

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **WESTERN SPRINGS COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Rugeley

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124125

Headteacher: Mr A Cook

Reporting inspector: Mrs J Greenfield  
7070

Dates of inspection: 19<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2001

Inspection number: 197735

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Swallow Close Rugeley Staffordshire
Postcode:	WS15 2PD
Telephone number:	(01889) 256000
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Duckhouse
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7070	Mrs J Greenfield	Registered inspector	Music Physical education English as an additional language	The school's results and students' achievements. How well are students taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9163	Mr G Humphrey	Lay inspector		Students' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its students? (part) How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20273	Mrs A Lewin	Team inspector	English History Foundation stage	
23319	Mr V Leary	Team inspector	Design and technology Geography Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
8056	Mr H Probert	Team inspector	Science Art Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to students?
27789	Mrs F Rychlik	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Special educational needs	How well does the school care for its students? (part)

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

With 312 pupils on roll, Western Springs Primary School is larger than most primary schools and caters for boys and girls aged 3 - 11 years. There are slightly more boys than girls overall, but this picture masks considerable variations in some year groups. Thirty children attend the nursery, which was opened in April 2001, on a part-time basis. Most pupils attended the playgroup, based at the school, before entering the school in the reception year. The majority of pupils come from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals at 25.6 per cent is above the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average, with a high proportion having weak literacy skills. Eighty-three pupils have special educational needs, which as a proportion of the total school population is above average. Of these, 2.2 per cent (seven pupils) have a statement of special educational need, which is above the national average of 1.7 per cent. One pupil has English as an additional language. The number of children entering or leaving the school other than at the normal transfer times is broadly average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Western Springs Primary School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is a developing and improving school. Its strengths, including examples of very good practice, outweigh any weaknesses. The school has made significant progress in the past year under the determined and energetic leadership of the current headteacher. Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning, which are good overall, are beginning to have a positive impact on raising standards. Pupils enjoy school, their attitudes to learning are good, and their behaviour is very good.

#### **What the school does well**

- The determined and energetic leadership and management of the headteacher ensure a climate that is strongly committed to learning and the achievement of high standards.
- Pupils are achieving well in most subjects in relation to their attainment on entry to the school.
- The good teaching motivates pupils and encourages positive attitudes to learning so that they make good progress.
- The school's extremely positive ethos fosters very good relationships that contribute significantly to the strong sense of community within the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good, stemming from the clear expectations that the school has of its pupils.
- The provision for pupils' social and spiritual development is good, and for their moral development is very good.

#### **What could be improved**

- The assessment, monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress are not consistent or rigorous enough.
- The higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently or given enough opportunities to develop independent learning skills.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used sufficiently to underpin learning in all areas of the curriculum and does not meet statutory requirements at Key Stage 1.
- Some subject leaders and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator are not involved sufficiently in developing, monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility.
- Standards in physical education and music are not high enough.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since its last inspection in September 1997, the school has made satisfactory, and in a few areas good, progress in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection report. The quality of teaching has improved throughout the school, and teachers' expectations are higher than previously. Some progress has been made in developing the school's assessment procedures, but they are not yet rigorous or consistent enough, especially in the foundation subjects. The school improvement



plan identifies clear priorities and the headteacher has implemented a systematic monitoring and evaluation process, which is having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the procedures to support and monitor the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and in developing the curriculum for children under five. The school has shown that it has the capacity to improve and, under the leadership of the current headteacher, it is well placed to make further improvements.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E	D
mathematics	D	D	C	B
science	E	E	D	C

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

Pupils start school with knowledge, skills and understanding that are below the standard expected of four year-olds but by the end of the Foundation Stage they reach the expected targets in all areas of learning, mainly through the good progress they make in the reception year. In the national tests for seven year-olds in 2000, the results, when all pupils are taken into account, were average in writing but below average in reading and mathematics. The results have improved since the last inspection, broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection findings confirm that standards in English are broadly average, showing some improvement over test results in 2000. In mathematics, standards are average and similar to the test results in 2000. Other than ICT where standards are below average, and music, where insufficient work was seen to make a clear judgement, standards are average in the remaining subjects. The national test results for 11 year-olds in 2000 were average in mathematics, below average in science and well below average in English. Overall, the school's performance has improved since the last inspection, broadly in line with the national trend. The work seen during the inspection indicates that standards in English and science are improving and, together with mathematics, are in line with the standard expected nationally. Standards are also average in art, design and technology, geography, history, ICT and religious education, but are below average in music and physical education. The majority of pupils make good progress in their learning: by the age of 11, they are achieving well in relation to their earlier attainment on entry to the school. However, some of the higher attaining pupils are not achieving as well as they might. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress overall and good progress when they are supported. The school has already exceeded its targets for 2001 in 2000 and is on course to achieve them again this year.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about and interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well, are polite and courteous, and respect each other and their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout are very positive. Pupils respond well to opportunities for them to show initiative and take responsibility.

Attendance	Attendance is below the national average and is unsatisfactory overall. Unauthorised absence is broadly average.
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The quality of relationships and the sense of community in the school are particular strengths. Pupils are considerate of other pupils' feelings and are extremely caring and supportive of one another. Occasionally, there are lapses in pupils' otherwise good behaviour, usually associated with a lack of challenge and pace in lessons, and the teacher's unclear expectations. In spite of the school's efforts, a few parents do not ensure that their children attend school regularly.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, the teaching in the school is good and makes a significant contribution to the progress pupils make and to their achievements. In 97 per cent of lessons, the teaching is at least satisfactory; in 40 per cent it is good; and in 18 per cent it is very good or very occasionally excellent. Only in two lessons was the teaching unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, with a reduction in the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and a considerable increase in the proportion of good or better teaching. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, but good in the reception year. The most successful teaching occurs in Year 6, where half the teaching is very good. The teaching of English is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. The skills of literacy are taught satisfactorily and sometimes well. In mathematics, the teaching is good at both key stages. The skills of numeracy are taught effectively, and mental calculation skills, particularly at Key Stage 2, are a strength. In the most effective lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan challenging work for their pupils and have high expectations of their response. In these lessons, the rate and pace of learning are brisk and pupils make good progress. Pupils are motivated by the demands made upon them, work hard and concentrate well in order to improve their skills. Teachers plan work to meet the needs of most pupils, but provide insufficient challenge through extension work and demanding homework for the higher attainers. The weaknesses in teaching stem mainly from unclear expectations of pupils' behaviour, lack of challenge in the work and weak organisational skills.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced, but there are some weaknesses in planning. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and, together with school visits and trips, enriches pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. They are fully integrated into the work and life of the school and make satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development; good provision for their social and spiritual development; and satisfactory provision for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Systems for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. Procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are improving, but remain unsatisfactory.

The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are good. The school's partnership with parents is good. The provision for ICT at Key Stage 1 does not meet statutory requirements.

## **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher brings determined and energetic leadership and management to improving standards. He is effectively supported by his recently-appointed deputy. The impact of subject and Foundation Stage leaders in coordinating and influencing the work in their areas of responsibility is variable but overall is broadly satisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school and governors are extending their monitoring and strategic management roles.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher has implemented a rigorous and systematic monitoring programme, the outcomes of which are used to improve aspects of the school's work. Pupils' performance is analysed, but there are weaknesses in the monitoring and evaluation undertaken by subject and Foundation Stage leaders.
The strategic use of resources	Financial expenditure is closely linked to the school's priorities and is carefully monitored. Resources are used efficiently for the benefit of pupils at the school and to meet clear educational priorities.

The school has sufficient well-qualified staff and adequate resources to support the curriculum. The accommodation is very good and very well maintained. The school takes care to ensure that it obtains best value in its use of resources. The school provides good value for money.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Children are expected to work hard and do their best.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress at school.</li> <li>• Children are helped to become more mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Parents feel happy about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework that their children are given.</li> <li>• The provision of a wider range of activities after school.</li> </ul>

Parents express very positive views about the school and the progress it has made during the past year under the leadership and management of the current headteacher. Inspectors' judgements support the positive views expressed by parents. The inspection team found that the homework set is generally appropriate, although not extensive, and is slightly less than that given in similar schools, especially to the older pupils. The range of activities organised outside lessons is, in the view of the team, broadly satisfactory, and inspectors note that the school has plans to extend the range of musical activities next term.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The school's results in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science have improved since the last inspection, but not consistently from year to year. The improvement in the school's performance over the past five years has been broadly in line with the national trend, but overall has remained below average. Pupils' current work indicates that standards are rising and their attainments in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by the age of 11 are in line with the standards expected nationally. This improvement is due, in the main, to better planning, improvements in the quality of teaching and in the mostly successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy.

2. The majority of pupils enter the school with knowledge, skills and understanding in the areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage that are below those expected for their age. Many have weak literacy skills. They are making broadly satisfactory progress in the recently-opened nursery and good progress during the reception year, and by the end of the Foundation Stage, enter Key Stage 1 at the expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Some children make less progress than expected during the Foundation Stage because the assessment of individual children is not systematic enough or used sufficiently to plan a curriculum to meet their needs.

3. In the National Curriculum tests in English in 2000, when all pupils are taken into account, the results for seven year-olds were in line with the national average in writing but below average in reading. Girls did less well in writing than the boys, contrary to the national picture. When compared with similar schools, based on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the results in writing were above average and were close to the average in reading. Inspection findings indicate that, by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment across all aspects of English is broadly in line with expectations, slightly better than the test results in 2000 would indicate. Most pupils are able to read easily and accurately and talk about what they read. They have a range of strategies for reading unfamiliar words. Spelling is mainly accurate and they are able to structure their writing to communicate ideas. Standards of writing are average.

4. The results of the National Curriculum tests in English for eleven year olds in 2000, for all pupils in the cohort, were well below average and were below average when compared with similar schools. The results were below average at Level 4 or above, and were well below average at Level 5 or above. A much smaller proportion of pupils than the national average reached the higher levels. As at Key Stage 1, girls performed less well than boys when compared with their respective national figures, a situation that has pertained for the last two years. The school is aware of the girls' underperformance and has been implementing strategies to remedy the situation. From their current and past work, pupils' attainment in English by the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with expectations. Pupils speak and listen well. Their writing is well structured and they are increasingly drawing on their own experiences outside of school for ideas. Handwriting is joined and consistent, and punctuation is generally accurate.

5. Pupils have good opportunities to use their literacy skills in other curriculum areas and this is making a positive contribution to learning. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to contribute orally to discussions and take time to listen carefully to those pupils whose speaking skills are not so well developed, as, for instance, in a Year 3 history lesson when pupils talked about their feelings should they be evacuated. In the Foundation Stage, pupils apply their growing skills through writing labels for suitcases in the airport and for the plants growing in the outside area. They enjoy listening to a variety of texts covering the learning areas of knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematics, and personal and social development. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' skills are beginning to make a real contribution to their ability to learn in other subjects. They use their reading and writing skills in topic work. Pupils are able to show their understanding in other areas by the use of comprehension tasks.

6. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' literacy skills are making a good contribution to their work in other areas of the curriculum. The majority of pupils read and write confidently, fluently and with understanding in a variety of genre. They are experienced in using a range of writing forms, including explanation, argument and persuasion. They analyse and synthesise information well. For instance, in Year 6, pupils take notes and use fact boxes and flow diagrams. Pupils have a growing interest and understanding of words and their construction. They use an increasing range of fiction and non-fiction text, and evaluate and justify their preferences across the areas of the curriculum. Using their literacy skills, they are developing and applying skills of empathy and the beginning of critical analysis to the rest of the curriculum, for instance in design and technology and religious education.

7. In the mathematics tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, the results, when all pupils are included, were below average but were average when compared with similar schools. At Level 2 or above, the results were close to the national average but were below average at Level 3 or above. The performance of the girls was below that of the boys and was below the national figure for girls. From the work seen during the inspection, pupils' attainment in mathematics is broadly in line with expectations by the time they are seven, indicating an improvement over the results of the national tests in 2000. Their numeracy skills are satisfactory. Pupils are able to explain their thinking using correct mathematical vocabulary. They use their mathematical skills appropriately to support their learning in other subjects.

8. In the national tests in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, the results in 2000, when all pupils are included, were close to the average and were above average when compared with similar schools. They were below average at the expected Level 4 or above but were average for the proportion of pupils attaining Level 5 or above. Girls perform less well than the boys by a considerable margin and less well than girls nationally. Since the last inspection, the school's performance has improved at a slightly faster rate than the national trend. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' attainment is in line with the standard expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 2, reflecting the test results in 2000. Boys continue to do better than the girls. Most pupils have a sound mental recall of multiplication and division facts to 10 times 10. They understand the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. Mental calculation skills are a particular strength.

