

INSPECTION REPORT

BURNT TREE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tividale, Oldbury

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103914

Headteacher: Mr M Hibbert

Reporting inspector: Mrs Mary Speakman
21581

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th September 2001

Inspection number: 197691

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 with nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hill Road Tividale Oldbury West Midlands
Postcode:	B69 2LN
Telephone number:	0121 557 2967
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Qayyum
Date of previous inspection:	11 th – 12 th November 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21581	Mrs Mary Speakman	Registered inspector	English Art and design Design and technology	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed English as an additional language
14756	Mr John Lovell	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
17263	Mr Andy Bond	Team inspector	Mathematics History Physical education Religious education	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils Equal opportunities
25775	Mrs Vivien Wilson	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Science Information and communication technology Music	Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Burnt Tree Primary School is in Tividale a district of Sandwell. It is an area of high social and economic disadvantage. There are 174 pupils on roll in the main school and, at the time of the inspection, 13 children attended nursery on a part time basis. This is smaller than average for a primary school. Children are admitted into the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five and into nursery throughout the school year in which they are four. Thirty-five per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is much higher than the average for a primary school. Sixty per cent of pupils come from homes where English is spoken as an additional language; this is a very high proportion of pupils when compared nationally. Forty-four per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, with three pupils having a Statement of special educational need. These figures are above average. Children enter the nursery with capabilities that are at a very much lower level than is usually seen.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Burnt Tree Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and standards of attainment, although lower than those usually seen, are improving at a good rate. Pupils are hardworking, well behaved and have positive attitudes towards school. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in the teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the school. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage¹ is good. The school is well led and managed by a committed headteacher who is realistic about what needs to be done to improve the school further. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher gives effective leadership and manages the school well, working in close and productive partnership with the governing body.
- Pupils achieve well and make good progress in English and mathematics throughout the school. This is made possible through the well-planned and effective teaching of these subjects.
- The high quality of provision for pupils' personal development successfully promotes very good relationships, good attitudes and good behaviour.
- The school provides well-planned and high quality support to pupils who have special educational needs and those who are in the early stages of learning English.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are not high enough.
- Standards in information and communication technology are low and there are insufficient resources for the subject to be taught effectively.
- Teachers' expectations of the standards pupils should reach in practical work in design and technology are low, and pupils' work lacks the expected level of precision and skill for their age.
- Teachers have insufficient confidence and expertise in the teaching of music and standards are not high enough.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents, and carers of pupils in the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has shown a good rate of improvement since its last inspection in November 1999. In response to the key issues from that inspection, a major amount of curriculum time is devoted to English and mathematics, and time allocation for science has recently been increased. The school has examined and reflected on its approaches to teaching and learning. A comprehensive policy document is now in place and there is a rigorous and regular programme of monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work, which involves all teachers in their various management roles. Assessment procedures are developing well. The school tracks the progress of each pupil as they move through the school and establishes National Curriculum targets for achievements. These are regularly reviewed and adjusted in the light of pupils' current progress. There is now a need to develop this further and to set pupils individual short-term targets for achievement in English and mathematics. The headteacher, with the support of the governing body and staff, has maintained a good pace of school development since the last inspection.

¹ The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools ²
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E*	E	D	B
Mathematics	E*	E	E	C
Science	E*	E	E	C

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Although results at the end of Year 6 in English, in 2000, were below average and those for mathematics and science well below, when compared with schools nationally, results have improved since 1996 at a rate that is faster than the national trend. The scores achieved by pupils in Year 6, in 2000, indicate that they made very good progress in English in Key Stage 2³. In mathematics, they made good progress and in science, progress was satisfactory. Results in 2000 were comparable to those achieved by similar schools overall. At Key Stage 1⁴ the results have improved since 1998, although not at as fast a rate as in Key Stage 2 and still remain well below the standards seen nationally. Results of the tests and tasks taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, in 2000, were comparable with those found in similar schools in reading, higher in writing, and lower in mathematics. Inspection findings reflect the test results in English and mathematics. Standards in science are below the national averages at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, which is an improvement on the test results.

Pupils work hard, particularly to acquire the full range of language skills they need in English and they achieve well. Pupils achieve the standards in art and design, religious education, history, geography and physical education that are expected for their age. Standards in information and communication technology, design and technology, and music, are lower than they should be by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

Children in the Foundation Stage make a positive start to their education; they make good strides in their learning, particularly in personal, social and emotional development and in the earliest stages of learning English.

The school keeps very detailed records of pupils' progress in English and mathematics, with individual targets set for all pupils to achieve by the end of each key stage. These targets were met, in the main, in 2000 and 2001.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils come to school eagerly and with a spring in their step. They enjoy their work, respond well to their teachers and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; both in lessons and around the school. Pupils understand and conform to school and class rules.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils value each other as individuals and care for each other very well. Older pupils show a good measure of initiative when fulfilling the various duties they share.
Attendance	Attendance is below the national average and unsatisfactory.

² 'Similar schools' are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals; this measure has been found to be significantly related to the levels of attainment normally found in schools nationally.

³ Key Stage 2 caters for pupils aged 7 to 11 and refers to pupils who are in Years 3 to 6.

⁴ Key Stage 1 caters for pupils aged 5 to 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of the learning needs of their pupils. Throughout the school, teachers plan their lessons very carefully and are consistent in the methods that they use. This enables all pupils to build on past experiences and knowledge and to learn at an increasing pace as they move through the school. Pupils' knowledge of how much they are learning improves as they move up the school and is good at Key Stage 2. Younger pupils at Key Stage 1 find it difficult to concentrate for a reasonable length of time, although teachers work hard to overcome this. In some lessons, teachers do not maintain the initial pace and challenge of the lesson throughout the whole lesson. The teaching of English and mathematics is good throughout the school and teachers have a good level of expertise in the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Provision for pupils who have special educational needs, and those who are in the earliest stages of learning English, is good and this enables them to make good progress towards achieving their individual learning targets. Learning support assistants make a positive contribution to the work of the school, through their effective support for groups and individual pupils. Teachers have insufficient expertise in the teaching of information and communication technology, design and technology, and music, and, therefore, pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides pupils with a broad range of interesting and relevant learning opportunities. There is an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The provision for ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils is very good, as is the effectiveness of the strategies for teaching literacy skills. The information and communication technology curriculum does not fully comply with statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils receive carefully planned support from teachers and support staff. Arrangements for assessment ensure that pupils' needs are identified accurately and that they are set appropriate targets for their learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Effective support enables pupils to make good strides in their language learning as they progress through the school. Pupils with very little English benefit from receiving support in their first language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good. This has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and values.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils, both personally and academically. There are very effective procedures for ensuring good behaviour and combating bullying.

The school has satisfactory links with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The management of the school is good. The headteacher provides energetic and effective leadership and is well supported by an efficient deputy headteacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors fulfil their responsibilities very well and are fully involved in planning for improvement. Many are very involved in the life and work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The management team has a realistic and accurate understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Plans for improvements are made carefully and supported by relevant action and evaluation.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Resources are used appropriately to support the school's priorities for improvements.

There is, overall, a satisfactory level of resources, although there are deficiencies in those for reception. Resources for information and communication technology, geography, and music are unsatisfactory. Accommodation is satisfactory. The governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value and apply these well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• The school helps their children become mature and responsible.• Behaviour is good.• Teaching is good.• Teachers have high expectations of what their children can achieve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents would like more information in the school report about the progress their children are making.• Some parents thought the school did not consult parents sufficiently about the work of the school.• A few parents were not satisfied with the amount or organisation of homework.

Parents have very positive views of the school.

The inspectors agree with most of the parents' positive views, although the overall quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory. Teachers have reasonable expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. The provision for homework is satisfactory and the amount given is similar to that found in most schools. The inspectors agreed with the parents that more detail about the progress their children make could be given in pupils' annual reports. The school works to involve parents in many aspects of its life, but still more could be done to consult parents about the work of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter nursery during the school year in which they are four and move into reception at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. When children enter reception, their levels of attainment are very much lower than those usually seen at this age, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. Most children are in the very early stages of learning English, or have no understanding of English at all. Children make a positive start to their school life, they achieve well, make good progress and by the time they start Year 1, although all their levels of attainment are still very low, they have made considerable strides in their learning, particularly in the areas of spoken language and emotional, social and personal development.
2. The previous inspection judged that standards in English, mathematics and science were rising although in need of still further improvement. Results in the National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, have continued to improve at a rate that is above the national trend. The rate of improvement is not as marked at Key Stage 1 as it is at Key Stage 2, but pupils start in Key Stage 1 from a relatively lower level than when they move into Key Stage 2. Test and task results of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, in 2000, showed standards in reading and mathematics to be well below the national averages and below average in writing. The test results of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, in 2000, showed standards in English to be below the national average, and well below in mathematics and science. The analysis of test results, over time, shows that pupils make good progress through Key Stage 2.
3. Pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum tests are comparable to those of pupils from similar schools in reading at the end of Key Stage 1, and in mathematics and science at the end Key Stage 2. Test results in writing at the end of Key Stage 1, and in English at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average when compared with similar schools. In mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 1, test results are below average when compared with similar schools. Analysis of test data, since 1996, shows that pupils who speak English as an additional language do not attain as highly in the English tests at the end of Key Stage 2 as pupils who speak English as a first language. However, their attainment has increased at a faster rate and, in 2000, the difference in attainment between these groups of pupils was very much less than in 1996. This is the result of improvements to the school's approach to teaching and learning, as well as its participation in the National Literacy Strategy from its pilot year. There is no significant difference in the attainment of pupils from different backgrounds in mathematics and science tests, and none was noted during the inspection. No significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls was seen during the week of the inspection, although girls do slightly better than boys in national tests. This is similar to the national picture. The unconfirmed results of the tests taken by pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, in 2001, are slightly lower than those of 2000. This matches the school's predicted targets for these pupils and takes account of the number of pupils with a high level of special educational needs in both year groups. The standards in English and mathematics seen during inspection are very similar to those found in the national tests. The standards seen in science are higher than those attained in the tests.
4. Pupils' speaking and listening skills develop at a fast rate as they move through the school. Most of the youngest pupils are still in the earliest stages of learning English. They listen carefully to their teachers, although some find it hard to maintain this concentration for a good length of time. They are keen to talk in informal situations, but some find it difficult to express themselves in settings that are more formal, for example, responding to the teacher in front of the whole class. The sensitive and well-targeted teaching and encouragement they receive, as they move through the school, enables them to grow in confidence as speakers. Pupils' concentration improves and, as they get older, they begin to express their views with increasing clarity and confidence. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are confident speakers and give well-constructed answers and views in lessons and in assemblies.

5. Pupils' progress in reading is good and they achieve well. The emphasis on teaching letter-sounds very thoroughly at the early stages benefits the pupils in the long run. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils are reading simple text accurately and, as they move through the school, their understanding of what they are reading deepens. Ample opportunities for reading in groups and independently, in school and at home, and the close monitoring of pupils' progress have proved successful and by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are very close to national averages. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in writing are low in relation to national averages. However, for many pupils this represents good achievement as when they enter Year 1, many pupils are at the very early stages of learning to write. In Year 2, progress accelerates as pupils build well on the writing skills they have worked hard to acquire during Year 1. By the end of the key stage, many pupils are able to construct simple sentences with logical spelling. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress. All pupils have benefited from the school's concerted efforts to improve the quality of their writing through additional writing lessons. However, the writing of many younger pupils is constrained by their limited vocabulary. Older, more able pupils write in a lively style using a reasonable range of formats, such as book reviews, stories, poems, and formal letters. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to write more expressively, using a wider range of language and punctuation and sentences that are more complex. However, some pupils find it difficult to sustain their independent writing to this standard, when carrying out pieces of extended writing, and not enough opportunity is given to pupils at Key Stage 2 to use their writing skills in other subjects as well as English.
6. Although pupils make good progress in mathematics, work hard, and achieve well, standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are still well below average. By the end of Key Stage 1, more able pupils have developed a reasonable understanding of number, and use addition and subtraction facts up to 20 when they undertake mental calculations. Less able pupils still need the support of practical apparatus when working out simple number problems. Most pupils have a reasonable understanding of shape and can measure length competently. By the end of Key Stage 2, more able pupils use numbers competently when solving arithmetical problems. They see patterns in numbers and can use these in their mental maths. Less able pupils find mental problem solving more difficult because they are not so adept at recalling their multiplication facts to help them. Most pupils work accurately with area and perimeter, and work correctly with co-ordinates.
7. Standards in science seen in the school are higher than those found in the national tests and teachers' assessments, in 2000, but still below what are expected of pupils at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, a more practical approach to science is beginning to pay off in terms of improving standards. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to carry out simple tests and observations and to record their findings properly, using drawings, tick lists or writing. Teachers and support staff are adept at introducing and reinforcing scientific vocabulary. At Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress and learn to co-operate well when undertaking practical work and sharing their findings.
8. Pupils make very little progress in information and communication technology because they have had too few opportunities to use computers to cover the whole range of the curriculum. Consequently, pupils' attainment is well below the expected standard at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.
9. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in history, geography, physical education, and art and design, are similar to those expected. Standards in music and design and technology are below what is expected at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. In both these subjects, teachers lack the expertise and confidence to teach some aspects effectively.
10. Throughout the school, taking the curriculum as a whole, pupils achieve well. Because of the effective provision for supporting and teaching pupils who speak English as an additional language pupils make good strides in their language acquisition. As they move through the school, they grow in confidence and their skill in the use of English, and their rate of progress, increases.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of the carefully targeted support from teachers and classroom assistants, together with help from the special educational

special needs support service. A structured literacy programme and suitably designed individual educational plans reinforce this provision. Information from the early assessment of pupils and specific tests is used well to identify and measure pupils' needs and set suitable targets for their learning.

