of tables bonds, place value, prime numbers and factors.
135. Some more able pupils have a growing ability to use fractions, decimals and percentages with increasing accuracy. They represent information correctly in block and spike graphs. The most able pupils calculate area by formula, measure angles and recognise types of triangles. They manipulate negative numbers accurately. However, most of the work covered draws on the Level 4 rather than the Level 5 curriculum. This reflects the large number of pupils in the year group and the limited help available to the class teacher.

136. There are some opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills in subjects such as science and geography. Pupils occasionally use computers, particularly spreadsheets, to extend their mathematical understanding, although this is not a consistently strong feature across the school. The range and quality of work observed was best for pupils in Year 5, at present a small and relatively cohesive group.
137. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils in the infant classes and good for those in the junior classes. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen. The pace of learning is generally satisfactory, although there are some variations due to inconsistencies in teachers' expectations. Planning to meet individual needs was a positive feature in a few lessons, but staff awareness varies. The quality of marking is always satisfactory and often good. There is a broadly consistent approach across the school. Marking is weaker, however, in identifying exactly what pupils need to do to improve their performance.
138. Most teachers use the closing few minutes of the lesson effectively, although occasionally, where the timing of the lesson is insecure, it is underdeveloped. They reinforce the use of correct mathematical vocabulary successfully. This helps to extend pupils' learning in literacy. Oral sessions support the development of improved mental skills and agility. Teachers use assessment information effectively in the planning of future lessons. Teachers make some, but insufficient, use of information and communication technology to extend learning in mathematics. The school has implemented comprehensive target-setting for year groups and is now identifying targets for individuals.
139. The co-ordinator is providing sound leadership for the subject and has had opportunities to observe teaching. There are sound procedures for formal assessment in mathematics. A start has been made to the analysis of national and optional test information. This is helping teachers to track pupils' progress and identify areas of weakness across the school. The effective use of this information to push up standards further is a priority for the co-ordinator. Record keeping provides teachers with an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils.

SCIENCE

140. In the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2000, the proportion of 7 year-old pupils in Year 2 reaching the standard expected at this age was very low compared with that expected nationally and no pupil reached the higher levels. In the National Curriculum statutory tests taken by 11 year olds in Year 6 in May 2000, standards were also very low compared with all schools and well below those found in similar schools. No pupil reached the higher levels.
141. At the time of the last inspection, standards were reported to be below those expected at the age of 7 and broadly in line with national averages at the age of 11. National Curriculum test results for this age group in the summer of 1998 were well below the average and declined the following year to very low. In 2000 they rose and this trend has continued in 2001 when, on the basis of the provisional results received by the school, a small but significant number of pupils achieved the higher level in the statutory tests.
142. The findings of this inspection indicate that overall standards in Year 2 are well below those expected at this age. In Year 6, standards are well below the national average. These judgements do not, however, give the full picture. Younger pupils have a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world upon which to develop their scientific knowledge and understanding. Older pupils' factual knowledge is often secure and they can recall specific information. However, many have particular difficulty in interpreting

and applying what they have previously learnt. For the majority, their grasp of language and thinking skills is underdeveloped with the consequence that they are unable to make the best use of what they already know and can do. This was vividly illustrated in a Year 5 lesson where pupils struggled to explain and understand how some flowers and plants are pollinated through the action of the wind. The teacher reinforced the concepts in small steps and from many different starting points in an attempt to link pupils' existing knowledge and develop their understanding.

