

INSPECTION REPORT

ST JOSEPHS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Lichfield

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124357

Headteacher: Mr P Flahive

Reporting inspector: Mrs C A Field
9479

Dates of inspection: 4th-7th March 2002

Inspection number: 197812

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Cherry Orchard
Lichfield
Staffs

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr B Mulroney

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
9479	Mrs C A Field	Registered inspector		Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Teaching and learning Leadership and management School improvement
9428	Mrs J Butler	Lay inspector		Welfare, care and support Partnership with parents
1189	Mrs S Brown	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Equality of opportunities English as an additional language English Music Physical education	
20326	Mr P Clark	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Geography History	Curricular opportunities
14991	Mr A Hardwicke	Team Inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated to the south of Lichfield city centre, and located within a well-established residential area. The school is popular with parents and over-subscribed. Most pupils who attend the school reside within a two-mile radius. There are 227 pupils on roll: 113 boys and 114 girls aged between four and eleven years. Children's attainment on entry to the reception varies widely, but overall is broadly similar to that expected for their age. Two per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals and this is very low compared to the national average for primary schools. The vast majority of pupils are of white UK heritage with a very small proportion from Black backgrounds. Pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds all speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well below average; two pupils have a statement of special educational needs for moderate learning difficulties.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Joseph's Catholic school is an effective school that serves its community well. The school's aims and mission are very well reflected in its daily life. The school is well led and managed, teaching and learning are both good and the standards that result, are above average overall. There is a strong feeling of unity in the school, good commitment to improvement and a clear sense of purpose. Pupils are happy at school and keen to improve on their personal best. Staff are very good role models for the pupils and the relationships amongst pupils are excellent. Pupils show great respect for the feelings of others and have a highly developed sense of social responsibility. They are being well prepared as responsible future citizens. Parents hold positive views about the rounded education their children receive within an environment that fosters family values within a caring Catholic ethos. There are three aspects of the school's provision that require enhancement and the school is judged to have good capacity to improve these. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher sets a clear educational direction; he gives good support to staff and pupils and is managing the changes in school well.
- Governors are good friends of the school, they know well its strengths and areas for development and are not afraid to question and challenge in the interests of moving the school forward.
- Teaching is good and is enabling all pupils irrespective of age, background, ability or gender to achieve successfully.
- Pupils reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and music by eleven years; standards are above average throughout the school in science, art and design, geography and history. The school has very effective strategies for promoting literacy and numeracy.
- Very good provision is made for those pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements and all make good progress against their individual targets.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school; they behave very well and show a refreshing maturity as successful learners who take full advantage of the rich curriculum they experience.

What could be improved

- The monitoring and evaluation systems in school lack rigour and this limits the potential for developing the very best practice to be found in school.
- The communication with parents is not as successful as it might be and this leads to some parents feeling that they do not know enough about the latest policy initiatives or their children's progress.
- Pupils' skills development in information and communications technology though satisfactory overall are hampered by too few planned opportunities to extend learning and by outdated hardware.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Over the last four years there have been significant changes in staffing. Despite this, the school has made good progress in remedying the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection, which concerned aspects of teaching and school development planning. The school has also sustained strengths. The standards being achieved today are better than they were in 1997 in most subjects. The school has introduced a positive approach to behaviour management, which is consistently implemented. This is a positive feature in supporting the effective teaching and learning now taking place. The school's development planning (SDP) process has been much improved. The SDP is now a useful tool that clearly identifies appropriate short and longer-term goals together with the action required to bring improvement. The school is aware that as new staff get to grips with their management responsibilities they will need to have a greater role in monitoring and evaluation of appropriate elements of the SDP. The school is judged to have good capacity to sustain continuous improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests (known as SATs by parents).

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	B	C
Mathematics	A	A	A	B
Science	A	A	A	C

Key	
Well above average	A
Average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

NB: similar schools are those with up to 8 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals.

The standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in the SATs last May as shown in the above table were above the national average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools standards were average in English and science and above average in mathematics. This group of pupils' performance from Year 2 to Year 6 was above average. The school expected a slight dip in standards last year due to the nature of the year group. However, standards are rising at a similar rate to that seen nationally. Following analysis of the test results the school rightly identified that writing was a weak area and has developed very effective strategies to improve the opportunities for writing. Writing skills are now very good at all ages.

The standards achieved in last May's SATs by seven-year-olds were very high in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Results in reading and mathematics were amongst the top five per cent nationally. When compared to similar schools the results compare as well above average across the tested areas. Teachers' assessed standards in science as very high overall. Trends over time show that standards are rising across the board in Year 2. There were no significant gender issues arising from the results over 3 years; both groups are doing well.

Inspection evidence shows notable high achievement by eleven years in English, mathematics and music. There is a pattern of good standards in science, art and design, geography and history in both the infant and junior classes and all pupils make good progress from their broadly average starting level of knowledge and skill. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively and they make good gains in learning. Standards are average throughout the school in information and technology (ICT), design and technology (DT) and physical education (PE). Limited resources and insufficient opportunities to practice and refine the full range of skills hamper pupils' progress in ICT. The school sets manageable and realistic targets for attainment that reflect the pupils' prior attainment. However, these could be more challenging to take account of the value the school aims to add to pupils' attainment over their time at school. The commitment to improvement in standards is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen and very eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is very good at all times. There have been no exclusions for quite some time.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships are excellent, pupils willingly take on roles of responsibility, for example older pupils take care of younger ones at lunchtime.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils' attendance is well above average and underpins the good achievement. Punctuality is good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	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 overall quality of teaching was good in the lesson observations made by inspectors. About a quarter was of very good or excellent quality. Teaching is almost always very good in music lessons. It tends to be more satisfactory than good in DT and PE. The teaching in ICT observed was satisfactory overall, however teachers are not planning for, and using ICT to support learning across the curriculum as much as they should. The teaching of basic skills is a very positive feature. There is no evidence of any unsatisfactory teaching across the subjects pupils learn. Pupils from 4 to 11, and regardless of background, share this good quality of teaching. The scrutiny of pupils' past work confirms this picture of good teaching. Parents should be reassured that teaching in Year 2 where there is a temporary job share is of the same good quality as elsewhere in Key Stage 1. There are many more strengths in teaching than shortcomings. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the management of pupils, the use of time and resources and the contribution of support staff to pupils' learning are all strengths. Planning and ongoing assessment and pupils' own knowledge of their learning, whilst satisfactory, could be enhanced. Overall, the school meets the needs of all pupils very effectively because it knows each one as an individual. Good quality individual education plans and very well deployed support staff are the key reasons why pupils with special educational needs achieve at the same good rate as their class-mates. All pupils work very productively and show very good levels of independence and maturity as self-motivated learners. Pupils rise to the many challenges provided and use their initiative very well to advance their own learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced and extended by well-chosen visits. The good extra curricular programme enhances pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Effective management and well-focussed support are the key features that enable these pupils to achieve successfully.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Pupils' spiritual growth is fostered in a climate of trust and friendship within the caring Catholic ethos. Their social and moral development is well attended to and this assists pupils in understanding right from wrong. Cultural development is good, however there are missed opportunities to promote multi-cultural aspects.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school is caring and staff are responsive to individual needs. However, health and safety procedures are too ad hoc and there is a lack of rigour in identifying potential risks. There are pockets of good assessment practice but it is variable.
How well the school works	Satisfactory overall. Parents have good opinions of the school and there is a mutually