12. More able pupils make good progress because teachers know these pupils' capabilities well and ensure that the work they are set is sufficiently challenging.
13. The school has a very thorough system for tracking pupils' progress in English and mathematics, and for setting targets for achievement at the end of each school year. Targets set for 2000 and 2001 reflected, with a high degree of accuracy, the attainment of pupils in the National Curriculum tests. Targets set for the next two years predict higher percentages of pupils achieving the expected levels at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Given the levels of pupils' attainment, seen in the current Years 5 and 6, these targets seem reasonable. The targets are likely to be more challenging for the pupils currently in Year 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils and staff, together, form an inclusive community in which each member is valued. Pupils' good attitudes to work and play, good behaviour, very good relationships and responses to opportunities for personal development and personal responsibility make a positive contribution to their learning. These attitudes continue to be a strength of the school as at the time of the previous inspection.
15. All parents responding to the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their children like school and the pupils themselves confirm this. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they appreciate and enjoy extra-curricular activities and visits. Pupils' responses to teaching are good or better in the majority of lessons. When the pace and challenge of lessons is good, pupils sustain their concentration well, undertaking work with interest and enthusiasm. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, when pupils were learning about how muscles cause body movement, they readily contributed ideas, enabling them to extend their thinking, share information, and deepen their own understanding, displaying wonder and awe when measuring the expansion of their partner's biceps. Pupils usually listen carefully to teachers and to each other. They display sensitivity and consideration for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. They appreciate and celebrate the cultural diversity within the school. Pupils respond very well to the very good provision for their social development and work effectively on their own and with others, sharing resources, and co-operating well with each other from an early age. They show increasing independence in their work, and in the way that they organise themselves, as they move up the school. Throughout the school, pupils take responsibility for tasks within the classroom. The older pupils take increased responsibility for their own behaviour and actions; for example, they undertake duties within the library or help with photocopying, which benefit the whole school.
16. Pupils' behaviour generally is good in the classroom, in the hall at lunchtime, and at play, and pupils have a very good awareness of the standards of behaviour that are expected.
17. They have a good understanding of the impact of their actions and words on the feelings and learning of others. Pupils move around the school in an orderly and quiet manner, holding doors open for each other and for adults. They are courteous and polite, welcoming each other and adults cheerfully when they arrive at school. Pupils are trustworthy and, from the youngest age, look after equipment, resources and property, displaying consideration and fairness in sharing. Pupils take care of their environment and there are no signs of graffiti or litter within the school, although the site is subject to vandalism out of school hours.
18. Pupils know that bullying and oppressive behaviour can take several forms and that they should act responsibly towards each other, seeking support from staff if they have any concerns or need support for themselves or a friend. Some pupils express concern about name-calling but they know that staff will respond to their concerns about this, or any other matter, and that any incidents are dealt with effectively. Four pupils were each excluded for a fixed period during the school year

prior to the inspection. Overall, the good standards of behaviour, combined with the very good relationships, help to create an environment in which all pupils can learn.

19. The quality of relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults, within the school, is a strength and pupils value each other as individuals and care for each other. They are inclusive in their play, share equipment amicably. Dinnertime is a social occasion in which boys and girls of all ages, and from a rich diversity of cultural backgrounds, mix together at the dining table very well and treat visitors with great respect and courtesy, seeking to include them in their conversations. They are proud of their school and identify with it, wanting visitors to gain a good impression.
20. Attendance shows an improvement since the time of the previous inspection and, although it remains unsatisfactory overall, it has steadily increased each year from 1997 to 2000, which is the last year for which there are comparative figures. During the term prior to the inspection almost 33 per cent of pupils achieved very good attendance levels, and ten pupils did not miss any sessions. Since the previous inspection, the school reports that there has been a small reduction in the number of sessions missed because of extended holidays, which have been properly requested and authorised. These were referred to in the previous inspection report and still account for a significant proportion of the authorised absences, together with absences due to illness, medical visits and annual holidays. From the school's own analysis of data, it is clear that the progress of pupils who take extended periods of absence is affected adversely.
21. The very significant majority of pupils arrive at school punctually for the start of sessions, although a small minority arrive late, but usually before the registers are closed. Such instances of lateness are properly recorded. Registers are called efficiently, lessons begin on time, and pupils quickly settle to work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

22. Taking account of the quality of teaching observed during the week of the inspection, the findings from studying pupils' work, and other available evidence, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the week of the inspection. Improvements in the quality of teaching were noted at the time of the previous inspection and these improvements have been maintained. The school's approaches to teaching and learning have been refined through considerable staff in-service training and rigorous monitoring by the headteacher and senior staff. Improvements have been made to the assessment of pupils' progress in English and mathematics and findings are used to set targets for pupils, and when planning the curriculum. This approach now needs to be extended across the remainder of subjects taught. A positive feature of teaching throughout the school is the consistency of approach by all teachers. This means that pupils are clear about what is expected of them and are able to build on earlier experiences; for instance, there are consistent approaches to the teaching of speaking and listening and in teaching pupils to assess how much they learn in lessons.
23. Of the 48 lessons observed, almost all were satisfactory or better. Of these, just over a third were judged to be good, with around one in ten lessons being very good or excellent.
24. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The teachers and support staff have a good understanding of the learning and emotional needs of the children. They provide a reasonable range of interesting activities which enable the children to make good strides in their learning and staff manage the children well. All the staff work in close and effective partnership. This is particularly evident in the teaching of children who are in the earliest stages of learning English, where the partnership teaching between bi-lingual support staff and teachers enables these children to make good progress. Children's capabilities are assessed carefully when they start school and this information is used when planning the children's learning programme.
25. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory overall. Teachers show good expertise in the teaching of literacy and numeracy and this enables pupils to make good improvement in their learning. However, there are weaknesses in teachers' expertise in information and communication

technology, music, and aspects of design and technology. Music is taught well to a few classes, by a visiting teacher, and her expertise is shared with staff to the benefit of pupils, but there is still a need for more staff training in the teaching of this subject. Teachers have a good understanding of the structure of the design and technology curriculum and give good attention to planning of projects and, at Key Stage 2, to the on-going evaluation of pupils' work. However, expectations of what pupils are able to achieve in the practical aspects of this subject are low.

26. The teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school. Teachers have a good understanding of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This, combined with the positive relationship they have with pupils, the careful planning of lessons in these important subjects and the consistency in approach throughout the school, results in effective teaching of all pupils. Teachers plan lessons in sufficient outline for the half term and then produce more detailed weekly plans. The school's analysis of pupils' test results at the end of Key Stage 2, and of their responses to the texts they read, showed that pupils needed additional practise in this aspect of literacy. Timetable adjustments enabled pupils to have additional time to develop this skill. A very good English lesson seen in Year 6, for instance, concentrated on teaching pupils to interpret the deeper underlying meaning of the text. The class shared a passage, which had many layers of meaning. Through discussion about the text and a series of independent tasks, pupils began to understand how characterisation and use of language might enrich their understanding of the meaning of the text. By the end of lesson, they understood how the passage displayed irony, and were able to comment on the temperament and motivation of the key characters in the story. Very effective use was made of support staff to ensure that pupils with special educational needs, and those in the earlier stages of learning English, were provided with follow up activities at an appropriate level.
27. Teachers ensure that in subjects other than English they always use the language and technical terms appropriate to the subject. They identify in their planning the key vocabulary to be emphasised. However, writing tasks do not always make use of skills pupils have learnt in literacy lessons. Subjects such as science or geography are not regularly used to extend pupils' writing skills, depending overmuch on tick lists or worksheets, which make few demands on pupils' literacy. Good use of writing was made in a design and technology lesson seen in Year 2, when pupils were required to write full sentences to describe exactly how a puppet they had examined, moved.
28. Teachers' planning is good throughout the school. Teachers always identify objectives for pupils' learning and share them with the class, writing them on the white boards and then discussing or explaining them at the beginning of the lesson. The objectives are carefully defined and are specific to the particular lesson. This means that pupils know exactly what they are expected to have accomplished by the end of the lesson. Throughout the school, the final minutes of a lesson are taken up evaluating how much pupils have learnt and understood. As a result, all pupils are developing a good level of awareness of how well they are progressing. Older pupils appreciate the importance of this evaluation session and how it helps them to improve their work.
29. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are satisfactory throughout the school. Work for the more able pupils is appropriately challenging in English and mathematics. However, more could be expected of pupils in some other subjects, such as design and technology, and music. Where expectations are high, teachers conduct whole-class teaching at a brisk pace, involving pupils in discussion and explanation. Sometimes, teachers do not maintain the challenge and pace that is seen during the introductory presentation throughout the lesson. Teachers are very aware that they need to give pupils time to consolidate and understand their learning but, sometimes, too much time is allowed for this and the pace of working slows.
30. A particular feature of teaching is the breaking up of whole-class teaching by brief opportunities for pupils to discuss aspects of what they are learning, or to extend their ideas in pairs, and then to contribute their answer to the whole class. This is most effective in developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, as well as giving the more reticent pupils a chance to express their ideas. In a literacy lesson observed for the youngest pupils in Year 1, the teacher introduced this approach. Most pupils quickly identified a partner and, encouraged by teacher and supporting staff, shared their ideas appropriately. However, a number of pupils were, at first, unsure of what to do and

unwilling to talk to their classmates. With the encouragement of the teacher and support assistant, these pupils understood what was required of them and, when a second opportunity for partner talk was given, they participated fully.

31. Teachers manage pupils well. They establish very positive and productive relationships with their pupils. They maintain assured control of their classes in a friendly but purposeful manner. Class rules are displayed in all rooms and teachers are consistent in their insistence on high standards of behaviour. As pupils progress through the school, they learn to work independently and support each other when difficulties arise.
32. The use of ongoing assessment is satisfactory overall. Teachers support pupils well in lessons, and intervene appropriately if they are having difficulties. Teachers give pupils useful feedback at the end of the lesson about how they are progressing. Marking is always helpful and teachers give useful comments about what pupils can do to improve
33. Teachers use the time and resources available to them satisfactory. Lesson start briskly after registration or break. Most available resources are readily accessible to pupils and due attention is given to establishing safety rules in practical subjects, such as design and technology or physical education. Teachers make insufficient use of the available resources for information and communication technology, and opportunities to develop pupils' information and communication technology skills across the curriculum are rarely taken.
34. The deployment of support staff is very effectively managed. Support staff play a full part in planning the teaching programme. Good use is made of support staff to monitor and assess pupils' responses to whole-class teaching. Support staff know the pupils well and are very skilful at encouraging and supporting the more reticent pupils, and those who are at the earliest stages of learning English. Support for these pupils is targeted very well.
35. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers make good use of these plans, whether planning pupils' work or when helping them to modify their behaviour. The focused help given by support staff allows pupils to participate fully in all classroom activities at an appropriate level. This allows them to benefit from individual help and thus make progress that is more rapid.
36. The teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language is good. All staff have a thorough understanding of the language needs of these pupils as well as their other learning needs. The school assesses pupils on entry and tracks their progress as they move through the school, providing them with individual targets for language learning. Bi-lingual support and partnership teaching are used well to enable pupils, who are in the earliest stages of learning English, to have full access to the curriculum. All support takes place within the classroom, so pupils of all ages benefit from the interaction with their classmates, whilst receiving additional support. Support is planned and integrated into the whole-class lesson well. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress in learning English. By the time they start in Year 1, despite the fact that, for many pupils, their understanding of English is still at a very early stage, they are able, with support, to understand instructions, respond to adult questions, and tackle the work they are given. As they move through Key Stage 1, pupils acquire the technical skills of reading although, for some, their understanding of the text is rather tenuous. Teachers recognise the need to work with pupils at their understanding of text, and they make good use of the shared reading part of literacy lessons to assess and further pupils' understanding. In a literacy lesson observed in Year 2 the teacher spent considerable time discussing the story with the reading group, ensuring they understood the key components of the text before they read. A lengthy discussion ensued about what a map would be used for, and what a tent was. This discussion proved valuable because when pupils read the story they were able to show a reasonable level of understanding in their discussions with the teacher. In Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress in language acquisition and reading, although their progress in writing is at a slower rate. Pupils benefit from the support of learning assistant and visiting teachers throughout the key stage. Work for these pupils is planned by the class teacher, in partnership with supporting staff, and is matched well to pupils' learning needs. Additional support is given to pupils with reading

and writing. Teachers keep careful records of pupils' progress, noting significant progress or difficulties, and using these to plan further work.