143. Pupils in both infant and junior classes make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language have full access to the science curriculum, and make progress at a similar rate to other pupils. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls, but it is noticeable that in the older junior classes, boys are more enthusiastic than girls about science.
144. The school has recognised the importance of finding different ways of helping pupils to apply their knowledge and develop their understanding. The science curriculum for both the infant and junior classes provides for the systematic development of knowledge and skills across the programmes of study. The school has adapted a nationally available curriculum model to ensure full coverage of the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has addressed the shortcomings in investigative and experimental science identified in the report of the previous inspection.
145. Teachers plan lessons where the emphasis is on developing pupils' practical and investigative skills. The impact of this is starting to come through, as demonstrated by the better results this year at the end of Year 6. However, difficulties with language proficiency impacts upon the underlying progress pupils make in science. Until pupils' confidence with language increases, many will continue to rely upon their teachers to help them make predictions and reach conclusions. The development of pupils' spoken and written thinking and analytical skills is central to higher achievement.
146. In the infant classes, pupils develop their knowledge of light and, in particular, shadows. They know that a torch is a source of light and they can suggest other such sources. They are excited yet committed to the activity and concentrate well on testing their predictions regarding where the shadow will fall. They discover the relationship between the distance from the source of light and the length of the shadow.
147. Year 2 pupils learn about the effect of friction as they roll a toy car down a slope on to rough and smooth surfaces. They know that the car will move forwards as it rolls down the slope. They suggest what will happen if the car is pushed and notice that it picks up speed as it rolls down the slope. Some suggest after a short time that the surface the car moves over has something to do with how quickly it stops, but others need help in working this out.
148. Many infant pupils find it easier to answer direct questions about what they see and think. They enjoy practical activities and their excitement is evident. A significant proportion find it difficult to put what they see and do into their own words. Many find it hard to come up with answers to the questions their investigations throw up. A number find difficulty with recording their work, either in picture form or in writing. One of the difficulties teachers face is trying to give pupils sufficient time to all participate in practical work yet maintain their interest long enough for them to complete the work. In some of the lessons seen, too much time was devoted to practical work and pupils' concentration waned to the extent that they were playing with the equipment rather than following the lesson.

149. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in this age group is satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned and appropriate resources used. Adults support pupils well but, at times, they do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to think for themselves. This is particularly the case with the more able who, although they need some support, are able to think and apply their knowledge when suitably challenged.
150. In the junior classes, pupils in Year 3 planned an investigation to determine which type of paper is best for writing on. The teacher outlined the lesson objective clearly and encouraged pupils to use the correct scientific vocabulary from the outset. Teachers and support staff communicated high expectations of what pupils were to achieve from the start. Pupils rose to the challenge by listening attentively and following instructions carefully. There was much emphasis by the teacher and the supporting adults on the use of language to discuss, observe and predict likely outcomes.
151. Adults support pupils to help them identify what they need to do when planning their investigation. In fact, much is done for them and pupils have more experience of the putting planning into practice rather than actually taking full responsibility for the whole process themselves. One of the problems here is that pupils' planning skills are underdeveloped and they actually need to learn how to plan. They do not systematically think through what they should do to ensure that the test is fair. In this respect, the guidance and help pupils are given is appropriate. Because there is a good amount of structured support available, pupils are able to succeed in their task. Well-planned, prepared and managed activities contribute to successful learning. The tasks given to pupils provide appropriate challenge and give due regard to the development of scientific knowledge and understanding. By the end of the lesson, some pupils are able to offer reasons for their choices independently and others, with prompting, can present the outcomes of their work.
152. Pupils in Year 4 build on the skills they learn in Year 3. The teacher's questions drew out pupils' thoughts and predictions when mixing and separating solids and liquids. Learning was good because pupils tried hard, despite language difficulties, to explain what they thought would happen and offer possible reasons why. They concentrated well on what the teacher said. The good pace of the lesson together with clear instructions provided pupils with a good basis for their work. Pupils showed positive attitudes to their work and collaborated well. The teacher's close attention to the target language pupils use during the lesson is a good feature because it provides pupils with the vocabulary they need to explain what they are doing.
153. Pupils in Year 5 are able to answer questions about pollination using appropriate scientific terms. Their observation skills, when examining the stamen for pollen deposits, are good. They are eager to do their best and benefit considerably from the very good subject knowledge of their teacher. They particularly appreciate having good quality resources to work with and are keen to record their findings accurately.
154. By the end of Year 6, pupils have studied food chains, the effects of heating and cooling, sound and light. Scrutiny of their work during the year demonstrates that their factual knowledge is secure, but the application of it is weak. Some, for example, are not sure about reversible and irreversible change. Others suggest, incorrectly, that grip is the force that increases when something is pulled. Many pupils have difficulty in presenting their findings. Diagrams and charts are not consistently neat or well drawn. There is very little evidence of the use of information and communication technology to develop their work.

