

# INSPECTION REPORT

## HEATHLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Castle Bromwich

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103382

Headteacher: Mrs J Crosbie

Reporting inspector: Mr A Portlock  
21411

Dates of inspection: 10 - 13 September 2001

Inspection number: 197797

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Heathway  
Castle Bromwich  
Birmingham

Postcode: B34 6NB

Telephone number: 0121 747 2705

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs W Boothby

Date of previous inspection: 13 / 12 / 1999

**INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21411	A. PORTLOCK	Registered inspector	Design and technology	What sort of school is it?
			Physical education	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
				How well pupils are taught.
				How well is the school led and managed?
				What should the school do to improve further?
9511	A. LONGFIELD	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29703	R. BARTON	Team inspector	Mathematics	
			Geography	
			Special educational needs	
27899	G. BEASLEY	Team inspector	Foundation stage curriculum	
			Science	
			Music	
22788	S. WEST	Team inspector	English	
			Art	
			Religious education	
			English as an additional language.	
23686	P. WHITE	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			History	
			Equal opportunities.	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Heathlands is much bigger than the average-sized primary school. There are 395 full-time pupils (219 boys and 199 girls) on roll, catering for pupils aged three to eleven. At the time of the inspection the nursery was just beginning to start taking in children. The school is situated in Castle Bromwich, to the north-east of Birmingham. About 28 per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Most of the pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. Three pupils learn English as an additional language. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. There are 24 per cent of pupils on the register of special educational needs and four pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need, which is above average. Just under one third of pupils join or leave the school at times other than at the normal times. The school is part of the local Education Action Zone. The school was judged to require special measures in 1998 and was brought out of special measures at its last inspection in December 1999. Several teachers were absent during the inspection.

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

Heathlands is an effective school that provides good value for money. Very effective leadership, a supportive and caring environment and good teaching provide the children with a good education, particularly in literacy, numeracy and science. This enables the children to make good progress in these subjects by the time that they leave the school.

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

- The headteacher, very ably supported by the deputy-headteacher, the governors and the senior staff, provides very effective leadership that has brought about a significant improvements in standards.
- The good teaching is contributing to raising standards and helps all pupils to achieve well.
- The good start to school in the foundation stage.
- The good provision and teaching for pupils with special educational needs ensures that they make very good progress.
- The high level of care provided for pupils.
- The very good partnership with parents and links with the local community which greatly supports the very positive school ethos.

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

- The standard of writing in Key Stage 2.
- The standards achieved in religious education, music, art and design technology.

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

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

The last inspection in December 1999 found the school to no longer require special measures as it was providing an acceptable standard of education. Since then it has continued to make good improvement. The school is part of the local Education Action Zone and is receiving good support. Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved further. The greater emphasis on literacy and numeracy is supporting the pupils' progress. All the issues from the last inspection have been tackled well. The governing body carry out their role well. Teaching is now good overall, including planning and together with the effective assessment procedures are having a positive impact on raising standards.

## STANDARDS

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

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

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The 2000 test results show that by the time the pupils leave the school, standards have improved significantly over the last four years. The rate of improvement is above that found nationally. The more recent 2001 test results in these subjects indicate continued improvement. Standards in science are a particular strength. The 2000 test results for 7-year-olds show that standards were below average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards were average in reading and writing and in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally in mathematics. The school has continued to set itself challenging targets based upon the increasingly effective assessment information and generally exceeds its targets.

Inspection findings indicate that most children in the foundation stage achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. In English, standards in speaking and listening are improving. Throughout the school the pupils are learning to read well. The quality of their writing is improving as the pupils progress through the school but not sufficiently in Key Stage 2. The quality of handwriting and presentation is variable between classes. In mathematics, infant pupils understand place value to a hundred and higher attaining pupils are beginning to confidently carry out calculations using these numbers. Junior pupils use and understand a range of different methods for calculating answers to questions, but are sometimes unable to transfer this knowledge into problem solving situations. In science, inspection evidence shows that standards are above average and the pupils achieve well. The pupils carry out group investigations on a regular basis and this has enabled them to develop good scientific enquiry skills. Boys and girls make good progress and achieve equally well. In other subjects, standards are mostly in line with expectations for seven and 11-year-olds. In religious education, art, design technology and music, standards are below expectations for 11-year-olds. Standards have improved in information and communication technology (ICT), history and geography for 11-year-olds since the last inspection.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Younger pupils are eager to come to school, enthusiastic and listen well to their teachers' instructions. They work well and play well together. The older pupils have a good attitude towards their work and to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	The pupils' personal development is good. The pupils develop in self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility, quietly carrying out duties in class and around the school. Relationships are good, friendly and constructive.
Attendance	The pupils' attendance is below that found nationally in similar schools. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly, as a result little time is wasted at the start of school sessions.

The pupils generally move around the school in a sensible manner. They look after equipment well, such as the computers and there is no graffiti, although litter is left lying on the playground and playing fields. The pupils are proud of the responsibility given to them when chosen to be class and school monitors. The need to exclude pupils is improving.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching is good overall, with no lessons judged to be unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially in the reduction in unsatisfactory teaching and in the increase in the amount of good and very good teaching. The teaching in the foundation stage, infant and junior classes is good overall. The homework seen during the inspection, for instance in the Year 2 science work on food, is effectively supporting the pupils' learning.

The school is working to meet the needs of all pupils effectively, including those pupils with special educational needs. The overall quality of teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good. They are usually given careful support within class, but not enough consideration is given in some lessons to the varying needs of all pupils. The pupils who are learning English as an additional language are also given support but this needs to be more closely focused on their needs, especially in junior classes. The teaching in English, mathematics and science lessons is good. The improvement in teaching supports the pupils' good progress in their learning. The teaching of the skills of literacy and numeracy are good but insufficient emphasis is given to improving the pupils' reading and writing skills in other subjects, for example, in history. The work of the support staff, especially in supporting literacy, numeracy, special educational needs is effective.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The foundation stage curriculum is broad and balanced and of good quality. For the infant and junior pupils, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum but more could be done to extend the work in religious education, music, art and design technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for the pupils who have special educational needs. They have access to the full curriculum and are helped to benefit from it through careful planning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language is appropriate for younger pupils but needs to be more closely linked to the junior pupils' needs.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision the school makes for the pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. It is satisfactory for their spiritual and cultural development. The pupils' social skills and moral awareness are well developed.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The standard of care provided by the teaching and non-teaching staff is very good. Clear procedures are in place for identifying and controlling risks to health and safety.

The curriculum for the youngest pupils is relevant and stimulating and it interests and motivates the children to take part. The curriculum for infant and junior pupils includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects. The school has rightly given a high priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and this has been successful in raising these standards significantly. However, this has been at the expense of non-core subjects, particularly religious education,



music, art and design technology, in relation to the amount of time provided and the quality of the curriculum. Child protection procedures are effectively in place and meet statutory requirements. The good measures in place for monitoring and improving attendance is bringing about an improvement, although attendance is still below average.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, together with the deputy-headteacher and senior staff with management responsibilities, have provided very good leadership since the last inspection and a clear educational direction for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher and provide effective support for the school. They fulfil their responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	These assessment procedures, particularly in English, mathematics and science, allow the management team, the governors and the teachers to evaluate the progress the pupils are making and to set appropriate and more challenging targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its financial resources well. It plans ahead successfully to account for variations in budget and expenditure. The headteacher and the governors are very aware of the need to provide a high standard of educational provision and finances are properly targeted to improving standards throughout the school.

The school has established effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and the quality of teaching has improved. The governors are keen to ensure that the school receives best value for the spending decisions it makes. Such principles are rigorously applied when obtaining tenders and in comparing the school's performance with that of similar schools. There are adequate learning resources, good levels of staffing and the school's accommodation is very good.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• The children like school.</li> <li>• The children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• The school helps the children to become more mature.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are not sufficient out of lesson activities.</li> <li>• The amount of work the pupils do at home.</li> <li>• The way the school keeps parents informed.</li> </ul>