in partnership with parents	supportive partnership. Communication though generally effective could be improved to meet the expectations of some parents.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher supports and develops his staff well. The new senior management share the same vision for the school's future and together are a strong team that are well placed to make improvements.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are well informed and know the school as critical friends keen to play a full role in helping the school move forward. They apply the principles of best value well to their decision-making as both purchaser and provider of services.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Much information is gathered to aid close scrutiny of the school's performance, however this is not analysed fully or used consistently to ensure that the very best practice in school is identified, and shared to help raise standards further.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There are sufficient staff, resources and accommodation. All finances are put to effective use, particularly specific grants, for example that for special educational needs. New technology supports the schools' efficient administration well but has limited impact on academic standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases most parents	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • Parents are comfortable to approach the school with questions or problems • Teachers have high expectations • Pupils are helped to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication in general and specifically regarding their children's progress • The range and quality of extra curricular activities • More attention paid to anti-bullying and race awareness as part of pupils' personal and social development

The above views reflect those of just over half of the parents. The inspection team agrees with the positive views expressed. The team judges that communication has strengths but also weaker areas and is flagged as an area for improvement. The school has given appropriate attention to anti-bullying measures in the light of the problems last year. New policy and practices have yet to be shared with parents. The range of extra curricular activities is good. The school is aware that more emphasis is needed to raise pupils' awareness about race issues as part of the developing personal social and health education programme.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- There has been good improvement in standards since the time of the previous inspection.
- Pupils reach well above average standards in English, mathematics and music by eleven years; standards are above average throughout the school in science, art and design, geography and history and average in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology (DT) and physical education (PE).
- The standards pupils' achieve in basic skills are good overall and very good in literacy.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported very effectively and they make good gains in their learning.
- Limited resources and insufficient opportunities to practice and refine the full range of skills hamper pupils' progress in ICT.
- The commitment to improvement in standards is good, however targets could be more challenging.

1. Standards were reported to be average overall in Key Stage 1 by the 1997 inspection. Standards were above average in English, mathematics, history and geography at Key Stage 2 and broadly average in other subjects. Over the four years, standards have improved in most subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and science. There has been very positive impact from the national strategies in literacy and numeracy. Standards in ICT, DT and PE are more or less at the same level as they were. Pupils of all abilities make good progress from their typically average starting point. Inspection evidence both from lesson observations and from a very detailed examination of pupils' work saved from last September confirms the well above average standards being achieved in English and mathematics in the SATs for seven and eleven-year-olds. The majority of parents believe that their children make good progress, however a small proportion of parents are concerned about the negative impact that the staffing situation in Year 2 is having on these pupils' achievements. Inspectors looked at this carefully and can reassure parents that pupils in Year 2 are receiving a good quality of education and that overall achievement is good. Pupils of all ages, irrespective of their ability, gender or ethnicity are enabled to achieve to a good level.
2. The standards achieved by eleven-year-olds in the SATs last May were above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science. When compared to similar schools standards were average in English and science and above average in mathematics. This group of pupils' performance from Year 2 to Year 6 was above average. The school expected a dip last year due to the nature of the year group. Standards are rising at a similar rate to that seen nationally. Following analysis of the test results the school rightly identified that writing was a weak area and has developed very effective strategies to improve the opportunities for writing. Writing skills are now very good at all ages.
3. The standards achieved in last May's SATs by seven-year-olds were very high in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Results in reading and mathematics were amongst the top five per cent nationally. When compared to similar schools the results compare as well above average across the tested areas. Teachers' assessed standards in science as very high overall. Trends over time show that standards are rising across the board in Year 2. There were no significant gender issues arising from the results, over 3 years; both groups are doing well.
4. Children in the reception class start school with broadly average knowledge, understanding and skills and make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage to generally exceed the level expected in most areas. The children reach the level expected in physical development; to some extent a limited range of resources, including poor access to outdoor play space restricts their progress in this area of learning. Good teamwork in teaching enables the children to develop very good personal and social skills, increase the skills with which they handle numbers, move and control their bodies, build good reading habits, work creatively and to grow in their awareness of the world about them.
5. Inspection evidence shows notable high achievement by eleven years in English, mathematics and music. There is a pattern of good standards in science; art and design, geography and history in both the infant and junior classes and all pupils make good progress from a broadly average starting level of knowledge and skill. Standards are average throughout the school in ICT, DT and PE. Those pupils with special needs who benefit from well-

conceived individual education plans that include precise targets that are regularly reviewed are making consistently good progress.

6. The very good improvement in standards in English and mathematics are being helped by the good quality intervention strategies, for example in Year 1 the early literacy strategy is having a positive impact on reading and spelling skills in particular. In Year 4 some good work undertaken by teaching assistants is supporting individuals and helping them to achieve better standards in both literacy and numeracy. Governors have added to the booster monies to enhance the levels of teaching assistant time to help prepare Year 6 pupils for the SATs. All of these initiatives are supporting the good quality teaching and learning that are resulting in the very good standards. The school is proud of the fact that its performance in SATs places it in the top 25 per cent of schools in the county.
7. The standards pupils' achieve in basic skills are good overall and very good in literacy. Pupils of all ages have very good listening skills. They listen attentively to the teacher and follow instructions quickly and accurately. In all classes the pupils speak with high levels of confidence and are extremely willing to respond when asked a question. Older pupils are very articulate in voicing their own opinions and putting forward well-reasoned arguments. Reading skills are at a very good level and the pupils take immense pleasure from sharing books and enjoying stories and poems. Their good range of experiences beyond school enhances the level at which pupils appreciate what they read, often gaining understanding beyond the literal. For example, most of the pupils who read to inspectors were members of the their local library and owned a wide range of books themselves. Writing skills are very good overall. Pupils sequence their ideas well and choose interesting words to enliven writing. Pupils have good recall of number facts and older pupils can mentally calculate quite difficult sums at a cracking pace. In an excellent lesson in Year 4, the strategy of "thumbs up or thumbs down" to signal whether they had the correct answer enabled the teacher to take a quick-fire approach to setting more complex problems. Problem solving skills are more adept in some classes than others as there is a tendency for a few teachers not only to set the problems but give the solutions too readily. Most pupils have a good understanding of shape, space and measures. By the age of eleven most can work quickly and accurately when working with numbers.
8. In all classes, both literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced with confidence and are supporting well-structured lessons that enable effective learning.
9. Skills in the use and application of ICT are just about satisfactory. The school's limited resources hamper the pace at which pupils can develop and refine their ICT skills. Computers in classes are not used to full advantage to enable those with less well developed skills to practice, not least because the outdated machines are not compatible with some of the software required by the school's programme of study. Computers in infant classes were often observed to remain switched off in lessons. There are examples of good quality work in word processing, graphics and data handling in junior classes. Older pupils are building useful insights into the power of computers to sort, search and interpret data. For example in Year 5, pupils used spread sheets to calculate holiday costs and in Year 6 pupils evaluated different web-sites convincingly as they compared the target age range of the site and the facilities offered. Not all junior-age pupils have Internet access in their classrooms. For example, Year 4 pupils are unable to use this medium to support research and enquiry into geography and history studies unless there is time scheduled in the ICT suite and then only half the class can be accommodated at a time.
10. The school has set realistic targets based on assessment data for end of Year 6 tests that predict a broadly average profile. In looking at the work completed so far, inspectors are of the view that these targets are too cautious and that an above average proportion are capable of attaining the expected level 4 in all three tested areas. Furthermore, that a much higher proportion than seen nationally are capable of attaining at the higher level 5 in English and mathematics. The school is basing its predictions on pupils' attainments from the previous year's tests and without taking account of the value it aims to add to these from the good quality of education being provided. The school has yet to join its target setting processes with on-going assessments. This is a missed opportunity that would enable targets to be adjusted and revised upwards as necessary during the year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- Pupils show great respect for the feelings of others are very well behaved and have a highly developed sense of social responsibility.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school, have excellent relationships with one another and are keen and very eager to learn.
- Pupils' attendance is well above average and punctuality is good.