155. In Year 6, pupils investigated the effect of placing a different thickness of wire in a circuit. The objective of the lesson was for them to investigate if the brightness of a bulb is altered. Pupils were, with prompting, able to recognise standard symbols and terms.
156. Some pupils understand how a circuit is made and that the voltage of the bulb must match that of the battery, but many need help in recalling this information. The way in which their teacher uses straightforward language to explain what is required helps pupils to learn. The teacher's questions helped pupils to draw on their previous knowledge and understanding. This use of less formal language is effective in helping pupils to make progress. All pupils had the opportunity to share and try their ideas. However, it is mainly the boys who suggest the likely outcome of investigations.
157. The quality of teaching in the junior classes is good. Lessons are well prepared, resourced and managed. The deployment of support staff is good. The way in which pupils are supported in carrying out their investigations and recording their findings is helping them to make progress. Teachers and support staff give good attention to the needs of pupils with special educational needs. In comparison, pupils who have the capacity for higher attainment are not consistently challenged.
158. Throughout the school, teachers pay appropriate attention to pupils' safety and pupils heed instructions well.
159. The co-ordinator has recently taken over responsibility for the subject. There has been a significant period of time during which there has been no member of staff fulfilling this role and there is, as a result, much to be done. Her first priority is to ensure that all the topics included in the science curriculum are appropriately resourced. At present, resources are inadequate. The co-ordinator provides practical help and support for colleagues and sees pupils' work. Her vision for the development of this area of the curriculum is good.

ART AND DESIGN

160. Attainment in art is in line with the expected level by the ages of 7 and 11. In some year groups, particularly Years 4 and 5, standards are above what is normally achieved by pupils of a similar age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, participate fully and make similar progress to other pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress up to the age of 7 and generally good progress between 7 and 11.
161. Displays around the school indicate that pupils are offered a good range of experiences, with opportunities for three-dimensional work which have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to learn about artists and their work. Progress is best in Year 4 where consistently good teaching successfully develops pupils' basic skills in observational drawing, collage and the use of paint and pastels. They work with a range of materials to produce good quality artwork, taking pride in their work because their confidence and self-esteem have been developed through strong teaching. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards art.
162. Year 1 pupils produce pastel drawings of ceramic vases, linked to simple clay work. They use textiles to produce transport collages of good quality. They work successfully with collage and experiment with pastels. In their sketch books, they copy plants and draw aeroplanes. They produce symmetrical pictures. Targets for their work in art are displayed on the classroom wall.
163. In Year 2, pupils continue to experience a good range of work, although the standard is at a similar level. They produce collages of faces using fabrics. They draw self-portraits in

pencil, paint owls and produce observational drawings of the Eiffel Tower and the Taj Mahal. There are good examples of preparatory work using a paint program on the computer. There is some recent three-dimensional clay work and some good examples of weaving. Pupils experience a good range of media up to the age of 7. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to select resources and develop their own creativity, although tasks are often tightly defined by the teachers in advance.

164. Year 3 pupils produce collages, a range of representations of heads and faces and Roman mosaics, to support their work in history. Progress picks up considerably in Year 4, where pupils have an extensive range of opportunities. They have produced pastel drawings of Kenyan figures and abstracts on the theme of 'Winter Creatures', supported by preparatory work on the computer. They successfully develop pencil and brush skills.
165. In the very successful lesson observed, one of a series on 'Dreamlike Landscapes', pupils were being introduced to photographic lenses as a way of achieving altered images and alternative perspectives. This session successfully captured pupils' interest and strongly promoted new learning. The quality of work seen in this class reflects the very good subject knowledge of the teacher, the wide range of experience provided and the high expectations which underpin her work.
166. The good skills pupils acquire in Year 4 are built on successfully in Year 5, where standards remain above average. Much of the art work successfully supports other subjects, such as the portraits of Henry VIII's wives and detailed views of buildings and Tudor houses. There is some high quality collage work. All pupils make very good use of sketchbooks.
167. Timetable constraints mean that some of the impetus built up earlier in the key stage is lost in Year 6. Pupils use sketchbooks to experiment with mixing chalk and charcoal. They produce creditable observational drawings of shoes. They tessellate shapes in the style of Escher and research the artist on the Internet. Very recently, pupils completed attractive and well-designed paper sculptures of winter trees. However, overall there is limited further development of pupils' skills in this year.
168. The quality of teaching is good in the junior classes. There were insufficient opportunities to judge teaching in the infant classes during the inspection. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They give good attention to the development of skills and this encourages pupils to develop their creative effort as well as their wider understanding. Teachers manage their lessons well and pupils work productively. Some teachers, notably in Year 4, make very good use of homework time to enable pupils to develop ideas, conduct research or to complete work. They have regular opportunities to enter art competitions.
169. A current weakness is the inconsistency with which sketch books are used across the school. These are not systematically employed to enable pupils to experiment and explore texture and shade or practise skills in observational drawing. They are seldom dated or annotated to indicate the progress being made. The paper quality of these sketch books is poor and does not provide a good finish to pupils' work.
170. **The co-ordinator for art is very confident and knowledgeable. She provides good support for colleagues and has a clear view of how the subject can be moved forward. The new national guidance for art has been implemented. Assessment opportunities are identified and there are good systems for recording pupils' progress. Teachers use assessment information well to support their planning of future work. Resources for art are adequate.**