The inspection findings agree with most of the parents' positive views. The inspection team finds that there is a good range of activities out of lesson time. Homework was seen to be supporting the pupils' learning, for example, in an infant science lesson. The school's homework policy is appropriate but, it was too early in the school year to judge how effective it is in practice. Information for parents is sound overall, although more information on non-core subjects needs to be included in the pupils' annual reports.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards have improved significantly over the last four years in English, mathematics and science. The rate of improvement is above that found nationally. Results in the 2000 national tests show that standards for 11-year-olds were average in mathematics, above average in English and well-above average in science. When compared with similar schools, standards in mathematics were above average and were well-above average in English and science. The 2000 test results for 7-year-olds show that standards were below average in reading and writing and well-above average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in reading and writing and in the top 5 percent of schools in mathematics. The more recent 2001 test results in these subjects indicate continued improvement for both 7 and 11-year-olds. Standards in science are a particular strength. The school has continued to set itself challenging targets and generally exceeds these.
2. Attainment on entry to the nursery varies, but overall it is below average in all areas of learning. The children make good progress in the nursery and in the reception classes and by the time they start Year 1, the majority are attaining the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning.
3. Overall in English, mathematics and science, the pupils make good progress, including higher attaining pupils, those pupils with special educational needs and for most pupils with English as an additional language. The standards achieved have improved significantly. The large number of the pupils with special educational needs and the high numbers of mobile pupils throughout the school, are factors that affect the overall standards achieved. However, the improved quality of teaching and the more effective pupil assessment records allow the teachers to monitor individual pupils' achievements and to set clear targets for improvement. This, in part, compensates for many of these factors. Targets set for this year are higher than for last year and have been exceeded.
4. In English, inspection findings confirm that standards for 7-year-olds currently meet expectations in both reading and writing and that for 11-year-olds the standards in reading have improved considerably even though many pupils do not meet the expected standards in writing. The pupils achieve well and the differences in standards between boys and girls has been narrowed due to the carefully focused work aimed at raising the standards of low achieving boys. Standards in speaking and listening are improving. Although many pupils do not have a wide vocabulary, many opportunities are provided for both infants and juniors to share experiences and talk about their ideas. Throughout the school the pupils learn to read well. Younger pupils are beginning to enjoy reading and becoming more accurate, fluent readers. Older ones read confidently more complex words and have a good knowledge of using books for researching their work. The quality of writing is improving as the pupils progress through the school. Year 2 pupils develop story-writing skills. They sequence their ideas and appreciate the order in which they should be written to have maximum effect. Year 1 pupils become more confident when using simple punctuation and this develops further in Year 2 with higher attaining pupils using question marks, exclamation marks and speech marks. By the end of Year 6, the pupils' writing is correctly structured with logical sequence and paragraphs, but there is limited use of extended punctuation such as commas, colons and semi-colons. The quality of handwriting and good presentation is variable between classes.
5. Standards in mathematics at age 7 are above average and at 11 they are average. A similar picture of attainment is shown in the 2000 national test results. The improving standards reflect the good standard of teaching now achieved throughout the school, the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the good leadership of the co-ordinator. So far the improvements in standards has been more marked at Key Stage 1. There are no significant differences in the achievements of girls and boys and the overall progress of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. By age 7, the pupils understand place value to a hundred and higher attaining pupils are beginning to confidently carry out calculations using these numbers. They work out simple problems involving number operations and money. Year 1 pupils use pictographs

to show their weather records in geography and Year 2 pupils use block graphs to show their favourite foods when working on nutrition in science. By age 11, the pupils calculate and solve problems involving decimals to two places. They make their number calculations using different methods but are sometimes unable to transfer this knowledge into problem solving situations. Too much emphasis is given to learning skills from worksheets, which do not fully involve the practical and problem solving skills associated with work on measures. In their data handling work the pupils collect information and communicate this using different graphical representation. These skills are used in other subjects, such as science, where graphs of plant growth are kept, and in geography where the pupils graph information on transport.

6. In science, inspection evidence shows that standards are above average and the pupils achieve well in science. This is generally in line with the test results. By age 7, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts. Whilst the pupils have above average skills of recording scientific results in graphs and tables, overall their scientific enquiry skills are average. Year 1 pupils know the parts of the body and this knowledge and understanding is developed further in Year 2 through consideration of the need for a healthy diet and exercise. By age 11, the pupils carry out group investigations on a regular basis and this has enabled them to develop good scientific enquiry skills. Boys and girls make good progress and achieve equally well. Year 4 pupils make good use their knowledge and understanding of the body learned in the infants and Year 3 when discussing and considering the bones in the skeleton.
7. In other subjects, standards are mostly in line with expectations for 7 and 11-year-olds. In religious education, art, design technology and music, standards are below expectations for 11-year-olds. Standards have improved in information and communication technology, history and geography for 11-year-olds since the last inspection. In ICT, the additional input and expertise the school has received as part of the Education Action Zone, together with the drive and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator, has made a very positive contribution to the rise in standards in a very short time.

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

8. The pupils' attitudes to their work are good. They continue to have the same positive attitudes towards their school as in the last report. Children in the foundation stage are eager to come to school, enthusiastic and listen well to their teachers' instructions. They work well and play well together. The older pupils have a good attitude towards their work and to school generally. When motivated by good teaching they are capable of sustained concentration. This was seen in a Year 1 history lesson about old toys and they examined a Victorian doll and other toys. Almost all of the parents who returned the questionnaire agreed that their child likes school and inspection evidence supports this.
9. The behaviour in the school is good. The pupils generally move around the school in a sensible manner. When there is an instance of unsatisfactory behaviour it is dealt with quickly by the staff. The pupils look after equipment, such as the computers, well and there is no graffiti, although litter is left lying on the playground and playing fields.
10. Relationships are good, friendly and constructive throughout the school. The pupils of different ages get on well together and with all the school staff. They show respect for each other's feelings, beliefs and values and are confident to join in discussions. This was seen in Year 3 religious education lesson and when choosing their class representatives for the new School Council. They are appreciative of each other's good work and behaviour, both in class and at the weekly 'Congratulation Assemblies'.
11. The pupils' personal development is good. The pupils develop in self-confidence and are willing to accept responsibility when the opportunity is given, quietly carrying out duties in class and around the school. They are proud of the responsibility given to them when chosen to be class and school monitors and the Year 6 pupils enjoy their role as 'reading buddies' for Year 2 pupils.
12. The pupils' attendance is below that found nationally in similar schools. The rate of unauthorised absence is in line with the national average. Most pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly,

as a result little time is wasted at the start of school sessions. During last year 3 pupils were temporarily excluded from school. The rate of exclusions is decreasing.

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

13. The quality of teaching is good overall, with no lessons judged to be unsatisfactory. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, especially in the reduction in unsatisfactory teaching and in the increase in the amount of good and very good teaching. Of the 73 lessons observed, three-quarters of them were good or better. The teaching in the foundation stage, infant and junior classes is good overall. The homework seen during the inspection, for instance in the Year 2 science work on food, is effectively supporting the pupils' learning and the planned homework.
14. The school is working to meet the needs of all pupils effectively, including those pupils with special educational needs. The overall quality of teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good. They are usually given careful support within class, but not enough consideration is given in some lessons to the varying needs of all pupils. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the special needs support teacher work with groups outside the classroom and their teaching is of a good standard. Class teachers, together with the special educational needs co-ordinator, write individual education plans and targets, and these are regularly reviewed. Support staff provide valuable and effective assistance, and there is a good standard of liaison between teachers and support assistants to ensure that both know what is to be done and what progress has been made.
15. The children in the reception class, who are learning English as an additional language, settle quickly. The whole ethos in this area is based on helping children gain confidence and involving them in early language activities. Because children have individual support they quickly lose their shyness and begin to participate and take a keen interest in the activities provided for them. The infant pupils also have suitable support enabling them to progress satisfactorily. Junior pupils who have English as an additional language are also given support by working in withdrawal groups with pupils who have special educational needs. Although this does provide individual support to help develop language, it sometimes means that they are working with pupils who are much slower to grasp concepts than they are and subsequently their progress is at times impeded.
16. The quality of teaching in the nursery and both reception classes, which make up the foundation stage, is good. Home visits establish positive relationships quickly and all the children settle very quickly to the well-organised routines, which are consistently followed by all staff in nursery and reception. Due emphasis is placed on the development of personal and social skills and linked to the very good teaching in this aspect, the children make particularly good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. Consequently, they have higher than average levels of independence and self-confidence by the end of the reception year. In addition, the children have good attitudes to school and are well prepared for the National Curriculum. Nursery and reception teachers and support assistants work extremely well together and make an excellent team. Everyone is involved in planning and this makes sure that everyone is aware of intended learning. An excellent ethos has been developed in which the children are confident to take part in all activities.
17. The teaching in English, mathematics and science lessons is good. The quality of teaching has improved well since the school's last inspection in 1999. Consequently, the pupils often make good progress in their learning. The teaching of the skills of literacy and numeracy are good but insufficient emphasis is placed on improving the pupils' reading and writing skills in other subjects, for example, in history. There are satisfactory opportunities for the pupils to use numeracy skills in most other subjects, such as some of the work seen in geography. The work of the support staff, especially in supporting literacy, numeracy, special educational needs is effective. Good relationships are formed, which are seen in the mutual respect between teachers and pupils. This helps the pupils to gain in confidence and self-esteem. Through this they respond with interest, for example when talking about their work they mostly give accurate or sensible answers. The teachers ensure that pupils are clear about what they are to learn and what they need

to do to improve. The pupils respond well to this and apply themselves in the effort that they make. At both key stages, the teachers' management and discipline of the pupils is good. The pupils respond positively to this, showing good attitudes to their work and good behaviour. This means that the pupils' learning is well supported because they are more attentive to what they are being taught and the tasks they have to complete. The teachers give high levels of deserved praise that encourages learning and raises the pupils' self-esteem.