11. The strengths outlined in the previous report have been sustained. Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour are very good overall and supporting positively their good academic achievements. Relationships are excellent; they are tolerant and supportive and reflect the strong Catholic Christian ethos that is so evident in school. The school's attention to emphasising positive behaviours is underpinning the good responses from pupils. The silly behaviour observed to have an adverse impact on the progress made in lessons at the time of the previous inspection is no longer in evidence. There have been no exclusions of any type for quite a few years.
12. Children in the Foundation Stage very much enjoy their work; they work together well and try hard. They are mature for their age and already into good learning habits. The behaviour, response and attitudes of pupils with special educational needs are all very good. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements are very successfully integrated into the full life of the school, and are well accepted by other pupils and adults. Pupils, whose levels of sustained concentration are not well established, are helped stay on task by the very effective guidance from learning support staff. All pupils display very good attitudes to learning. In the lessons seen the majority of pupils concentrate very well and persevere with tasks even when they find them challenging. For example, in a Year 4 English lesson on the use of adjectives to aid good description, the pupils worked really hard to find powerful words that would convey the best images. Some were noticed to change easier words for more difficult ones, using dictionaries quite naturally to aid spellings. In sharing work, the pupils welcomed the critical input of others to aid refinement. Writing benefited, as one girl wrote, "The black blood door creaked open, a stampede of weeds grew up the door and over the windows...." In contrast others had described "....billions of green thorny weeds..." and another, ".... millions of weeds twisting about anything in their path....". Pupils' response benefits strongly from the highly effective teaching strategies to support independent learning and personal development.
13. Parents told inspectors how much their children like school and are helped to become mature and responsible. Pupils confirmed this. Writing on display in the foyer completed by pupils of various ages about what they like about school includes, nice teachers, fantastic headteacher, dinners, writing and PE amongst others. When asked by an inspector what they would change in school to make it even better, a group of Year 5 pupils identified more ICT equipment and more playground equipment. They also said they wouldn't change anything else as they were very happy at school and would be very sorry when the time came to leave. It was also clear from discussions that pupils are alert to bullying and are clear about what to do if an instance arises. They also referred to the opportunity to email the headteacher with any concerns or worries they may have. Both older and younger pupils told inspectors they feel safe and secure at school.
14. Pupils' are happy at school and keen to improve on their personal best. Pupils willingly take on roles of responsibility, for example reading partnerships that involve older pupils supporting the literacy skills of younger pupils assists in this. The Commendation Board given a high profile in the school's entrance is a new addition that celebrates those in school who have put in great effort either in their academic work or in the way they have behaved personally or towards others. In one assembly the headteacher invited pupils who had made significant achievements to "Come on Down" to the front of the hall so that everyone could share in celebrating the successes. Pupils feel comfortable doing this and are not afraid to take pride in their own and one another's achievements.
15. Pupils show great respect for the feelings of others and have a highly developed sense of social responsibility. They are being well prepared as responsible future citizens. Pupils' response benefits strongly from good teaching and from the very good role models of courtesy and respect for others provided by all the staff. Pupils are being encouraged to develop a good set of values and principles to live by. Pupils' worship and prayer is seen to be fundamental to their spiritual development and helps foster an awareness of the needs of others. For example, pupils are very aware of the Apostles' Creed and in one assembly were very articulate in exploring forgiveness. Pupils identified how easy it is to say sorry and sometimes when it is not really meant. Pupils think

about the needs of others, particularly through their very creditable charitable endeavours. They also consider the differences between people, for example in reception they are helped to show respect for, and an understanding of, cultural diversity by looking at Diwali and Hanukkah celebrations. In geography lessons in Year 2, pupils focus on African-Caribbean culture and in Year 4 pupils look at rural and urban life in India. The school acknowledges that in trying to prepare pupils to take their place as citizens in a multicultural society and whilst successful in fostering the spirit of justice it has yet to give sufficient emphasis to exploring race issues specifically including prejudice.

16. Pupils' attendance is well above average and underpins the good achievement. Punctuality is good and this helps the day get off to a purposeful start.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- Teaching is good and is enabling all pupils irrespective of age, background, ability or gender to achieve successfully, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Teaching draws on specialist input to support the very worthwhile experiences in music and older pupils achieve well above average as a result.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and the management of pupils, the use of time and resources and the contribution of support staff to pupils' learning are all strengths.
- All pupils work very productively and show very good levels of independence and maturity as self-motivated learners.
- Planning and ongoing assessment and pupils' own knowledge of their learning, whilst satisfactory, could be enhanced. The use of ICT to support learning across the curriculum is insufficient and inconsistencies in the setting of homework have yet to be ironed out.