37. The rate of pupils' learning increases as they move through the school. At Key Stage 1, teachers, rightly, devote a great deal of time and effort ensuring that pupils acquire vital literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers at Key Stage 2 build on the firm foundations provided at Key Stage 1. The fact that progress accelerates at Key Stage 2 is due not only to the quality of teaching in that key stage, but also to the quality of teaching that they have received earlier in their schooling. Pupils' knowledge of how much they are learning improves as they move up the school and is good at Key Stage 2. This is due to the consistency with which teachers and pupils evaluate what has been learnt in all classes. Pupils respond well to the challenges they are given, the older ones usually concentrate well during whole-class discussions and teaching but, sometimes, the pace of their work flags when they are undertaking follow-up tasks. The concentration span of the youngest pupils is short, and teachers work hard to overcome this by breaking up lessons into short tasks, discussing in pairs, and activities that require pupils to participate. For example, in a literacy lesson seen in Year 1, the teacher involved the pupils very fully in the whole-class session. Pupils identified rhyming words with enthusiasm and delight at their own understanding, talked about their work in English, in pairs, and nodded or put their thumbs up every time they identified a capital letter or a full stop! This overcame, to a great extent, their short concentration span and enabled them to make satisfactory gains in learning in a pleasant, working atmosphere.

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

The curriculum

38. The school provides pupils with a good range of curricular opportunities in Key Stages 1 and 2, which are suitably matched to their interests and cultural backgrounds. There is a strong emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science in order to raise pupils' level of attainment and, as a result, the time allocation given to other subjects tends to be quite small. However, this slight imbalance is appropriate at the present stage of the school's development. The school meets statutory requirements in the delivery of religious education, but fails to meet these in information and communication technology. There is no scheme of work in place for information and communication technology, the equipment available is insufficient and is not used frequently enough in other subjects to enable pupils to gain the appropriate levels of proficiency.
39. The school has made good progress developing the curriculum since the last inspection in 1999. Curriculum planning is very thorough and learning objectives are clearly identified across all subjects. The gradual introduction of the National Curriculum guidelines has helped teachers to identify exactly what they want pupils to learn in lessons. The whole-school curriculum plan, which outlines the topics to be taught in each subject in each year group, gives a clear and logical overview of how the curriculum is covered throughout the school.
40. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. Since the last inspection, ways of identifying these pupils has improved and more appropriately targeted support provided. At each stage of need, the aims for improvement are written and suitable work devised to achieve these targets. The earliest plans, written by class teachers, however, do not always have sufficiently precise targets to assist them in planning pupils' work. Class teachers and support staff work closely together and ensure that their contributions are closely linked. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in lessons, ensuring equality of access to all subjects.
41. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been introduced into the school curriculum and are proving to be very beneficial in raising levels of attainment. In particular, literacy underpins the development of many curriculum areas. There are many good examples of pupils developing their basic English skills of speaking and listening in paired work and using research techniques in reference books to find information. Numeracy skills are taught well with teachers carefully breaking down the component parts of mental and written work to enable pupils to gain a clear understanding of the various mathematical processes.

42. The school takes a strong stance on equality of opportunity and has very good procedures for ensuring that all pupils receive their full curriculum entitlement. The school favours a policy of supporting pupils who receive additional help within the class, and withdrawal from lessons is rare for such pupils. The school recruits staff from a range of ethnic backgrounds in order to provide pupils with appropriate role models. The school monitors the performance of all pupils well and analyses any differences in attainment by specific groups. The provision for delivering personal, social and health education is sound. There is no discrete time set aside for providing this element of the curriculum except in Year 6, where sex education is taught in a sensitive way to separate groups of boys and girls. Drug awareness is also taught in the final year in the school through the use of video presentations and specialist visitors, such as the school nurse. Health education also features in other curriculum areas, such as science and physical education, where pupils are encouraged to follow healthy lifestyles through cleanliness, balanced diet and regular exercise.

Extra-curricular activities

43. The provision of extra-curricular activities for pupils is satisfactory and all pupils have the opportunity to take part in visits, which support the curriculum and provide opportunities to widen pupils' experiences. Almost 90 per cent of parents believe that the school provides an interesting range of extra activities. These include a homework club that provides study support for mathematics, English, and preparation for the National Curriculum tests, a 'games club', offering pupils a range of sports throughout the year, and a gardening club, in which younger pupils can become involved. Inclusive arrangements have been set up whereby any pupil may learn to play a brass musical instrument, at no cost to their parents. On Wednesday evenings, parents and pupils have the opportunity to join together, sometimes with members of the governing body, staff and the headteacher, to participate in line dancing, which is organised by the school. The popularity of these activities is evident from the enthusiastic and high take-up of places, with almost half of the pupils participating in one or more activities.
44. Pupils visit places in the locality, which appropriately support work in geography, history, religious education, and science, such as Sandwell Valley and Oak House. Pupils in Year 6 visit the urban park, working on a variety of themes including a study of the speed and direction of the River Tame. At the end of the summer term, almost the entire school, with the exception of those children under the age of five, went to Blackpool for the day to experience a seaside visit, and the vivid recollections of the pupils demonstrate the good value of this opportunity. Such visits enrich the curriculum and make a positive contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

Links with the community and partner institutions

45. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is satisfactory and relationships with the local community remain good since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' studies in history benefit from meeting local people who help to bring lessons alive by contributing their experiences about events such as evacuation and the Second World War. Links with Dudley College have been developed to try and offer opportunities to parents and, as a consequence, a small group of parents has undertaken first aid training.
46. Liaison with the secondary school, to which most pupils transfer, is satisfactory. The secondary school has helped with information and communication technology provision during the recent period in which the school suffered two break-ins and consequent loss of equipment. Sporting links with Tividale High School have provided the opportunity for pupils to play hockey as an after-school activity this term, for which pupils pay a small charge. The consortium of local schools is currently working with the High School to develop the physical education and dance curriculum. Useful links exist between co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science. These, together with good transfer arrangements, benefit the transition of pupils between primary and secondary school.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

47. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is good as was found at the time of the last inspection. The very good provision for pupils' social development is an improvement on previous standards. Religious education gives pupils suitable opportunities to consider the beliefs and practices of some major world faiths. Pupils' spiritual development is addressed well through stories illustrating suitable themes in lessons and in collective worship. Pupils are given a short time for reflection or personal prayer in assemblies. This is helpful in developing their own thoughts and views on a subject. Time is allowed for pupils to reflect on issues and values at other times and different places. For example, in history lessons pupils consider Victorian society's harsh attitudes towards child workers.
48. The school is also effective in raising pupils' awareness of moral issues. Staff succeed in helping pupils to acquire a sense of right and wrong and a concern for others. At the beginning of the school year, assembly themes are particularly helpful in prompting pupils to reflect on how their actions may affect others. Through a discussion about friendship, pupils consider the kind of school they want to belong to and how they need to behave to achieve this. Teachers encourage pupils to think about the needs of people beyond their own families and friends and to show concern for others. Through their own behaviour, staff provide good role models in their manner towards each other and to pupils. In lessons, teachers generally set clear expectations of pupils' behaviour by rewarding good conduct and valuing contributions to the school community.
49. The school is successful in providing very good opportunities for pupils' social development. Pupils achieve very well from a low standard of social awareness as they start school. The school places a strong emphasis on raising pupils' self-esteem and praising their successes. Displays in the corridors celebrate pupils' test results and previous pupils' achievements at work or university. From the nursery onwards, teachers encourage pupils to work co-operatively in pairs and groups. This helps them to understand the importance of taking responsibility themselves and valuing others' efforts. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and others who speak English as an additional language, are integrated well into all aspects of school life. Older pupils are encouraged to develop personal responsibility by undertaking supervisory duties around the school.
50. Pupils' cultural development is good. Teachers provide suitable opportunities for pupils through effective links between various subjects of the curriculum, for example, in religious education and history lessons. Comparative studies of a village in the United Kingdom with a village in Pakistan take into account pupils' personal background and experience. As a result, pupils learn to understand how people from different backgrounds share some similar attitudes. Teachers help pupils to acquire knowledge of their own cultural traditions and to develop respect for the culture of other people. Occasional visitors to the school contribute well to pupils' understanding of different ways of life by demonstrating a variety of foods, ornaments and clothing relating to different countries. Parents are also involved on occasions, such as through a Fish and Chip supper, and gardening club sessions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

51. The effectiveness of the strategies employed to manage and monitor pupils' behaviour, and the support for pupils' personal development, ensure good standards of behaviour overall and very good personal relationships. These, together, help to create an environment that has a positive effect on pupils' learning.
52. The procedures for promoting and monitoring good behaviour are very good. The particular strengths are the consistency with which they are applied, pupils' own knowledge and 'ownership' of the school's sanctions and rewards, and their understanding of the fairness with which they are applied.
53. Teachers have good procedures to promote and monitor pupils' personal development. From the time that children start school, they are encouraged to develop their social skills and to take responsibility for their own belongings and equipment within the classroom. As they progress

through the school, they are expected to take responsibility for organising elements of their own work. For example, pupils in a Year 2 class, who were considering the stories told by different pictures, were expected to organise themselves in small groups, appoint a scribe, and discuss and record their ideas. Staff monitor pupils' personal development well and record those elements which have an impact on pupils' learning, identifying targets which will benefit their further progress.

54. Pupils speak positively of the support that they receive and are confident that they can take concerns, including those about friendship breakdowns, to any member of staff. They know they will be listened to and the issues addressed and resolved sympathetically and effectively. Parents are also invited to help resolve difficulties when it is appropriate. The school's procedures for addressing bullying and oppressive behaviour are very good and, where particular concerns are identified, parents are involved in developing strategies.
55. The school has an appropriate health and safety policy and day-to-day management of health and safety matters is satisfactory.
56. Child protection procedures are satisfactory and comply with requirements. The school is vigilant in exercising its responsibilities and does not hesitate to involve outside agencies, with which there are very good liaison arrangements, if there are any concerns. The school uses the local area protection committee's guidelines. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and has undertaken appropriate training. All staff are familiar with the procedures to be followed in the case of any concerns and these procedures are reinforced during induction for new staff and through staff meetings.
57. The arrangements for providing first-aid are satisfactory. The designated first-aider is available throughout the school day and at least two other staff hold current first-aid certificates. First aid supplies are satisfactory and first-aid kits are taken on school visits. Records for serious accidents are good. However, the recording of minor accidents is inconsistent and, where records are maintained, there is insufficient detail and formal monitoring to ensure that potential risks are identified. Parents are appropriately advised of any bumps that pupils may receive to their head and contacted in the event of any concerns about a pupil's health.
58. The school has satisfactory procedures to monitor attendance and punctuality and seeks to encourage parents to take holidays outside term time and, in the case of extended holidays, work is set and marked upon the pupil's return to school. Generally, the school does not contact parents on the first day of absence in those cases where no explanation has been provided. Good attendance is celebrated, through the award of trophies and certificates, and pupils who are late for school on more than two occasions in a week are excluded from a weekly prize draw for those pupils who have behaved well during the preceding week. There is some inconsistency in the marking of registers and, on occasions, marks for those pupils who are not present at registration are not completed until the following day.
59. Detailed analysis of attendance data ensures that teachers and the headteacher are aware of individual attendance issues and the impact of particular circumstances, such as extended holidays or the removal of pupils from the school roll, on overall attendance figures. Parents wanting to remove pupils for holidays during term time are required to seek approval and are made aware that places will not be held open beyond the agreed date for the pupil's return to school. Approved extended holidays are counted as authorised absences. In those cases where concerns about attendance are identified, the school seeks to resolve them in partnership with parents and outside agencies. Outside agencies and education specialists provide good support and advice for pupils.