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

171. Four lessons were observed during the inspection. Additional evidence was drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work, artefacts displayed around the school, a detailed scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with staff. Standards in design and technology are in line with what is expected nationally by the age of 7 and above the expected level by the age of 11. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make sound progress in the infant classes and good progress in the junior classes.
172. This is a much improved picture to that reported in the previous inspection. The progress made since that time, particularly in the work of the younger pupils and in the comprehensive planning now available to support teachers, is very good. The subject is well-established in the curriculum.
173. In a lesson observed in Year 1, which focused on designing a tee-shirt for a teddy-bear, pupils were using fabric crayons carefully to implement their planned design. The quality of their work was inhibited only by the limited drawing skills of some of the pupils. Work on playground structures extends children's learning well.
174. By the time pupils are 7 they have developed their cutting skills sufficiently to follow a pattern, cut out material and create a range of puppets, including glove puppets and jointed puppets. They design pencil cases, make handbags from card and assemble simple electrical circuits. They develop their literacy skills effectively in writing an account of their planned task. Pupils show very positive attitudes in Year 1, but the indifferent behaviour and lack of attention of a few pupils affects the progress and the quality of work in Year 2.
175. In the junior classes, standards are now good. The curriculum provides a wide range of experiences for pupils. This ensures that the quality of pupils' craft skills is improving steadily as they move through the junior classes. Year 3 pupils have designed and made their favourite sandwiches, recording the stages of their work fully in a topic booklet. They were observed in the early stages of a unit on the design and making of a moving monster. This was involving them in gaining a basic understanding of pneumatics and made demands on their construction skills.
176. However, although the design process is much improved, many pupils are still very dependent on staff for guidance and support. Their knowledge of how things work remains limited. Pupils' experience of design and technology in Year 4 is sound. They have successfully designed hats, made pop-up characters for a story-book and have produced effective three-dimensional representations of Tutankhamun's death mask.
177. Opportunities in Year 5 are good. Pupils have undertaken an impressive task which required them to design, make and evaluate bread. This was tackled thoroughly. Pupils researched the topic and sampled opinion, prior to beginning design work. The various stages of the project, through to the detailed evaluation, are recorded successfully in a comprehensive project booklet. Year 6 pupils have successfully constructed a series of model shelters, have designed and made slippers and are currently constructing motorised fairground equipment.
178. However, much support from staff on some basic craft techniques is still necessary, suggesting that these skills have not been firmly rooted at an early stage. For example, they still need very specific instructions on how to hold and saw wood, although they have some knowledge of the use of corner joints. However, their design and evaluative skills

are developing well. Pupils now moving through the school are acquiring skills more systematically as the curriculum becomes more secure.

179. The quality of teaching was sound overall in the lessons observed in the infant classes and good in the junior classes. Planning is very thorough and takes into account pupils' previous knowledge and the extent to which they are ready to build on their existing skills. In the best teaching, for example in Year 3, teachers pose challenging questions so that pupils begin to identify the likely constraints which might affect their construction. There was also evidence of the effective use of the digital camera, to enable pupils to maintain a record of their bread-making in Year 5.
180. Design and technology makes an increasingly effective contribution to other subjects such as history (in Year 3) and science (in Year 5).
181. The co-ordinator has been very successful in taking the subject forward. She has a clear view of what has been achieved so far and of the weaker aspects which still exist. She provides advice to colleagues and has developed an extremely detailed scheme of work based on national guidance. This provides a clear framework for the teaching of both knowledge and skills. Assessment opportunities have improved significantly and the information which becomes available is used well to inform planning.