18. In English, the teachers use a range of teaching methods but many of the worksheets are undemanding and fail to extend writing or to improve standards. The pupils' work is marked regularly and positive praise is given, although teachers do not consistently include developmental points that would help the pupils improve their work.
19. In mathematics, the teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well. The teachers show in their use of language, explanations and careful questioning that they have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics. The teachers' expectations of their pupils were good in the lessons observed. However, some pupils' work indicates that there is sometimes a need to match work more accurately to the pupils' abilities. In good lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and the pupils are kept actively engaged in appropriately challenging and stimulating tasks. In very good lessons, the teacher's enthusiasm enlivens the work of the pupils and raises their enjoyment for learning.
20. In science, the teachers' planning of lessons is detailed and thorough and clearly identifies what the children will learn. The pupils are told the learning objectives at the beginning of every lesson so that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. A strength of the teaching is the quality of questioning which challenge the pupils to think about what they are doing. The pupils feel confident to ask questions about why things happen and how things work and the teachers often respond with a suitable question, which encourages the pupils to think through possible answers for themselves. This deepens the pupils' understanding of scientific processes as well as gaining in knowledge of scientific facts. This was reflected in the ability by the older pupils who were able to apply their knowledge of the functions of a flower to the process of human reproduction, which they discussed openly and sensibly.
21. The teaching in the lessons seen was good overall in art, history, information and communication technology and physical education. In religious education and music the teaching was satisfactory overall. There were too few lessons in design technology and geography to make a judgement.

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

22. The curriculum for the children in the foundation stage is broad and balanced and of good quality. Activities are relevant and suitably based in play and this interests and motivates the children to take part. The display in the nursery and reception areas is colourful and inviting and the classrooms are organised into activity areas, which allow the children to choose their own activities when offered. Plans to extend learning further through the development of the outdoor environment are detailed and when funds become available these plans are ready to be implemented.
23. For the infant and junior pupils, the school provides a satisfactory, broadly based curriculum that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects. The school has rightly given a high priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and this has been successful in raising these standards significantly. However, this has been at the expense of non-core subjects, particularly religious education, music, art and design technology, in relation to the amount of time provided and the quality of the curriculum. The school has made an effort to redress the balance, by organising activity weeks with a specific focus, for example, an arts week where performing and visual arts are emphasised in all the learning. Information and communication technology has undergone significant improvement since the last inspection and the physical education curriculum is effectively meeting the needs of the pupils.

24. At the time of the last inspection in 1999, a key issue was to improve the precision of planning. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science good progress has been made. The teachers plan thoroughly for literacy and numeracy using an agreed format. The lessons are evaluated and the planning sheet is annotated so as to inform the next steps in learning. In other subjects, the school has successfully adopted many elements of the model schemes of work published by the Qualifications and Assessment authority and it also uses schemes of work developed with the help of local authority curriculum advisors. Overall planning is satisfactory, with year groups frequently collaborating in their weekly and daily plans. The subject co-ordinators collect work samples and scrutinise books in order to review the work that has been covered. However, in the non-core subjects, they do not take the next steps of assessing the standard of the work seen and setting targets for different groups of pupils in order to raise standards further.
25. There is good provision for the pupils who have special educational needs. They have access to the full curriculum and are helped to benefit from it through careful planning and the good use that is made of the learning support assistants. The very small minority of pupils for whom English is an additional language in junior classes are less well provided for. For example, the planned work and the support provided is not always sufficiently well suited to their needs and does not ensure that they fully understand the language being used.
26. The school's arrangements for personal, social and health education are sound. Much of the sex education is taught through the science curriculum and the school nurse provides valuable additional input with the Year 6 pupils. At the time of the inspection plans were already in hand to introduce a structured programme of learning for citizenship. The school is at present in the process of forming a School Council and the older pupils are keenly preparing their manifestos prior to the class elections. A good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum. Additional funds for out-of-hours learning are well used to provide activities such as a homework club, a journalism and a library club, as well as sports coaching. The school also provides a breakfast club, an Easter revision club and a summer school. The school has a successful football team and there are opportunities for the pupils to learn the recorder.
27. One of the school's strengths is the very good use it makes of the local community and its good links with the local cluster of schools, particularly those within the Education Action Zone. Several of the extra-curricular activities are shared with the zone schools and local businesses have supported renovation work on the school playing field and have provided reading partners for some of the pupils. Links with the local secondary schools are very well established with a range of joint teaching initiatives and pre-transfer activities.
28. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, although activities to develop this aspect are not systematically planned across the curriculum. However, during the inspection, instances were observed when the pupils were totally absorbed in the activities presented for them. For example, the Year 1 pupils were enthralled by the mechanisms that moved the eyes of a Victorian doll. In Year 4, the pupils were fascinated by the way they were able to merge pastel colours to create the effect of calm and rough seas. Resources were used to good effect in Year 6 when the chilling sound of a siren created a very effective atmosphere to discuss World War 2 and evacuees. Following the devastating news of the terrorist attacks on America, throughout the school many opportunities were provided for the pupils to reflect on the results of acts of violence and the ultimate devastation they create.
29. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. The pupils know right from wrong and in personal, social and health education lessons are given opportunities to discuss the effect their actions have on others. School rules are agreed and displayed in every classroom. They are discussed in assembly and this helps the pupils to remember why rules are important. As part of the setting up of a School Council, when discussing the qualities of a school councillor, many pupils demonstrated the appreciation of the necessity to abide by school rules to ensure a harmonious community.

30. The pupils develop good social skills as they move through the school. All staff members provide good role models for the pupils who, in turn recognise the high expectations made on them in terms of behaviour and respond in a positive manner. Their understanding of citizenship is well developed by fund raising activities for charities, for example Comic relief. Group and team activities in lesson and as a part of the extra-curricular activities promote pupils' personal and social development well.
31. There are weaknesses in the provision for pupils' cultural development. During the year visits, performances and demonstrations support the work in the non-core subjects. However, in subjects, such as art, music and religious education, the pupils have limited opportunities to develop their understanding of their own culture in sufficient depth and there are limited opportunities for them to appreciate and understand the cultural diversity of the society in which they live. In subjects, such as history and geography, teachers make good use of visits to their immediate local area, including the heritage museum and to areas slightly further away, such as the River Cole and Middleton Village. The Creative Arts Week also provided an effective way of furthering their understanding.

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

32. The standard of care provided by the teaching and non-teaching staff is very good. Clear procedures are in place for identifying and controlling risks to health and safety. Child protection procedures are in place and meet statutory requirements. There is a designated person who has received training. All the teaching and non-teaching staff are aware of their responsibilities and are kept up to date with child protection issues. All the staff have received first aid training and the pupils know who to go to if they are sick or injured. There are regular fire drills and fire notices, with the location of the assembly point, displayed around the school.
33. The school has good measures in place for monitoring and improving attendance. These have helped the level of attendance to rise and meet the target set in the School Development Plan, although the level of attendance is still below the national average. The school works hard at reminding parents about the need for good attendance and the pupils are rewarded for good attendance, such being given certificates for 100 per cent attendance at the end of each term and incentives for class with the highest weekly attendance.
34. The school has a positive approach to behaviour through the behaviour policy and the staff are supported by the behaviour co-ordinator. As a result the standards of behaviour in the classrooms, dining hall and in other parts of the school are good. Any bullying is dealt with quickly and sympathetically. All members of staff monitor the behaviour of individuals and present a united approach in dealing with discipline problems when they arise. The pupils and parents know the rules, what is expected of the children and the sanctions that are applied when necessary. There are good relationships between the pupils, teachers and other adults in the school. The class teachers use their knowledge of the pupils to monitor their personal development effectively.
35. A key issue of the previous inspection was to develop further the strategies used for assessment to gain a clearer picture of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and to use this information to raise attainment. Good improvements have been achieved since then and the school now has good assessment procedures that help to sustain the good levels of teaching and learning and contribute to the good progress which the pupils make. There are also good procedures for monitoring the pupils' academic performance and their personal development.
36. The teachers in the nursery and reception classes make on-going assessments of the children's personal, social and language development and the information is used to identify children who may have specific language or learning needs. The teachers then plan to meet these needs appropriately. The children's progress against the Early Learning Goals is recorded systematically and regularly. Assessment procedures are very good and used well to meet the individual learning needs of all children including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The 'Early Milestones' booklet gives good opportunity for parents to say what their children are able to do independently at home prior to starting school.

This enables the nursery and reception staff to begin to build a picture of each child and plan suitable and relevant activities matched to individual learning needs in all areas of learning.

37. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the school makes good use of assessment information to guide curricular planning and to support the pupils' academic progress. This good use of assessment is the basis of the on-going improvement in standards. In the nursery and again in the reception year the children are assessed using the 'Signposts' baseline test. Information from this together with a thorough analysis of the end-of-key-stage test results is used to identify areas for development and to set whole school targets. These results are also used very effectively to measure the progress of different groups of pupils as they move through the school and to set individual targets for improvement.
38. In recent years the boys have achieved less well in national tests than the girls and the school has used assessment information well to select and target underachieving boys for additional help, such as a basic skills summer school and the use of reading buddies. These initiatives have been and are continuing to be successful in narrowing the gap, especially in English and mathematics.
39. Together with the results of non-statutory tests, the teachers gather additional information during half-termly assessments. They record the pupils' achievements and use the information to track progress and to plan the next steps in learning. This good use of assessment information results in clear, well focussed planning in the core subjects and is the basis of the good teaching that the pupils receive. However, these good assessment procedures do not extend to other subjects and as a result, planning for further learning in the non-core subjects is less rigorous and well focussed.
40. The majority of pupils are aware of what their targets are and are reminded of their progress towards them. The reports to parents are of variable quality and currently do not meet statutory requirements, as they do not provide sufficient information about the pupils' progress in non-core subjects. Nonetheless, some of them do include information about what the pupils need to do to improve.
41. The teachers demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of the pupils. They are alert and responsive to the pupils' needs and their personal and social development is monitored effectively. Home visits are carried out before the children start school and the Breakfast Club is a social time where the pupils can chat about their problems or concerns. Personal and social issues are further addressed in classes during personal, social and health education lessons. The pupils who have a specific problem or emotional need know that all staff will support them sensitively.