17. Six teaching staff have joined the school within the last two years, five since September and this makes direct comparison with the previous report's findings about teaching difficult. The induction arrangements for new staff have been successful and morale is high. Teachers feel well supported in school and are committed to raising standards. Most are reflective about their work and inspectors noticed some people taking on board aspects for improvement that had been discussed with the inspectors. There is clearly a culture for self review as lesson observations have been routinely undertaken by managers in the past, and specific pupils are at the centre of a tracking system that enables the headteacher to keep oversight about their general progress. The introduction of performance management is viewed positively and the policy is on track. However, there is no direct link between the school development planning process and the performance management cycle and this requires review. The school is poised to continue to build on its systems for looking critically at the quality of teaching and learning and standards being achieved by drawing more people into the process of monitoring and evaluation.
18. Teaching quality observed during this inspection was good overall, with all teachers sharing in this good quality. Of the 56 lessons observed, 13 were satisfactory, 33 good and 10 very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. A very thorough examination of pupils' work from September last year confirmed that good teaching is the norm at St Joseph's RC primary school. The good teaching is enabling all pupils to make good progress and achieve well, particularly in English and mathematics. Specialist teaching observed in the music lessons in junior classes was of very good quality. Parents told inspectors that teachers' hold high expectations and they are right. Some parents explained to inspectors their worries about the temporary situation in Year 2 and the adverse impact it may be having on their children's education. Inspectors looked very carefully at lessons in Year 2, sampled work in all subjects and scrutinised every pupil's English and mathematics books. There is good continuity and the same good quality of teaching as in the rest of the infant phase in Year 2, and parents should not be concerned.
19. Teaching is good overall in the Foundation Stage and leads to the youngest children in school making a secure start to their education. Good teaching is enabling those pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements to make good progress against their individual targets. Good quality individual education plans and very well deployed support staff are the key reasons why pupils with special educational needs achieve at the same good rate as their class-mates. Teaching of the highest attaining pupils is challenging and enabling them to do well. Teaching is particularly successful in promoting positive working conditions; classes are happy, purposeful places and all pupils feel valued and supported and enabled to reach their personal best. Overall, the school meets the needs of all pupils very effectively because it knows each one as an individual. Pockets of

excellence in teaching were observed in a Year 4 mathematics lesson and a music lesson in Year 6. Some very good teaching and learning was observed in Years 3, 4 and 5.

20. Teaching is consistently good in English, mathematics and science. Lessons are well prepared and there are good expectations of what pupils of all abilities can achieve. Teaching tends to be more satisfactory in DT and PE. Subject knowledge is not as high in these two subjects and in the case of PE the limited hall space available was observed to curtail the pace at which older pupils advanced their skills because of their sheer size and number. During the inspection some good lessons were seen in ICT but an equal number were observed that came close to being unsatisfactory largely because of problems with hardware and software that resulted in the pace of learning being too slow and in one case stopping because the system crashed. Teachers are becoming frustrated in trying to use outdated equipment that they cannot rely on. The use of computers in classes to support pupils' learning across the curriculum is much less than required by the National Curriculum. This is having a negative impact on the pupils' development in the full range of ICT skills. Staff training in ICT is on-going and confidence to teach the full range of ICT skills is still in need of a boost. The partially completed ICT suite is not yet in use. The development of teaching and learning in ICT is a key issue for improvement.
21. The good teaching overall is enabling pupils to become willing and enthusiastic learners. Pupils work hard, concentrate extremely well and become mature and sensible learners. Pupils enjoy their lessons and rise to the many challenges provided and use their initiative very well to advance their own learning. Because lessons are profitable, younger pupils are building skills, knowledge and understanding at good rates and older ones continue to build effectively on developing these. In English and mathematics many are moving quickly to where their potential lies. Teachers prepare lessons well, they pace them to move on at the right speed for learning and choose interesting resources that stimulate the pupils' very good responses. Writing has been a particular success story and there is some very high quality work in all classes. The range of writing is impressive. For example poetry work in Year 6 embraces limericks to haiku to kennings to cinquains. Pupils' writing is imaginative and exciting, for example in writing about quests, one boy from Year 4 began his story with, "Legless the water-breathing dragon was playing cludo with me when the doorbell went..." This is high quality work that compels the reader to read on. Teachers are using history and geography lessons to support writing development without compromising the integrity of these subjects. For example, in a Year 2 history book in looking at times past and present, one girl wrote a letter dated August 1950, "Dear Mrs. Smith, I have just arrived at Scarborough and it is very sunny. I travelled by steam train. I am staying in a hotel and having a lovely time".
22. Throughout the school there has been beneficial impact on the achievements of pupils from the successful implementation of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of basic numeracy and literacy skills is very good overall. Teachers make effective use of mental warm-up time to improve numeracy though occasionally this goes on for too long and eats up the time available for pupils to work independently. Occasionally, teachers are too focused on pupils' answers to their questions rather than probing individual strategies for solving problems. These are relative areas for improvement. Group work is well planned and pupils of all abilities and across the age-range were observed to receive work that was well matched to their level of competency in mathematics. Literacy sessions typically begin with the sharing of text, and most teachers engage pupils' good working habits very early on by asking probing questions that seek to deepen pupils' thinking skills. It is usually the case that group activities are purposeful and productive times in which the majority of pupils get on well with their independent tasks. Plenary sessions were observed to be rather rushed in both numeracy and literacy sessions and only occasionally did teachers return to the objectives they had set to assess what learning gains had been made. The good practice in setting targets for individual pupils in literacy and numeracy is not yet a feature of lesson planning or on-going assessment. Marking has yet to refer to these targets and as such is an area for improvement.
23. Relationships in classes are very good. Teachers and the teaching assistants who work successfully together want to do their best for the pupils and vice-versa; this shows in the positive outcomes. All teachers hold good expectations of what pupils are capable of, are reflective about their own practice in meeting needs and keen to make improvement. There is a very good team spirit amongst staff, who are positive about sharing ideas in the interest of giving the best to pupils. The management of behaviour is very good and is tipped in favour of rewarding positive efforts. Both young and older pupils are rightly proud of their achievements and are well motivated by the award of house points and in some classes additional motivation, for example, chocolate bars! Teachers assess and chart pupils' achievements at regular intervals and this is a good feature of practice. There is less recording of more immediate learning gains following lessons and this is one aspect that the school is aware it needs to improve. When talking to inspectors, Year 5 pupils showed good levels of self-knowledge about

what they were good at and where they needed to improve their work. The good practice in target setting and self-review has yet to be used to the full as part of on-going assessment.

24. Parents are very supportive and want to play their part in helping pupils make the very best rates of progress possible and to help realise the individual targets set. Teachers generally make sound use of homework to extend learning, though there are inconsistencies between classes and the entitlement set out in the Home-school agreement is not always met in practice. Very few homework diaries are signed by parents. The quality and thoroughness with which home-school reading diaries are maintained is creditable.

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

- The curriculum offers a rich, broad range of interesting learning opportunities that is socially inclusive to all pupils. However, the provision for ICT is only just meeting requirements due to a lack of suitable resources and this requires attention.
- The curriculum offers very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Children in the Foundation Stage undertake a good curriculum, however the scope for outdoor play is limited by unsatisfactory resources.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education.
- The community contributes effectively to pupils' learning and the very good attention to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development enables them to develop as responsible young adults.
- There are not enough planned opportunities for pupils to experience an awareness of the multi-cultural society that exists in Britain today.