Assessment

60. The school has developed good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. This area has improved steadily since the previous inspection. Children are assessed thoroughly when they start school, using a nationally recognised system to ascertain the level of performance across a range of social and academic areas.

61. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, a range of assessment information is gathered, which focuses largely on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. As well as the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, optional tests are taken by pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5. The results of these enable teachers to make accurate assessments of pupils' levels of performance and to monitor their progress accurately. The school has also developed good analytical systems to find out where weaknesses appear in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding within English, mathematics, and science, and modifies the curriculum accordingly to overcome difficulties. The analysis of academic performance of pupils by ethnic background and gender is well established and ensures that any inequality of access is effectively rectified.
62. Individual teachers administer periodic tests, at the end of sections of work, to check on pupils' levels of understanding. Regular reading tests help teachers to monitor pupils' progress and make diagnostic assessment. The daily evaluation of lessons, which is undertaken by all teachers, is a valuable source of information that teachers use effectively to modify the lessons planned for the following days of the week. Problems encountered by individual pupils are noted and strategies put in place to overcome the weaknesses identified.
63. In information and communication technology, art and design, music, history, geography, physical education, design and technology, and religious education, there are no established school procedures for assessment. Teachers tend to make their own informal assessments of pupils' attainment levels, which, although helpful, is imprecise. The school has carefully constructed a development plan, which itemises its main priorities for improvement accurately. The assessment of subjects other than English, mathematics and science is, quite rightly, not a high priority, currently, but at a later stage it would be a useful tool in raising standards in these subjects.
64. The use of assessment information to guide future planning is sound. The school is steadily improving its systems and has generally made good progress in this area since the last inspection. End of year class performance targets are realistically set for each pupil within each class in English, mathematics and science.
65. General objectives based on National Curriculum levels are pasted into pupils' exercise books so that they can focus on what needs to be achieved in the future. However, many targets are too general and need tailoring to individual pupils' needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

66. The effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory and, since the previous inspection, the school continues to maintain good relationships with parents and continues to seek to involve them in their children's learning.
67. The school works hard to involve parents in supporting their children's learning and the work and life of the school, for the benefit of the pupils. This partnership is reinforced by a home-school agreement that has been signed by all parents and children. The significant majority of parents value education and, together with their families, provide good support for their children's learning, encouraging them to develop good study habits by, for example, reading regularly at home. The school recognises that many parents do not speak or read English but that, with the support of their family and bilingual staff, they are kept satisfactorily informed about their children's progress and the life and work of the school.
68. The parents are very pleased with the school and the education that it provides. Inspectors' judgements support the many positive views expressed by parents. However, a few of the parents expressed some concern about the information provided about arrangements for homework, the information that they receive about their child's progress, and the closeness with which the school works with parents. The inspection team found that homework is set and marked regularly, and that it satisfactorily extends work undertaken in the classroom. The information provided to parents about pupils' progress is satisfactory, although annual reports are not always clear about what pupils need to do to move forward and how parents can support them in making further progress. However, parents respond very well to any concerns expressed by the school and

provide good encouragement and support for pupils' learning at school and at home, which has a positive impact on pupils' progress in areas such as reading. Whilst the school does seek to involve all parents in the life and work of the school, parents do not always respond to the opportunities provided, and the school could do more to consult parents and use their views to help shape the work of the school.

69. Information provided to parents, particularly about pupils' progress is satisfactory overall and that provided to parents of pupils with special education needs is good. Parents receive an annual progress report, which was provided in a new format last July. However, it does not provide a clear picture of the progress which the pupil has made. It often fails to identify clear targets for improvement, which could help parents to understand how they can support their child. Reports often include good guidance on how pupils' attitudes could be improved or built upon to benefit their learning. Parents are invited to attend consultation evenings and bilingual support staff are readily available to assist with translations when required. These meetings are attended by almost three-quarters of all parents. Throughout the school, all staff, including the headteacher, are readily accessible to parents. Letters provide satisfactory information about the life and work of the school and detail key dates and information about visits and activities.
70. All families receive a visit at home, prior to their child joining the school, and this, together with arrangements for meeting and welcoming parents of the youngest children when they arrive for school, help to develop a relationship between the school and home. The school organises meetings to help parents understand how they can support their children and workshops in which parents may sit the mental maths National Curriculum test papers in order to gain an understanding of the work which their children are doing. These sessions are appreciated by those parents who attend. However, parents are not provided with sufficient information about the work that is to be covered, which would help them to be able to reinforce learning at home and on family outings.
71. The role which parents play in the life and work of the school is valued by staff and pupils and makes a positive contribution to the pupils' learning. A small number of parents provide effective assistance in classrooms and an active group of parents provide support for activities such as the gardening club, which is enjoyed by pupils in Key Stage 1. The parents', teachers' and friends' association raises money through events such as discos, and the sale of eggs at Easter. The funds that they raise are used to support outings, and provide resources and social events for the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

72. The headteacher provides effective and active leadership and gives a firm sense of direction to the school. He has maintained the good pace of school improvement found at the time of the previous inspection. This has enabled the school to address the key issues from that inspection thoroughly. Standards in English, mathematics and science continue to improve. Although they are still below the expected standard, the gap is closing, particularly for the oldest pupils.
73. The school's aims and the positive whole-school ethos demonstrate a very strong commitment to equal opportunities and the improving of standards and provision. The school provides a caring atmosphere in which pupils feel valued, develop confidence and work hard. There is a high level of commitment, by all members of the school community, to provide the best they can for the pupils.
74. There is a comprehensive policy that has established a whole-school approach to teaching and learning. The monitoring of teaching is thorough and involves headteacher, senior staff and, to a lesser extent, teachers with curriculum co-ordinator roles. The quality of teaching is monitored through direct observation of teaching, after which teachers receive oral and written feedback on identified areas. These findings provide a basis for the teacher's further development. Curriculum co-ordinators regularly monitor teachers' lessons plans, and teachers' evaluations of lessons contribute to adjustments and developments being made to the curriculum. Pupils' written work is scrutinised and assessed regularly and this practice, together with a comprehensive programme of

testing, gives teachers an accurate picture of standards and what aspects of a subject individual pupils need to improve.

75. The school has a realistic perception of where it now, and what needs to be done in terms of further improvement is very closely detailed in the school development planning document. The school, rightly, puts a considerable emphasis on improving standards and provision in English, mathematics, and science. Although other subjects have a lesser priority, their development is not being neglected and the school is currently trying out the use of the new national guidelines for subjects such as information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, and is evaluating their effectiveness over the next year.
76. The headteacher is supported well by an efficient deputy headteacher and an experienced Key Stage 1 co-ordinator. Recent reorganisation of their duties, to accommodate the introduction of the Foundation Stage curriculum, have been made smoothly and ensure that the three key stages are given effective leadership and managed well. A planned structure of the headteacher's daily briefings, meetings for key stages, whole staff and senior staff, ensure that everybody is informed about the day-to-day life of the school and participates in school development. The school has a logical management structure that ensures that all National Curriculum subjects have co-ordinators, as do major areas of development, such as assessment. However, changes in staff and the impact of a long-term absence have meant that some subjects do not have a permanent manager. This has recently been rectified in the case of information and communication technology, but science, design and technology, and geography, currently, have no co-ordinator, and these subjects are temporarily being overseen by the headteacher. This is manageable in the short term, because all teachers are committed to school improvement and work very hard. The headteacher has focused on sustaining and developing the science curriculum. Geography is a priority for development later in the development cycle and standards have been maintained. However, development of design and technology has slowed in recent months and this has had a negative impact on standards in this subject.
77. Since the last inspection the governors have maintained and further developed their high level of involvement in the life of the school. The governors have very detailed view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They visit school regularly and take their individual responsibilities seriously. The governors perceive themselves as 'analytical friends' of the school and are well versed in interpreting the wealth of data and information about the school that they receive. They are fully involved in planning for the development of the school. However, statutory requirements are not fully met because there are deficiencies in the provision for information and communication technology for pupils between the ages of five and eleven. The school has prudent budgeting based on very good development planning. The governors contribute very significantly to the planning process by maintaining a strategic overview and bringing to discussions a wide range of relevant experience and expertise. The school development plan drives medium-term planning and budget setting. In all cases, priorities are clearly identified and correspond with the school's current needs. Success criteria are clearly defined and priorities are related to raising standards of attainment. There is a close association between educational and financial planning, and specific proposals are costed appropriately.
78. The management of the school's finances is good and financial control and monitoring, combined with careful review and appropriate action, has enabled the school to cope with adjustments in the level of funding. For example, there has been a significant reduction, in 2000/1, in the funds available to support pupils from ethnic minorities, which the school has managed without it making a significant impact on the support provided at the current time. For some period, there has been a shortfall between expectations and funding but, through prudent budgeting, the governing body has achieved an almost balanced budget. Staff and governors contribute to the school development plan, although consultation with parents is limited. Priorities are determined which guides the financial planning in the school. The governing body, through the finance committee, monitors expenditure carefully and the impact of its spending decisions, such as the effectiveness of monies allocated to the provision of support staff. Additional funds such as those allocated to supporting pupils with special educational needs, and the standards fund, are used appropriately.

79. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has a clear overview of special educational needs provision and manages this area capably. She works closely and effectively with teachers and classroom assistants in the planning of suitable activities. Individual educational plans are monitored regularly and discussed with staff. There is a satisfactory policy for special educational needs and it features in the school development plan. A named governor has responsibility for this aspect of the school's work and meets regularly for discussion with the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Resources for English are good and are used effectively to develop pupils' language skills. There are insufficient materials for extending pupils' learning through information and communication technology.
80. The match of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum is satisfactory. Teaching staff are appropriately qualified to teach the Foundation Stage, infant and junior age pupils and, although first qualifications do not always match co-ordinator responsibilities, there is a broad range of expertise amongst the staff. Support staff are used effectively and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Administrative support is adequate to meet the school's needs and makes a sound contribution to the smooth running of the school. The amount and range of in-service training undertaken by the staff are good and contribute considerably to meeting the priorities identified by the school and to professional development.
81. Induction arrangements for new staff are good, as is the support provided for newly qualified teachers. The school has recently made several new appointments to the teaching staff and newly appointed teachers had opportunities to spend time in the school before taking up their duties, to meet with staff and be made aware of school's classroom practise and approaches to behaviour management. The success of these arrangements was seen during the inspection when two teachers who had been working in the school for a week, at the time of the inspection, were very well versed in the school's approaches to teaching and learning and put them into practice confidently in the classroom.
82. The school has developed a very good strategy for performance management that is well supported by rigorous monitoring of teaching and a regular review of objectives and progress towards meeting them. The school's provision for performance management of staff is very thorough and organised well. All teachers have targets in place and review dates are set for later this term, the findings of these reviews will provide starting points for school development priorities in the coming year.
83. The accommodation for delivery of the curriculum is satisfactory overall and all classrooms now have a water supply, which will benefit the provision of practical activities. Classrooms are an appropriate size for the number of pupils and do not restrict movement or teaching styles. However, there are no designated areas for specialist activities, such as music and information and communication technology. The library area, although small, provides a good focus for independent learning and is well used. The grounds are attractive and provide an appropriate resource for pupils' physical development, although they are underdeveloped as a resource to support areas of learning such as science. The hard surfaced playground is in satisfactory condition, although it lacks markings and equipment to provide a stimulating environment. Displays within the school are used well to brighten the environment, celebrate pupils' activities and successes and are linked to areas of the curriculum.
84. Since the previous inspection, some of the poor woodwork and window frames have been replaced and all classrooms now have new window frames, although the openings restrict ventilation when it is hot and some pupils' state that this affects their ability to concentrate. Where wooden window frames remain, they are often in very poor condition and the school is conscious of the potential hazards of widows falling from rotten frames. The maintenance of the grounds has improved since the last inspection and the entrance to the school is an attractive, landscaped feature.
85. The school has an adequate range of resources to support most areas of the curriculum and resources are generally well organised to maximise their effectiveness. Resources to support numeracy, science and religious education are good. Resources for information and communication technology, geography, and music, are unsatisfactory and limit pupils'

opportunities in these subjects. Resources for children in reception are unsatisfactory; many of them are worn and uninviting. There are not enough attractive up-to-date materials to stimulate children's imagination and develop their learning. Similarly, the outside area is lacking in attractive, fixed, play apparatus to excite children's interest and extend their physical skills.