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

42. The majority of parents are very supportive of the school. The views expressed by parents in the questionnaires were very positive. In particular, almost all agreed that their children were expected to work hard and that the school was well led and the teaching was good. Most parents would feel comfortable in approaching the school with any problems. There was some dissatisfaction about the amount of homework set and a feeling that they were not kept well informed.
43. Overall the links with parents are good. Links with parents of the youngest children are very good. This was clearly demonstrated in the relaxed atmosphere in the nursery when parents are encouraged to stay and join in with the activities until their children are happy and confident enough to be left. The parents feel welcome and are pleased to be involved. This strong relationship is built upon positively in the reception year with almost all of the parents of the foundation stage children attending the 'INSPIRE' sessions working with their children on Numeracy or Literacy activities. The great majority of parents attend two sessions, which give a steer as to how parents can play and learn with their children at home. An informative notice board is regularly updated and with regular newsletters help parents to be fully involved in all aspects of school and their children's learning.
44. The quality of the information about the school provided for parents is mostly good, except for



the annual school reports, which do not give the parents sufficient information about how well their children have achieved in the non-core subjects. The parents are invited to three consultation evenings a year and value the opportunity to talk to staff informally at the end of the day. The school brochure contains all the necessary information and the weekly newsletters give an account of the varied activities of the school. The parents receive a termly homework timetable. The Governors' Annual Report gives a clear picture of school life in the preceding year.

45. There is a Friends' Association, which organises social and fund raising events. Several parents provide good help in the classroom and on educational visits on a regular basis. A number of parents attend the 'Keeping up with the Children' courses. There is an appropriate Home-School agreement

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

46. The headteacher, together with the deputy-headteacher and senior staff with management responsibilities, provide very good leadership. They work as an effective team and are supported well by the other members of staff. The school has clear aims and has a positive commitment to raising standards. These aims are now more achievable since the school has established effective procedures for assessing pupils' standards and achievements, monitoring and evaluating the work of the school and the quality of teaching has improved. These assessment procedures, particularly in English, mathematics and science, allow the management team, the governors and the teachers to evaluate the progress the pupils are making and to set appropriate and more challenging targets for improvement. All of the key issues from the last inspection have been effectively dealt with.
47. The governors are kept very well informed by the headteacher and provide effective support for the school. They fulfil their responsibilities well. They continue to improve their knowledge of how well the school is achieving and have appropriate management procedures in place. The headteacher and governors use their results of the monitoring to set clear targets for development. The chair of the governors meets with the headteacher regularly and governors visit the school. This ensures that they have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The governing body has agreed a Performance Management policy for appraising the work of the headteacher and other teachers.
48. The school uses its financial resources well. It plans ahead successfully to account for variations in budget and expenditure. The headteacher and the governors are very aware of the need to provide a high standard of educational provision and finances are properly targeted to improving standards throughout the school. Spending is linked well to the priorities in the school development plan and grants to the school for specific purposes are appropriately used and good accounts are kept. The headteacher and the governors, with the help of their finance administrator, monitor the budget regularly. This monitoring together with the conscientious work of the school's finance administrator and the specialist financial services employed by the school, ensures the accurate control of spending.
49. The governing body are fully aware of the projected over or under spending in the budget. The very large overspend, that resulted from situations occurring just prior to and after the schools inspection in 1997, has remained and continues as an area of great concern. The governors and the head teacher have worked alongside the local education authority so that major educational priorities, identified after the schools placement in 'Special Measures', were not compromised by undue pressure to pay back such a large deficit. The governors are now in a position to start to reduce this deficit and agreement has been reached with the local education authority on how this will proceed.
50. The school's financial problems have meant that the headteacher and the governing body have had to pay strict attention to the principles of good value when considering budget expenditure. The school has been active in seeking financial support from various sources, such as local industries.

51. The school's internal financial controls and office administration are very good. The school's finance administrator is very efficient and ensures financial transactions are carefully carried out and checked.
52. The leadership in the foundation stage is very good. Good improvements have been made to the organisation of the curriculum and teachers' planning which details learning outcomes clearly. The teachers and classroom assistants form an effective team who work extremely well together. The role of Key Stage co-ordinators is under review. At present the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator supports the smooth running of infant classes and the Key Stage 2 role is carried out effectively by the deputy-headteacher. The subject co-ordinators are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and hard working. The English, mathematics and science subject managers play a prominent role in developing their subjects across the school. They are actively involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning, setting targets for pupils and in scrutinising and improving teachers' planning. In other subjects, the co-ordinators are establishing appropriate policies and schemes of work, linked to national guidelines. The ICT co-ordinator has effectively developed appropriate support and guidance for teachers in developing this subject. Some subjects, such as physical education and design technology, do not at present have a co-ordinator due to staff changes. The school is providing support and guidance for colleagues and in some cases they monitor the teachers' planning. In some subjects, including English and mathematics, the co-ordinators have opportunities to evaluate pupils' progress by scrutinising the pupils' workbooks and discussing with the pupils their work.
53. The special needs co-ordinator, senior management team and support assistants are effective in promoting the importance of special educational needs throughout the school. Good records are kept and there are effective procedures for the identification, monitoring and review of pupils' progress. The co-ordinator meets with support staff directly involved with special educational needs pupils and with individual teachers to discuss the position of their pupils on the special educational needs register. She monitors aspects of teachers planning for those pupils with special educational needs and has monitored the work of pupils in some subjects. The school has a nominated governor for special educational needs who is normally in regular contact with the special needs co-ordinator.
54. No member of staff has overall responsibility for co-ordinating learning for pupils who are learning English as an additional language and no policy is in place to guide teachers. Recently a bi-lingual teacher has joined the teaching staff and she has supported teachers in communicating with parents more effectively.
55. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified staff to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and to meet the needs of all pupils. The number of teachers means that the pupils are taught in reasonable sized classes, whilst the number of support staff is good. The teachers have a good balance of expertise and experience. Support staff are also suitably qualified and they work well with the teachers to provide good support for the pupils, although in some cases, their contribution could be more effectively planned to support the needs of the pupils. The school has satisfactory arrangements for meeting the professional needs of the staff in English, mathematics and science and the training is linked to the priorities identified in the school development plan, although less so in other subjects.
56. Overall, learning resources are at least satisfactory in all subjects. They are good in mathematics, religious education and physical education and very good in the foundation stage and English. Resources in science, art and religious education have improved since the last inspection. Resources for music are insufficient to support the curriculum. The school is situated on a large site and the well-maintained premises and grounds are more than sufficient to deliver the full range of the National Curriculum. Accommodation is very good for the current number of pupils. The school's site manager maintains it very well. The school benefits from large playing fields, two halls and a separate dining hall. The pupils work is attractively displayed in the corridors. Accommodation for the foundation stage is very good and this makes a positive contribution to the pupils' learning.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

57. In order to raise the pupils' quality of education further, the governors, headteacher and staff need to:

- (1) raise standards in writing further in Key Stage 2 by:
  - developing strategies to improve the pupils' vocabulary and their use of punctuation, and provide more opportunities for them to write at length.
  
- (2) improve the standards in the non-core subjects, particularly art, music, religious education and aspects of design technology by:
  - ensuring that sufficient time is allocated to each subject;
  - enabling subject co-ordinators to monitor standards and the quality of education and to support teachers in raising standards;
  - providing appropriate staff training to enrich and enliven the learning experiences for the pupils where necessary.

### **Minor issues:**

- Improve the pupils' handwriting and presentation.
- Establish appropriate provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- Improve the reporting of the pupils' progress in non-core subjects to parents.
- Improve provision for the pupils' cultural development.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	11	31	20	0	0	0
Percentage	1	15	56	27	0	0	0

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

### 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)	36	382
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		107

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	92

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	55
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	27	22

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	26
	Girls	19	21	21
	Total	39	42	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (83)	86 (87)	96 (91)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	24
	Girls	21	21	21
	Total	42	46	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (83)	94 (94)	92 (91)
	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 6)*

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	17	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	15
	Girls	36	30	37
	Total	45	39	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (84)	65 (80)	87 (93)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	9	10
	Girls	27	27	38
	Total	34	36	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (55)	60 (76)	80 (64)
	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	12
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	34
Indian	1
Pakistani	16
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	2
White	254
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	17
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	27.3

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	180

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	36
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	882894
Total expenditure	907519
Expenditure per pupil	2281
Balance brought forward from previous year	-58143
Balance carried forward to next year	-82768

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	418
Number of questionnaires returned	178

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	30	3	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	53	42	2	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	40	5	3	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	39	21	4	2
The teaching is good.	57	37	2	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	39	13	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	30	3	3	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	32	2	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	49	35	10	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	56	38	2	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	40	4	3	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	45	14	5	5

## **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**

58. Children start nursery in the September following their third birthday. Most attend part time although there are some full-time places available. As the inspection took place during the first full week of the new school year, only 12 children were attending in the morning and two in the afternoon. Children have one year in the nursery before moving to the reception class in the September following their fourth birthday. Home visits before the children start nursery welcome parents and children and provide useful information about the school. It also serves to develop positive relationships with the parents and children quickly.
59. Attainment on entry to the nursery varies, but overall it is below average in all areas of learning. The children make good progress in the nursery and in the reception classes and by the time they start Year 1, the majority are attaining the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning.