GEOGRAPHY

182. Too few lessons were observed in geography to make secure judgements about teaching in the subject. A scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' past work and discussions with pupils have helped to form other judgements.
183. Standards have remained broadly the same since the previous inspection. Pupils attain similar levels to those achieved nationally at 7 and 11. Progress for pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory. Discussions indicate that pupils have positive attitudes to learning in the subject.
184. The school's guidelines for geography are very useful. They indicate what is to be taught and learned in each year group and identify the key skills pupils will need to use to get the best from their learning. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils consider a local traffic issue, collect data from questionnaires and first-hand observations. They use local maps to plan alternative routes and then develop their knowledge and understanding of place by using their reasoning and enquiry skills. They analyse data through a simple chart and begin to ask questions, such as 'What are the main traffic problems?' and 'How is traffic controlled?' Pupils are interested in their work and relate well to its focus on places that pupils know locally.
185. Teachers' planning shows that geography is being covered in each year group and where possible links are made with pupils' knowledge and understanding of India and Pakistan. For instance, in the infant classes, pupils study hot lands and refer to their visits to these countries.
186. The school makes good use of maps and geographical resources to develop pupils' wider understanding of the world. Younger pupils can explain the rain cycle and they develop this knowledge further in Year 3 as they learn how rivers are formed and track their journey to the sea. There is a good balance between study at a local level and gaining a wider knowledge of Great Britain and the world. Year 6 pupils study rain forests and have discussions of related environmental issues.

187. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make steady progress with their speaking and writing skills. Discussions help them to become more confident and competent over time in English. It helps them to achieve similar standards to other pupils in their class. Pupils use their computer skills to analyse and use data from their local studies, making good use of pie and bar charts to communicate their findings.
188. The co-ordinator manages the subject well. Lessons have appropriate resources to meet the pupils' learning needs.

HISTORY

189. Only a limited number of lessons were observed in history. Evidence from pupils' previous work, discussions with pupils and teachers' planning have been used to help support judgements.
190. Since the last inspection, standards in history have improved and pupils are now attaining standards similar to those found nationally. Good progress with speaking and writing skills in the junior classes means that pupils contribute more confidently in discussions. In addition, the quality of pupils' written work has improved and this is evident in some of the good historical writing on display, such as the detailed comparisons of the lives of rich and poor in Victorian times.
191. No lessons were observed in the infant classes. Discussions with pupils and evidence from their work indicate that the school's guidelines for history are followed in each year group. Teachers make good use of the local environment as a source of study and, by using first-hand experiences, try to make learning relevant to pupils' own experience. Pupils begin to understand the passing of time as they identify dates on local buildings and churches. They visit 'old' and 'new' Palfrey school and compare similarities and differences. They begin to understand words such as 'in the past' and 'long ago'. In Year 2, teachers focus on famous people, such as Marco Polo, and journeys such as the exploration of space.
192. In the junior classes pupils study certain periods of time, including Roman Britain and the Ancient Egyptians, in greater depth. Year 3 pupils successfully consider the importance of archaeology and evidence from 'finds' to sift fact from fiction and to build up a picture of the past. They make decisions about where different artefacts are housed in a Roman villa, handle replica Roman coins and trace the images printed on them. In Year 5, very good use is made of a local leather museum as a source of historical information. Their teacher has high expectation of the pupils' contribution to the lesson and even the less confident speakers rise to the occasion. Planning meets the specific language needs of pupils and enables them to make good progress. Accounts of a factory owner, leather worker, doctor and local vicar are used well in role-play 'debate' about child labour in Victorian factories. Lessons are interesting and so pupils behave well and are keen to learn.
193. The quality of teaching in the junior classes is good. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make steady progress with their speaking and writing skills. Over time, they become more confident and competent in English and achieve similar standards to other pupils in their class. To help them, teachers make good use of questioning skills to encourage pupils to enter into discussion and explain in greater depth. Effective evaluation of learning in Years 5 and 6 indicates that pupils find this difficult to do. For instance, few can give an opinion as to whether it was morally right to employ children in factories and whether the laws passed (1864) were reasonable.