9. Pupils are developing their numeracy skills in other subjects throughout the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils use graphs to record a seaside survey as part of a literacy topic. At Key Stage 2, pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in many subjects: in history, when using a timeline; in geography, when comparing water consumption in Britain and India; in information and communication technology (ICT), when they work with spreadsheets and use addition and multiplication skills to check calculations and their knowledge of angles and length in a turtle graphics programme. They use graphs and tables in a limited way to record information in science.

10. In the national tests in science at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000, the results overall were below average but were average when compared with similar schools. At Level 4 or above, the results were in line with the national average but were below average at the higher Level 5 or above. Girls perform less well than the boys and also in relation to the performance of girls nationally. Since the last inspection, the results have improved at a slightly faster rate than the national trend. From the inspection evidence, pupils' attainment in science by the age of seven and by the age of eleven is in line with that expected nationally, indicating some improvement over the Key Stage 2 test results last year and also the assessments undertaken by teachers at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their scientific knowledge and understanding and investigative skills through a range of challenging and interesting activities.

11. By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, standards are broadly in line with expectations in most other subjects, including art, design and technology, geography, history and religious education. In ICT, pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is below the standard expected nationally. Pupils have insufficient opportunity to use ICT and consequently the requirements of the programme of study are not fully covered. By the end of Key Stage 2, their attainment is in line with expectations, indicating that they are making good progress in developing their ICT skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils' attainment in physical education is below the standard expected by the

end of both key stages. Their skills are not developed in a systematic way and much of the work lacks challenge. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about pupils' attainment in music at the end of Key Stage 1 as only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Standards in music by the end of Key Stage 2 are below expectations, mainly because pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their skills across all aspects of the subject. There is clear evidence, however, that under the guidance of the new music co-ordinator, standards will rise very sharply in the coming months. Other than in mathematics at Key Stage 2 where boys continue to attain higher standards than the girls, there were no significant differences noted between boys and girls in other subjects.

12. Most pupils are making satisfactory and more often good progress in their learning in lessons; over time, progress is being consolidated and accelerated through the tighter planning and improved quality of teaching. Some recent developments instigated by the new headteacher are resulting in a more consistent approach by all staff, which is beginning to raise standards. The school's emphasis on literacy and numeracy is proving successful in improving standards.

13. When account is taken of pupils' earlier attainment on entry to the school, the majority of pupils are achieving well, particularly in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The higher attaining pupils are not always stretched sufficiently, either by the use of additional extension materials or by the challenge of homework and consequently do not make as much progress as they are capable of. There are not enough opportunities provided for them to develop their independent learning and research skills. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress in all subjects and when they receive additional support, their progress is good.

14. The school is keen to improve standards. Targets have been set in line with national requirements and those set for 2001 were achieved in 2000. Given the predominantly good teaching, the positive attitudes of pupils to their learning and the monitoring of teaching and learning on a systematic basis by the headteacher, the school is well placed to improve its performance in the future.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

15. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good. They enjoy school and show considerable enthusiasm for and interest in their work. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting, and who returned questionnaires, confirm that their children are happy at school, behave well and respect each other and their teachers. They feel that the school provides a calm atmosphere and promotes a good work ethic.

16. In the nursery, children quickly settle into school routines and observe the required disciplines. They listen well, share and take turns and are eager to take part in group play and learning activities. Their social skills develop well. In the reception class, they develop good listening skills, observe the discipline of holding up a hand to answer a question, concentrate well on the tasks they are given and make a positive contribution to lessons. A good example of children in the Foundation Stage enjoying their learning, and taking an active role, was observed in a religious education lesson, where pupils re-enacted a baptism service. This lesson followed an earlier visit to a local church. The re-enactment included a christening party with cakes and sandwiches during which they discussed the religious significance of baptism.

17. As pupils progress through the school their self-discipline, enthusiasm and interest in their work continues to develop. For example, pupils in a Year 2 music lesson demonstrated high levels of concentration when playing percussion instruments together and very good self-discipline by not touching their instruments when they were not in use and placed on the floor in front of them. In design and technology, pupils in Year 3 were eager to contribute to practical work and in Year 4, pupils discussed their 'pop up' book illustration mechanisms in a truly reflective and evaluative way. Other examples include an English lesson in Year 6 where pupils expressed their views with confidence and listened carefully to the opinions of others. In a Year 6 science lesson, pupils demonstrated very mature attitudes while conducting alkaline and acidity tests on a range of liquids.

18. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and towards adults. Staff treat pupils with respect and consideration and this is reflected in the confidence and trust that pupils have in their relationships with others, particularly adults. The quality of relationships

throughout the school is one of its strengths. Pupils have a very good understanding of the effect that their actions can have on others and show respect for their values and beliefs. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds or who have a physical disability, or find learning difficult, are totally included in the life and work of the school. There were no instances of bullying or harassment during the inspection and neither adults nor pupils tolerate any form of unacceptable behaviour. Very occasionally, when teachers are not clear enough in their expectations of pupils' behaviour, some pupils do not behave as well as they might. One pupil has been excluded in the last year.

19. Pupils respond well to opportunities for them to show initiative and take responsibility. The school council is consulted over a wide range of issues including the school environment, behaviour management and any issues concerning bullying. Pupils help to look after the plants and flowerbeds around the school. Pupils in Year 6 help in assemblies and at lunch times, and there are appointed monitors for a variety of routine tasks. Older pupils have caring attitudes towards younger ones and show sensitivity to their needs. In lessons, the opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility are limited and could be further developed, particularly in relation to making choices, and for older pupils, being encouraged to work more independently.

20. Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average. Unauthorised absence is in line with the national average. In spite of the efforts of the school, a few parents do not ensure that their children attend regularly. Morning punctuality is good. Attitudes to learning, now good, have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory. Behaviour has also improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be good as compared to very good as it is now. Overall, good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour make a positive contribution towards pupils' achievements. They develop as confident individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

21. The overall quality of the teaching is good and makes a strong contribution to the good progress that the majority of pupils make in their learning. Across the school as a whole, the teaching is at least satisfactory in 97 per cent of lessons; in 40 per cent, it is good; and in 18 per cent, it is very good, and in one lesson excellent. Only in two lessons was the teaching unsatisfactory. In most lessons, pupils learn effectively, acquiring new skills and consolidating previous learning.

22. The school has made good progress in improving the quality of teaching since the last inspection, reducing the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching from 18 per cent to 3 per cent and increasing the proportion of good or better teaching from around 33 per cent to 59 per cent. These improvements have come through improvements in the quality of planning, having higher expectations of what pupils can do, and the regular monitoring of teaching, in the main by the headteacher. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall and better in reception than in the nursery. At Key Stage 1, the teaching is good overall, with good or better teaching occurring in slightly under three-quarters of lessons. At Key Stage 2, all of the teaching is at least satisfactory and overall it is good, with around a quarter of the teaching very good. The most successful teaching occurs in Year 6, where half the teaching is very good.

23. In the Foundation Stage, the teaching has some strengths and also some areas of weakness. Teaching in the reception has improved since the last inspection when it was judged that pupils had too little opportunity to work independently or to talk about their experiences. These features are now a strength of the teaching and learning in the reception class. However, the use of assessment to provide activities to meet individual needs is not systematic enough and the short-term planning of the nursery curriculum is not challenging pupils sufficiently, especially the higher and lower attaining pupils.

24. The teaching of English is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1, and is good at Key Stage 2. Teachers' understanding of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy is satisfactory although not consistently applied in all cases. For example, in Key Stage 1, the teaching of word and sentence level work is insufficiently structured. The teaching of phonics is satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers are clear not only about the objectives but also about the standard they expect to see in all the work, for example neat handwriting and accurate punctuation. The best teaching pays careful attention to the National Literacy Strategy objectives to ensure

coverage and the consistent use of technical vocabulary. Standards of teaching at this key stage have improved considerably since the last inspection and consequently pupils are making better progress.

25. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory in the Foundation Stage and good at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, showing an improvement since the last inspection. Lessons are well planned and follow the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. A positive feature of lessons is the whole class teaching, which maintains a good balance between explanations by the teacher and contribution by the pupils. Generally, pupils play an active part in lessons. Occasionally at Key Stage 1, pupils' stage of development is not assessed carefully enough and tasks are too difficult for some of them. At Key Stage 2, the work is well matched to pupils' needs. In the best lessons, the quality of the teacher's questioning has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning. Mental work is a particular strength at this key stage. The higher attaining pupils are challenged to develop their thinking and encouraged to explain their strategies to the rest of the class.

26. There is good teaching in many subjects and in several lessons the teaching is very good, for example in religious education at Key Stage 1; in English, science, art and geography in Year 6; mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5; and design and technology in Year 4. The teaching is good overall in science. Some excellent teaching occurs in music in Year 6. The most effective teaching includes some or all of these features: good planning with lesson intentions that are clear and shared with pupils at the outset of the lesson; high expectations in terms of the quality of the work pupils are expected to produce and of their response; the use of challenging questions to make children think more critically; and effective use of time to ensure that not a minute is wasted. In such lessons, pupils settle down to work quickly and maintain their concentration well. The rate and pace of learning in these lessons are good as pupils are motivated by the quality and challenge of the teaching and the teacher's enthusiasm. Pupils' learning also benefits from the effective contribution made by support staff in lessons. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching stemmed mainly from a lack of challenge in the work in one lesson, and weak organisational skills and unclear expectations of how pupils should behave in another.

27. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, enabling them to make sound progress. When they are supported by the high-quality teaching assistants, many of whom have received specialist training, the teaching and learning are good. Provision for pupils with special education needs has improved since the last inspection when it was identified as a key issue. Teachers generally set appropriate learning targets for these pupils although some are not specific enough. All teachers have comprehensive information regarding pupils with special educational needs in the classroom and are aware of their responsibilities regarding these pupils. However, their progress is not monitored sufficiently and records are not always up to date.

28. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are required to teach are generally secure, although in ICT it is more variable. In the most successful lessons, they use this knowledge well to provide work to stimulate, challenge and motivate their pupils and help them learn, as, for example, in a Year 6 music lesson, where the teacher's high level of subject expertise and organisational skills enabled all pupils to make significant progress in developing their performance skills and musical understanding. At times, for example in some physical education lessons, insecurity in teachers' subject knowledge results in a lack of focus and challenge to the work. Consequently, progress in some lessons and over time is not always sufficient.

29. Lesson planning, which has improved since the last inspection, is satisfactory overall, and in many cases, it is good. There is now a greater consistency in the planning throughout the school. The planning does not always identify clearly enough the skills, knowledge and understanding that are to be developed in the lesson. At times, the planning does not take sufficient account of the range of pupils' needs within the class, for example in providing more challenging work for the higher attaining pupils and sometimes identifies activities to be undertaken rather than the specific learning intentions of the lesson. In most lessons, an appropriate range of work is provided to support the lower attaining pupils, but extension work for the higher attainers is not a strong feature of the planning. The introduction of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) schemes of work, together with joint planning undertaken by teachers, ensures greater consistency in the provision of work and activities to support pupils' learning in each year group. However, these schemes of work are in the early stage of implementation and have not been sufficiently adapted to meet the needs of



pupils in the school or been in place long enough to ensure the systematic development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding from year to year.

30. In most lessons, the teachers' clear expectations of pupils' behaviour contribute to purposeful learning and to the good progress that they make in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. Lessons, in the main, are calm and focused and pupils quickly settle down to work. Occasionally, as for example in a Year 1/2 physical education lesson and in an ICT lesson in Year 5, teachers are not firm enough or clear enough in their expectations of pupils' response and behaviour and consequently the pace of the lesson becomes rather too slow. Overall, the rate and pace of learning are rarely less than satisfactory and in many lessons, they are good. Good use is made of resources to support learning.

31. Teachers generally give good oral feedback on how pupils are doing and what they need to do to improve. However, there are weaknesses in the assessment and recording of pupils' progress and although there are exceptions, for example in English and mathematics at Key Stage 2, assessment is not used sufficiently to match work to pupils' individual needs, to plan the next stage of learning or to indicate to pupils the level they have attained. In general, marking is positive and encouraging and undertaken regularly, but does not always give sufficient information to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work. Homework is used to support learning and to extend the curriculum for the majority of pupils but does not always extend the higher attainers. The amount that is given, especially for the older pupils, is less than usually found in other primary schools.