86. Issues identified in the last audit, completed in 1998, have been addressed and, although problems with the computer system used for financial management have been resolved. Some procedures for checking the school's expenditure throughout the year are not kept up-to-date. This is because the necessary information is not always received promptly from external support services.
87. The school's use of new technology to support management is unsatisfactory. Computers are used to maintain the school's financial records, to record pupils' personal details, and for word-processing. E-mail and facsimile facilities are not used to assist in communication and, when the school needs to send a fax, the facilities available at local retailers are used. Recently, the school has taken delivery of an optical mark reader, which will enable attendance data to be scanned into a computer and analysed, which will further improve the monitoring of attendance and make the analysis of attendance data more efficient. Other areas in which the school has not developed the use of new technology include the recording of assessment data and internal communications within the school.
88. The school's procedures for ensuring best value are good, although it is recognised that they could be further improved, particularly in respect of consultation with parents and pupils. Strategies for comparison are very good, and the school and the governing body compare standards and expenditure with that of other schools, both locally and nationally and, as a result of their work in this area, have been able to identify and address certain anomalies. The members of the governing body effectively and constructively challenge and fulfil their monitoring role very well. The use of competition is well established in determining how goods and services can be best provided and this is exemplified by the careful consideration of ways in which further computers may be provided and the type of equipment which is most effective in meeting the school's needs. The school and governors view obtaining best value as a means to providing continuous improvement.
89. Taking account of the context of the school, and the very low level of attainment of pupils on entry, the quality of teaching and education provided, the progress that pupils make, the standards they attain, and the level of expenditure, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

90. The headteacher and staff, in partnership with the governing body should continue to work together to raise standards

θ in English and mathematics by:

- setting pupils short-term individual targets for improvement;
- making regular use of information and communication technology in these subjects.

(Paragraphs 8, 68, 109, 119)

θ In science by:

- using the additional time allocated to science to extend the pupils' scientific knowledge further.

(Paragraphs 7, 126)

θ In information and communication technology by:

- ensuring there is sufficient time allocated to teach the subject thoroughly;

- improving the level of resources;
- devising and implementing guidelines that support the teaching of this subject in sufficient depth;
- developing staff expertise and confidence in this subject so that they are able to use resources effectively.

(Paragraphs 8, 33, 38, 85, 87, 124, 126)

θ In design and technology by:

- raising teachers' expectations of the standards pupils are able to reach in practical aspects of the subject.

(Paragraphs 9, 25, 29, 133, 135, 137)

θ In music by:

- providing a scheme of work that will support the teaching of this subject in sufficient depth;
- developing staff expertise and confidence in the teaching of music.

(Paragraphs 9, 25, 29, 156, 159, 160)

Other issues which should be considered by the school for inclusion in the action plan:

- to further develop assessment strategies, by introducing formal methods of assessment in information and communication technology, art and design, music, history, geography, physical education, design and technology and religious education;

(Paragraphs 63, 135, 139, 145, 151, 167, 173)

- to improve the quality of resources for children in the reception class.

(Paragraphs 85, 98)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

48

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	4	18	24	1	0	0
Percentage	2	8	38	50	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	174
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	62

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	83

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	104

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.5
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	9	18

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys*	-	-	-
	Girls*	-	-	-
	Total	14	14	14
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	78 (87)	78 (83)	78 (73)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys*	-	-	-
	Girls*	-	-	-
	Total	15	14	14
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	83 (83)	78 (77)	78 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

*The number of boys and girls taking the tests has been omitted, as there were 10 or fewer in each group.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	14	13	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	7	9
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	20	17	20
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	74 (37)	63 (36)	74 (63)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	7	6
	Girls	10	10	8
	Total	16	17	14
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	59 (47)	63 (45)	52 (57)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	8
Pakistani	74
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	49
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	134

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	5.8
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.5

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani	4	
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
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	£
Total income	515,081
Total expenditure	516,183
Expenditure per pupil	2,717
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,571
Balance carried forward to next year	23,469

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	188
Number of questionnaires returned	45
Percentage of questionnaires returned	24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	31	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	24	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	42	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	36	16	9	0
The teaching is good.	58	38	2	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	24	11	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	22	7	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	20	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	44	38	13	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	29	7	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	31	2	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	60	27	4	2	7

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

91. The school makes good provision for the children in the Foundation Stage. Children are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis after their third birthday. They transfer to the reception class in September of the year in which they are five. Most children start school with very low standards of attainment, particularly in language and mathematical skills. This is confirmed by the careful assessments made of each child on entry to the nursery. The majority of the children speak English as an additional language. The sound teaching is very well supported by the three nursery assistants, two of whom are bi-lingual in the children's mother tongue. There is also good support for children with special educational needs, which helps them to progress well. The high level of adult attention ensures that the children make good progress along the 'stepping stones' towards achieving the Early Learning Goals⁵. This reflects the judgement made at the time of the previous inspection. Good relationships with parents are evident as children and parents are welcomed into the classroom each morning.

Personal, social and emotional development

92. By the end of the reception year, children make good progress in this area of development and most attain the Early Learning Goals. Staff put considerable effort into helping children with special educational needs to behave in a way appropriate to belonging to a large group. At this very early stage in the school year, when some children are starting school for the first time, staff show sensitivity to their needs and anxieties. Their calm and courteous manner towards each other provides a good example for children. Most children listen quietly and answer the teacher's greeting as she calls the register for both classes. In the nursery, children play alongside each other amicably. They are happy to join the 'train' of children visiting each area of the classroom and confidently choose an activity for themselves. Older children co-operate well in tidying up at the end of a session. They take turns with the popular, large wheeled toys during playtime. After lunch, they behave in a friendly and polite manner with the mid-day supervisor as they wash their hands and then sing nursery rhymes together. Visitors are invited to bring a variety of foods and clothing to help children understand about other cultural backgrounds.

Communication, language and literacy

93. Children progress well, particularly those with English as an additional language. They benefit from the alert attention of the bi-lingual assistants who ensure that children understand in their first language, while simultaneously learning the English words. Most children reach the Early Learning Goals for communicating verbally with each other by the end of the reception year. Children begin to link letters with sounds and some write their own words, but few reach the goals for reading and writing. However, standards are still very low in these aspects by the time children leave reception. Children enjoy looking at books and interpret the illustrations appropriately for the story. Teachers' patient questioning and suitable choice of activities helps the children to remember letter and word shapes as they look at books, such as 'The Monster's Party'. Some write 'I can' towards the sentence 'I can jump in the jelly', while less able children use felt tip pens to make some recognisable letter shapes. By the end of the reception year, suitable teaching and learning activities results in a quarter of the children in the class being able to write a sentence of their own, such as 'The giant was horrible' and 'Jack was really skinny'. Suitable letter-matching activities on the computer help children to recognise and repeat the correct sounds. This makes an effective contribution to their reading and writing development.

Mathematical development

94. Children make good progress in this area of learning although standards by the end of their time in reception are still very low. By the time children leave the reception class, most can label and count numbers up to ten. Teachers make good use of everyday opportunities for counting and

⁵ The Early Learning Goals set out what children should achieve by the time they reach the end of reception year

comparing, such as finding out how many children are present, or the number of objects in a picture. This helps the children to apply their skills in a real context. Choosing from a selection of colourful socks encourages children to use the right descriptive words as they arrange them correctly in pairs. Children become aware of numbers as they join in accurately with the 'five claps and fold arms' attention signal from the teacher. Praise for effort and response encourages children's confidence in learning. Teachers choose suitable number games and rhymes according to the ability level of different groups. These help children to link number shape with quantity as they count spots on the dice in the 'spotty frogs' game. Songs, such as 'Five Little Ducks' help children to add and subtract as they count backwards and recognise how many are left. Computer games support this teaching effectively, as children work independently in identifying and selecting shapes and numbers on the screen.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

95. Teachers provide an interesting range of practical activities to develop an understanding of the world around them. When children leave the reception class they have made good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Teachers set up suitable activities, which encourage the children to ask questions and suggest explanations. Staff help children to compare different tastes as they try contrasting foods, such as banana and carrot. Children with English as an additional language particularly benefit from choosing suitable descriptions, like 'sweet', 'soft', or 'chewy'. By using construction toys, hammer, nails, and a variety of materials, children learn how to use tools to build. Pouring sand and water, and filling and emptying containers gives them useful experience in finding out about the characteristics of different materials. As children quickly learn to click on the mouse control to move pictures around the computer screen, they enjoy responding to the symbols that tell whether or not their choices are correct.

Physical development

96. Many children start in the nursery with poor co-ordination and physical abilities for their age. By the end of their time in reception, children's confident and well-co-ordinated movements show that all make very good progress in developing their physical skills and most meet the Early Learning Goals. This is because there are well-organised opportunities for children to move around safely inside and in the secure outside play area. They show good awareness of space as they run between other children competently scooting, pedalling and walking their large wheeled toys around. Staff help to develop children's manual dexterity by providing a suitable range of tools and materials to manipulate. Children's dough 'monsters' show how they have carefully moulded, rolled, and joined pieces to make a long shape. They taste and compare different foods and learn which will make them grow strong and healthy.

Creative development

97. Children achieve well in their progress towards the Early Learning Goals. Many have had quite limited earlier experience of creating their own patterns and pictures. They choose from a suitable range of drawing and painting materials to make attractive pictures to express their ideas. One group concentrates well as they arrange glitter and colourful beads and glue them onto card to make a sparkling tiara. Others enjoy dressing up in the collection of different hats on display. They watch quietly and copy the teacher's actions carefully as she shows how to bathe the baby doll and wash her hair. This helps them to use their imagination as they play. When occupied independently in the 'clinic' play corner, however, they do not concentrate for long enough to develop their role-play without positive adult intervention. Music and stories are often combined. Children learn to sing action songs that are well chosen to reinforce language skills. They enjoy experimenting with percussion instruments to discover the sounds that they make.

Teaching

98. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some examples of good teaching. This supports the findings of the previous inspection. Nursery support staff make good, sensitively focused contributions to the children's learning. They are observant and quick to respond to children's needs. This is particularly evident in the teaching of children who speak English as an additional language and it

is helping them to progress well. The good relationships between all staff contribute well to the good management of the Foundation Stage. Teachers assess children's stages of development as they enter the Foundation Stage and build effectively on these. The detailed planning of learning activities identifies suitable tasks that are directed towards the Early Learning Goals. The staff plan appropriate ways of helping the children with special educational needs. Considerable effort is made in encouraging children to socialise according to the particular needs identified in their individual education plans. Resources for the nursery class are satisfactory, however, in the reception class they are unsatisfactory, as much of the equipment and resources are old, worn, and in need of replacement.

ENGLISH

99. The previous inspection judged that standards in English were rising, although still in need of further improvement. Standards in the National Curriculum tests have continued to rise since that time. Improvement in the tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2 is at a rate that is above the national trend and results have moved from well below to below the national average. In 2001, results are not as high as in 2000. This is in line with the school's predications and takes account of the higher number of pupils with special educational needs in the groups taking the tests. The rate of improvement at Key Stage 1 is not so marked as at Key Stage 2, but pupils start from a relatively lower base than at the start of Key Stage 2.
100. The school sets individual targets for pupils and these predict a continuation of the improving trend over the next two years. Standards seen in the school during the inspection confirm the test findings. Currently, standards in English at the end of Key Stage 1 are well below the national average, and at the end of Key Stage 2 they are below average. Pupils work hard and achieve well. Pupils who are in the early stages of learning English, and those with special educational needs, benefit greatly from the skills of class teachers and support staff all of whom have a thorough understanding of the learning needs of all their pupils.

Speaking and listening

101. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening at both key stages. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments in speaking and listening are well below national averages. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainments, although below, are close to national averages. When pupils start in Year 1 many of them are in the early stages of learning English. The teachers recognise the importance of providing many and varied opportunities for speaking and listening. Pupils listen with great concentration, although some find it difficult to maintain this for very long. From the start, teachers build in brief opportunities for pupils to talk in pairs to break up whole-class discussion. Although the younger, more reticent pupils are unwilling to participate in this activity, such experiences are regularly structured into lessons. Pupils begin to make good use of this opportunity, to formulate their ideas and gain confidence in speaking in front of a small group. They grow in confidence and, by the time they move to Year 6, they talk in quite complex sentences and respond thoughtfully to ideas and different points of view. In an assembly observed, older pupils responded with a good level of maturity and confidence, expressing themselves clearly in front of the whole school when asked to give their views on what makes a good friend.