194. Teachers continue to build up historical knowledge and skills year on year, and regularly record their assessments of progress. Lessons are well resourced and visits to local museums and places of historical interest add depth to learning. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is sound. Pupils are supported mainly within the classroom and make steady progress with work that is targeted to meet their specific needs.
195. The co-ordinator manages the subject well and has produced clear guidelines to support lesson planning. Resources are accessible in lessons and effectively support learning. Pupils use the computer to draft and edit their writing in history and often display their finished pieces to highlight aspects of their study. Work about Lord Shaftesbury and other philanthropists is enhanced by such accounts.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

196. At the ages of 7 and 11 years standards are similar to those expected nationally. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. There has been a considerable investment in new equipment since that time and, with a recently completed computer suite, teachers and pupils are no longer faced with unreliable and malfunctioning equipment.
197. Pupils in all classes enjoy working with information and communication technology equipment. They are enthusiastic and keen to demonstrate their developing skills. They work well with each other, offering help and support freely. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make steady progress.
198. Pupils in the infant classes are familiar with computers. They know how to load and run a program and their skills in using the keyboard and controlling the mouse are developing well. Most are able to follow step-by-step instructions when, as seen in a Year 1 lesson, entering data to draw graphs. Pupils in Year 2 have good control of the mouse. When using a program to paint in the style of contemporary artists, the majority concentrate carefully on what they have to do. They run the program independently, make selections and 'drag and drop' using the cursor. Many pupils are able, without adult help, to select the print option. The quality of the equipment makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved. However, a minority of pupils find it difficult to maintain their concentration sufficiently to use the program as successfully as others.
199. Pupils in the junior classes successfully develop their use of computer technology. Using a 'Number Snake' program, Year 3 pupils 'warm up' using the keyboard and the mouse to practise numeracy skills involving counting forwards and backwards in tens. When using data handling programs, the majority follow their teacher's instructions accurately. Although some can work independently, many still require reassurance that they are progressing along the right lines.
200. Year 4 pupils are able to select and deploy different fonts, colours and sizes of text. They correctly explain what they are doing when, for example, highlighting, copying and modifying text. Their earlier work includes handling data, labelling, illustrated writing and, with the use of a screen turtle, giving directions. They have also used information and communication technology to help them in their work on settlements in geography.
201. Pupils in Year 6 are very enthusiastic about the different applications of information and communication technology. They readily share information and skills with each other and, in preparing multi-media presentations of a 'book' for reception class, pupils demonstrate that they have a firm grasp of the use of sound, graphics, colour and text. It is also helping to develop their literacy skills. Their presentations, although not complete,

are attractive and appealing to the intended audience. Pupils are able to make necessary alterations, such as to the timing, to enhance their work.

- 202. Teachers' own skills are currently developing through in-service training and, together with the new equipment, this is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The majority of staff are very keen to develop their own knowledge and understanding and this is reflected in their growing confidence in lessons. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some good lessons observed.
- 203. Lessons are well planned and the good deployment of support staff makes a valuable contribution to what is achieved. In one lesson seen, the help provided for a pupil with complex learning difficulties enabled progress to be made at a similar rate to other pupils. In the majority of classes, numbers are low enough for two pupils to work at a computer. However, in Year 6 the class size is such that three or even four pupils have to work at one machine. Although pupils make progress because they are enthusiastic, keen and willing to take their turn, this situation is unsatisfactory. This situation has arisen due to the reduction in the school's EMAG provision.
- 204. The co-ordinator has worked hard to get the suite up and running. She supports staff in planning their lessons and in their personal development. It is school policy for medium-term plans to identify ways in which information and communication technology can be used across the curriculum. This good practice is starting to be realised but, as yet, not all teachers take full advantage of the timetabled opportunities that are made available for their classes to use the computer suite.
- 205. A notable feature in the development of information and communication technology in the school is the computer club. Pupils of all ages are welcome to attend but they must do so with a parent or, exceptionally, an older member of their family. The club is well supported and is helping to raise standards in lessons.

MUSIC

- 206. At the last inspection, a number of weaknesses were identified in the provision for music, although attainment was judged to be satisfactory overall. There were weaknesses in pupils' progress, there was no co-ordinator, opportunities for composition were limited and the overall quality of singing was unsatisfactory. Most of these issues have been overcome and progress is now much improved. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music making activities. Teachers make use of the good guidance available and this enables pupils, including those who have special needs and for whom English is an additional language, to achieve appropriately.
- 207. Pupils in Year 2 learn about timbre, tempo and dynamics. They identify these elements when listening to music and describe them from memory. They listen to recorded music and respond perceptively when asked questions about what they have heard. They read notation, compose and perform simple pieces using unpitched percussion instruments, for example when performing simple musical scores. The quality of their singing, however, remains unsatisfactory. Their ability to pitch is weak and they have little sense of musical dynamics, in spite of the school's best efforts.
- 208. Several lessons were observed in the junior classes. All were similar in that they were centred on composition activities inspired by familiar recorded music, with pupils responding to what they had heard. These pupils learn to create percussion parts to songs and compose simple melodies. They are gaining a secure knowledge of music from other cultures. In Year 4, pupils were composing a piece with the theme of 'Starry Night' based on 'Pictures from an Exhibition'. They worked carefully in groups to create a