25. The school is socially inclusive and provides a rich, balanced and well-planned curriculum to which all pupils have equal access. Statutory requirements are met in all subjects taught, with particular strengths in English, mathematics and music. The standards being achieved today are better than they were in 1997 in most subjects and this reflects the good cohesion within the curriculum. A comprehensive programme has been introduced for the development, monitoring and reviewing of all areas of the curriculum, resulting in well-focused and appropriate action plans that have guided improvement. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and enables them to get off to a good start in their education. However, a paucity of outdoor play equipment and difficult access to outdoor play space, hampers their physical development. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements are very successfully integrated into groups within the class, and are appropriately included in any additional activities undertaken by the school.
26. The curriculum has been planned effectively to ensure that all subjects receive sufficient emphasis. The provision for ICT is only just meeting requirements due to a lack of suitable resources and this requires attention. Teachers' planning reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum 2000, and is well supported through the use of national guidelines in most subjects. The school's strategy for teaching literacy and numeracy has been implemented very successfully throughout the school. The English curriculum is very rich, providing well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills, as observed during a Year 2 class assembly in which all pupils spoke their parts with confidence and clarity. The school's strategy for teaching numeracy is also very good, and has an impact in particular on pupils' numeracy skills in other subjects, for example design and technology, that require pupils to measure accurately before cutting out material to make picture frames.
27. The school provides good equality of access and opportunity, with no significant variations noted in the provision for boys and girls, or between different ability groups. The staff at St Josephs RC primary know the pupils very well as individuals, and are highly responsive to individual needs. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school has very good procedures to identify pupils having difficulties in their learning, and follows all the recommendations of the national code of practice. Class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator are responsible for writing the good quality education plans and these are monitored carefully, ensuring that the progress made by individual pupils is good. Substantial evidence was seen of pupils making very good progress in their learning in literacy and numeracy. This is because of the effective action taken in lessons, or through small groups work when pupils are withdrawn from the group-time in literacy and numeracy lessons to work with support teachers or learning support assistants.
28. The curriculum is suitably enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils to develop their abilities, particularly through sport and music. These include football, netball, cross-country, chess, choir and

French. Over recent years, the staff have put their energy into improving standards, involving many meetings and training sessions. Nevertheless, the provision and range of extra-curricular activities has been good. Subsequently, the inspection team disagrees with parents' views that the present range and quality of extra-curricular activities is inadequate. There is a good personal health, safety and citizenship programme of work that provides a range of useful experiences for all pupils. There is an agreed policy for sex education and satisfactory provision for drugs awareness and the dangers of drugs misuse.

29. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. The school's links with the community were reported as a significant strength in the previous inspection report, and remain so. Links include emergency services, music festivals, retail outlets, nursing homes and the cathedral. There are strong links with the church and local parish, and effective links with the secondary schools to which most of the pupils transfer.
30. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. There are particular strengths in the opportunities for spiritual development, which are excellent.
31. The opportunities for spiritual development are woven very effectively into the daily life of the school and pupils' spiritual growth is fostered in a climate of trust and friendship. The very strong Catholic Christian ethos of the school gives a very positive support to this development. The assemblies, which all staff attend, are well led and have a significant impact on the pupils, providing a good opportunity for prayer and reflection. Pupils are encouraged to think about important events, both happy and sad, and special moments in their lives. Each classroom has a special corner where pupils reflect on their experiences and the lives and experiences of others. Displays show the depth of pupils' feelings and beliefs. For example in Year 1 a large display thanks God for our wonderful world. Pupils in Year 2 have written prayers that are meaningful to them, as one girl wrote, "Dear Jesus, Please forgive my sister for waking me up too early". Pupils are clearly valued by the adults in the school. The parish priest is a frequent visitor; this adds significantly to the impact of spiritual development in the school, and strengthens links with the parish. Music plays a significant part in the spiritual life of the school, both in singing and the music played in assemblies. This further enhances the opportunities for a moment's reflection. Parents comment very positively on the impact of the class assemblies on the pupils' spiritual growth.
32. Pupils' moral development is very good. The mission statement, "We are growing with Jesus", is clearly central to the life of the school. Pupils are positively encouraged to live lives in which they love, care and share through the respectful and tolerant ethos based on Catholic principles. There are weekly awards in assembly where children from each class are selected, and the school celebrates together the good things that have been achieved by these children. The pupils are visibly proud of their skills, and take their role seriously when opening doors or explaining arrangements for collecting lunch at lunchtime to visitors. Well-planned opportunities are provided in assemblies and lessons for pupils to discuss moral issues. Very good behaviour in the school is promoted through a system of school rules and mutually agreed classroom rules. In Year 4, the pupils have written their own rules called "Golden Rules" which are on prominent display at the entrance to their classroom.
33. Social development is very good. Excellent relationships are a particular strength of the school, and provide a very strong basis for pupils' social development. All adults in school provide very good role models of courtesy and respect to which all pupils respond positively. Opportunities for 'Reading Friends' for example, encouraging older pupils in Year 5 to support pupils' reading in Year 1, assists quality friendships and co-operation. Such events contribute very positively to improving pupils' self esteem and their ability to co-operate with others.
34. All pupils are encouraged to work well in lessons and to share ideas and thoughts when working. Pupils undertake a range of planned responsibilities both in the classroom and around school. The school fathers a very strong family atmosphere. Further opportunities are made through visits, extra-curricular activities and competitive sports. Pupils support Catholic fundraising events and other local charities. This has a positive influence on their sense of social responsibility.
35. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Pupils are given opportunities to appreciate their own cultural heritage, for example through visits to places such as Lichfield Cathedral. Opportunities for cultural development in art and design and music are well developed. In history, pupils learn about life in Victorian times, comparing in detail food, education and transport with that found today. Visits and visitors also make a significant contribution to the enrichment of the curriculum. There are few opportunities to develop pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural make up of society in Britain today. Religious education at present does not

incorporate studies of other faiths, apart from Judaism. The school is aware that more emphasis needs to be given to enhancing pupils' understanding of race issues as part of the developing personal, social and health education programme.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- All adults in school respond well to pupils' individual needs.
- Procedures for monitoring health and safety are rather ad hoc however.
- There is a serious risk of accident due to the unfenced, unsafe, unrestricted use of surfaces, which slope down to the playground.
- The support and guidance for personal development is good and produces well-informed pupils who are confident of making sensible choices.
- Educational support is good, but the monitoring of academic progress has room for improvement. Assessment practice is variable, target setting is at an early stage of development and there is an inconsistent approach by teachers, even within the same key stage. This is an area for improvement.