Reading

102. Throughout Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils benefit from the school's systematic approach to the teaching of reading. Progress in reading is good and by the end of Key Stage 2, standards although below, are close to the national average.
103. At Key Stage 1, pupils are given a very thorough grounding in early reading skills and by the end of the key stage they are acquiring a good range of strategies to tackle new and unfamiliar words. For example, building words by using their knowledge of letter sounds, and breaking words into syllables. Many of the pupils are beginning to apply the techniques they learn during the literacy strategy. By the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils read simple texts and describe the

stories they have read, but only a few pupils are able to talk about the principle characters in their books. The more able pupils use a good level of expression when reading aloud, although many of the pupils have a more stilted delivery that does not take account of punctuation. They know how to use reference books and understand how to use the contents and index pages.

104. As they progress through Key Stage 2, pupils read an increasing range of children's literature and use information books for research with growing independence. At the end of the key stage, standards in reading are close to the national average. Pupils benefit from shared reading in the literacy lessons, where they begin to understand the importance of reading with expression. In a group reading session in Year 5, pupils evaluated the quality of reading aloud by other pupils. Their comments showed a good understanding of how to use punctuation to mark pauses and how to evoke the characters through expressive reading of direct speech. Their comments about each other's reading, although positively phrased, were very honest and helpful, and all pupils made good progress in their learning as a result. The older pupils read a reasonable variety of children's fiction. They identify their favourite authors and the more able perceive the underlying meaning in stories. Older pupils use information books for research and apply their findings to other subjects such as history and geography. It is evident that some hard work has taken place to teach older pupils to interpret and understand the deeper meaning of texts, by regular timetabling of lessons that give pupils opportunities to discuss and respond to a wide range of children's literature.

Writing

105. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' standards in writing are very low when compared with the national average. However, for many pupils this represents a good achievement because, when they enter Year 1, many pupils are at the earliest stages of writing. Most are able to copy letters and words in print, but very few are able to write words independently. Pupils work hard and, by the end of Year 1, many are able to construct a simple sentence with logical spelling. In response to the story 'The Owl who was afraid of the dark', pupils in Year 1 write sentences describing why they like the dark. Some pupils are beginning to use capital letters and full stops correctly. In Year 2, pupils' progress accelerates; they build on the considerable attention given to word work in Year 1 and all pupils begin to write at greater length and their spelling becomes more accurate. Pupils write simple stories and accounts of school activities such as a visit to Blackpool. Pupils of below average ability make good progress and begin to write at greater length, although, sometimes, their accounts are not completely logical and their English vocabulary is limited to commonly used one or two syllable words. Although it becomes more legible as pupils move through the key stage, many pupils' handwriting is not at the expected standard for their age.
106. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make good progress. All pupils have benefited from the positive impact of the literacy strategy and from the school's concerted efforts to improve the quality of pupils' writing through additional writing lessons. Through the key stage, pupils' handwriting becomes more legible, writing is presented tidily, and pupils take a pride in their work. They develop a consistent, joined handwriting style. It is clear that much hard work teaching correct punctuation has been undertaken throughout the key stage, and older pupils use a range of punctuation, including possessive and short form apostrophes and speech marks, correctly. The writing of many younger pupils is constrained by their limited English vocabulary and some pupils in Years 4 and 5 find it difficult to produce extended pieces of writing that sustain a reasonable standard of expression throughout. Older, more able pupils write in a lively style across a reasonable range of forms, such as book reviews, stories, poems and formal letters. The independent writing of older pupils benefits from the attention that teachers give to insisting on full and complex sentences in pupils' written responses to questions about the literature they encounter in literacy lessons.

Teaching and learning

107. The quality of teaching is good overall. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. The rate of learning is faster at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1, although teaching at both key stages is of good quality. However at Key Stage 1, many younger pupils are in the earliest stages of learning English and need more time to absorb, practise and consolidate their

understanding than is usual for pupils of this age. Teachers are very sensitive to the language needs of pupils. They enunciate and repeat instructions carefully and make very good use of visual stimulus and questioning to check and assess understanding. At both key stages, pupils are assisted well by learning support staff who have considerable skill in supporting potentially bi-lingual pupils. Bi-lingual support and teaching staff use pupils' home languages skilfully to aid and enhance pupils' understanding. The literacy hour is used very effectively, throughout the school. Teachers use a good range of strategies to engage and maintain pupils' interest. For example, at the beginning of the lesson, objectives are displayed and discussed and pupils' achievements are evaluated at the end of the lesson. As pupils get older, they develop a keen sense of their own rate of progress. In a lesson observed in Year 3, the teacher reviewed what pupils had learnt and they were able to demonstrate the new vocabulary they had acquired and a keen awareness of when to use exclamation marks.

108. The teaching of reading is organised well. Teachers keep careful records of the reading that takes place in literacy sessions and monitor pupils' independent reading carefully. Teachers have positive relationships with their pupils and usually exercise firm class control. However, in some lessons, teachers do not maintain the high expectations and brisk pace seen during the whole-class presentation throughout the follow up session, and the energy and concentration of some pupils flags, and they do not accomplish as much as they could. In Years 4 and 5, pupils learn how to make notes, which they use in producing a final piece of written work. However, there is no evidence that this skill is being developed further, or that the drafting and improvement of writing are being taught to older pupils.
109. The subject is ably led by an experienced co-ordinator. Test results are analysed well and the information used effectively to set pupils targets for improvement. There is a need, however, to give pupils shorter term, more specific targets for achievement. The co-ordinator has been able to monitor planning, teaching and learning throughout the school. In partnership with local authority advisory staff, a comprehensive language development document has been produced, which gives staff useful practical support in the teaching of literacy. Improvement in standards in English is the school's highest priority and the activities planned to enable this improvement are defined very closely. Those already in place, such as the provision of good quality, shared texts are having a good impact on pupils' learning. There is a satisfactory level of resources and this is improving. There is a small school library, which is organised appropriately and well used. This is supplemented by a good range of children's literature in all classrooms, to which pupils have ready access. The subject is reasonably resourced. Very little use of information and communication technology in support of the subject was seen during the inspection.

MATHEMATICS

110. The National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, in 2000 and the unconfirmed results in 2001 showed that pupils' attainment was well below average. Inspection evidence confirms this because, although many pupils reach at least average standards, a comparatively high percentage of pupils are working well below expectations. Compared with similar schools, the test results in 2000 showed pupils' attainment to be below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and average at the end of Key Stage 2. An analysis of test results show that although performance by boys and girls, and pupils of different ethnic backgrounds, vary from year to year, the pattern indicates no marked difference in results overall.
111. Over the last five years, the National Curriculum test results have improved significantly, at a rate greater than the national trend. Far more pupils are reaching average and above average standards by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, the improved quality of teaching and learning, better assessment procedures, and a determined approach to whole-school strategic planning, appear to be the main reasons for the overall improvement in standards in mathematics. The school has made good progress since the previous inspection.
112. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who are in the earliest stages of learning English, make good progress at Key Stages 1 and 2. The school provides good support through specific programmes and the use of well-targeted classroom support. Support

staff work well with small groups and break down tasks simply or use practical apparatus to build pupils' concepts. They often reinforce class teachers' instructions by translating them into the pupils' first language.

113. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils count forwards in ones, up to 100, confidently, however, they find it far more difficult to count backwards and become confused. More able pupils have developed an understanding of number bonds to 20, and use them effectively in mental calculations, whilst less able pupils need the support of counting apparatus to solve simple single digit addition sums. Pupils are beginning to see pattern in number and recognise odd and even number sequences. They are competent in measuring length, using a ruler to measure distances of less than 30 centimetres. Most pupils recognise basic two-dimensional shapes and name them correctly. By the end of the key stage, more able pupils begin to recall simple multiplication facts on the 'times table' to solve problems.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are conversant in the use of multiplication tables and apply them in order to solve problems. The more able pupils are quick to see patterns in doubling and halving and find a range of factors for different target numbers. Pupils of below average ability are less proficient in the use of times tables and plod through, reciting each fact, or refer to table 'squares' to find a suitable pair of factors. Most pupils have a sound understanding of area and perimeter, the more able constructing their own rectangles for a given area. Some challenging calculations are undertaken by these pupils when a number of processes have to be used to solve a number problem. Pupils use co-ordinates to construct simple shapes on graph paper and, by the time they reach the end of the key stage, they are familiar with negative numbers in four quadrants.
115. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is generally good, and the pace of learning tends to accelerate in Key Stage 2, as pupils mature and build on the existing knowledge, skills and understanding gained their earlier years in school.
116. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy documents effectively to plan their lessons, setting learning objectives, which are shared and often recorded by pupils at the start of lessons. Teachers use accurate terminology to extend pupils' mathematical vocabulary and sprinkle these terms effectively throughout their explanations. The basic skills are taught well, especially in mental sessions. This was illustrated well in a Year 6 lesson when the teacher used the blackboard very effectively to explain the process of breaking down two digit numbers to make multiplication more simplified. The 'doubling' and 'halving' techniques are often employed by teachers to aid pupils' understanding. Teachers have well-developed management systems and ensure pupils listen well and follow instructions. However, there are times when some teachers keep pupils sitting and listening for too long and this results in restlessness and pupils' concentration begins to wane.
117. The quality of teachers' marking is good, especially in Key Stage 2. Pupils' work is marked regularly and positive remarks and merits are used to encourage pupils to achieve well. The best examples of teachers' marking is characterised by the setting of simple targets for the next piece of work. Teachers monitor pupils' work when they are completing tasks in lesson time, but there is a tendency for some teachers to stay with one group for too long, allowing other pupils to drift off the set task.
118. The final part of the lesson is used to good effect, helping to consolidate learning and reinforcing the main objective. This helps to ensure that pupils have a clearer understanding of their own learning.
119. The curriculum is planned well and follows the National Numeracy Strategy. The allocation of time to mathematics is quite generous, but this is in line with the school's priority for raising standards. Pupils are given a good grounding in number work and this is a basis for later development. The use of information and communication technology in mathematics is weak and limits opportunities for pupils, especially in the area of data handling.
120. All pupils receive their full entitlement to the curriculum. Teachers match tasks to pupils' ability levels and spread their questions throughout the class so that particular groups are not excluded.

There is no evidence of withdrawal of pupils from lessons for additional tuition; all specialist support is given within the classroom.

121. The co-ordinator is well qualified to lead the subject, having had a significant amount of training in preparation for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teaching and learning is monitored through classroom visits, review of pupils' work, and the examination of teachers' planning. This enables development planning to be built on a firm foundation through the identification of strengths and weaknesses in provision. Assessment systems are good, ensuring that pupils' progress is carefully monitored. Increasingly, the information gained from assessment is being used fruitfully to set class targets. Some refinement is needed to formally pinpoint pupils' weaknesses, so that specific individual targets can be shared with each pupil. Learning resources are good and support pupils' learning successfully.

SCIENCE

122. The results of the teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and the tests at the end of Key Stage 2, in 2000, were well below average. This is similar to the standards at the time of the previous inspection. Inspection evidence, however, shows that standards are below average at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 and that pupils have made significant and sustained progress. This is due to improved lesson planning and more challenging work for pupils. This improvement in pupils' attainment is a result of more time being allocated to the subject and more opportunities for practical investigation. Results show a slight rise in standards over the past four years, at a rate greater than the national trend. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are average compared with similar schools, representing a satisfactory level of achievement from a very low starting point.
123. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils carry out simple tests and compare their observations. They record their findings suitably by drawings, sentences, or tick lists, according to their ability. Teachers provide a suitable focus to interest pupils, such as growing beans and chrysanthemums, to observe their development. Pupils compare different kinds of foods and learn about their effects on the body. This helps them to understand what they need to eat to grow strong and healthy. In a Year 1 lesson seen, pupils were interested when tasting a variety of foods and feeling different textures. In this way, they discovered how they learn using different senses. Although the teacher and support staff prompt pupils to describe their impressions, pupils who are in the earliest stages of learning English lack sufficient vocabulary to describe their experiences. To extend pupils' knowledge, teachers always ask pupils to repeat new science vocabulary, such as 'circuit'. Pupils usefully explore how materials can be changed so that they can understand about their differing characteristics. For instance, they compare food before and after it is cooked to observe the effects of heat. By freezing water, they learn that it can be changed into ice. Pupils in a Year 2 lesson experimented with light bulbs, wires and batteries to learn that electricity needs a complete circuit. They co-operated well in groups, taking turns and offering suggestions. Progress was slow, however, because pupils did not understand that the 'crocodile clips' could be opened to attach parts.
124. At Key Stage 2, pupils' written work shows that most of their learning is based on practical experience. Pupils enjoy exploring a range of scientific themes. Although these are heavily teacher-directed, pupils learn to apply clear scientific procedures to each experiment. They co-operate well in sharing their findings. The range of pupils' recording is limited to tick lists or descriptions. No evidence was found of pupils using computers for recording in their previous work. However, in a Year 6 lesson seen, a group of pupils with special educational needs was helped to record findings successfully on a graph with their laptop computer. Other groups worked together very harmoniously to measure the effect of forces on an object and repeat experiments to check their accuracy. The teacher's clear explanations and thorough summary of results helped pupils to achieve a good level of understanding. Pupils in Year 5 lesson had suitable opportunities to practise their numeracy skills when they compared the calorie content listed on food cartons, however, the lack of a stimulating practical focus meant that pupils showed little interest in the task. Pupils have opportunities to develop their research skills satisfactorily by using books from the library, but they do not yet use the Internet.

125. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Lessons are suitably resourced and thoroughly prepared, and result in satisfactory learning overall for most pupils. Teachers' consistent focus on appropriate scientific methods helps pupils to develop correct patterns of working. The additional support and modified work given to pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, contributes to their good progress. The good emphasis on collaborative working helps to increase pupils' confidence in communicating with others and to share their ideas. Teachers use the end of each lesson well to summarise pupils' achievements and strengthen their understanding. In lessons where the explanation or demonstration is too brief, some pupils achieve less because they are not clear about the task. This happens on occasions when there is no extra support for pupils with English as an additional language. On the other hand, class assistants sometimes offer too much help to pupils, thus limiting their opportunities to discover for themselves.
126. Although the co-ordinator is currently absent, teachers are committed to improving standards within their own classes. Thorough monitoring by the headteacher ensures that lessons are planned according to school policy and this has contributed to recent improvements. Staff regularly assess pupils' understanding and keep appropriate records of their learning. Pupils lack experience of information and communication technology to develop their understanding of the subject. However, with the replacement of equipment, plans are in hand to integrate this aspect of study within the learning scheme. The school now needs to use the additional curriculum time allocated to the subject to extend pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding in more depth.

ART AND DESIGN

127. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment is in line with expectations. At both key stages pupils achieve well, make good gains in their learning and reach standards that are appropriate for their ages. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others in their class. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils who are in the earliest stages of learning English are supported well by teachers, support staff, and, when working in small groups, by their fellow pupils. This enables them to understand what is expected of them and to give of their best. Available evidence shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. At Key Stage 2, pupils use sketchbooks appropriately to make observational drawings to draft design ideas, but insufficient use is made of sketchbooks to experiment with different media or techniques.
128. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have had a good range of experiences in using various media, including paint, fabrics, thread and pastel crayon. These build well on the experiences they have had in the Foundation Stage and, from the earliest days, pupils are developing a confidence in their abilities. At the beginning of Year 1 pupils paint self-portraits. Although these paintings are lively and expressive, many lack control in the application of the paint. During their time in Key Stage 1, their control of media develops noticeably. Pencil portraits of friends completed during Year 2 show a commendable level of detail and pupils have learnt how to use line and shading to show interesting detail. Portraits painted by pupils in Year 2 also show good experience in mixing colours and applying detail. Colour is used effectively in oil pastel drawings of cross sections of fruit such as pomegranate and kiwi fruit.
129. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to use the various media they have experienced earlier in the school. They show increasing control over a widening range of material and techniques working in both two and three dimensions. As they move through the key stage, pupils learn how to plan their art and design assignments with reasonable skill, and begin to recognise what problems they are likely to meet in managing various projects. Teachers have a good understanding of the design element in the subject and provide regular opportunities for pupils to plan and identify the design problems they might encounter. During the inspection, pupils in Year 4 were observed considering the challenge of devising a chair for a rich person. Through discussions with the teacher and each other, they began to realise the importance of achieving the right proportions for comfort. In all classes, teachers put a particular emphasis on evaluating work in progress with the pupils. Consequently, as they move through the school, pupils develop good critical skills, are prepared to assess the quality of their own and the work of others with a high level of discrimination for their age

130. Pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2 make use of a digital camera to give starting points for their work. For example, pupils in Year 6 took photographs of their classmates making a series of gymnastic movements to illustrate different qualities of movement. However, apart from this, very little use is made of information and communication technology in art and, overall, pupils' skills in this aspect of the subject are lower than would be expected.
131. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and, consequently, pupils are acquiring a reasonable level of skill and understanding in this subject. Lesson planning is very thorough. Because teachers plan a series of lessons around one theme, pupils have a chance to develop skills and knowledge to a reasonable level. For example, in Year 5, pupils learn about still life and, across a series of lessons, learn to devise their arrangements, consider and try out different approaches and views, and make observational drawings leading to painting. Because evaluation of pupils' work is an integral part of each lesson, they are able to discuss the design problems and possible solutions at each stage of their work. Teachers begin each lesson with a clear statement of purpose and make consistent and repeated use of appropriate technical language encouraging and providing opportunities for pupils to use these terms when they answer questions. In a lesson seen in Year 4. This approach enabled pupils to learn the word 'ergonomic' and, before long, they were using it in their discussions. Teachers ensure that pupils who are in the earliest stages of learning English understand what is required of them, by breaking up explanations into short sections, and by emphatic use of key words. Support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning by giving unobtrusive and effective help and encouraging the more reticent pupils to participate in whole-class discussions. They give good support to pupils who need additional help during the practical activities. A weakness in teaching is that, sometimes, the initial challenge and pace that is typical in the first part of the lesson is not maintained as the lesson progresses. Teachers give pupils good support and advice whilst they are working but occasionally allow the pace of working to slow. The balance between giving pupils sufficient time to develop their ideas, solve any problems and produce a piece of work, whilst maintaining a concentrated working atmosphere, is not always achieved and this means that pupils' working pace can slow in the second half of the lesson and time is wasted.
132. There are good links made with other subjects, particularly history. This is successful because teachers are always mindful of the art skills they are teaching whilst reinforcing pupils' understanding of aspects of the wider curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 produced paintings and drawings of a high standard around the theme of 'The Secret Garden', which drew successfully on the story by Frances Compton Burnett to teach aspects of history and English as well as art.
133. The subject is managed satisfactorily by an experienced co-ordinator. Currently, the school is piloting the national guidelines for the subject with a view to adapting them to suit the needs of the school. There is a detailed programme of development in place, which ensures that the changes this adaptation is bringing about are being evaluated on a regular basis. The level of resources is satisfactory. Although teachers assess the impact of their lessons on a weekly basis, this does not extend to regular assessment of individual pupils' progress.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

134. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment in design and technology is below expectations. At both key stages, pupils make reasonable progress in the planning and evaluating of their work and in these aspects of the subject reach standards that are appropriate for their ages. However, their practical skills of measuring, cutting, shaping and assembling are not accurate enough, nor is the quality of finish on the artefact they make of a reasonable standard for their age. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others in their class. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well.
135. Available evidence indicates that, at both key stages, pupils only have a limited experience of the making aspect of design and technology and that standards have declined since the last inspection. Pupils understand the importance of making a design, and they can explain their

ideas in drawing and words. However, their practical skills are limited. For example, pupils in Year 2 made go-carts from card, but the card had been pre-cut for them and all the go-carts were to the same design. Discussions with older pupils in Key Stage 2 indicated that they have opportunities to undertake practical projects in each year and these include working with rigid materials, fabric and food. They reported that they draw detailed designs and undertake evaluations at the end of the projects but, because they do not maintain design and technology notebooks, there is no accumulative record of their work. Discussions with pupils indicated that they have insufficient opportunity to select their own material or tools and their understanding of how to organise a practical activity, measure and join accurately are very restricted for their age.

136. Although the majority of lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better, taking account of all available evidence, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. This is because teachers do not teach pupils the necessary practical skills to a reasonable standard at either key stage. Only a very small amount of teaching of the subject was seen during the inspection and, as it was the very beginning of the school year, all the lessons were about the earliest stages of the planning process, with no making taking place. In Year 5, pupils were introduced to a range of toys and required to investigate how they worked and comment on how fit the toys were for use. In an earlier lesson, they had been set the challenge to make a toy in 40 minutes and these were displayed in the classroom so they had acquired an understanding of the design problems from their own experiences. The teacher extended their evaluation by prompting them to discuss what questions they might ask when they were assessing the toys and these questions became increasingly complex. However, the pace of the lesson and pupils' concentration flagged somewhat during the follow-up session. In spite of that, the lesson gave a reasonable introduction in considering the design process.
137. Teachers have a reasonable understanding of the importance of the designing and evaluating elements of the subjects, but their expectations of what pupils can produce in practical terms are low. The subject co-ordinator is currently absent from school and this, allied to the fact that the subject is not a school priority, means that its development has been neglected in the recent past. There are no formal arrangements in place for assessing pupils' progress. Resources are currently being expanded to ensure that all classes have their own collection of practical equipment and the school is to adapt the nationally devised subject guidelines to ensure a more balanced approach to the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

138. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards of attainment at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. During the inspection two lessons were observed at Key Stage 2 and none at Key Stage 1. Available evidence shows that most pupils are achieving satisfactorily, standards have been maintained, and satisfactory developments in the curriculum have taken place since the previous inspection, although there is still a tendency in some classes to overuse worksheets which do not challenge pupils sufficiently. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive effective additional support and this ensures that they make good progress.
139. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good opportunities to observe their local surroundings to consider different buildings and their uses. Their study of the seaside as a contrasting area involves a suitable comparison with the features of their own locality. Pupils carefully observe and record details accurately on simple maps and plans. They are aware of the names of some United Kingdom cities and know that the climate varies according to its geographical location.
140. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing new skills, ideas and vocabulary. They show a growing awareness of environmental issues such as the effects of global warming and the over use of the earth's natural resources. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use and interpret maps and plans that they draw themselves. In one lesson seen, this task proved quite challenging for pupils in Year 3, as they made simple plans, from memory, of their houses, or their route to school. Suitably modified activities, with praise given to pupils for their suggestions, help pupils with special educational needs to gain confidence in their work. In one session seen, one such group concentrated well on identifying relevant areas in their preparation of a classroom plan. Pupils consider water sources and how water is made available for domestic use. For

instance, in Year 5 pupils identify significant features on the school site, successfully observing drain covers and water tanks. Whereas, they record them appropriately as symbols on their plans, the absence of a key makes them difficult to interpret.

141. Pupils' earlier work shows that their understanding of distant places is superficial. Some studies show a lack of relevant depth. Much of the work in one year-group consists entirely of worksheets, as reported at the last inspection. These require little effort from pupils and opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills are missed.
142. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. Learning activities are clearly planned and fulfil suitable objectives. Lessons are structured well and pupils' achievements summarised thoroughly. This has a positive effect on their learning. It is particularly effective in building confidence in pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
143. The headteacher has oversight of geography, during the long-term absence of the co-ordinator. This has proved as satisfactory arrangement for the management of the subject during the period of absence. Geography is taught alternately with history in blocked periods over the school year. The recently introduced scheme of work contains the appropriate elements. Assessment of pupils' work within the subject is currently under used. There is also little evidence of information and communication technology being used to widen pupils' learning experiences.

HISTORY

144. Standards in history are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, make sound progress through the school. It is not possible to make a precise evaluation of the level of improvement made by the school since the last inspection, because no specific mention was made of history. Evidence provided by the school indicates that an appropriate level of improvement has been made.
145. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve sound standards. They recall famous historical events, such as the Fire of London, explaining where the fire started and why it spread so rapidly through the timber framed houses. Pupils are aware of the primitive methods of fire fighting but not the method of escape taken by many Londoners via the Thames. Pupils draw simple comparisons between seaside activities of today and those of Victorian times. As well as relating typical Victorian seaside pastimes, such as donkey rides and watching Punch and Judy shows, they have a growing awareness of different attitudes, which prevail today about exposure to the sun and the types of clothing worn. They record their views in simple sentences and illustrate their work with drawings of seaside scenes.
146. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve sound standards. They acquire a thorough factual knowledge of the key characters and events in the Second World War. Pupils describe the evacuation process and the use of Anderson shelters accurately. In a lesson seen a more able pupil quoted parts of Winston Churchill's 'Finest Hour' speech. Pupils are developing good chronological skills. They place 20th Century events on a timeline, such as the sinking of the Titanic, the start of the First World War, and the Queen Mother's birth. Pupils know how to seek out reliable sources of information, for instance, when undertaking research to find out the condition of poor children in Victorian times. They organise themselves well and pool their information to obtain good factual knowledge and deepen their understanding.
147. It is not possible to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching and learning, as only two lessons were observed. In one satisfactory lesson in Year 2, the teacher ensured that pupils maintained a good level of concentration through the use of interesting artefacts and good explanations. However, the pace was rather slow and only a small amount of time was given to completing written tasks. In an excellent lesson in Year 6, many outstanding features were present in both teaching and learning. Astute questioning made pupils think before providing logical answers. Pupils' literacy skills were consolidated and research skills promoted through the selection of well-designed tasks. Resources were used very effectively to give pupils a real insight into life in Victorian times. There was a high standard of class management, which centred on

praise and encouragement, resulting in very good behaviour and enthusiasm for work. Pupils worked well together and shared their newfound knowledge to the benefit of others in the class.