brief composition and this was later shared with the class. The occasion was constrained by the lack of opportunity for pupils to select an instrument. All had to use the instruments given to them. While pupils worked hard and were very well behaved, they were not enthusiastic about the task set and this diminished the quality of their learning.

209. In Year 5, pupils again explored sound colours on the theme of 'Lovely day in the forest'. They worked in groups to produce a percussion sound picture. The teacher encouraged them to experiment with instruments in order to achieve the best effect. They generated many ideas, but needed adult support to be able to work together productively. They listened to each other's contributions and are able to evaluate sounds and what they represent. The session was challenging and this ensured good learning for these pupils. The oldest pupils were working towards a composition based on Munch's 'The Scream'. They have good ideas and work together productively to produce some interesting sequences of music. Some groups managed to notate their music graphically and this was helpful to them when they had to perform. Again, teachers challenged pupils successfully and learning in this session was good.
210. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory overall. The subject knowledge of most teachers is sufficient to teach basic musical skills and knowledge, but does not consistently challenge or extend pupils' creative abilities. The teachers of the older pupils use a comprehensive commercial scheme for their lessons, backed by very detailed mid-term planning. This provides good opportunities for imaginative progression of composition skills as pupils get older. Limited use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning. There is consistent development of correct musical vocabulary throughout the school.
211. The well-established co-ordinator provides sound educational direction for this subject and monitors teachers' planning, teaching and learning on a regular basis. There are secure short-term assessment procedures in place. The co-ordinator focuses well on improving teaching and learning and raising standards, especially in the infant classes. There are opportunities for a small number of pupils to learn brass and string instruments and a few learn recorder in school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

212. Only games and athletics sessions were observed during the inspection. Standards by the age of 7 are in line with those expected nationally. By the age of 11, overall standards are below the expected level. This closely reflects the standards reported at the previous inspection. In swimming, the standards achieved are significantly below the requirements of the National Curriculum and the school feels that dance remains undeveloped in the curriculum.
213. Although pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress initially, the pace of progress slows as they move through the school. This reflects, in part, pupils' limited involvement in sporting activities outside school, but also, in the case of dance, a lack of confidence among the teaching staff. Overall, the progress made since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory, although there has been some improvement in the opportunities provided for extra-curricular sport.
214. Most pupils up to the age of 7 endeavour to achieve and work with enthusiasm in games. Year 2 pupils were observed in a games' skills session. When required to strike and retrieve a ball, some pupils found this challenging and took time to realise the importance of looking at where the ball should be aimed. They did not initially appreciate the need to work as a team for better results, but this improved as the session progressed. Overall,

however, while progress was satisfactory during the lesson, the hand to eye co-ordination of the majority of pupils remained underdeveloped.

215. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported. This enables them to participate fully and make similar progress to others in the class. While pupils are generally co-operative, they do not always work with enough effort. On occasions, the use of time targets improves the pace. Teachers provide few opportunities for self-evaluation, but pupils lack both the language skills and the experience to comment critically. Such evaluation, when it occurs, is at a superficial level. In the junior classes, lessons are managed well and the teaching in some lessons is good. However, weaknesses in the curriculum and the limited skills of a significant number of pupils means that the gap between what pupils can do and what they should be able to do grows steadily wider.
216. In Year 4, a well managed games' skills lesson was observed. This focused on the development of throwing skills. It was quickly evident that pupils have very limited experience of throwing and catching and while they persevered and some made progress in the lesson, the progress which they have made over time has been restricted. Year 5 pupils practised long jump, baton passing in relay racing and over-arm throwing. Again, this was a well-managed lesson. Pupils were co-operative and listened carefully. However, many have poor co-ordination and this restricts their progress.
217. In Year 6, the skills evident during games' activities were more secure and pupils co-operated enthusiastically. The teacher's good subject knowledge and the brisk pace of the lesson enabled pupils to learn well. There were opportunities for pupils to evaluate the lesson and to suggest improvements. This was an underdeveloped feature in most other lessons. There are too few opportunities for pupils to analyse what they have done and to consider how their work might be improved. Equally, there is infrequent reference to the effects of exercise on pupils' health.
218. The co-ordinator has provided very detailed plans for teachers. This includes new material to support dance activities. He has introduced new record sheets and staff are beginning to make better use of assessment information to inform teaching and learning. The school is well resourced for physical education.
219. The school's arranges for swimming to be taught to boys and girls separately and for the pool to be appropriately staffed. These arrangements have been agreed with parents and the local community. Standards remain a concern, with few pupils in the current Year 6 achieving the expected level of proficiency. One contributory factor is that few pupils swim other than with the school and thus have little opportunity to gain confidence and experience in the water.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