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

32. The curriculum provided in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and appropriate steps have been taken to implement the early learning goals in both nursery and reception classes. Although improving, the planning of the curriculum and the assessment arrangements are not sufficiently robust to enable teachers to monitor sufficiently well the progress and development of pupils' skills and experiences to prepare them for effective transition from the Foundation Stage to the National Curriculum programmes of study in Year 1. The curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 is broad and balanced. The amount of time devoted to both English and mathematics at Key Stages 1 and 2 is relatively high and more time is devoted to these subjects than the national strategies for literacy and numeracy require. This affects the amount of time available for other subject areas, in particular science, ICT and physical education. Now that the literacy and numeracy strategies are more firmly established, the school intends to review the balance of time given to individual subjects and the way the curriculum is organised. The length of some lessons of an hour for pupils in Key Stage 1 and the younger pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly in subjects like music and physical education, is too long for them to sustain their concentration or to develop their skills effectively. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, other than in the provision for ICT at Key Stage 1.

33. All subjects of the curriculum have a policy and scheme of work, most of which are based upon guidance issued by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). These schemes of work have been introduced throughout the school but they have not yet been adapted to meet the specific needs of the pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully at both key stages and it is having a good effect upon raising standards in mathematics. Similarly, the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented effectively throughout the school and satisfactory progress is being made in raising standards in English, although some of the word and sentence level work at Key Stage 1 lacks sufficient structure.

34. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of the work of the school and provision for them is satisfactory. The school's system of early identification of their needs is effective and the greater proportion of pupils on the special needs register is at Key Stage 1. Teaching is supported by pupils' individual education plans. All pupils are set targets, but these are not always specific enough or always measurable. The plans, which are mostly written by class teachers, are of variable quality and are better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1. Those that are good clearly identify the area of need, set realistic and measurable targets, with criteria for success and dates for review, and indicate how the pupil will be supported in achieving the targets. Pupils' individual education plans are reviewed regularly and pupils receive appropriate support according to their need. A strong feature of the provision for pupils with special educational needs throughout the

school is the encouragement of social skills and behaviour that are appropriate for pupils as members of the school community.

35. The school effectively promotes equality of opportunity and the principles underpinning the school's approach are enshrined in a new policy document, which has been fully discussed and agreed with staff and governors. An analysis of test results has revealed the underachievement of girls compared with boys at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The headteacher and members of the standards team are analysing the attitudes and achievements of girls to ensure that appropriate strategies are implemented to improve the performance of girls.

36. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. A strength of the school is the behaviour policy which emphasises the importance of the principles of right and wrong. Pupils are provided with reasons for good behaviour and learn the consequences of both good and bad behaviour. In lessons, teachers generate a sense of fairness in their dealings with pupils in class activities and discussions. The school has an appropriate policy on sex education and the Health Visitor regularly visits the school to talk to pupils about dietary and health-related issues. The school provides suitable drugs education through work in science and the involvement of a former police officer who talks to Year 6 pupils about the use and misuse of drugs.

37. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Pupils have opportunities to participate in a range of out of school activities, including sport and interest clubs such as football, netball, cricket, cross-country running, cooking, dance and recorder. One group of up to 10 pupils form the 'Green Gang', who support the site manager in the maintenance of the school environment. At the time of the inspection, they were painting containers to hold flowers and plants in the style of Van Gogh. Pupils in Year 5 participate in a residential experience at Shugborough Residential Centre. On these occasions, they develop their social skills and undertake a range of outdoor and adventurous activities and visits to historic sites. The school organises an out-of-hours learning club and a homework club, which are valued by pupils and parents.

38. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory. Pupils leaving the school transfer mainly to two secondary schools. There are good links with these schools and some cross-phase work takes place in both ICT and science. Teachers from one of the secondary schools work with pupils in Year 6. This enables the pupils to carry on with this level of work when they transfer, as they also take their workbooks with them. Similar links may be extended to the other secondary school. Relationships between Key Stage 2 staff and subject staff in the secondary schools are good. The school also co-operates effectively with other local primary schools by way of meetings and joint activities, for example, the schools' music festival.

39. The school has fostered good links with the community to support pupils' education. There are substantial links with the church and the whole school visits the local church for Christmas and Easter services. Local speakers from the community talk to pupils about topics of interest. For example, one resident talked about the history of the local town. Governors are involved in the school and one governor, who is an artist, works with Key Stage 2 pupils to develop their art skills. Another regular feature is the weekly senior citizens' lunch in the school and the involvement of parents and grandparents, who meet and have lunch with some of the pupils. Both pupils and adults gain from these opportunities. Children attending part-time in the nursery and their parents/carers are also able to have lunch in the school on one day each week as a way of preparing them for full-time education.

40. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, similar to the findings at the time of the last inspection. The school provides a welcoming and very caring environment in which all pupils are encouraged to work together in harmony and learn to respect and be sensitive to the needs of others.

41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. It is successfully promoted throughout the school. The aims of the school underscore the school's Christian ethos and the importance of spiritual values. In many classes, pupils are given opportunities for reflection and prayer, for example, concluding the day by reflecting on 'their day' and thinking about their personal contribution to the quality of life in the class. The requirements for a daily act of collective worship are met fully and good quality assemblies further enhance pupils' spiritual awareness. These are carefully

prepared and are effective acts of collective worship, allowing pupils to reflect and pray. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Music provides a spiritual uplift at the beginning and end of assemblies. Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their relationships in the community, in the family and with their friends. Their spiritual awareness is also raised in several subjects. For example, in English, their writing vividly captures their special feelings for international issues, such as difficulties encountered by refugees and in music, through listening to Buddhist chant music. In religious education, pupils learn to recognise and respect the beliefs of other faiths, enabling them to reflect upon their own beliefs, through, for example, writing prayers and poems linked to liturgical highlights such as Lent and Easter.

42. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. It is promoted through the school's aims and objectives in which the school sees its provision of a secure and orderly learning community as a significant responsibility. In this, they are very successful. There is a very strong moral framework where, in a positive atmosphere, high expectations of behaviour, self-discipline and good relationships are fostered. Pupils are given clear boundaries for good behaviour. They have a very good understanding of right and wrong. School rules are displayed prominently in classrooms. Staff are good role models, showing respect and concern for the individual needs of all pupils. A strong feature of pupils' moral development is the way they are taught about wider moral issues through their religious education programme and other subjects. In an English lesson, pupils in Year 4 debated with their teacher and developed in their writing the issue of honesty in advertising. This resulted in pupils being sensitised to evaluating advertisements from a moral stance. Assemblies and prayers at the end of the school day are used effectively to provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on positive personal qualities such as tolerance, kindness and sensitivity to others' needs and rights.

43. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. There is a wide variety of experiences for the vast majority of pupils to develop an awareness of how to relate to people in different circumstances. Good relationships are a strong feature of the school. Achievements in work and behaviour are celebrated weekly in the 'celebration' assemblies, with certificates for good work and good behaviour. Pupils in both key stages have opportunities to take on responsibilities that contribute to the smooth running of the school. In all classes, there are helpers who carry out tasks such as taking the register to the office and delivering messages. Older pupils prepare the hall for assemblies; some look after the younger pupils at lunchtime and help in organising playtime equipment. There are occasions for pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship. The School Council, for example, has pupils from Key Stage 2 involved in discussions with the headteacher on issues such as school dinners, vandalism and a secure space to leave their bikes. Pupils from both key stages are involved in community activities. Senior citizens are invited to share lunch with the pupils on a regular basis. In the summer term, they entertain the residents from the local residential home with a musical performance. Fundraising for national, international and local charities is a regular feature of school life. Educational visits are an aspect of social provision. In Years 5, pupils take part in residential outdoor pursuit visits and all classes experience a good range of visits. The school also involves its pupils in local community sports competitions. This level of provision is effective in developing the pupils' social skills and enhancing their personal self-esteem.

44. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. At both key stages, the curriculum effectively promotes an understanding and appreciation of pupils' own local heritage and history. It is less effective in highlighting the rich diversity of cultures and life in a multi-cultural society, although there is an increasing emphasis on preparing pupils for living in a culturally diverse society. In religious education, pupils study Hinduism and Judaism and visit Christian churches. In physical education, art and music, the pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural nature of their society is highlighted. They experience opportunities in dance, through participating in folk dancing and playing Asian musical instruments. Displays and artwork throughout the school feature aspects of cultural diversity, such as the geography display of an Indian village and the rainforests. The school is developing a range of multi-cultural books and artefacts. Visitors are encouraged to share their experiences and expertise. For example, an artist in residence provided pupils with an opportunity to participate in a wide range of artistic experiences. Visits are also made into the local area to explore its heritage centre, museums and parks.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

45. The support and guidance given to pupils, and the care taken over their welfare, are good. Teachers and support staff know and understand their pupils well and care for their personal needs in a sensitive and supportive way. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting, and those who returned questionnaires, confirmed that they were pleased with the care and support provided for their children and felt that the small class sizes allowed teachers to give individual attention and care, particularly for those children assessed as having special educational needs.

46. Health and safety procedures are diligent and include good arrangements for first aid. Child protection procedures are effective and staff are well trained and alert to the needs of all pupils. The headteacher is the designated teacher for child protection and the school has developed close links with social services and all other appropriate outside agencies.

47. Personal, social and health education is provided through the curriculum. Personal hygiene practice is very good, with hand washing, before meals and after visiting the toilet or undertaking practical activities, a well established part of normal school routines, particularly for younger pupils. The school promotes equality of opportunity through all of its educational, recreational and welfare activities.

48. The procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are very good. The management of behaviour is consistent throughout the school and any incidents of unacceptable behaviour, such as bullying, are dealt with effectively and sensitively. Procedures for promoting attendance and punctuality are good and the education welfare officer provides good support. In spite of the school's efforts, a few parents do not ensure that their children attend school regularly. Registers are completed accurately. Overall, the procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development are very good and have remained a significant strength of the school, as reported after the last inspection.

49. At the time of the last inspection, assessment procedures within the school were not well developed and assessment was identified as a key issue for improvement. Although some progress has been made in this area, the school's assessment procedures remain unsatisfactory.

50. Lessons are well planned in the main, but there is no formal method of evaluating their effectiveness and ensuring that this informs planning. Pupils' work is marked regularly and there is some evidence in Key Stage 2 of marking being used successfully to give guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. Some classes have been piloting a new marking system, which is a helpful first step in providing pupils with useful feedback on their work, but this needs to be developed further. Satisfactory records are kept of pupils' individual progress and achievement in the core subjects and teachers keep class record files containing information about pupils' progress. There is limited evidence of record keeping and assessment in the foundation subjects. Group targets are set, mainly for spelling and literacy. These are contributing towards matching work to pupils' needs but insufficient use is made of individual target setting to improve their learning.

51. In addition to baseline assessment in the reception classes and statutory assessments at the ages of seven and eleven, the school uses a range of formal assessments to monitor pupils' progress. These include assessments in English and mathematics in Years 3, 4 and 5 and spelling tests. This provides useful information about pupils' attainment, but assessment results are disorganised and the school does not analyse them sufficiently to enable them to track individual progress or identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning as pupils move through the school. The school lacks a simple and effective system for recording and collating assessment information so that it can be used to inform subject co-ordinators of strengths and weaknesses in their curriculum area and enable them to devise an action plan to bring about consistent improvement in their subject. The school recognises the need to develop assessment and record keeping and plans to review the marking policy and develop a more consistent and analytical approach to assessment. This is a priority area for action.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

52. Overall, the parents have good views of the school. The consensus view of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires is that under the new headteacher, discipline has improved and a calmer atmosphere has been created throughout the school. Parents

feel that the school promotes high expectations, giving mathematics and creativity as examples, and that the introduction of standardised handwriting techniques across the school has raised standards in writing. They acknowledge that the school deals with concerns and complaints quickly and effectively and that the staff are very approachable. The majority of parents feel that they know how well their children are doing and know how to help them to improve. The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views.

53. A few parents feel that not enough emphasis is put on reading skills in school and that teachers rely too much on parents to listen to their children read. Some also feel that annual reports are impersonal and individual learning targets not sufficiently clear. A number feel that regular communication between teacher and parent is poor and that they have to wait for formal consultation evenings to find out about any problems. Parents also expressed concern about the extensive number of literary and spelling errors in the word-processed annual reports last year. A number of parents feel there should be more homework.

54. Inspectors find that the use of homework to support learning is broadly satisfactory, although some of the older pupils receive less homework than is usually found in other primary schools and it does not always challenge the higher attaining pupils sufficiently. They also find that the expectation for pupils to read to an adult at home is an additional activity that effectively supports the literacy programme and dedicated daily reading time in school. Inspectors judge that communication between the school and parents is good overall and that staff are available and willing to discuss concerns as they arise. The inspectors share the parents concern about the quality and content of the previous annual reports but note that the school has already responded to this criticism by developing a new style of report that will come into use at the end of the present term.