148. There is a sound curriculum in place, which builds logically on pupils' previous learning. In view of the school's present focus on raising standards in English and mathematics this appears appropriate. There is evidence of the use of information and communication technology skills being used by pupils, but they are superficial and tend to be directed by adults. All pupils are thoroughly involved in history lessons and classroom assistants perform a valuable role in supporting pupils with special needs and translating teachers' instructions for pupils who are in the earliest stages of learning English.
149. The co-ordinator is new to the role and has had very little time to make a thorough audit of the subject. Because of its low priority status in the school development plan, no monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place recently and assessment systems, other than weekly evaluations, are not yet developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

150. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils attain standards which are well below those expected. Pupils have not gained sufficient knowledge and skills in the subject. Available evidence indicates that insufficient progress has been made in improving provision in this subject since the previous inspection. During this inspection, there was little evidence of clearly planned activities for pupils to use the computers. The school has experienced considerable difficulties in developing this area of the curriculum because of large-scale theft of equipment. This has caused disruption to lesson planning and to pupils' learning. One teacher-led computer lesson was observed and computer activity was seen in a small number of other lessons.
151. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn elementary keyboard and mouse control. They understand that the programmable floor robot moves according to the directional information fed into it. In a Year 2 history lesson, a group of pupils receive useful guidance from a parent helper when entering information. They are helped to select appropriate vocabulary for their writing from a bank of words on the screen and to print the results to share with the class.
152. In Key Stage 2, in one session, a group of pupils in Year 3 began drawing a plan of the classroom to program the floor robot, but this was not seen in operation. During a lesson using laptop computers pupils in Year 4 were shown how to log on and name their database. They used the mouse, pad, and keyboard, competently to enter their information about minibeasts. Lack of sufficient hardware, however, lead to most pupils being under-occupied for most of the lesson. In Year 6, pupils explain how to highlight text and know that the font can be changed to alter size and typeface. They use the mouse to control the cursor and know that a database is a store for information. In a Year 6 science lesson, a small group of pupils with special educational needs benefited from the attention of a competent class assistant. This helped them to satisfactorily record their findings as a bar graph on a laptop computer and to make good progress in their understanding.
153. Some pupils have received extra help during after-school visits to the secondary school. Others describe research and e-mail communication practised at home. However, as a result of the school's problems with resources, pupils have had insufficient opportunities to apply their skills across the curriculum. Pupils understand the potential of word-processing, but have had limited scope to put it into practice. Their understanding of how to communicate and handle information is inadequate.
154. Although one satisfactory lesson was observed, the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. This judgement is based on the fact that information and communication technology is not consistently integrated into computer-based research or data collection within other areas of the curriculum. The subject's successful introduction in the Foundation Stage is not being systematically built upon through Key Stages 1 and 2. Most teachers, as yet, do not have sufficient expertise to identify and address learning objectives that will ensure that pupils make adequate achievement.

155. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Now that equipment has been replaced, the school acknowledges the necessity of developing the subject fully. Information and communication technology has a priority on the school development plan for its integration with all subjects. There is now a need to provide more resources to successfully implement this and to evolve effective means of assessing pupils' achievements. Training for staff and a comprehensive scheme of work is planned to support teaching in all aspects of the subject.

MUSIC

156. Standards of attainment for music are below those expected for pupils at both key stages and available evidence indicates that standards have not been maintained since the last inspection. The standard of singing is satisfactory throughout the school. During the inspection one lesson was observed at Key Stage 1 and two lessons at Key Stage 2. Evidence was supported by listening to singing in assembly and talking to pupils. Music lessons are taught by class teachers or the peripatetic teacher. The school provides opportunities for pupils to learn to play a musical instrument through the local education authority music service. At present, a visiting teacher gives brass instrument tuition. All pupils sing together in their daily assemblies. Their singing of hymns, such as 'Thank you for my friends' is tuneful but lacking in enthusiasm. Pupils sing with satisfactory rhythm and variation in volume to a piano accompaniment. A display on the overhead projector helpfully reminds pupils of the words and adds to their opportunities to practise reading. The playing of recorded music, such as Dvorak's 'New World' Symphony, helps pupils to be aware of the sound of different instruments.
157. The good teaching displayed by the peripatetic music teacher, during a lesson in Year 1, enabled pupils to experience a balance of listening, making rhythmic sounds and singing. Most pupils responded with enjoyment to the question and answer song. Repetition led to their improvement in keeping together as they sang in unison. Pupils clapped with a satisfactory beat in time with recorded music and were fascinated to hear the extended vibrations of a gong.
158. In Year 2, pupils are introduced to a variety of contrasting songs, such as sea shanties, traditional and modern songs. They learn to respond appropriately with their voices to changes in pitch, rhythm and mood. Pupils are entranced by the teacher's proficient playing of tuned percussion instruments such as a xylophone and a metallophone. They make good efforts, but are not able to hold beaters correctly or keep to a steady beat in time with 'Haul away Joe'. Pupils lack experience in using percussion instruments to compose and perform their own music, and are not familiar with exploring sounds and devising their own music notation.
159. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and benefits considerably from the strong contribution of the peripatetic teacher. Class teachers give good support to the visiting teacher during music lessons. In this way, staff benefit from musical expertise and pupils see good examples of teamwork and co-operation. Lessons are planned well to include a balance of musical experiences. The structure and organisation of lessons allows opportunities for performance and improvement for pupils of all abilities and pupils achieve well within individual lessons. However, the current curriculum does not ensure that pupils have sufficient experience of all aspects of the required curriculum and this is why they do not attain the expected standard by the end of either Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2.
160. The newly appointed co-ordinator has identified appropriately the school's priorities for music. These include developing a scheme of work to support the teaching of music in sufficient depth and organising staff training according to their needs. Although two new electronic keyboards have recently been added to the school's collection, musical resources are not sufficient in quantity or variety. Pupils do, however, gain experience in using the instruments brought in by the peripatetic teacher.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

161. Standards in physical education are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Sound progress is made by all pupils, including those who have special educational needs and

those for whom English is an additional language. It is not possible to evaluate precisely the level of improvement made by the school since the last inspection because no specific mention was made of physical education in the last report. Evidence derived from discussion with teachers and examining school documents indicates that an adequate level of improvement has been made.

162. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve sound standards in games lessons. They explore basic skills of running, dodging and marking safely in the school hall. They improve their level of control and co-ordination as tasks become more complex. Pupils are beginning to explore tactics but are not given enough opportunity to discuss how they can improve their tactical approach in order to catch an opponent. They have a clear understanding of the need for warm ups and the effects of exercise on their heart rate.
163. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve sound standards in gymnastics. When working on the apparatus they connect a range of basic balances to form a smooth sequence of movements, often combining with a partner to make a symmetrical pattern. They are building up a good knowledge of technical gymnastic terms to describe their actions. Pupils work well together, moving equipment safely into position and checking that it is secured before beginning gymnastic activity. They are well aware of the importance of warm up activities to gently stretch muscles before energetic exercise begins. However, there is limited discussion amongst pupils about how to improve. Imaginative sequences of movement are demonstrated by pupils to classmates but discussion about the quality of pupils' performances is too teacher led. It was not possible to view the standards of swimming in the school, but the school records show that pupils are making sound progress. Not all pupils have reached the nationally recognised average standard of swimming 25 metres by the end of Year 6, but the level of provision within the next school year makes this a realistic possibility.
164. The quality of teaching and learning is generally sound throughout the school, but there is very good teaching and learning taking place in Year 6. In these lessons there is very effective management of classes, which ensures that pupils listen and follow instructions. Energetic exercise is well controlled and purposeful. Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subject and provide a good warm up session at the beginning of the lesson. Appropriate tasks are set but they are only moderately challenging in lessons at Key Stage 1, whereas, in Year 6, the teachers' expectations are high and pupils are encouraged to extend themselves fully both physically and creatively. Although pupils know the purpose of the lesson, teachers could draw pupils more into discussion in order to evaluate their performance and suggest how improvement could be made in their quality of work. Pupils retain good levels of interest and enjoy physical activity. Their behaviour is generally good and in Year 6 it is of a particularly high standard and pupils show a high degree of maturity in their attitudes. The whole-school approach to encouraging good teamwork is also evident in lessons where pupils work with a partner.
167. The school provides pupils with a good range of activities in physical education, incorporating all the prescribed elements of the National Curriculum. A generous allocation of time is given to this subject, but it provides a useful variety to the more sedentary lessons in the classroom. The school's commitment to inclusion is evident, as all pupils participate fully in lessons. They are properly dressed for physical activity. The co-ordinator of the subject gives strong, effective leadership having a clear view of standards in the school. The subject is not a priority for school development at present, but annually projected plans are produced and these are based on well-founded evidence. Assessment procedures are not well established in this subject, other than in swimming. Pupils' progress could be enhanced by the use of a simplified form of class assessment based on National Curriculum objectives, allowing teachers to build on pupils' earlier learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

168. At the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make sound progress through the school. It is not possible to make a precise evaluation of the level for improvement in the subject since the last inspection because no specific mention was made of religious education in the last

report. However, the general evidence provided by the school indicates that adequate progress has been made.

169. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve sound standards. They recall special celebrations linked to religions and family occasions, relating their own experiences. For example, by eating special foods, such as spiced rice, chappatis and chicken. Pupils know that certain symbols represent different celebrations, for instance, the egg at Easter, and the diva light for Diwali. Pupils have good background knowledge of different places of worship and name church, temple and mosque as important places where people can pray. They know that the Qu'ran and the Bible are holy books, but find it difficult to retell stories about Jesus. They talk confidently about caring for their pets. Many pupils find it difficult to complete written tasks, largely because their literacy skills, at this stage, are quite limited.
170. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve sound standards. Pupils examine their own values and explain choices of symbolic artefacts that represent important events in their lives. They talk sensitively and uninhibitedly about their personal experiences to the rest of the class. Pupils share knowledge of their own religious backgrounds with each other. Muslim pupils tell stories of miracles performed by Mohammed and his trust in one God. Sikh pupils explain the significance of the '5 Ks', and pupils with Christian backgrounds state the rules to live by, as told in the Ten Commandments.
171. The quality of teaching and learning in religious education is generally satisfactory. Teachers have good subject knowledge and move confidently from one religion to another, imparting accurate information. They draw well from pupils' own knowledge and share this with the class. They usually try to link religious beliefs with living in present day society so that it is relevant to pupils' level of understanding. The basic skills of literacy are taught well, with teachers reinforcing good grammatical structure and punctuation in sentences and accurate speech when replying to questions. Artefacts are used effectively in lessons to spark pupils' interest. Teachers manage pupils well, especially in Key Stage 2, and ensure that they concentrate and complete a reasonable amount of work in the time available. In Key Stage 1, the pace of lessons is only moderate and less is accomplished. This is due in part to pupils' limited ability in literacy and the need for giving more careful explanations to younger pupils.
172. The curriculum for religious education is broad, well balanced and relevant for the pupils in school, who represent a wide range of ethnic and religious backgrounds. The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access and their religious beliefs are valued and shared. The half-termly planning is thorough and builds on pupils' experiences progressively as they mature. Objectives in lessons are clearly linked to the school's curriculum plans. Although there is some evidence of information and communication technology being used in the subjects, it is limited to research work in Year 6.
173. The co-ordinator is an established member of staff who has developed the subject conscientiously over a number of years, but has had limited opportunities in recent times, due to school circumstances, to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and do not give a clear picture of pupils' level of attainment. Learning resources are good and these, together with visits and visitors, enliven the delivery of the subject and enhance pupils' learning.