220. Standards in religious education are in line with those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well in terms of their knowledge about religion.
221. The school has successfully maintained the strength reported at the time of the last inspection in the way that it embraces the many different faiths found in the school. A notable feature is the way in which pupils respect the views, beliefs and traditions of others around them. A key factor in this is the example given by adults in the school. They clearly value and respect pupils' cultural opinions and beliefs. In a Year 6 lesson, looking at how prayer can help us talk to God, pupils readily drew on their own religious

background and experience to interpret the Lord's Prayer within the context of their own beliefs. This was a very spiritual lesson where, led by their teacher, pupils showed sensitivity and respect for each other's beliefs and a tremendous respect for God. The inspector observing this lesson felt privileged to have been present.

222. Younger pupils in the infant classes broaden their knowledge and understanding of significant events and characters in religious history through, for example, learning about Joseph and his coat of many colours. It is the good teaching in this lesson that made pupils' learning successful. The teacher read from an illustrated book, each step of the story being represented in both words and pictures. She used straightforward, everyday language with which the children are familiar. The teacher used questions well and referred frequently to the multicoloured silk scarf she wore throughout the lesson. This good use of language and symbolism is particularly helpful in establishing meaning and understanding for pupils whose language skills in English are still at an early stage of development.
223. Where appropriate, a member of the support staff provided interpretation in the mother tongue and, for the whole class, recounted the story from the Koran. By the time pupils were ready to record their understanding in words and illustrations, they recognised the name 'Joseph' in English, Arabic and Urdu. By the end of the lesson, most pupils could recount the main points of the story and some offered comments about the fairness of Jacob only giving one of his sons such a spectacular present.
224. In Year 3, pupils are encouraged to put themselves in the place of characters in a story, as when Jesus threw the money lenders out of the Temple. The teacher in this class adopted a particularly vigorous style of presentation and made very good use of questions to encourage pupils to consider the feelings and thoughts of all the different characters involved. As well as developing their understanding of the story, teachers provided good opportunities for pupils to use literary and thinking skills. The key vocabulary was repeated throughout the session. In small group discussions, pupils considered what action they might have taken. Some assumed the role of the priests, angrily making representations to Pilate. This approach brought religion alive for pupils and made a considerable contribution to the development of their skills in speaking and listening.
225. Similar approaches are evident in older classes. Year 5 pupils learned about David and Goliath. A particular feature of this lesson was the way in which the teacher told the story as if she had been an observer at the scene. This captured the pupils' attention and helped them to focus and think about what David and the giant Goliath would have been thinking as they squared up to each other. The teacher systematically developed pupils' vocabulary and, with prompting and questioning, enabled them to share their understanding of ideas such as 'hero' and 'bravery'. In this oral work, pupils made good progress, but when it came to written work, pupils had some difficulty in identifying what were the key points of the story. Taking into account their prior attainment, they made satisfactory progress in the lesson.
226. The quality of teaching is good with some very good and excellent teaching observed. Teachers are knowledgeable about the subject and use language and literacy well to make learning come alive. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are able to take a full part and make similar progress to everyone else. The use of a lighted candle to signify respect and reflection made for a calm and settled start to a Year 5 lesson. Good preparation and organisation ensure that lessons move along at a good pace. Pupils approach their work sensibly and listen carefully to each other's contributions.

227. The school has an adequate range of artefacts to support the teaching of religious education. However, little use is made of information and communication technology to support learning in religious education. The co-ordinator has led staff training on how to teach pupils to learn from, as well as about, religion. This was identified by staff as an area for development. Inspection evidence indicates that this is being successfully addressed.