55. The school works hard to promote a close working partnership with parents. The effect of the school's links with parents is good. The home-school agreement clearly defines the expectations of the school, parents and pupils. The quality of information provided to parents is good overall, and has some very good features. The school provides a weekly newsletter and training sessions for parents on specific areas of the curriculum such as literacy, numeracy and ICT. The weaknesses in current practices are that no use is made of home-school diaries as a means of communicating between teachers and parents on a day-to-day basis and there is no whole-school marking policy to give parents and pupils reliable information about progress and achievement on a regular basis.

56. The school has effective procedures for liaison with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents, particularly those of pupils in Key Stage 1, are keen to help their children and the school provides them with a good level of support on an informal basis. Parents are fully involved in the review process and are well informed about the learning targets set for their children.

57. The annual progress reports meet statutory requirements. They provide a brief subject-by-subject commentary on what pupils know and understand, report on their personal development and summarise areas for development. The reports do not provide comparative information on attainment against national standards or set individual targets for pupils to achieve. For pupils with special educational needs, the quality of information given to parents on their children's progress is generally good. Parents are invited to regular review meetings when the progress of pupils towards the targets specified in their individual education plans is discussed and new targets agreed. There are formal consultation meetings every term for all parents.

58. There is an active parent teacher association, 'Relatives of Western Springs' (ROWS), that organises fund raising and social events and additional activities for pupils. Overall, the impact of parents' involvement in the work of the school is good and their contribution to their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. The school has maintained the effective partnership with parents reported at the time of the last inspection.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

59. Since his appointment in September 2000, the headteacher has brought determined and energetic leadership and management to the work of the school and has played a key role in determining its educational direction, particularly in improving standards, teaching and behaviour. Parents believe that the school is well led and managed and comment very favourably on the

difference that the new headteacher has made to secure improvement. The inspection team endorses the parents' views. The headteacher maintains a high profile around the school, visiting classrooms regularly, and talking to pupils and staff about their work. His open style of management means that pupils, parents and staff are able to discuss any concerns they have in a positive way. In the year since his appointment, he has set in place a variety of initiatives that are aimed at raising standards and improving the school's performance. These initiatives, which focus on getting clarity and consistency of approach, particularly in dealing with pupils' behaviour and in the quality of teaching, are beginning to show their effect in improved standards. Staff are very supportive of the headteacher and are keen to improve their practice.

60. The headteacher is effectively supported by his deputy, who has been in post only since the beginning of term. She carries a full class teaching commitment but has already taken action to improve areas of the school's work, in particular school routines, staff meetings, assemblies and staff development, as well as acting as a good role model to staff through her own practice. The headteacher and his deputy have complementary skills and work well together as a team. There is good delegation to staff with management responsibilities.

61. Most subject and phase leaders are providing broadly satisfactory, but in many instances developing, leadership in their areas of responsibility. There is effective leadership and management in English. In some subjects, including mathematics, science, art, design and technology, geography, ICT, music and physical education, the leaders are recent appointments and consequently they have had only a comparatively short amount of time to make a positive impact on their subject areas. Subject leaders have a clear view of the priorities for developing their subjects, have written improvement plans and have mapped the curriculum for each stage. In some instances, for example in religious education, the subject leader has adapted the scheme of work to meet the needs of the school. In other subjects, the school has implemented the QCA schemes of work but co-ordinators have not adapted these sufficiently to meet the needs of pupils at the school. This is a weakness. Some, but not all, monitor planning and give guidance and advice to their colleagues when requested but their impact in some subjects, for example physical education where the subject leader is also the mathematics co-ordinator, is less evident. The role of subject leaders and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator in ensuring continuity in the work from year to year and the systematic development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is not yet clear or undertaken rigorously enough.

62. Subject leaders are not involved at present in assessing teaching and learning in their curriculum area. This is largely carried out by the headteacher although some subject leaders are beginning to take responsibility for this aspect of leadership and management in their subject. The school is addressing this issue and training for developing the role of subject leaders has been identified in the school improvement plan.

63. The governing body undertakes its role in the governance of the school and in its strategic management satisfactorily. Many of the governors are recent appointments and the governing body is improving its way of working to ensure that it is in a better position to hold the school to account for what it does. The committee structure has been revised and committees now have a clearer focus to their work. Governors are very supportive of the school and particularly the headteacher, with whom they have established good relationships. Some governors are actively involved with the school and undertake visits to classrooms to monitor the work. This, together with regular reports from the headteacher and from subject leaders, gives them a good insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses. They also help with school visits and support curriculum activities: for example, one governor, who is an artist, has been working with pupils in Year 5 to create a three-dimensional piece of work centred around the school's mission statement. Other than in the provision for ICT at Key Stage 1, which does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum, they fulfil their statutory responsibilities well.

64. The school's procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of its work are satisfactory overall, with areas of considerable strength but other areas of weakness. The headteacher has implemented a rigorous and systematic schedule for the monitoring of teaching, which is having a significant impact on improving the quality of teaching and standards in the school. Written accounts of these observations are helpful as they identify strengths and weaknesses and provide targets for improvement. This is an example of best practice. The literacy co-ordinator has undertaken some

monitoring of lessons in conjunction with an adviser for the local education authority. In other subjects, the monitoring of work by subject leaders, either through classroom observation, the scrutiny of work and of planning, and of pupils' progress in order to identify strengths and weaknesses have been insubstantial and remains unsatisfactory. Some analysis of data is undertaken in order to inform the school's priorities but without improved assessment procedures to target pupils more intensively, this remains limited.

65. The school is clear about its priorities and the comprehensive school improvement plan, to which staff and governors have contributed, sets out clearly how the school intends to address its priorities. The plan is a very helpful management tool and includes the features normally found in effective plans. Success criteria, however, are not sharp enough. The school's priorities are appropriate to the school's current stage of development but more urgent action is required on improving the assessment arrangements and clarifying the role of subject and phase leaders in developing their areas of responsibility.

66. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is monitored satisfactorily by the special needs co-ordinator. However, there is insufficient non-contact time to enable the co-ordinator to monitor pupils' progress adequately, advise class teachers on appropriate strategies and ensure that records are up to date. The majority of non-contact time, one half day per week, is spent liaising with outside agencies, conducting reviews and carrying out administrative tasks. The special needs register is incomplete. There are undue variations in the format of individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs, as most are completed by individual teachers. A good model already exists and its adoption throughout the school would ensure greater consistency of approach. Insufficient emphasis is placed on using the assessments of pupils with special educational needs to set targets for future improvement.

67. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education effectively and to meet the needs of all pupils in the reception classes and at Key Stages 1 and 2. The teachers have a good balance of expertise and experience. Two part-time nursery nurses currently staff the nursery but this arrangement is under review. Pupils benefit from the contribution of good quality support staff, a significant number of whom have completed accredited training courses in early years child care. The administration of the school runs smoothly and unobtrusively and all the adults involved in the life of the school work very well together. Systems and practices are effective in ensuring that the school's day-to-day life is well ordered, providing a calm and pleasant atmosphere in which pupils can learn. The school's strategy for performance management is satisfactory. All teachers are set targets, which are monitored by senior staff. The school has good arrangements for meeting the professional development needs of staff and the training undertaken is clearly focused on supporting the priorities in the school improvement plan. Procedures for the induction of new staff, including the mentoring of newly qualified teachers, are good. The school holds the Investor in People Award.

68. The resources available to support the curriculum are satisfactory overall and in some areas are good. At the Foundation Stage, resources are satisfactory and give children access to the whole curriculum, although there are weaknesses in some of the resources to stretch the higher attaining pupils. For instance, although a wide range of construction materials is available, there is an insufficient amount of any one of them to allow higher attaining pupils to make constructions which are complex enough to challenge their thinking, pose problems or to work effectively on joint projects.

69. At both Key Stage 1 and 2, there are sufficient resources to teach the curriculum. All resources are in reasonable condition, well stored and accessible to teachers and, where appropriate, pupils. The provision for books, which are stored in both the library and in classrooms, is satisfactory. However, few of the non-fiction books in the library have been published within the last three years, which reduces the quality of the curriculum, especially for higher and lower attaining pupils. Poetry books and play texts are under represented in the library and in the majority of classrooms. There is sufficient software and hardware to teach the ICT curriculum except in the nursery, which does not currently have access to programmable toys like the Roamer. The provision of the new ICT suite and the availability of one computer in each Key Stage 1 class have significantly improved the opportunities available to support pupils' learning.

70. The standard and quality of accommodation for the number of pupils on roll are very good. The site is attractively landscaped and provides extensive hard surfaced and grassed areas for physical education, sports, athletics and recreation. There is a secure environmental studies area with a pond. The grounds are very well managed and maintained to a high standard, with numerous flower and shrub borders, mature trees and a tree-planting regime that is supported by the Forestry Commission. The well-equipped play area for children in the nursery is secure. Externally the permanent buildings are in satisfactory condition but the temporary classroom units are in a poor state of repair, with many windows deteriorating rapidly and in urgent need of refurbishment.

71. The use of the accommodation is very well planned and managed. Both halls are deployed for physical education, music and as dining areas. There is a central library area and a dedicated room for the ICT suite. Classrooms are large for the number of pupils in each class. Internally, the buildings are cleaned and maintained to a high standard. The quality of display is variable and ranges from satisfactory to very good. There is no whole-school approach towards display to ensure that all classrooms have areas dedicated to the celebration of pupils' work as well as displays to stimulate interest and promote high standards. There are a number of very good displays dedicated to specific areas of the curriculum. There is a lack of appropriate display in the library to stimulate interest in literature and non-fiction as a source for reference and research.

72. The management of the school's finances is good. The school improvement plan drives the financial planning within the school. Expenditure is carefully monitored. Financial controls and procedures are well established. The last audit report identified a number of areas where practice could be improved. These have all now been implemented. The school uses its resources to good effect to support pupils' learning. The principles of best value are applied rigorously under the new headteacher and the governing body takes care to ensure that it obtains best value in its use of resources. Funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are used appropriately, as are other specific grants. The school provides good value for money.



## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. The school should:

- (1) improve the systems for assessment, monitoring, and tracking of pupils' progress, by:
  - assessing pupils' work more thoroughly and regularly;
  - ensuring that the marking gives clearer guidance to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work;
  - monitoring pupils' academic progress in a more systematic way and setting clearer targets for improvement;
  - implementing more rigorous procedures for monitoring progress in the foundation subjects;
  - analysing the outcomes of assessment to inform the next stage of learning and teachers' planning.

*[Paras: 2; 23; 25; 27; 31; 49; 50; 51; 65; 75; 77; 120; 125; 127; 134; 138; 142; 146]*

- (2) provide more challenge for the higher attaining pupils, by:
  - giving them more extension activities;
  - developing their skills of independent learning and research in a more systematic way;
  - providing them with more challenging homework.

*[Paras: 13; 23; 29; 31; 54; 77; 127; 133]*

- (3) improve standards in ICT, particularly in Key Stage 1, by:
  - ensuring that the requirements of the programmes of study are fully covered at Key Stage 1;
  - using ICT more effectively to support learning across subjects;
  - improving teachers' skills in the teaching and use of ICT;
  - providing more challenging tasks for the higher attaining pupils.

*[Paras: 11; 28; 32; 63; 123; 125; 129; 130; 131]*

- (4) extend the role of subject leaders and the Foundation Stage co-ordinator in developing, monitoring and evaluating their areas of responsibility, by:
  - increasing their role in developing the schemes of work and supporting and monitoring planning;
  - increasing their role in monitoring standards through classroom observation, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils;
  - monitoring pupils' progress more rigorously throughout the school;
  - developing robust assessment systems to record pupils' progress and to set appropriate challenges and targets.

*[Paras: 51; 61; 62; 64; 65; 78; 101; 109; 115; 120; 125; 128; 134; 142; 146]*

- (5) improve standards in physical education and music, by:
  - developing a more detailed scheme of work in physical education;
  - providing pupils with more challenging tasks and activities;
  - having higher expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving;
  - reviewing the length and content of lessons to ensure a faster pace and more effective learning.