36. This is a caring school in which all adults know the pupils well and are responsive to individual needs. Parents are happy about the rounded education their children receive within an environment that fosters family values within a caring Catholic ethos. The day-to-day welfare of pupils is a high priority but the school does not monitor its approach to health and safety with sufficient rigour. For example, the portable electrical appliances have not been certificated recently, and there is no consistent approach to assessing risk prior to undertaking any new activity. Although first aid provision is good, and staff are generally vigilant and aware of safe practice, there remains an ongoing concern regarding the unfenced hard slope leading down to the playground. The poor state of the steps, broken or missing edging stones, and failure to restrict activity in this area, put pupils at serious risk of sustaining injury. The governors are aware of the issue and are trying to seek capital investment to fund repairs. They have not yet resolved this problem. The school's procedures for child protection are adequate and follow local area guidelines.
37. The monitoring and promotion of pupils' personal development is good overall and the school places great importance on the growth of the whole person. The school is a harmonious community. Attendance is monitored well and all absences are explained. Improved procedures to promote good behaviour and good manners are used consistently by all staff, and well understood by the pupils. The house point system is a popular way of promoting a sense of corporate responsibility, while the commendations book helps to develop the self-esteem of all pupils. Some parents expressed concern about the way the school deals with bullying, following a serious allegation last year. As a result of a considered and wide-reaching approach, the school is now in a much better position to monitor and seek to eliminate any form of oppressive behaviour. Pupils have been informed about bullying issues by a visiting drama group, teaching and discussion, and they have the opportunity to voice concerns anonymously if they prefer. Parents were invited to join the working party, which brought about these improvements and some have taken up this offer. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their confidence, through public speaking and notably through the pairing of older and younger pupils as reading friends.
38. The high standards achieved by pupils are testimony to the good educational guidance and support they receive from school, based on good procedures for assessment. However the monitoring of their academic progress remains only satisfactory. Pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school to ensure that each reaches their own potential. However, the termly profile books do not give a clear idea of attainment levels, and with the exception of English and mathematics, pupils are not aware of exactly what they need to do to improve. Target setting is at an early stage of development and there is an inconsistent approach by teachers, even within the same key stage. The best practice clearly demonstrates how pupils are assessed in all subject areas, and how personal targets help them to make good progress. However, the regular review and refinement of these targets is not yet fully in place. The last inspection found that improvement was needed in the use of assessment information in order to set the priorities for development. Some teachers make good use of assessment information to refine their teaching plans. For example, in Year 2, a mathematics lesson was repeated by one teacher in response to her colleague's judgement that the pupils needed to consolidate their knowledge before moving on. Again, greater consistency is needed.
39. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this helps them to make good progress. All statutory requirements are met for the assessment of pupils with special educational needs. Regular review meetings are carried out, involving parents appropriately. The quality of targets is generally good. However, not all pupils are actively involved in reviewing their progress against the targets set.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- Parents have good opinions of the school and there is a mutually supportive partnership. They hold positive views about the rounded education their children receive within an environment that fosters family values within a caring Catholic ethos
- Parents provide generous financial and practical support, but would like to work more closely with the school.
- Although satisfactory overall, communications could be improved.
- There are missed opportunities to involve parents in supporting their children, for example by sharing targets for improvement.
- Parents are not fully aware of the school's initiatives and successes.

40. The school values and works hard to sustain its mutually supportive partnership with parents. As a result most parents are happy with the school's provision for their children and they support it well wherever the opportunity arises. Parents hold positive views about the rounded education their children receive within an environment that fosters family values within a caring Catholic ethos. However, many parents rightly place demands on the school and for some the perception is that these are not always met. A very small but significant minority have some disquiet about the way a bullying issue was handled last year. The deputy headteacher has been leading the work on anti-bullying. A well-conceived policy has been drawn up by a working group of staff and parents and very recently agreed by the governing body. There are good procedures in place should an incident arise, including an early warning system that involves staff logging suspected incidents in a book that is regularly monitored by the headteacher. The systems in place to raise pupils' awareness about bullying are thorough and parents need no longer have cause for concern. The school has not yet provided parents with information about the good improvements made and this is an aspect of communication that requires further improvement. Nearly a quarter of the parents responding to the questionnaire felt that the school does not work closely with them, although most were very happy with approachability. Inspection evidence suggests that the school is not always successful in promoting and celebrating its successes, and that there are some missed opportunities to involve parents more closely in support of their children's education.
41. Communication weaknesses appear to be the heart of the problem, although the inspection finding is that the overall picture is satisfactory. Some parents do not feel well informed about their child's progress, particularly through the written annual reports. The team supports this view, and found that the reports do not give a clear picture of attainment, as compared to what might be expected of a child of that age, nor any targets for improvement. Parents are not clear about the requirements of the homework policy, particularly how it is timetabled and how they are expected to support. The school does provide a very thorough projection of the areas of work to be covered by each class at the beginning of the year, and this is a good foundation on which to add more information about homework expectations. In fact the school gives parents very good opportunities to meet with class teachers, either at the end of the day, or at the three parents' evenings, so any problems which might arise should be dealt with without delay.
42. There is a regular weekly newsletter, which is a particularly good way of keeping parents informed about the day-to-day life of the school. Despite this, some parents were unaware of the school's recent initiatives regarding changes to the anti-bullying policy. More generally, the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are rather dry and formal, and fail to celebrate the contributions and achievements of the pupils in the life of the school.
43. Overall, the impact made by parents on the work of the school is good. They are extremely generous supporters of fund-raising, both for educational resources and for charitable concerns. The PTFA provides a calendar of social events and is also a very useful forum for gauging parental opinion, as each class has a representative parent. Parental questionnaires for target year groups are also used to assist in drawing up priorities for the school. A few parents volunteer to help in class, and there is always help available for special trips, visits, and transport to sports events. They support hearing reading and other homework tasks well when the requirements are made clear. Parents of pupils with special educational needs work well with the school to encourage and support their children, and are fully involved in their reviews. Individual education plans are shared with parents at regular intervals. However they do not receive a copy of the individual education plan, therefore making effective support of their children rather remote. Parents are generally very well pleased with the provision for special educational needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- The school is effectively led and managed. The headteacher sets clear educational direction, he gives good support to staff and pupils and is managing the changes in school well.
- The new senior management hold the same vision for the school's future and together are a strong team that are well placed to reach shared goals.
- Governors are good friends of the school, they know well its strengths and areas for development and apply the principles of best value well.
- The monitoring and evaluation systems in school lack rigour and this is a key issue for improvement.
- The communication with parents, though satisfactory overall, has some shortcomings that require attention.
- All finances are put to effective use, particularly specific grants, for example that for special educational needs. New technology supports the schools' efficient administration well but has limited impact on academic standards.