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

60. Teaching is very good overall. The opportunities provided for children's personal, social and emotional development ensure that the majority of children make very good progress. They make particularly good progress in developing independence and self-confidence. This means they have good attitudes to school and are very keen to learn and take part in all the activities on offer.
61. When the children first start nursery they soon settle to the routines. These are developed further in the reception classes so that the children listen well and behave very well. They follow instructions and settle to activities quickly, persevering with them for good periods of time. Considering that this was the children's first week in school, their response and behaviour was outstanding. The staff in the nursery have given pegs a picture so that the children soon learn which is their place to hang coats and bags. The knowledge is reinforced daily through playtime routines and the children as a consequence feel safe and secure. Children in the reception classes are equally good at finding their place and change for physical development lessons ably.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

62. The children start nursery with below average skills in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress in response to the good teaching and by the end of the reception year, the majority achieve the early learning goals in the speaking, listening and reading aspects of this area of learning. While listening to the story of 'The Three Bears' in the nursery, the children listened very well as the story unfolded. The teacher used the tone of her voice to prompt correct responses to her questions about the characters and their belongings so that most children were able to correctly identify which bed belonged to Father Bear. One boy, who initially did not want to join in with the activity, was skilfully drawn into the group by the teacher through focusing such interesting questions towards him that he couldn't help himself but to answer and listen to the next part of the story to find out what was going to happen.
63. The children's early reading skills are developed further in the reception classes through 'Big Book' sessions. Puppets from the school's collection of story sacks bring new stories to life and help the children recall the story in the correct sequence. Many children can say which is their favourite story and join in with interest. Role-play areas support children's language skills very well especially when teachers and support assistants play alongside the children. By the end of the reception year all of the children are able to talk about what happens in the books that they read themselves. Although they use little expression, many children are able to use their knowledge of letter sounds, to build unfamiliar words and use pictures to help them read the words.



## **Mathematical development**

64. The teaching of mathematics is good. The children start nursery with below average skills. Nursery staff organise and plan a range of mathematical activities so that the children make good progress in developing their counting skills and they learn new vocabulary to describe and order objects by size. The Three Bear's cottage gives the children good opportunities to identify which bed belongs to daddy bear as well as laying the breakfast table ready for the three bears returning from their walk. The children enjoy acting out the story in this well organised role-play area and the support staff play alongside the children, prompting them with skilful questions, which supports their play very well. The children continue to make good progress in the reception classes. The children are confident to count and order numbers and through learning number rhymes and practical games they are soon able to solve simple problems using addition and subtraction.

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

65. The children start school with below average knowledge and understanding of the world. A well organised curriculum ensures that they receive a balanced programme of activities matched to individual learning needs so that they all achieve well. The children really enjoy using the computer to learn about numbers and use the mouse with very good control in the reception classes to put the right number of goals in the net. This reflects the very good teaching in the nursery to gain these early ICT skills.
66. Well planned activities enable the children to design and make a range of pictures and models using construction kits and recycled materials. The models are imaginative and show good care in their manufacture. The teachers have put together science boxes, which contain interesting toys and other objects on a range of science themes. These motivate the children to explore, find out and learn about a range of scientific themes including water, seasonal change and animals and plants in the environment. Again puppets are used effectively by teachers to gain the children's attention and interest and this allows them to learn the relationships and to talk about their own families.

## **Physical development**

67. Children enter nursery with average physical development skills. They are taught appropriately and make satisfactory progress to achieve the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the reception year. The children enjoy riding the wide range of wheeled toys and the varied climbing apparatus when playing outside. This develops their pedalling skills as well as their awareness of space around them as they move safely in and out of each other on the track. Teachers and support staff observe closely and give the children suitable challenges, which develop their awareness of their own, and each other's safety. The children in the reception classes enjoyed the parachute session tremendously. Great giggles were expressed when they managed to ripple and make waves, which lifted the parachute into the air high enough for them to see their classmates underneath. The planned rhymes and games developed the children's control and movements as the activity progressed until the final game of 'Ring a Ring o' Roses' gave good opportunity to put all the skills together for one last time. Further plans to develop the outdoors to incorporate additional learning activities for the children are wholly appropriate in order to raise standards in physical development further.

## **Creative development**

68. Children are taught well and they make good progress in their creative development. Many good opportunities are provided for the children to paint, draw and make collage pictures both in the nursery and the reception classes. There is a well organised music area in the nursery and reception area where the children can choose to go to explore a range of musical instruments and other sound making objects. Through this focused activity the children soon learn how to change sounds and match them to movements and pictures. One boy on his first day in the nursery was having great fun exploring the sound made by a hooter.

## ENGLISH

69. Results in the 2000 national tests show that standards were average for 11-year-olds but well above average when compared to similar schools. Results in the 2000 national tests show that standards in reading and writing were below average for 7-year-olds but average when compared with similar schools. Test results have risen over the last four years at a rate above those nationally and the school worked hard to achieve its targets. Results of the more recent 2001 tests indicate that standards for both 7 and 11-year-olds have continued to rise.
70. Inspection findings confirm that standards for 7-year-olds currently meet expectations in both reading and writing and that for 11-year-olds the standards in reading have improved considerably even though many pupils do not meet the expected standards in writing. The pupils achieve well and the differences in standards between boys and girls have been narrowed due to the carefully focused work aimed at raising the standards of low achieving boys. The pupils with special educational needs achieve well for their abilities and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. There are three pupils with English as an additional language. Of these, one is at an early stage of acquisition of English. The provision to support these pupils is good in reception, satisfactory in infants but unsatisfactory in the juniors. The junior pupil is given support by working in withdrawal groups with the pupils who have special educational needs. Although this does provide individual support to help develop language, it sometimes means that he is working with the pupils who are much slower to grasp concepts than himself and consequently his progress is impeded.
71. Throughout the school the standards in speaking and listening are improving. Although many pupils do not have a wide vocabulary, many opportunities are provided for both infants and juniors to share experiences and voice ideas. The infant pupils are eager to speak out and many do so with confidence. They begin to enjoy adjectives and new words such as 'rotund' and almost all give input into class discussions on 'big book' stories. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils were observed totally involved in sharing and improving on ideas as to how Grandpa's friend was injured. Teachers of junior pupils build on previous work and, guided by the National Literacy Strategy, encourage the pupils to share experiences, make spontaneous suggestions and give sensible answers.
72. Teachers have made considerable efforts to improve standards in reading by concentrating on reading skills and improving the literature available to pupils. Throughout the school the pupils are learning to read. Younger pupils are beginning to enjoy reading and becoming more accurate, fluent readers. Older ones attempt more complex words with increasing confidence. Year 1 pupils identify the title, author and illustrator of the books they are reading and by age 7 they are beginning to use index and contents to help them find information. They talk about a number of well-known authors, such as Roald Dahl, although they have only a limited knowledge of authors usually found at this age. Junior pupils' reading skills continue to develop well. When discussing a storybook, a group of pupils enthusiastically described the plot and discussed what might happen next. By Year 6, the pupils are able to find the underlying meanings in stories and have a sound understanding of how words are used by authors for effect. They have a good knowledge of using books for researching their work.
73. Following the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy, the quality of the pupils' writing is improving. Year 1 pupils are quickly introduced to simple punctuation. They know that this will improve their stories and by Year 2 make every effort to include full stops and capital letters. Higher attaining pupils attempt question marks, exclamation marks and speech marks. All use 'bold' print for effect and understand to structure stories with a beginning, middle and end. This was exemplified well in Year 2 where the pupils were looking at story planning. They were able to sequence their ideas and appreciate the order in which they should be written to have maximum effect. They were introduced to using note-taking and were able to discuss how this differs from their other writing. Vocabulary was emphasised and many pupils attempted to include descriptive words. In the junior classes, much of this good work is developed. Word and sentence work are emphasised and grammatical concepts and parts of speech are discussed in the context of 'big books' and selected texts. Work is then consolidated on work sheets or in exercises. Although these have structure, they lack the challenging tasks higher attaining pupils

need to improve their work. As a result, by the end of Year 6, although pupils' writing is correctly structured with logical sequence and paragraphs, for almost all pupils there is limited use of extended punctuation such as commas, colons and semi-colons. Although spellings are practised, many pupils are careless with spelling in their writing. Throughout the school the pupils have opportunities to write their own poetry. By Year 6, the pupils have produced a wide variety of forms of writing. Although much was pleasing, it did not contain the richness of vocabulary or phraseology usually found in the work of pupils of this age. The quality of handwriting and good presentation is variable between classes. In many year groups the use of ICT supports learning well. For example, computer programs were used to produce letters of complaint, diaries of Macbeth, poetry on summer and deserts and descriptions of the residential visit.