*[Paras: 11; 135; 136; 137; 140; 141]*

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

- continuing to take positive steps to improve levels of attendance *[Paras: 20; 48]*
- implementing further strategies to address the underachievement of girls in mathematics *[Paras: 8; 94]*

- improving the quality and consistency of individual education plans [*Paras: 27; 34; 66*]

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	17	40	39	3	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	301
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	80

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	76

#### English as an additional language

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

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	20	18	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	19
	Girls	17	15	17
	Total	33	33	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (78)	87 (76)	95 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	18
	Girls	15	16	15
	Total	33	33	33
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (76)	87 (85)	87 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	25	22	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	23
	Girls	14	14	18
	Total	32	32	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (53)	68 (69)	87 (70)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	18	15
	Girls	11	13	11
	Total	24	31	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	51 (55)	66 (73)	55 (51)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	260
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	23.2

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	112

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

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

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	April 2000
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	£
Total income	689,017
Total expenditure	658,590
Expenditure per pupil	2,085
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,650
Balance carried forward to next year	64,077

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	316
Number of questionnaires returned	87

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	45	3	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	52	44	3	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	58	2	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	49	9	2	1
The teaching is good.	59	37	2	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	43	5	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	32	1	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	0	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	49	44	1	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	58	40	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	47	0	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	53	30	9	0	8

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

74. Until recently, children have entered school into the reception year at the age of four. Following the opening of the nursery at the beginning of the term of the inspection, children are able to join the nursery on a part-time basis from the age of three. Their attainment when they enter the school is mixed. The majority of children have weak speaking and listening skills, for instance, although others are able to communicate effectively, have some number and letter recognition skills, are able to retell simple stories and say simple rhymes and songs. Overall, however, their attainment on entry is below that expected for children of this age and many lack the breadth of experiences which children normally receive before they enter school. The Performance Indicators in Primary Schools (PIPS) baseline assessment, undertaken at the start of the reception year, indicates that attainment on entry to reception has been below average over the past two years.

75. During the Foundation Stage, the majority of children make at least satisfactory progress, and many make good progress, although their progress is not consistent across the Foundation Stage. Overall, they are making satisfactory progress towards attaining the expected goals in the nursery and mostly good progress in the reception classes. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support, which enables them to make satisfactory progress in developing their skills in all areas of learning. Some children do not make as much progress as might be expected as the assessment information collected on them is not used systematically enough to plan specific activities for the next stage of learning, either for individuals or groups. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children reach the expected goals in all the areas of learning, including personal, social and emotional development; language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

76. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage varies from unsatisfactory to very good, but overall it is satisfactory with some areas of strength. In the most effective sessions, teachers establish excellent and supportive relationships with the children. This increases their self-esteem and willingness to experiment. These sessions have clear learning objectives, which teachers share with the pupils, and time is taken at the end to discuss whether the objectives have been met. For instance, one child in the nursery was praised for carrying through his plan to completion, the objective for the activity. Good use is made of a range of resources to heighten the learning, like the display of artefacts to support the work on baptism. Adults modulate their voices well to hold children's attention and manage potential disruptions well.

77. In some instances, weaknesses in teaching are limiting the amount of learning that is taking place, especially for the higher and lower attaining pupils. The assessment of individual children is not systematic, except at point of entry to the reception classes, and is not used enough to plan a curriculum that targets individual needs as well as providing a range of generic experiences. This information is beginning to be used in the setting of group targets in reception classes but these targets are too wide and the timescales for completion are generally too long. The school is implementing better short-term planning systems for the Foundation Stage but these are not used consistently. This means that, at times, particularly at the end of a session, the pace of learning is slow and pupils are wasting time on too many low level tasks. In all the areas of learning, there are too few opportunities for the higher attaining pupils to be challenged in their learning, for example, by evaluating what they have done or by making comparisons.

78. The co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has identified a set of appropriate priorities. A curriculum map is in place, which, when fully implemented, will secure the systematic teaching of all areas of learning. At present, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage by the co-ordinator, which is limiting the quality and consistency of learning in the newly opened nursery. Nursery nurses and other staff offer good support to individual children but the provision would benefit from more partnership teaching. For instance, in one session observed, some staff sat behind the children and were not able to offer effective modelling of the learning.

79. Provision in the reception classes has improved since the last inspection. On that occasion, children had too little opportunity to work independently or to talk about their experiences. These are now strong features of provision in the reception year.

#### *Personal, social and emotional development*

80. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Children in the nursery are able to play for extended periods. They develop increasing confidence in playing independently, for instance in the role-play area. Most children are able to separate from their parent/carer with support, and are helped by transition routines like finding their name and putting it in the box. They are able to make attachments to other children in the group, for instance when they are playing independently in an aeroplane that they have constructed from blocks. In the reception class, children concentrate well, develop good listening skills and make a positive contribution to lessons. They have good opportunities to work in groups or on their own. They are able to take the initiative and be independent. They are respectful of each other's views and experiences. By the time they come to the end of the Foundation Stage, they are beginning to understand right and wrong and to conform to the behavioural expectations within the class. They show concern for living things and the environment of the school. The discussions held about the visit to the church indicated their interest in and enjoyment of cultural differences.

#### *Communication, language and literacy*

81. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children reach the expected goals for learning in their communication, language and literacy skills. Children across the Foundation Stage use their speaking and listening skills in a range of situations, for example, taking part in role-play in the airport or, in the case of older children, using them to talk about their experience of visiting the church to attend a baptism. By the end of the Foundation Stage, many pupils are able to draw on their previous experience to deepen their learning. In reading, the younger pupils listen to a range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, and are beginning to use picture clues to help them predict what will happen next. Older children read simple texts independently, match initial sounds and pictures, and are beginning to acquire phonic knowledge. In writing, the younger children use their knowledge of letters to write their names, for example, on labels on suitcases in the role-play area, and write text on postcards that were subsequently sent home. Many older children write extended pieces of writing, applying what they know of word and sentence structure well. They use a range of word sources to help them spell unfamiliar words.

#### *Mathematical development*

82. Children make good progress in mathematics and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, nearly all are achieving the early learning goals. Younger children are able to recite number names up to ten and sometimes beyond. Some children are beginning to get a sense of numbers: for example, one child knew that the heavier you are the greater the number would be on the weighing scales. They sort objects in formal and informal settings, for example, clothes suitable for cold weather and clothes for hot weather. They record data using the weather chart. By the end of the Foundation Stage, pupils recognise some two-digit numbers and do simple addition and subtraction sums orally or using practical objects. They are beginning to order the days of the week and know what comes *before* or *after*. They are able to identify shapes in context, for example, during the visit to the church, and are beginning to get a sense of time and distance, which they used in planning an outing to Cannock Chase.

#### *Knowledge and understanding of the world*

83. The long-term plans for the Foundation Stage give pupils many opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Younger children plant seeds and children at the end of the Foundation Stage talk enthusiastically about how plants grow and the conditions they need. Children take an interest in the environment, both in school and outside, as in the trip to Cannock Chase. Older children know the relation between globes, atlases and ordinance survey maps. Some are able to identify features on the map like railway lines and footpaths. Children in the nursery are using the computer to match and sort, and the older children have used it to explore Paint programmes. Children at the end of the Foundation Stage are able to make links with their prior



learning, for instance in their visit to the church to see a baptism. They know that churches are special places and why people put their hands together when they pray.

#### *Physical development*

84. Children in the nursery run, climb, manoeuvre in cars, and throw and catch rings and balls in line with expectations of this age group. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage, they move backwards, forwards and sideways confidently on different parts of their body, are beginning to jump and land safely, and to take part in more structured physical education lessons. Some of the lower attaining pupils at the end of the Foundation Stage do not currently have the opportunity to play and explore their growing physical skills independently outside of the physical education lesson, other than at playtime, and even here the opportunities are limited. Children's manipulative skills are satisfactory and they use small apparatus and other equipment in a way suitable for their age.

#### *Creative development*

85. Children in the nursery sing and recite songs and rhymes, and have particular favourites. They use one object to represent another, as when they use folded card to represent passports in the role-play area. They are able to play out a narrative with support, for example, when the class enacted a flight on the plane, complete with snacks and decisions about where they were going. Using paint and clay, they make representations of other objects and known characters like the fish in the story. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children transfer their role-play into a wider range of play activities, sometimes with support. They express ideas and thought using a wider range of resources, including Paint programmes on the computer, and respond appropriately in more formal music lessons. Some children talk clearly about their intentions and describe in some detail what they are trying to do. In this area of development, they achieve the expected goals for learning by the end of the Foundation Stage.

### **ENGLISH**

86. Pupils' attainment by the end of both key stages is in line with the standards expected nationally. At Key Stage 2, this is an improvement since the last inspection when standards in English were below the national expectation, particularly in writing, and in relation to the results of the national tests in 2000, which were well below average. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2000, the school's results were below the national average in reading but were average in writing. When compared with similar schools, the results in reading were in line with the national average and were above average in writing. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was broadly average but very few achieved the higher Level 3. Boys did less well than the girls in reading but performed better in writing. In the Key Stage 2 national tests, standards have shown a steady improvement over the past three years in line with the national trend but remained well below average in 2000 and below average in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 4 or above was below the national average and was well below average for those attaining the higher Level 5. The performance of girls was well below that expected nationally and below that of boys in the school, contrary to the national picture. There were no significant differences noted in the performance of boys and girls during the inspection. The school surpassed the target for English in 2000 and the evidence indicates that it could do so again in 2001.

87. Most pupils are making good progress between their entry to school and the time they are seven, and between the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that pupils are improving their writing skills in particular. This is the result of several school initiatives, including the impact of the national strategy for teaching literacy, better planning and improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Although standards in English may not rise very much this year, there are signs that the school's performance in the national tests in subsequent years will improve, particularly if whole-school procedures for assessment and the tracking of pupils' progress are implemented speedily, staffing remains stable, and when newly introduced strategies are more firmly established.

88. By the time they are seven, most pupils read easily and accurately a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and talk about the major incidents and ideas in them. They have a range of strategies for reading unfamiliar words. Word level work is insufficiently structured in literacy

sessions and this is limiting the ease with which children become familiar with standard endings, such as 'ed'. In writing, seven year-old pupils are able to write well-shaped letters accurately and fluently. They are able to structure pieces of writing with a clear beginning, middle and end to communicate their ideas. They identify and use synonyms like 'cold' and 'freezing'. Spelling of simple words is mainly accurate and pupils use simple punctuation consistently although they do not always remember to use these skills in all their writing. Opportunities to engage in writing poetry or plays are limited.

89. By the age of eleven, pupils apply their reading skills to an increasing range of texts. They know the difference between different kinds of text, for example, explanatory and persuasive, and understand the characteristics of them. They apply this knowledge to their writing and adapt their writing style to its purpose. The handwriting of most pupils is joined and consistent, reflecting the recent focus on improving handwriting across the school. Narrative writing is well structured, and the use of paragraphs and an increasing range of punctuation, including colons and semi-colons, support the structure. Increasingly, pupils draw on their own experiences outside school for their ideas; for instance, one pupil used ideas from a television programme about global warming in a piece of persuasive writing.

90. Overall, teaching in English is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Where teaching is good at Key Stage 1, teachers are clear, not only about the objectives, but also about the standards that they expect to see in all work, for example, neat handwriting, and capital letters at the start and full stops at the end of sentences. Learning is enhanced in some classes by the teacher carefully checking that pupils understand all the words in the objectives, as for example, identifying confusion about *setting* as in location and the *sets* they had been studying in a mathematics lesson the previous day. The use of 'thinking time' either individually or in pairs gives pupils the chance to deepen their ideas before they answer questions. In a few lessons, learning is less effective as noise levels are too high, and teachers use the same worksheet for all pupils, irrespective of their individual needs, and fail to target questions at the lower attaining pupils to keep them engaged. On occasions in literacy sessions, the teaching of word and sentence level work lacks sufficient structure.

91. At Key Stage 2, the characteristics of good teaching include paying careful attention to the National Literacy Strategy objectives to ensure appropriate coverage, a brisk pace, good use of questioning to challenge higher attaining pupils and the consistent use of technical language, for example annotation. Teachers use whiteboards effectively to collate thoughts and use the plenary session well to deepen learning and share misunderstandings. Pupils are encouraged to link their literacy work with other subjects. On occasions, this can be a weakness when the objectives for the session are not achieved because pupils become too involved in the subject matter of the text. Lesson evaluation sheets give teachers the opportunity to record such occasions to ensure work is not missed. Pupils' work is consistently marked and in Year 4, marking levels are linked to targets, which enables pupils to evaluate their own work. In Year 6, targets identified in the previous week are used effectively to monitor progress in group reading sessions. Homework, whilst not consistently given, offers parents ways in which they can help their children to achieve. For instance, parents are encouraged to use the 'write, cover, spell, check' approach to spelling homework.

92. The subject is effectively led and managed. Priorities have been identified and the resources are largely satisfactory, including the provision of aids for pupils who find the act of writing difficult. Poetry books and plays are under represented in the texts across the school. The subject co-ordinator and the literacy consultant from the local education authority have jointly monitored teaching. This process has identified strengths for sharing with other staff and areas for further improvement. The headteacher has also monitored teaching in the subject and the areas for development identified in his reports have contributed to improved levels of teaching.

93. There is clear evidence of improvements in English, particularly in writing and spelling, since the last inspection. Pupils make better progress in lessons and the standard of teaching has improved dramatically.