44. There has been good improvement to the issues identified by the 1997 inspection and good improvement to academic standards. St Joseph's RC primary is a well run school that provides a happy place in which pupils are known as individuals and helped to grow both academically and socially. The headteacher sets a very positive ethos and has created a good learning environment. The school's aims, and mission of "We are growing with Jesus", is well reflected in its work. The headteacher leads the school with devotion and determination. A notable achievement that reflects well on the headteacher's effective leadership is the much improved writing standards in school which have lifted from average to well above average levels over four years. This is despite staffing changes and in the last year the appointment of three new teachers to the junior-phase and a temporary job-share in Year 2 to cover for maternity leave. The headteacher has managed these changes well, and ensured a good level of continuity in the curriculum and the quality of education provided.
45. The headteacher provides clear educational direction to the work of the school. He is caring in all of his dealings with people. He leads from the front but is sure never to ask people to do things he wouldn't undertake himself. His approach commands respect from his staff who find his consensual approach both supportive and encouraging. The senior management team is new; the deputy only joined the school in September and the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator who makes up the SMT took on this role very recently. They are a team of different people who collectively have the necessary talents to take the school forward. They recognise these in themselves and, because they share the same vision for the future, are very confident to play to strengths in making improvements.
46. Subject co-ordinators are doing a good job overall, for example, they ensure that policies are properly implemented and that planning reflects the agreed programme of study. Some have not yet had the opportunity to gain a wide enough perspective of the quality of teaching, learning and standards in the subject they lead, and this is an area for improvement. The special needs co-ordinator, although only part time provides very good, knowledgeable leadership for this area of the school's work. She ensures that all staff understand the system for identifying pupils' difficulties. The governing body is fully involved with issues related to special educational needs, and fulfils its statutory responsibilities well.
47. All staff work effectively to ensure the school meets its aims and reflects its values. They meet with success in this drive. The unity within school is tangible and is a key reason for the good quality of education provided.
48. Governors are good friends of the school, they know well its strengths and areas for development. They have established committees to enable efficient organisation of the business they need to discuss. The system enables meetings of the full governing body to be well informed and effective. Through the work of the Finance committee there is good oversight of the finances and budget control is secure. Governors are well up to speed in making checks for cost effectiveness in the goods and services they procure. They are equally as effective in asking the headteacher to report regularly on the school's results and then compare these to other schools both locally and within the county. It is a source of pride that the school's SATs results place it in the top 25 per cent in the county. Governors are not complacent however, and ask challenging questions to ensure that the school moves forward in its bid to sustain the high standards that compare favourably against similar schools nationally. Governors are also firm in their convictions that the school should be a happy place of learning in which pupils are stretched but not stressed. The school is successful in meeting this aim too.

49. The school's performance management policy is well implemented and is seen as integral to the school development planning system. However the time-scales that the school is working to are not dovetailed and this causes hiccoughs in the target setting process. The school has well established monitoring systems. For example, senior managers undertake lesson observations and sample pupils' work at regular intervals. These are positive features and generally provide useful feedback to individuals. However, it is not always apparent what the monitoring has revealed in terms of points for development to support wider school improvement or how these are to be progressed. There are currently only loose ties between school priorities, the headteacher's objectives and teachers' performance targets. Additionally, there are pockets of very good practice around the school, for example in some classes teachers maintain comprehensive records of how well different pupils are achieving. This information is not maintained by everyone however, and no one is drawing the data available to assist in target setting work. This adhoc approach results in the best practice in school not being sufficiently recognised or shared to assist in further raising standards and is a missed opportunity. The headteacher has identified that more people need to be drawn into the process of self-review but has yet to identify exactly how monitoring and evaluation is to be taken forward. This is an area for improvement and a key issue identified by this inspection.
50. The school is run efficiently. There are sufficient staff, resources and accommodation overall. However, the resources available for both teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage are not of good quality and those to promote outdoor play are unsatisfactory. All finances are put to effective use, particularly specific grants, for example that for special educational needs. New technology supports the schools' efficient administration well but has limited impact on academic standards. There is a reserve of £30,000, on deposit in the LEA's Investment Account which has been earmarked for ICT improvements and buildings development. Managers are aware that this will not be sufficient for all of the school's needs. The school's ICT provision is falling behind that seen in many schools; hardware is very out of date and was observed on numerous occasions to crash when trying to run more up-to-date software. The staff are finding this frustrating and it is very much hampering the pupils' skills development. The school is investing in a suite of nine computers but this will not be sufficient to take full classes. The school has a useful action plan to guide improvement but there is a lack of specialist expertise to draw on. The need to improve ICT is a key issue identified by this inspection.
51. The school's budget is carefully managed. It is on track for this financial year. There will be a reasonable carry forward but it is all committed as outlined above. The school receives a below average income per pupil and is highly effective in putting it to good effect as demonstrated by the good educational provision, good climate for learning and good standards overall. The school is judged to provide good value for money and this is certain to continue as the school moves closer to its goals.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In their work to further raise standards and improve the quality of education at the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should seek to:

1. Improve the pupils' ICT skills development by:

- pressing ahead with the sensible priorities contained in the ICT action plan;
- ensuring that planned improvements in staff training, the enhancement of hardware and software are given immediate attention;
- insisting that all teachers plan for, and use ICT to support learning across the curriculum and in so doing make more efficient use of the computers in classrooms;
- enabling pupils to have sufficient opportunities to practice, consolidate and refine their ICT skills;
- promoting consistency in monitoring and assessing the progress that pupils make in all years in the range of ICT skills required.

Paragraphs: 9, 20, 26, 50, 72, 80, 87, 96, 101, 107, 110, 112-115

2. Establish a monitoring and evaluation policy that will:

- bring sharp focus to what is to be monitored and why;
- draw more people into the process of self-critical review and set out clear roles and responsibilities;
- ensure a clear and probing analysis of findings that finds the key issues to be taken forward as improvement points;
- encompass and bring together in unison the pockets of assessment and evaluation already being undertaken by individual members of staff to give a clear view of individual attainment and to target improvement;
- enable the identification and promotion of the very best teaching and learning in school.

Paragraphs: 10, 17, 22, 23, 38, 39, 46, 49, 70, 74, 81, 88, 96, 103, 109

3. Continue to extend the ways of communicating with parents so that:

- they are made fully aware of new initiatives, policies and procedures;
- they find the annual pupil report more informative by stating clearly how well pupils are achieving and setting out targets for future improvement that they can support their child in progressing;
- parents of pupils with special educational needs receive a copy of the individual education plan that will enable them to play a greater part in supporting their children's targets;
- the requirement for homework in each year is clarified and parents' support is engaged in monitoring the impact and effectiveness of this aspect of the school's provision;
- more can join in celebrating the schools' many successes.

Paragraphs: 24, 37, 40-43

Although not identified as separate issues, in preparing their action plan the Governing Body should also pay attention to the following:

Developing the multicultural aspects of the curriculum and giving attention to raising pupils' awareness about race issues in particular.

Paragraphs: 15, 35, 71, 100, 121

Rectifying health and safety issues identified immediately.

Paragraphs: 36

Improving the resource provision in the Foundation Stage, particularly for outdoor play.

Paragraphs: 4, 25, 56, 63

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

56

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

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	8	33	13	0	0	0
Percentage	3	14	60	23	0	0	0

Pupils on the school's roll

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)

227

Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals

4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs

2

Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register

30

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language

0

Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

8

Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	12	16	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	12
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	27	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (97)	96 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	12	12
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	27	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	11	16	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	11
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	24	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (91)	85 (88)	93 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	22	22	24
Percentage of pupils	School	81 (91)	81 (88)	88 (91)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	220
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.6
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	177

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	379,335
Total expenditure	388,787
Expenditure per pupil	1,768
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,649
Balance carried forward to next year	30,197

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	227
Number of questionnaires returned	115

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	43	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	43	3	1	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	53	7	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	57	14	1	3
The teaching is good.	32	57	3	1	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	50	26	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	36	6	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	48	2	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	29	45	23	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	37	44	16	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	50	5	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	41	22	7	11

NB Rows may not total 100 per cent due to rounding

Other issues raised by parents

A small minority of parents in Year 2 are concerned about the staff turnover and the negative impact this may be having on their children's education.

A small minority of parents believe the school does too little about anti-bullying and race awareness even though the instances of either happening are recognised as few.