74. The quality of teaching is always satisfactory and mostly good or very good and is having a positive effect on raising standards, particularly by younger pupils. Teachers use an appropriate range of strategies, but many of the worksheets are rather undemanding and do not relate to the common errors or areas for development in the pupils' writing. All pupils' work is marked regularly and positive praise is given, although teachers do not consistently include developmental points that would help the pupils improve their work.
75. The co-ordinator has worked hard to support teachers and to raise standards. Schemes of work are being updated, but there is still no handwriting scheme of work to guide teachers. The pupils' progress is monitored and targets are set based upon effective assessments. The co-ordinator has a detailed action plan to identify areas for development and priorities for staff training. Both the infant and junior libraries have improved since the last inspection. They are now well presented and thoughtfully planned. The junior area encourages a good working ethos and lively displays attract the most reluctant reader. Library sessions are used well to develop skills and further individual interests.

## **MATHEMATICS**

76. Results of the 2000 national tests show standards in mathematics at age 7 are above average and at 11 they are average. When these test results are compared to those of similar schools, standards for 7-year-old pupils were well-above average and for 11-year-old pupils above average. Standards of attainment have risen considerably at both key stages since 1998. This good progress reflects the good standard of teaching now achieved throughout the school, the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the good leadership of the co-ordinator. So far the improvements in standards has been more marked at Key Stage 1. There are no significant differences in the achievements of girls and boys and the overall progress of the pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. Inspection findings indicate that standards in mathematics at age 7 are above average and at 11 they are average, which is in line with the national test results.
77. By age 7, the pupils can work out simple problems involving number operations and money. They understand place value to a hundred and higher attaining pupils are beginning to confidently carry out calculations using these numbers. The pupils use different methods for calculating, such as using their knowledge of rounding up the numbers nine and nineteen to make calculation quicker. They understand simple fractions and use these when dividing shapes or sharing numbers. When considering shapes they know the names and simple properties of a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. They estimate and measure using non-standard and standard units. The pupils collect data about favourite colours or letters in names and then form various pictorial representations, such as block graphs. Year 1 pupils use pictographs to show their weather records in geography and Year 2 pupils use block graphs to show their favourite foods, when working on nutrition in science. In Year 2 the pupils use a computer program to produce a graph of their collected information and they interpret simple graphs to gain information.
78. By age 11, the pupils calculate and solve problems involving decimals to two places. They know the relationship between fractions, decimals and percentages. The pupils make their number calculations using different methods but are sometimes unable to transfer this

knowledge into problem solving situations. They work satisfactorily with co-ordinates in one quadrant but have little experience of working at a higher level within all four quadrants. The pupils know about reflective and rotational symmetry. They can measure in various standard measurements and use these skills to solve problems. However, the pupils have too little opportunity for practical work when developing their knowledge of different forms of measurement, such as length, mass, capacity and area. Too much emphasis is given to learning these skills from worksheets, which do not fully involve the practical and problem solving skills associated with work on measures. Higher attaining pupils use a formula to calculate the circumference of a circle, given its radius or diameter. In their data handling work the pupils collect information and communicate this using different graphical representation. These skills are used in other subjects such as science, where graphs of plant growth are kept, and in geography where the pupils graph information on transport.

79. The quality of teaching has improved well since the schools last inspection in 1999 and teaching standards are now good overall. Consequently the pupils often make good progress in their learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection and in over 80 per cent of lessons, teaching was good or better.
80. The teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well. This structure, which has mental strategies as one of its emphases, has helped to raise standards in this area. The teachers show in their use of language, explanations and careful questioning that they have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics. For instance in a Year 3 lesson the teacher stressed important number concepts and through continued questioning explored and shared the pupils' use of different strategies to solve number problems. In some lessons the teacher discusses with the pupils at the beginning what they are going to learn and this helps to focus the pupils' learning. In one Year 6 lesson, these objectives formed part of the final recap and helped both the pupils and the teacher focus on the learning that had occurred. The teachers' expectations of their pupils were good in the lessons observed. However, some pupils' work indicates that there is sometimes a need to match work more accurately to the pupils' abilities. The work of the learning support assistants, which is organised well by the teachers, forms a valuable additional support to the learning of the pupils.
81. At both key stages the teachers' management and discipline of the pupils is good. The pupils respond positively to this, showing good attitudes to their work and good behaviour. This means that the pupils' learning is well supported because they are more attentive to what they are being taught and the tasks they have to complete. The teachers give high levels of deserved praise that encourages learning and raises the pupils' self-esteem. In good lessons, the pace of learning is brisk and the pupils are kept actively engaged in appropriately challenging and stimulating tasks. In very good lessons, the teacher's enthusiasm enlivens the work of the pupils and raises their enjoyment for learning.
82. The mathematics co-ordinator is committed to the continued improvement of pupils' attainment in mathematics. She is aware of the need to monitor closely the match of work to pupils' ability and the need to extend the use of computer technology across the curriculum. Her present analysis of the good assessment data collected, and subsequent action planning, are other important areas that she has appropriately identified for further development.

## **SCIENCE**

83. The results of the 2000 teacher assessments indicated that standards were above average for 7-year-olds. The number of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was well above average. This represents a rise in standards since the last inspection when standards were judged to be average. The 2000 national test results showed standards to be well above average for 11-year-olds. A greater than average number of pupils achieved the higher level 5. Girls achieved significantly better results than boys did. Standards have risen significantly in the last three years and shows very good improvement since the last inspection. Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average and the pupils achieve well in science.

84. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress at both key stages due to the support they are given by classroom assistants and through the teachers' focused planning. Teachers give too little emphasis in some lessons to ensure that the pupils who are learning English as an additional language are developing an understanding of the scientific terms introduced.
85. By age 7, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts. This is because the curriculum is revisited over the two years, and this helps the pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. Whilst the pupils have above average skills of recording scientific results in graphs and tables, overall their scientific enquiry skills are average. These specific skills are not so high as there are relatively few opportunities for the pupils to carry out their own investigations, which will enable them to achieve the higher level 3 in this aspect. The range of work covered is wide and is organised effectively to build on previous learning. For example, Year 1 pupils know the parts of the body and this knowledge and understanding is developed further in Year 2 through consideration of the need for a healthy diet and exercise. Homework is used effectively for the pupils to use first hand information to explore their own dietary habits and this is used to provide interesting activities, which require them to record and represent information in different forms. Computers are used to aid this process and this enables the pupils to present the information neatly thus giving success to what the pupils find difficult to do themselves by hand.
86. By age 11, the pupils carry out group investigations on a regular basis and this has enabled them to develop good scientific enquiry skills. Boys and girls make good progress and achieve equally well. Each new unit of learning begins with 'concept mapping'. This activity provides the pupils with very good opportunities to recall their previous knowledge and understanding of each topic, which helps with the planning and setting up of investigations. It also provides useful information to the teachers, who are then able to plan relevant work matched to individual ability levels and which will take learning forward from each pupil's starting point. Year 4 pupils were thus able to use their knowledge and understanding of the body learned in the infants and Year 3 when discussing and considering the bones in the skeleton. This activity gave the pupils the enthusiasm to find out more about the bones and muscles and how they work. Planning includes key questions and in this lesson provided a sharp focus which kept the pupils' interest levels high and also acted as an assessment tool for the plenary when the pupils discussed what they had learned.
87. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Of the eight lessons seen, all were at least satisfactory and six were judged to be good. The teachers' planning of lessons is detailed and thorough and clearly identifies what the children will learn. The pupils are told the learning objectives at the beginning of every lesson so that they are clear about what they are expected to learn. A strength of the teaching is the quality of questioning which challenges the pupils to think about what they are doing. The pupils feel confident to ask questions about why things happen and how things work and the teachers often respond with a suitable question, which encourages the pupils to think through possible answers for themselves. This deepens understanding of scientific processes as well as gaining in knowledge of scientific facts. This was reflected in the work of the older pupils who were able to apply their knowledge of the functions of a flower to the process of human reproduction, which they discussed openly and sensibly.
88. The co-ordination of science is very good. The co-ordinator has reviewed and made changes to the way the curriculum is taught and this has enabled the pupils to gain a good knowledge and understanding of scientific facts and processes. The curriculum is organised so that the pupils revisit themes to support their memory of scientific knowledge. The co-ordinator rigorously monitors the pupils' work, teachers' planning and lessons to ensure equal provision across the school. The pupils work is looked at carefully to make sure that they are achieving as well as they can. Steps are taken if improvements are required. Assessment information is used well to make changes to the curriculum to support the pupils' learning further. The resources are very well organised so that teachers can access the equipment they need for lessons.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