## **MATHEMATICS**

94. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment in mathematics is in line with the standard expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was

below national expectations at both key stages, and also at Key Stage 1 when compared with the results of the national tests in 2000. In the national tests for seven year-olds in 2000, the school's results were below the national average but close to the average for similar schools. At Level 2 or above, the results were close to the national average but at Level 3 or above, they were below average. Girls performed less well than the boys, and less well than girls nationally. In the Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000, the results were close to the national average and were above average in comparison with similar schools. This represents an improvement over previous years when the results were below average. At Level 4 or above, the results were below average but were close to the average at Level 5 or above. There was a significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, with girls doing less well than the boys and less well than girls nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that boys still outperform girls by the end of Key Stage 2. Trends over time show a gradual improvement in standards, at a rate slightly faster than the national trend. The school exceeded its target for mathematics in 2000 and is on course to do so again in 2001.

95. During Key Stage 1, pupils, particularly the higher attainers, make good progress in relation to their earlier attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. By the time they are seven, most pupils count, read, write and order numbers to 100, have an understanding of simple number sequences and understand a half and a quarter. They use this knowledge to find half or a quarter of numbers and shapes. They add several coins mentally, halve and double numbers, and have an appropriate understanding of division. They explain their thinking using correct mathematical vocabulary. Pupils use the correct symbols for addition and subtraction, and they are familiar with symbols for multiplication and division. They recognise and name two- and three-dimensional shapes, describing their properties, and measure and compare lengths. They use simple graphs to record data, for example, in a survey for a recent Year 1 and 2 topic on the seaside. Pupils' investigative approaches to mathematics are less well developed: they have insufficient opportunities to engage in problem solving or open-ended activities to enable them to consolidate learning in basic mathematical skills, apply their mathematical knowledge and develop their reasoning skills.

96. By the age of eleven, most pupils have a sound mental recall of multiplication and division facts to 10 times 10. They halve and double numbers confidently and use their knowledge of near doubles to multiply mentally with larger numbers. For example, a Year 6 group was able to multiply by nineteen using their knowledge of how to multiply by twenty, then adjusting the answer. Pupils use their knowledge of fractions to find fractions of numbers and quantities: they understand percentages and find simple percentages of whole numbers. They understand the relationship between decimals, fractions and percentages. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, pupils learn a wide range of mathematical skills. By the age of eleven, they are able to use a protractor to measure angles to calculate the area and perimeter of compound shapes. Mental calculation skills are a particular strength at Key Stage 2. Regular 'morning maths' enables pupils to develop a range of strategies for mental calculations. They explain their thinking using correct mathematical vocabulary. Pupils in Year 6 solve problems by extracting and interpreting information presented in graphs and tables. Higher attaining pupils solve word problems, selecting the correct operation and are able to check their answers and explain their reasoning.

97. The quality of teaching is good overall and never less than satisfactory. About a fifth of the teaching is very good. This is an improvement on the last inspection when the overall quality of teaching was satisfactory and a small minority unsatisfactory. The good quality of around two-thirds of the teaching leads to good quality learning for most pupils, enabling them to make good progress. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, which found progress at both key stages to be unsatisfactory.

98. At Key Stage 1, planning is good and lessons follow the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. Teachers share the learning objectives with the children and plan activities to meet the needs of all pupils. A particularly good feature of these lessons is the whole class teaching, where there is a good balance between the teacher explaining and showing the children what to do, and pupils being given the opportunity to explain their thinking and demonstrate their understanding. Generally, pupils play an active part in lessons. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary and usually make good use of resources. At times, not enough use is made of resources, such as individual white boards and number fans, to allow more pupils to be fully engaged in the lesson and to enable the teacher to assess all pupils' learning. In a small number of

cases, independent activities do not always match pupils' needs. In one lesson, for example, the teacher over-estimated the pupils' abilities and consequently they found the task too difficult.

99. At Key Stage 2, the teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. Work matches pupils' needs well, with higher attaining pupils challenged to develop their thinking and encouraged to explain their strategies to the rest of the class. Mental calculation skills are a strength at this key stage and pupils are fully engaged in whole class activities: for example, a Year 5 class clapped and chanted whilst practising number bonds to 100. Teachers make sure that pupils understand the learning objectives for the lesson and give clear explanations. In the most effective lessons, there is a strong link between the quality of the teachers' questioning and the quality of pupils' learning. In these lessons, the climate for learning is good, pupils' contributions are valued and they show very clear evidence of their learning, for example, in a Year 3 lesson where they quickly spotted a deliberate mistake made by the teacher. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved. Teachers assess work throughout the lesson and quickly identify and correct mistakes. Homework extends pupils' learning effectively. For example, in a Year 6 class, homework on converting litres to millilitres linked well with a lesson on subtracting decimal numbers.

100. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good: their work is well organised and neatly presented. In a small number of cases, teachers over-estimate the ability of lower attaining pupils and tasks are too open-ended. This makes the work too difficult for these pupils. The use of more open-ended activities with higher attaining pupils challenges them to extend their learning, as occurred, for example, in a Year 6 class where they were able to subtract decimal numbers with seven or more digits. At both key stages, teachers make effective use of high quality classroom assistants to support pupils with special educational needs.

101. The role of the mathematics co-ordinator, who has recently been appointed, is developing well. The co-ordinator has identified strengths and weaknesses within the subject and has a clear vision for the development of mathematics in the school. A new scheme of work, used throughout the school, provides greater structure to the way mathematics is taught. The headteacher monitors teaching and planning effectively. However, the co-ordinator is not as yet playing a strong enough role in monitoring teaching and analysing assessment results to identify areas for improvement and raise standards. There is a greater need to compare the school's results with those nationally and set realistic targets for sustained improvement. The school is making good use of a local education authority adviser to support the co-ordinator in developing the skills to improve teaching and learning in mathematics throughout the school.

## **SCIENCE**

102. Only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 1. Judgements for this key stage are based on this lesson, a scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils and staff. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils are attaining standards that are broadly in line with those expected nationally. At the time of the last inspection, standards were above average by the age of seven and well below average by the age of eleven. The findings of the inspection show that there has been an improvement in standards by the time pupils reach the age of eleven but there has been a drop in the standards of work up to the age of seven.

103. Teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 indicate that the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was below the national average and well below average at Level 3 or above. In the national tests at Key Stage 2 in 2000, the school's results were below the national average but were average when compared with similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 or above was close to the national average but below average for those attaining Level 5 or above. The overall trend since 1997 shows that there has been an improvement in the performance of both boys and girls, although girls perform less well than the boys and well below the average for girls nationally. There were no significant differences noted between the performance of boys and girls at the time of the inspection.

104. Pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1 and by the age of seven, achieve average standards in investigation skills. Pupils understand how to make an electrical circuit and that a bulb will not light up if there is a break in the circuit. They have recorded their survey on 'What I Found in the School Grounds' in a table, classifying plants and animals, including their location and

frequency. In the one lesson at Key Stage 1, a class of Year 1/2 pupils visited the local park as part of their topic on Forces. They investigated the effect of different surfaces on the height of the bounce of the ball and how familiar objects move faster or slower. They explored the play equipment and considered what kind of force they were using, for example, pushing the roundabout and using their hands to make it move faster or slower. Using the climbing frame, pupils learned how to pull themselves up. Using a bouncing ball on different surfaces, for example grass and concrete, they considered and measured the height of the bounce. By the end of the lesson, pupils understood the meaning of 'push and pull' forces and how to use force to make objects go faster or slower. On returning to the classroom, some of the higher attaining pupils made a table to record their findings on their ball bouncing investigations. Pupils with special educational needs made satisfactory progress in this lesson.

105. By the age of eleven, pupils cover a range of topics, including studies of reflection, shadows, plant life and to understand the chemical differences between flat and fizzy water of the same brand and to discover the pH factor in common household liquids. In one Year 5 lesson, pupils learned that plants produce flowers and that seeds are produced when pollen fertilises the flower. They know the names of different parts of the flower and talk confidently about the nature and functions of the stamen, stigma, style, sepal and petal. Some of the higher attaining pupils are able to explain the term 'germination' and why plants have flowers to attract insects, why petals are coloured and how bees are attracted by nectar. Pupils use hand lenses to examine buttercups before labelling the parts on diagrams. They carry out their investigations competently. By the end of the lesson, higher attaining pupils were not only able to label all the parts of a flower but also able to provide answers to questions such as 'why do flowers have strong smells?' and 'why do flowers look pretty?'. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, were able to name the parts of the flower. In another lesson in Year 6, pupils studied the chemical difference between flat and fizzy water of the same brand. During this lesson, they carried out three activities: the first involved using all their senses to compare flat or fizzy water; the second involved testing the pH of flat and fizzy water; and the third to test common household liquids. The lesson involved good opportunities for scientific investigation as they completed their table to compare flat and fizzy water by look, smell, taste, feel and sound. They learned that the gas was carbon dioxide and that it dissolves in water. They discovered that the pH scale is about sourness and that vinegar is low on the pH scale. The content of the lesson challenged all pupils fully and they responded enthusiastically.

106. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about teaching at Key Stage 1 but in the lesson seen it was good. The lesson was well planned, with appropriate targets for the pupils and a good balance of discussion and investigation. The teacher ensured that the work was challenging for the higher attaining pupils. At Key Stage 2, the quality of the teaching and learning is good and occasionally very good. At the start of lessons, teachers make good links with previous learning and ensure that lessons build carefully upon the pupils' previous knowledge and understanding. In the best lessons, teachers place a strong emphasis on the development of the pupils' skills of investigation. A feature of the teaching and learning in science are the opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils write accounts of the equipment they use in their investigations and record the outcomes of their tests.

107. Pupils at both key stages show very positive attitudes towards science and work well to complete their investigations. They answer questions readily and use equipment thoughtfully. This is particularly evident at Key Stage 2. Pupils have a better attitude to science than at the time of the last inspection. Relationships between pupils and teachers and amongst the pupils themselves are good. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils work collaboratively in small groups, effectively sharing materials and using apparatus. At Key Stage 1, pupils are still learning this skill. They receive good support from teachers and teaching assistants.

108. The science curriculum meets statutory requirements. Subject planning is based upon the QCA schemes of work and this programme underpins the progressive development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The school is aware of the need to review this scheme and to produce a more specific scheme of work focused on the needs of pupils in the school. In this way, the work can be related more effectively to the National Curriculum levels, which will enable the monitoring of pupils' progress and skill development across the school. At present, teachers produce grids to show the levels of work achieved at the end of each unit but this process is not used consistently to inform the planning of subsequent lessons. Resources for science are adequate at

Key Stage 1 but the existing resources, although used well, are insufficient at Key Stage 2 to meet the needs of the QCA scheme of work.

109. The role of the in science co-ordinator is at an early stage of development. Much has been done to develop and evaluate the planning and to consider the learning outcomes and the individual needs of pupils. As yet, there has been no monitoring of teaching by the co-ordinator or any tracking of pupils' skill development across the key stages. The co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be achieved in the subject, including the development of a science club, and plans to become involved in an Eco-Schools project.

## **ART**

110. Art is taught alternately with design and technology and because of this arrangement, no lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. It is not possible, therefore, to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, learning, or of pupils' attitudes and behaviour. However, the work completed in pupils' sketchbooks and on display indicates that pupils' attainment by the age of seven is in line with national expectations. Three lessons were seen in art at Key Stage 2. This evidence, together with the scrutiny of work in sketchbooks and displays of work, indicates that standards by the age of eleven are in line with those expected nationally, similar to those at the time of the last inspection.

111. A scrutiny of the work in sketchbooks and on display shows that pupils of all levels of attainment make satisfactory progress with their drawing and they are learning to express their ideas using a range of materials. Pupils' sketchbooks in Years 1 and 2 show that they have made a range of pencil drawings and developed their ideas and skills satisfactorily. There are careful drawings of glove puppets, drawings to illustrate the vowels of the alphabet, drawings of children sitting developing the idea of perspective and background. In Year 2, pupils have developed the use of the sketchbook and drawn a bird's eye view of the classroom. They have drawn portraits and completed exercises like 'taking a piece of string for a walk' as a beginning for collage work. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have also used self-drying clay to represent a make up of the school building from outside to inside.