89. The pupils' standards meet expectations for 7-year-olds but are below expectations for 11 year-olds. The infant pupils make good progress but progress slows in the junior classes. This is an improvement in standards since the last inspection for 7-year-olds and similar for 11-year-olds.
90. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils have many opportunities to experience a wide range of media, for example, materials, clay, paint, pencil, wax crayon and oil and chalk pastels. They are encouraged to develop their ideas and skills. Colourful displays indicate good links between art and design and other subjects. Murals and paintings are enhanced by paper sculpture, clay work and felt toys. Interesting Rangoli patterns and effective silk paintings edged with silver gutta adorn the walls. The pupils have looked at the work of Monet and developed their colour mixing skills by reproducing impressions of waterlilies. Collages of 'under the sea' are made more effective by the use of foil and glitter to depict imaginative fish with shining scales, and lush seaweeds. Clay work is developed well from coil pots to interesting masks and minibeasts where tooling depicts specific features, skin, claws, and wings. Following a talk on portraits by a visiting artist, the pupils in Year 1 produced portraits, some of a very high standard, in pencil crayon matching skin tones carefully and clearly depicting facial features.
91. The junior pupils do not have similar access to such a wide range of media. Nor are they sufficiently guided or encouraged to build on skills already learned. Although a wider range of work was presented for scrutiny in Year 4 than in other years, overall the evidence presented indicates that the pupils have limited opportunities for art. Progressive experiences in charcoal, pastel and paint or in three-dimensional materials, such as clay, are also limited. Throughout this stage the pupils copy the works of a wide number of both English and European artists and these are effectively displayed. However, the pupils do not have an understanding or experience of the techniques used by the artists and consequently have not explored these in appropriate depth. The school is aware that sufficient time has not been spent in developing this subject but have provided opportunities, such as a 'Creative Arts Week' in which all pupils take part, to try and overcome this. This is very beneficial, as the pupils are introduced to an exciting range of experiences and are encouraged to develop their creative and technical abilities that they have not been able to explore during normal lesson times.
92. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory in one lesson and very good in two lessons. In all lessons the objectives were introduced well with clear examples of what the pupils were expected to do. Materials were appropriate. However, in the very good lessons the pupils were supported particularly well. All were kept on task as they received positive encouragement and praise and were guided to develop expertise in the skills and techniques they were practising. For example the pupils using pastel were encouraged to smudge and blend to create the desired effects. In one lesson, learning support assistants were particularly well briefed and this heightened the pupils' learning.
93. The management of art, though sound, is still in the early stages of development. Art has not been a priority on the school development plan and consequently some teachers have not had sufficient in-service training to feel confident in their own knowledge and understanding to teach the subject effectively. The school has adopted the national guidelines in part and amalgamated with the schools' own ideas to form medium-term plans. However, these do not yet take into account the need for clearly identifying how pupils develop skills and understanding as they move through the school. Resources for developing information and communication technology to support art are in place.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

94. Standards, particularly in designing, are not high enough and are below national expectations. No lessons were seen during the inspection and so it is not possible to arrive at a judgement on standards or quality of teaching. The work seen covered a variety of topics arising from work linked to the themes in the national guidelines. The finished examples of work showed care and some evidence of designing. However, the designing is at a fairly low level and is not challenging enough. The school has adopted the national guidelines as its scheme of work and

this has helped to map out what needs to be taught and improved teacher knowledge. At present there is no subject co-ordinator to oversee the subject and teachers have had no recent training to support them. Other aspects, such as, control technology and use of resistant materials are not well developed. There is insufficient time spent on the subject.

95. When discussing their work the pupils are interested, enthusiastic and reasonably knowledgeable. They are keen to explain how they produced their products and what they needed to take into consideration when designing and making. They talk about the processes involved and take a pride in their work.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

96. Standards are in line with national expectations for 7 and 11-year-olds. This is an improvement since the last inspection for 11-year-olds. The pupils study a wide range of geographical topics and the teachers make good use of the school and local environment as a resource for learning. As only one lesson was observed, too little information is available to make a firm judgement on the quality of teaching. However the standard of pupils' work indicates that the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory.
97. By age 7, the pupils know that some places are near and others are further away. They know about simple landscape features such as hills and mountains and know the names of some cities and rivers of the British Isles. Year 2 pupils know that Edinburgh is part of the British Isles and in their map work they can use simple co-ordinates to find different sites on an Edinburgh street map. The pupils know about local features such as shops from their studies of the local area. In Year 1 the pupils draw good maps of their route to school and local area, while in Year 2 they draw sketch plans of their town. In Year 1 the pupils write about their favourite places in the area and in Year 2 they write about their likes and dislikes of the area and how it could be improved.
98. By age 11, the pupils can compare and contrast other localities with their own. They know about physical features such as the formation of river systems and about processes, such as the water cycle. The pupils know how to use some different types of maps and are becoming familiar with co-ordinates, although their knowledge of Ordnance Survey maps, grid lines and contours is limited. In Year 3, the pupils collect more sophisticated weather information, such as wind speed and visibility. They also make comparisons between Egypt and Britain. Year 4 pupils study the River Cole and know how rivers are formed. They can name features of rivers, such as source, meander and estuary. Older pupils make further comparisons between their location and other areas both within the British Isles, Europe and the rest of the world.
99. A feature of their study in Year 6 is their work on five cities across the world. The pupils compare and contrast these areas and write their own thoughts about what they have learnt. Writing their personal feelings about their work and issues that have arisen is a strong feature of the pupils' geography work. It starts from an early age when in Year 1 the pupils write about their favourite places in the area, and in Year 2 where they consider how to improve their area. The Year 6 pupils write about world environmental problems and have considered issues such as oil extraction in Alaska and deforestation in tropical areas.
100. Literacy and numeracy skills are enhanced through work on these geographical issues, such as those that involve various written and spoken inputs and mathematical activities relating to maps and collecting data. To help pupils in their work teachers make good use of visits to their immediate local area and to areas slightly further away, such as the River Cole and Middleton Village.
101. At the present time the school's use of computer technology in geography is limited, though some resources are available for specific topics. Some pupils in Year 6 who have access to the Internet have used this to find out information about cities they are studying.

102. The geography co-ordinator has identified the use of ICT as an area for development. She also realises that assessment has not been carried out in a systematic way and this also is an area that the school will be developing during this academic year.

## **HISTORY**

103. Throughout the school, levels of attainment in history are in line with those expected nationally and progress for the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. These standards are an improvement on those found at the time of the inspection in 1999, when standards in history at junior level were judged to be below average. There is little difference between the attainment of girls and boys.
104. In the infants, much of the learning involves discussion of the pupils' ideas and observations about the past through the examination of pictures and artefacts. There have been limited opportunities to record their work and consequently literacy is less well developed. Photographic evidence and discussions with pupils reveals satisfactory learning and knowledge about toys in the past and the lives of famous people, such as Guy Fawkes, Louis Braille and Queen Elizabeth I. The pupils in Year 2 can use simple terms about the passing of time. Many of the higher attaining pupils are beginning to have a sound understanding of sources of evidence and are able to explain some of the ways in which we find out about the past. When studying portraits of Queen Elizabeth I and in watching a video recording almost all of the pupils can compare and contrast the type of clothing worn then with that worn today. When comparing the appearance and activities of Queen Elizabeth I with those of our present Queen, they show a good understanding of the changes that have taken place over time.
105. In the juniors, Year 3 pupils use their previous learning to explain how we know about the life of the Ancient Egyptians. Year 5 pupils use pictures, photographs and their own knowledge and experience to describe the similarities and differences between school life in Victorian times and that of the present day. The oldest pupils are enthusiastic about their learning of World War II. They make very good progress and show a sound level of knowledge and maturity as they discuss the advantages and disadvantages of being evacuated.
106. The use of ICT to support work in history is currently being developed and, although it is at an early stage, there are signs that it is progressing well. Year 6 pupils are able to use programs and information downloaded from the Internet in their study of World War II. The Year 5 pupils use the computer to read information and complete an exercise about class differences in Victorian Times.
107. The overall quality of teaching in history is good. In the infants, it is consistently good and in the juniors, it ranges from satisfactory to very good. In all of the lessons, the teachers place appropriate emphasis on the use of sources of evidence and through good open-ended questioning, they encourage the pupils to observe carefully and to use what they already know in order to learn more. In the very good lesson with the Year 6 pupils, the teacher's well organised discussion and role-play activities ensured that the pupils shared and listened to each other's opinions. The good arguments they produced for the pros and cons of evacuation showed good knowledge and understanding of the subject. Where the quality of the teaching was less successful it was because the discussion went on too long and the pace of the lesson slowed. Occasionally, the teacher's delivery does not stimulate the pupils' interest sufficiently.
108. Since the last inspection the quality of the teachers' planning has improved. To ensure coverage of all the elements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study, the co-ordinator, in consultation with colleagues, has allocated units of work to each year group. Teachers then plan using both the guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and the school's own scheme of work. The co-ordinator has had limited opportunities to work alongside colleagues in order to evaluate teaching and learning in the subject but she has monitored the pupils' work and has begun a portfolio of selected pieces of work. Currently, there is no assessment of attainment in history, although end-of-unit assessments are being discussed as a way forward.



## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with those expected for 7 and 11-year-olds nationally. This applies to boys and girls of all attainment levels including those with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress overall with some good and rapid progress observed in Years 1 and 2. This is a good improvement since the time of the last inspection in 1999.
110. Since the last inspection, new computer hardware and software have been purchased in order to deliver more effectively ICT, and almost all of the staff have received training which has successfully raised the level of teacher confidence and expertise. Teaching and learning in the subject are still in the process of development. However, the additional input and expertise the school has received as part of the Education Action Zone, together with the drive and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator, has made a very positive contribution to the rise in standards in a very short time. There has been good improvement in the way that the subject is now beginning to be incorporated and taught across all subjects, including literacy and numeracy, but not as yet in music.
111. By age 7, the pupils can use the mouse to control the cursor and also understand how to use the shift and capital lock keys. They make satisfactory progress as they type their work although not all are confident with the layout of the keyboard. With help and assistance, the pupils make satisfactory progress in the use of graphics and drawing programs to produce simple pictures and designs. The Year 2 pupils make good progress as they handle information in their study of food and healthy eating to produce and print a block graph. The Year 1 pupils use digital photographs of themselves and their toys and incorporate word processing skills to make captions for their pictures. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils confidently use cassette players and listening centres to listen to song and story tapes.
112. By age 11, the pupils have developed a wider range of skills in using the computer. Almost all the pupils are confident in word processing; they are able to edit their work. They are beginning to use laptops to support their learning in literacy, using them, for example, in shared reading. In the Literacy Hour, the Year 3 pupils can use a drop down menu to find appropriate rhyming words in order to complete a poem. The pupils have also begun to learn how to compose and send e-mails. In history, the Year 6 pupils use information on World War II downloaded from the Internet. The majority of the older pupils know about changing font size and colour and produce work which has customised text and which incorporates digital photographs and other graphics. The pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they use the computer to consolidate their learning in reading, spelling and sentence work. For example, a group of Year 3 pupils responds enthusiastically to a reading program and they are able to move competently words on the screen. In junior classes, more opportunities need to be found for the pupils to use ICT to control events. For example to measure and control the movement of models or sensors.
113. The quality of teaching is good overall. In one effective lesson with some of the youngest pupils, the teacher made sure the pupils understood exactly what it was they were going to learn. She explained the main parts of the computer very clearly and allowed the group time to practise so that their learning was reinforced. In many of the classes the teachers use peer mentoring so that groups of pupils of all abilities can learn from each other. In a science activity the learning of a group of Year 3 pupils benefited from the use of a well prepared prompt sheet that allowed them to access the Internet and take part in a materials and properties quiz. When most effective, the teachers also used questions very well to help the pupils to overcome problems and achieve success. Where teaching and learning were satisfactory, the teachers are still becoming familiar with the use of particular programs or hardware and so opportunities or specific strategies for learning are overlooked.
114. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has worked very hard in order to raise the profile of the subject across the school and to help improve standards over a short space of time. The school has augmented the national guidance with a further scheme and suggested teaching

activities and programs to extend the learning of the required skills. ICT has begun to be an integral part of teachers' planning in all subjects and the school is looking to develop this further. The school also makes good use of the support from consultants and technicians available through the local authority and the Education Action Zone. The co-ordinator has a clear view of standards in the subject and what still needs to be done to raise them further. She has collected a very useful and well presented portfolio of pupils' work and this reveals the need for more emphasis to be placed on the control element of work in the subject, especially in junior classes.

## **MUSIC**

115. Standards in music are below national expectations at the end of both key stages, except in singing and the pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. The school is aware of the need to improve the pupils' musical experiences in lessons and the plans for improvement are identified in the subject improvement plan.
116. Singing assemblies provide sound opportunities for the pupils to take part in singing activities. The emphasis on these at the moment is to increase the number of songs that the pupils know, but insufficient focus is given to developing the pupils' diction and quality of performance. However, the pupils enjoy these occasions and sing enthusiastically showing that they can learn quickly in response to the enthusiastic approach by the teachers who lead these sessions. The oldest pupils are able to keep their part going independently when singing a 'round' and this indicates average standards in singing across the school.
117. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall. When teachers have the necessary expertise they allow the pupils to achieve well. However, a number of teachers have weak subject knowledge and require more support. In the lessons, suitable emphasis was given to developing the pupils' knowledge and understanding of musical elements including loudness, and deciding whether notes heard were high or low. When offered the challenge, the pupils in Year 3 were able to keep their own part going when one group clapped the pulse and another the rhythm while listening to a familiar song. Overall, however, the pupils in Year 2 were familiar with and recognised the various instruments, they have too little opportunity to play them or to make music.
118. The quality of the pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. The pupils describe interesting lessons, and the music they listen to often has popular appeal but they have too few opportunities to compose and record their own music and this area of the curriculum is weak.
119. The school is aware of these deficiencies and has provided enrichment activities of very good quality, which give the pupils very good musical experiences. The recent 'Creative Arts Week' is a very good example of this. Photographs and talking with the pupils reveal how exciting the activities are. Recorder lessons are excellent. The pupils work in small groups and this enables them to have individual attention. The teacher's subject expertise is excellent and this ensures that specific guidance is given to the pupils to improve their performance.
120. The co-ordination of music is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the needs of the subject and, within the constraints of previous school development has tried hard to ensure that all the pupils take part in worthwhile musical experiences. This has not yet impacted sufficiently on the provision in class lessons. The quantity and quality of music resources are limited. While there are an adequate number of percussion instruments stored in the infant hall, some are of poor quality and in need of replacement. Other musical instruments are new and of very good quality, but, there is barely enough for whole class music sessions. The use of ICT to support music is very limited.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

121. Standards are in line with expectations for seven and 11-year-olds. This is similar to those at the last inspection. Progress is satisfactory for both infant and junior pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

122. In lessons, the infant pupils demonstrate satisfactory levels of co-ordination and spatial awareness. They refine their gymnastic and dance movements and build on the skills they have learnt in previous lessons, for example by changing speed, level and direction when moving around the hall. The pupils respond well to music whilst performing their dance movements. In a dance lesson, Year 1 pupils were using their imagination to respond to the music by moving in similar ways to the character Buzz Lightyear. They work well together in pairs and listened effectively to the teacher's clear instructions. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils are creating simple sequences whilst moving and balancing on different parts of their bodies. They use the opportunities to think about their movements well to improve the quality of their performance.
123. Junior pupils are making good progress in developing the control and quality of their gymnastic and games skills. In a Year 3 lesson, the pupils discuss the types of movement that machines make and then with a partner explore different ways of moving. The pupils concentrate well and have good control. In games lessons, Year 5 pupils, build on the skills learnt in previous lessons to develop their dribbling skills by bouncing the ball when attempting to move past an opponent. By observing other pupils and evaluating their own performance, they were able to improve upon their skills. Year 3, 4 and 5 pupils attend swimming lessons. Any Year 6 pupil not achieving the appropriate standard has additional lessons with Year 5. This allows all pupils to become confident in the water and all are able to swim at least 25 metres by the time that they leave the school.
124. The quality of teaching is good overall. Where teaching is good there is a high level of physical challenge for pupils and the sharp pace of lessons is maintained, allowing the pupils to respond to lessons with enthusiasm and a sense of enjoyment. Lessons are well planned, providing the pupils with appropriate opportunities for developing a variety of skills, but there are limited opportunities for pupils to evaluate their performance and that of others. The teachers make use of pupils to demonstrate, which reinforces the pupils' understanding of their tasks and related skills. The teachers challenge the pupils to improve their performance and the pupils mostly apply themselves well. The teachers provide suitable opportunities for the pupils to demonstrate good levels of co-operation when working in groups and collaborate well when given paired activities.
125. The co-ordinator is on secondment but had been active in establishing an appropriate curriculum. There is a good range and quantity of resources to support all elements of physical education. The school has two spacious halls with small and large apparatus for the teaching of dance, gymnastics and games skills. There are spacious grounds with both hard and grassed surfaces for pupils to develop their games skills.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

126. Standards attained by the pupils in lessons were in line with expectations for both 7 and 11-year-olds. There was insufficient other evidence to make an overall judgement on standards for 7-year-olds. However, the work seen and the knowledge and understanding demonstrated by junior pupils indicates that the overall standards are below expectations for 11-year-olds, which is not as high as it was at last inspection.
127. In the two Year 1 lessons observed, the pupils are beginning to understand the meaning of 'belonging'. Good questioning by the teacher brings out points about 'belonging' and the pupils recognise that specific clothing, brownie uniforms, ballet dresses, Aston Villa colours, indicate they belong to groups. They identify the school uniform shows they go to this school. The lesson is conducted in a quiet manner and moves into discussion about God's family and symbols of Christianity like the Cross, the Bible and the sign of a fish. The pupils' previous work indicates that in the past the pupils have gone on to discuss symbols of baptism whilst looking at celebrations. In a Year 2 class, the pupils had discussed the qualities of friends and good 'neighbours', and have learned about aspects of Sikhism and Moses and the Shabbat meal in Judaism. Although this work was satisfactory, overall learning is inconsistent across the year group and too little is recorded in infant classes to remind the pupils what they have learned. In junior classes, the quality, quantity and content of work available is limited and of a below

average standard. Recorded work often relies heavily on the use of very simple worksheets that do not challenge the pupils and is too often careless with incorrect spelling of key vocabulary. Work on the symbols, practices and great leaders of other religions lacks the depth and understanding required by the school's planning and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Consequently by Year 6, the pupils have limited knowledge of Christianity and other religions. However, more attention has been paid to developing the pupils' understanding of personal values and the world around them. The Year 5 pupils are beginning to differentiate between their physical and spiritual needs through discussion on the 'Feeding of the Five Thousand'. The Year 6 pupils are able to identify the beliefs and relationships within their families and the wider world and many express strong ecological views.

128. Although the quality of teaching in all the lessons seen was satisfactory, the pupils' work indicates that planning does not always build upon the work that they have done before and the pupils frequently do not increase their knowledge but repeat the same work. Moreover, the teachers' marking too often overlooks confused facts and carelessly copied work with significant errors.
129. The co-ordinator has made a satisfactory start by producing a new scheme of work. She is aware that insufficient time has been allocated to developing the subject and that the teachers' planning is not monitored. In addition, some teachers are not confident in their own knowledge and understanding of the history, concepts and practices of the religions that are required to be taught by the Agreed Syllabus.