112. Pupils make satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their art lessons at Key Stage 2. They are developing their knowledge of materials, processes and techniques, as well as learning safe practice. This was seen to good effect in a Year 5 lesson, where the teacher worked with a governor, who is an artist, to help the pupils create a three-dimensional piece of work centred on the school's mission statement. In this lesson, pupils were transferring previously made self-portraits on to wood blocks covered with Gesso. Pupils learned to remove some of the surface of the Gesso using lino cutters, before applying a different coloured Gesso. They showed increased skill in using lino-cutting tools to create their portrait blocks and understood the need to keep both their hands behind the cutting edge of the tool. In another Year 5 lesson, pupils used groupings of potted plants to explore ideas for a still life arrangement. They considered similarities and differences, using a viewfinder to make close observations. From their discussions and ideas, they discovered the importance of curved, straight, bright, dull, patterned and plain features in determining their compositions and deciding where the focus of their work should lie. They used magnifying glasses to observe the parts of the plants closely and a variety of coloured pencils to create their drawings. Higher attaining pupils demonstrated considerable confidence in planning their work and using materials and tools. Several pupils used a digital camera to record their work and to aid future re-creations. Pupils in Year 6 are able to discuss what makes a good still life composition and are able to explain what makes a good composition, taking into account the importance of colour, texture, design and size when arranging their objects. Boys and girls, higher and lower attainers alike, collaborate well to achieve their final compositions.

113. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 2 is good. Teachers provide clear explanations, good demonstrations of the techniques and provide effective support for pupils who find the work difficult. They make effective use of discussion before pupils begin their work. Through good planning and use of resources, pupils make considerable progress. At the end of most lessons, teachers make effective use of whole class discussion as they review completed work. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work and there is good evidence of progression in the work as pupils move through the school.

114. The school places considerable emphasis upon art as a subject in the school, shown by the numerous attractive displays that are a feature of the building. For example, there is a display by Year 3 pupils of closely observed drawings of World War 2 artefacts, including a gas mask, dipper pen and inkwell, and an enamel jug. Pupils in Year 4 have made a moving parts display, with drawings and paintings to illustrate how things move. In Year 5, pupils have considered the work of Van Gogh and Georgia O'Keefe and produced paintings of sunflowers and poppies, using pastels and paints. Pupils in Year 6 have studied the work of Clara Peters, William Harnett and Cézanne, and used photography to demonstrate how they have used their objects to make compositions.

115. The art curriculum, based upon QCA guidance, ensures that there is good subject coverage of the work. The school acknowledges that the scheme needs to be adapted to meet the specific needs of the pupils. Since the last inspection, the attitudes of pupils to art have improved and there are better opportunities to investigate a wider range of techniques and processes. The role of the co-ordinator is at an early stage of development. The co-ordinator has carried out an audit of resources and has a clear idea of future needs of the subject. As yet, there is no formal monitoring by the co-ordinator of pupils' progress throughout the school, the development of skills against the National Curriculum attainment targets or of teaching. Although used across the school, there is no consistent policy for the development of sketchbooks. ICT is not widely used to support work in the subject, although there is limited use of the Paint programme. Resources for art, which have improved since the last inspection, are good, with a wide range of materials to support the work at both key stages. Art makes an important contribution to work in other subjects, such as science and design and technology.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

116. Pupils' attainments by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are in line with the standard expected nationally, and are similar to the judgements made in the last inspection report. As only one lesson was seen in Key Stage 1, judgements are based on this evidence, a scrutiny of pupils' work, an examination of teachers' planning and discussion with teachers.

117. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in a range of joining and assembling skills. They competently make things out of different materials, including card and fabric, demonstrating developing skills in making stable constructions. For example, in Year 1, pupils make model vehicles, first drawing what they propose to make then working out the materials they need and the techniques, such as cutting and pasting, that they will use when making the object. Pupils in Year 2 look at and evaluate different types of equipment for a playground before designing their own. Using constructional kits, they experiment with making playground models with moving parts. Their models show skills in constructing and dismantling, with developing skills in making three-dimensional models with moving parts.

118. Pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2 and extend their skills to an average standard, particularly in learning how to make things move. Pupils in Year 3 learn about 'levers' and 'linkage', including simple pneumatic systems and have produced some impressive monsters with a range of moving parts. They make good progress in evaluating the effectiveness of their work and decide that a simple model with strong joints would be easier to control. In making moving toys, pupils in Year 5 develop a sound understanding of how pulleys work. In talking about their work, they use and understand appropriate vocabulary like cam, chassis and rod. All pupils are developing a sound understanding of the design-make-evaluate process. A good example of this occurs in work done by Year 6 pupils in designing and constructing bird boxes. They researched different materials, testing for strength and waterproofing qualities, before deciding on appropriate ones to use. They tested their models to identify ways of improving their product, before evaluating their models against the criteria presented to them.

119. It is not possible to make a clear judgement about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are generally secure and lessons are planned carefully. Teachers understand the importance of pupils having time to look at and disassemble commercial products in order to examine design features. They make effective use of discussion to help pupils evaluate their own designs and models. For example, pupils in a Year 4 lesson discussed their 'pop up' characters and decided that simple models would be easier to control. Skills are taught systematically and opportunities are provided for pupils to experiment using a range of tools and techniques. Teachers use opportunities

to reinforce the importance of planning as a group, sharing ideas and changing ideas where necessary. As a result, pupils are able to work together in a mature manner. For example, two pupils in Year 3 collaborated well when discussing how to make their monster move. They agreed that a split pin and a strong bracket would support the levers and the pneumatic control system. As pupils worked, teachers and support staff further enhanced their learning by asking such questions as 'what would happen if...?' to encourage further experimentation. Links with other subjects are sound. For example, pupils in Year 4 made open-ended cuboids, a mathematical link, to support their 'pop up' characters. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, both in lessons and over time.

120. The school has adopted the QCA scheme of work. The management of the subject is developing. The co-ordinator has not yet monitored the quality of teaching and learning but is monitoring coverage of the curriculum. This is ensuring that pupils experience a range of projects that draw on knowledge from mathematics, science and art and design. Good use is made of the expertise of classroom assistants in supporting and in extending pupils' ideas. Other than lesson plans, teachers have little to track pupils' progress and attainment. Resources are adequate.

## GEOGRAPHY

121. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' attainment is at the standard expected nationally. They make satisfactory progress in the development of geographical knowledge of people, places and environments. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. They also develop their skills in carrying out geographical enquiries both in and out of school.

122. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 make good use of the school and the local area, and, as a result, pupils in Year 2 talk confidently about their local area and what they would see on a walk around the school. They talk about their visits to the seaside and about the differences between coastal resorts and their own locality. They use appropriate geographical vocabulary, such as seaside, beach and holiday. They are developing an awareness of changes in environments, for example, that the beach life in Scarborough in 1911 differs from contemporary British seaside holidays. Their understanding of weather patterns and places in the world extends through the effective use of displays, weather boards and the regular use of local maps and maps of the United Kingdom and the world. Pupils know that they live in England. They know that 'Spain is hot' or 'we go to America by plane because it is across the sea'. Pupils in Year 2 draw recognisable picture maps.

123. During Key Stage 2, pupils look carefully at the school environment, noting aspects of the school building that they like or dislike. They think about wider environmental issues as they look at aspects of pollution. By Year 6, pupils have learnt how to use a range of maps confidently and to draw their own. They are developing their understanding of contours as imaginary lines that provide information on heights of land. They have some knowledge of other communities, such as village life in India, and know that climate and geographical features affect lifestyle. Pupils understand that village life in Chembakolli, India, is very different from life in their home area, but that there are also similarities, for example, that pupils still have to go to school. As part of a residential visit, pupils in Year 5 look at how the environment can be protected and improved. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of physical features. In their studies of rivers, pupils know that the estuary is where the river enters the sea. They use appropriate geographical vocabulary, such as source, estuary and tributary. However, pupils' use of ICT for research is underdeveloped. They are also less confident in finding places on world maps or in suggesting how they would carry out their own investigations.

124. The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory, with examples of good and very good lessons seen in both key stages. As noted in the last inspection report, the use made of field trips to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of their environment is a strength. Pupils in Year 1 enjoy looking at items from the travels of Barnaby Bear. Lessons are carefully planned and activities matched to the different levels of attainment within the class, an improvement since the last inspection. In lessons, teachers skilfully revise previous learning with pupils, using this strategy effectively to focus pupils on the next stage of learning. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 6, pupils revisited key words in their topic on investigating rivers. The teacher's expectations were high and pupils were challenged constantly to use precise geographical terms. This resulted in good learning, with pupils using terms like *catchment area* and *source* correctly, thereby developing their understanding of the physical features of rivers. In less effective lessons, although the level of



learning remains satisfactory, it is constrained by teachers allowing the misbehaviour of a few pupils to go unchecked for too long. This affects the concentration of others who do not achieve as much as they should, even though the lessons are well structured and interest most of the pupils. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are effectively developed in geography lessons.

125. The management of the subject is a developing area and is broadly satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of what needs to be developed and the school has adopted the QCA scheme of work. The co-ordinator has not yet monitored the quality of teaching and learning but is monitoring coverage of the curriculum. This is ensuring that pupils experience a range of projects that draw on knowledge from English, mathematics and science. Good use is made of the expertise of classroom assistants in supporting and in extending pupils' ideas. Other than lesson plans, the teachers have little to track the pupils' progress and attainment. The use of ICT is improving but is currently unsatisfactory. Resources are satisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

126. Only a very small number of lessons in history were seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on these lessons, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work. Pupils' attainments by the age of seven and eleven are in line with the standards expected nationally. Pupils are making satisfactory progress both within and across the key stages. Pupils in Year 2 are able to identify the differences between what people wear at the seaside now and at the start of the century. Eleven year-olds know the significant events in Queen Victoria's reign and can link events: for instance, making associations between the death of her husband and some of her children, and the fact that portraits always show her wearing black. Few pupils at eleven are currently working at the higher levels: for example, pupils are unable to recognise the difference between primary and secondary historical sources. Pupils with special educational needs are making satisfactory progress. Teachers are adapting activities so that they can learn from them, for instance, using photographs to motivate discussion about chronology.

127. Teaching in history is satisfactory overall and has some strengths, especially at Key Stage 2. In the more effective lessons, teachers share the objectives for the lesson with the children, take time at the end to review whether the objectives have been met, make clear their expectations and ensure that the work proceeds at a brisk pace, and provide resources of high quality. For instance, in the topic on World War 2, texts, photos, letters and other artefacts, including a 1940s apron with an original price tag, were used. Visits to places of historical interest deepen their understanding, for example to the museum at Whittington Barracks to explore exhibits on the second world war. Teachers use questions well to develop pupils' thinking. For example, in the work on the seaside at Key Stage 1, pupils were asked 'why don't we have so many hotels today?'. They were given thinking time, individually or in pairs, to consider their response. Where teaching is less effective, too many closed tasks limit the opportunities for pupils to develop their historical understanding. Overall, there is a weakness in the assessment of the subject. Although teachers assess progress during lessons and mark work, they do not assess pupils' work against the National Curriculum attainment targets. This makes it difficult for teachers to stretch the higher attaining pupils when the next unit of work is undertaken. The need to improve the assessment procedures was identified in the last inspection report and remains a weakness.

128. The co-ordinator has a clear set of priorities for the subject and recognises that methods for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, standards and the quality of teaching are not sufficiently well developed. The improvement plan for the school indicates that history will be a specific focus for the school next year. In the meantime, work in the subject would benefit from staff working together to assess and moderate pupils' work in history against the National Curriculum attainment targets.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

129. All Key Stage 1 classes have recently been supplied with a computer. This combined with the introduction of a scheme of work is beginning to provide greater opportunities for pupils to improve and expand their range of computer skills. However, pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is below the standard expected nationally since the provision does not meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 2 so

that by the age of eleven, their attainment is in line with national expectations. Since the last inspection, satisfactory progress has been maintained at Key Stage 2. The computer suite has recently been updated to provide networked, reliable computers, a wide range of software and full access to the Internet. A scheme of work, which covers all aspects of the ICT curriculum, has been introduced and Key Stage 2 classes are timetabled for a lesson each week, when they are taught specific computer skills.

130. In Key Stage 1, pupils control a mouse to select choices and enter, save and retrieve information using a graphics programme. Some pupils are able to use a word processor to record their written work. A digital camera is widely used by pupils to record a variety of events. Across the key stage, pupils' learning is limited and overall it is unsatisfactory. The school is aware of this and recent developments, including the introduction of a scheme of work, an improvement in resources, and the installation of higher stools in the computer suite so that the computers are more accessible to Key Stage 1 pupils, are beginning to improve their learning opportunities.

131. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are competent in a range of skills and are familiar with a variety of programmes. They log on, load programmes, and save and retrieve their work. They use a spreadsheet to input data, calculate totals and produce graphs. For example, pupils in Year 6 created a spreadsheet about river trips where they calculated the cost of a range of activities using formulae. Pupils use e-mail and search the Internet for information. They recently used the Internet to research information about Victorians for a history topic. In Year 5, pupils use a spreadsheet to calculate water consumption for their geography project. Pupils in Year 4 are able to control a screen turtle in a turtle graphics programme and type in specific commands to move the turtle around the screen. Pupils use a digital camera to record events and record their work in design and technology. ICT supports work in mathematics, history, geography and art. However, it is not sufficiently used across the curriculum to have a positive impact on learning in all subjects. Pupils in both key stages, but particularly in Key Stage 1, are insufficiently familiar with word processing and a wider range of software to underpin other areas of the curriculum. In Key Stage 2, pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and the higher attaining pupils, is satisfactory.

132. Pupils are generally enthusiastic about ICT. They explain procedures well, particularly the higher attaining pupils. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and work well, both independently and in pairs, when they support each other in their learning. Their behaviour is usually good.

133. At Key Stage 1, no teaching of ICT was seen and it is not possible, therefore, to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. At Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good. In the most effective lessons, the teacher's clear instructions, good use of the screen and projector to demonstrate how, for example, to use a spreadsheet or move a turtle, and a brisk pace and high expectations for their learning, challenges all pupils to make good progress. Where lessons are less effective, they usually lack pace, which leads to some loss of concentration, a rise in noise levels and a small amount of inappropriate behaviour. In these lessons, pupils, particularly the higher attainers, are insufficiently challenged and the pace of the learning suffers.

134. The co-ordinator, who is new to the post, is enthusiastic and committed and has a clear vision for the development of ICT within the school. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified and an action plan for ICT, which is included in the school improvement plan as a priority for development, has been prepared. Over the past year, the school has purchased additional computers and software, updated the computer suite and introduced an appropriate scheme of work, which will improve coverage of the ICT programme of study. The scheme of work has not yet been reviewed to ensure that it meets the needs of the pupils at the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is variable and the co-ordinator has been instrumental in organising training for teaching staff. The co-ordinator's role is developing. The co-ordinator is beginning to compile a portfolio of pupils' work but there are no formal procedures for record keeping and assessment. At present, the co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and planning. These issues, and the lack of a broad and balanced ICT curriculum for pupils at Key Stage 1, are preventing the systematic development of the subject and the achievement of high standards.

## **MUSIC**

135. It is not possible to make a firm judgement about standards in music by the end of Key Stage 1 as only one Year 1/2 lesson was seen during the inspection. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 is below the standard expected nationally. The progress that pupils make in lessons in developing their musical skills, knowledge and understanding is broadly satisfactory and in one lesson excellent. Standards in music are lower than at the time of the last inspection, when pupils' attainment by the age of seven and eleven was in line with national expectations. Until very recently, a teacher from the local education authority has taken all the music in the school: consequently, teachers are only now beginning to teach music to their own classes. The school has been using the QCA schemes of work but has recently introduced a new commercial scheme. In due course, adherence to this scheme should help teachers in their planning and ensure the systematic development of pupils' musical skills. Throughout the school, pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding across the aspects of performing, composing and appraising, and consequently the music curriculum lacks adequate depth and breadth.

136. Pupils in Year 2 understand that percussion instruments make different sounds, which can be varied by the player. They also recognise that their voice is an instrument that can be used to make music. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of musical terms such as ostinato, pulse and beat, and an awareness of the different sounds that untuned percussion instruments can make. They understand about different musical structures, such as a round and the majority are able to maintain their part when singing a round. In general, pupils' percussion playing skills are underdeveloped, although improving, as are their skills in clapping rhythms. Throughout this key stage, pupils' skills in appraising both their own and each other's work are underdeveloped. Most sing in tune, but the singing often lacks sparkle, showing little awareness of dynamics and phrasing. Younger pupils have some understanding of musical terms, but this is not extensive or secure. In two out of the three lessons observed, pupils made insufficient progress in their learning, as teachers did not expect enough of them.

137. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent, and overall it is satisfactory. Teachers plan a range of suitable activities and organise their classes reasonably well. At times, some of the teaching lacks challenge and the management of pupils' behaviour is not always effective. Consequently, in a few lessons, pupils do not learn as much as they are capable of doing. In general, insufficient attention is given to improving the quality of the pupils' work, either by giving opportunities to repeat and practise or through specific guidance from the teacher. In a Year 6 lesson, where pupils made excellent progress, the teacher's lively, enthusiastic approach was transmitted to the class so that they were fully engaged in the activities, which were challenging and interesting. The teacher used her very good subject knowledge very effectively to explain to pupils the different characteristics of the percussion instruments and to help them become more familiar with musical terminology. They were given plenty of time to repeat and practise their rhythms and their eventual performance was of an average standard. Their skills of appraising and evaluating developed effectively in this lesson. Some of these characteristics of good practice are absent in other lessons.

138. Pupils are able to participate in a limited range of music activities, including recorder, and a small number receive additional instrumental tuition in violin, cello and brass. Music is used effectively to accompany pupils into and out of assemblies to set a calm atmosphere. Singing features in assemblies, although its quality lacks sparkle and expression. The school has an adequate number of percussion instruments, including some keyboards, but they are comparatively narrow in range. Other resources to support pupils' musical education, such as tapes and CDs, are satisfactory. Since her appointment at the start of the term, the role of the subject manager, who is also the deputy headteacher, is beginning to have considerable impact on raising standards in music. The school has made little progress in implementing a systematic and consistent approach to assessment.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

139. Only a comparatively small number of lessons were seen during the inspection, involving games and athletic skills. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the standard expected of seven year olds, a similar picture to the last inspection. Most pupils are making satisfactory progress in developing their throwing, bouncing and catching skills but progress is not

consistent across the year group, mainly because of weaknesses in some of the teaching. Pupils' co-ordination skills are mostly average but a significant minority have poor spatial awareness and find difficulty in moving around each other safely and with control. When pupils are set challenges, for example bouncing and catching the ball five, then ten, times without dropping it, they concentrate hard and make good progress in developing their skills. At other times, the lack of effective organisation and pupils' noisy and inattentive behaviour, result in them making unsatisfactory progress. However, the majority of pupils listen carefully, respond quickly to instructions and work satisfactorily with a partner.

140. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is below the standard expected nationally. Although a significant minority are achieving average standards, the majority of pupils are underachieving. Standards at this key stage have declined since the last inspection when they were in line with expectations. Pupils' running and throwing techniques are not as well developed as might be expected for pupils of this age, mainly because most teachers' subject knowledge is not secure enough to enable them to give pertinent teaching points to improve performance or to provide work that is sufficiently challenging. In many lessons, at both key stages, pupils do not have enough opportunity to repeat, practise and refine their skills. The majority of pupils are making broadly satisfactory progress in developing their athletic skills in lessons, but there is little evidence to indicate that these skills have been developed in a systematic way throughout the key stage. The recent introduction of the QCA scheme of work, although it has not yet been modified to meet the needs of the pupils at the school, is providing a clearer structure to support teachers' planning, but there has been insufficient time for the improvements in planning to have had a significant impact on raising standards. In addition, the length of lessons, particularly for the infants and younger Key Stage 2 pupils, is too long for them to sustain their concentration and high levels of physical activity. Pupils are aware of the need to warm up and cool down when engaging in physical activity, although these are undertaken in a perfunctory manner in some lessons, and are developing an understanding of the effect of vigorous activity on the heart. Their skills of evaluating their own and others' performance are insufficiently developed, as they have too little opportunity to develop these aspects in lessons. There are no marked differences between the performance of boys and girls.

141. The quality of teaching is broadly satisfactory overall at both key stages, but is more variable at Key Stage 1, ranging from unsatisfactory to good. The best teaching, as for example in a Year 1/2 games skills lesson, enables pupils to make good progress in developing their skills by ensuring that they listen well, providing a range of suitably challenging activities, using demonstrations effectively to show good practice, and giving pupils plenty of opportunity to repeat and practise in order to refine these skills. Teachers plan their lessons satisfactorily, in the main, with an appropriate range of activities, although the planning tends to identify the activities to be undertaken rather than the specific skills to be developed. Occasionally, as in another Year 1/2 class, activities such as 'piggy in the middle' are too challenging for the ages and stage of development of the pupils. Consequently, pupils make insufficient gains in their throwing and catching skills or in their understanding. In addition, weaknesses in managing pupils' high levels of excitement and noise affect their learning in some lessons. In all lessons, pupils with special educational needs are fully involved and consequently make satisfactory progress. This was particularly evident in one Year 1/2 lesson, where the specific support they received from classroom assistants ensured that they made good progress. The higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently and consequently their progress at times is unsatisfactory.

142. Leadership of the subject is developing but does not as yet have sufficient influence on teaching and planning throughout the school. The subject co-ordinator is also the mathematics co-ordinator, which limits the time available to develop the curriculum and raise standards. The curriculum is broad and reasonably balanced. Pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5 go swimming each year and, according to the school, the majority of Years 4 and 5 are able to swim a minimum of 25 metres. Curriculum planning, which is improving, is based on the QCA schemes of work, although these have not yet been modified to take account of the specific needs of pupils at the school or to ensure that their knowledge, understanding and skills are developed systematically from year to year. Progress in devising and implementing a manageable and comprehensive form of assessment of pupils' progress and attainment is slow, but there are proposals to implement end of unit/termly assessments in the coming year. A good number of pupils participate in a range of extra-curricular activities, including football, dance, netball, cricket, cross-country running and gymnastics, which enhance their skills and experiences.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. By the end of both key stages, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Standards have improved since the last inspection. In its policy and practice, the school focuses on other religions as well as developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress at both key stages. In Year 1, pupils are developing their understanding of a church as a special place for Christians; that churches have important features such as a spire, churchyard and an altar; and there are special ceremonies like baptism. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of what makes holy places 'special'. Their work shows a satisfactory understanding of the basic beliefs and practices of world faiths such as Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. For example, they know that the Jewish holy book is the Torah and they understand that Jewish people believe that the Torah teaches them how God wants them to live. They know that Jesus is the leader of Christianity and the Bible is a holy book that provides guidance on how God wants Christians to live. Higher attaining pupils express their understanding well through reflecting and writing about the importance of rules in their own lives. They are also developing their skills of literacy through this.

144. At Key Stage 2, pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, continue to make satisfactory progress in developing their religious knowledge and understanding. They show a sound knowledge and understanding of the Hindu religion. They are able to discuss, in some detail, the differences between holy books, buildings and customs of the major world religions. Pupils in Year 4 know about the places of worship in different religions and understand that Christians worship in churches and pray and sing hymns, Jewish people worship in a synagogue, and many Hindu families worship at home. Many pupils see the relevance of religion in their own lives. Some of their explanations are very moving. For example, one pupil, reflecting on the Ascension and the apostles' sense of the loss of Jesus, wrote that as a result of losing her father, through family circumstances, she now remembers the many good things they did together and the helpful advice he gave her. Another pupil said 'we should treat everybody, even animals, with kindness'. Pupils of all levels of attainment develop their awareness of the various signs and symbols of world religions. Pupils in Year 4 know that the Puja tray, used in Hindu worship, comprises a number of items such as a bell, incense burner and powder and play a special part in Hinduism. They recognise that the term 'worship' is linked to 'prayer' and 'God'. A notable feature is the pupils' clear tolerance and respect for the cultural traditions and holy books of the other faiths. Religious education is making a valuable contribution towards the development of pupils' literacy and geography skills. For example, pupils in Year 6 debated and wrote about the issue of keeping the Sunday as a special day, and in Year 4, pupils discussed and wrote about the religious customs of people from the Indian village of Chembakolli.

145. The teaching is good at Key Stage 1, and often very good. At Key Stage 2, the teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher provided pupils with interesting information about the Torah and related this to the importance of rules in their lives. An effective lesson in Year 6 involved pupils reflecting on the significance of the Ascension. Through discussion, pupils showed an understanding of the Ascension as a special Christian event and some pupils were able to relate to how they felt when someone they love has gone away. Pupils respond well to their teacher and listen carefully to the views and opinions of others. A notable feature of the better teaching in both key stages is its effectiveness in helping pupils' spiritual development. In their discussions on the Torah, pupils showed a strong sense of how precious this scroll is to Jewish people and handled the artefact used in a lesson with sensitivity and care. Most pupils demonstrate a belief in a God, a supreme being, and his power to help them in their every day life. Pupils are secure and generally enthusiastic in their beliefs and value the work they do in this subject. Religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

146. The co-ordinator is working effectively to raise the profile of religious education in the curriculum. Much has been done, in a short time, to ensure that teachers have adequate information to guide their teaching. The co-ordinator has adapted national guidance to suit the school programme, matching it to the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. The provision of learning resources, particularly for work on other faiths, is satisfactory. There is now a good range of artefacts

easily available for use in lessons. However, procedures for assessing pupils' progress and the role of the co-ordinator in monitoring teaching are not yet developed sufficiently.