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

- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and children attain standards which are above average.
- Progress is good in all areas of learning.
- Good intervention by the support assistant contributes well to children's learning.
- There is no policy or guidance in place for the Foundation Stage. Closer links are needed for planning the curriculum between the classes to ensure progression and continuity. Consideration is needed about how the Foundation Stage should be organized.
- Provision for outdoor play is unsatisfactory with few resources in a barren area. This is not used regularly by the reception class because it is not easily accessible. Other resources in class are rather old and worn.

53. Children are admitted to the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. A pre-reception class has recently been formed, admitting children on a part time basis for two terms prior to joining the reception class. At the time of the inspection there were 8 children on the pre-reception class and 31 children in the reception class. Early assessment information in the reception class indicated that children's attainment on entry to school varies widely but overall is broadly at the level expected for their age. School managers have identified the need to provide a more cohesive Foundation Stage.
54. The curriculum for children in the reception class of the Foundation Stage is good. Good teaching provides the children with a broad range of interesting and challenging experiences, enabling them to make good gains in their acquisition of early skills and knowledge. Basic skills are very carefully taught. As a result by the time they enter Year 1 many of the children have exceeded the early learning goals for the Foundation Stage and are working within Level 1 of the National Curriculum. Although there has been no specific training for the Foundation Stage, the teacher and support staff have worked hard to ensure they have secure knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. High expectations, effective teaching methods and very good management of children are some of the factors influencing the good progress children make. Learning objectives within planning reflect the 'stepping stones' leading towards the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage. Carefully planned tasks are matched to individual needs to ensure the right level of challenge for all children. Children in the reception class are well motivated by the experiences offered and these lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Support staff are very well deployed and resources used very effectively. Outcomes of assessment made by the adults are used to determine the next steps of learning in the reception class. This is good.
55. Children having special educational needs are identified early. Although there is no one currently on the register the very good support provided for the lower attainers enable them to participate fully and confidently in all of the activities.
56. Learning resources are adequate but do little to enhance children's learning experiences. This is because much of the equipment, resources are old and worn. Furniture is old, and inappropriate for the Foundation Stage, particularly storage cupboards. This does not promote good independence and enable children to access equipment and resources easily for themselves. The physical equipment is dull and does not reflect what is desirable for children in the Foundation Stage. Provision for outdoor play is unsatisfactory. The area is barren, and is not used regularly by the reception class. The lack of a suitable outdoor play environment does not promote effectively children's physical development.

Personal social and emotional development

57. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. Children are confident with good self-esteem. They get along together right from the start and forge excellent relationships with one another. The children enjoy coming to school and have positive attitudes to learning. They learn to share and take turns, for example, when using the computer. They behave very well and are kind and friendly to each other. The children have good listening skills, and follow instructions obediently. They have very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour reflects the high expectations of the teacher and support staff. The children readily engage in discussions and conversations with the adults and each other, they are eager to answer questions. For example in a literacy game

'pass the pebble' children took turns to think of a rhyming word to match the one given by the teacher. All children responded readily and all but two managed to identify a rhyming word. When the teacher drew attention to the different meanings of 'bat' several children offered explanations, with an articulate response from one child providing an extended explanation about bats. Children move confidently about the classroom, into the hall for assemblies and PE and take the register to the office. They select activities with confidence and independence and tidy away their equipment on the music signal. Children having special educational needs make very good progress in this area of learning. By the time they start in Year 1 they will achieve the expected level and many will exceed this level.

Communication, language and literacy

58. The children have very good speaking and listening skills. The majority are very articulate, speaking confidently to adults and the rest of the class. The many opportunities provided encourage speaking aloud. Through role-play, for example, in the baby clinic, children make appointments, hold telephone conversations, discuss notes they have written and talk about the dolls as they weigh and examine the 'babies'. Very good use is made of puppets to promote speaking skills. In one lesson, small groups of children performed simple plays retelling familiar stories. They performed to an audience of children. An able girl explained to an inspector, 'It's the funny show'. She proceeded to act as narrator, telling the story very well and interacting well with the others in her group. Even shy children came into their own using puppets. They improvised well, responded spontaneously to each other's input and were applauded by the audience when they finished. All children enjoy stories. The youngest follow the 'Bearhunt' with great excitement, predicting what might happen next 'I think he looks annoyed' comments one child of the bear. 'I think the bear's going to kill them'. They join in the repetition 'stumble trip' and one boy suggests an alternative 'slip-slop, slip-slop' which they then use instead. The youngest children are still learning to listen but in the reception class children listen attentively, take turns to speak and help each other with words in the rhyming game.
59. The good focus on rhyming strings in the reception class contributes well to early reading and spelling skills. In the shared text 'My mum and dad make me laugh' all recognise the title and read this aloud. The majority join in the shared reading following the teachers' good role model for expression. Many are already achieving the early learning goals for reading. The majority know most of their initial sounds and higher attainers build simple three letter words confidently. They read fluently and accurately the early reading scheme books, as do many average readers. Lower attainers recognise many of the words and know most initial sounds. Many are good at re-telling stories and recalling from memory. The good teaching promotes enjoyment of reading and a love of books. Children have a strong desire to read. Basic writing skills are very well taught with good attention to pencil control and purposeful writing tasks. All children write their name independently and most with reasonable accuracy. The most able children write independently putting two or three sentences about Jack and the beanstalk in logical order. Their letters are accurately formed and spelling is correct. They create simple winter poems and write letters to Santa. Many others are well placed to 'take-off' with their emerging writing. Good teaching in this area of learning results in most children making good progress overall. Most will achieve the expected level and a significant proportion will exceed this by the time they start in Year 1.

Mathematical development

60. Attainment in this area of learning is above average. Most children count to 20 confidently. Many then go on to reach 30 counting accurately. The children count silently the swings of an apple on a string. They do this well to 20. Skilful questioning by the teacher engages the children in simple problem solving using fingers. They know 1 more than and 1 less than and know how to double numbers to 10. Three-quarters of the class do this accurately and confidently. The good role-play in the clinic provides opportunities for children to weigh and record their findings. Many children recognise and name basic two-dimensional shapes, such as 'square', 'circle', 'triangle' and 'rectangle'. They are also familiar with some three dimensional shapes. A good proportion continue a repeating pattern using two colours and two shapes. Higher attainers use three shapes. Lower attainers print randomly but are able to talk about their pattern in terms of colours and numbers. Most children are acquiring and developing a good mathematical vocabulary as they explore sand and water, understanding terms such as 'full' 'empty', 'more' and 'less'. Good teaching in this area builds well on every opportunity for example, counting the children at registration, putting children into pairs, counting in twos, finding out how many are left over. Number songs and rhymes are used well to reinforce mathematical skills. Very good intervention and support ensures all children are involved and understand. Most children make good gains in their learning and many achieve above the levels expected by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Attainment is above average in this area of learning. Good teaching and a carefully planned range of practical experiences help children to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the world. The children know the season is spring and the time of year is Lent. They know that the colour of spring is green. Effective questioning extends thinking skills and promotes careful investigations. For example, in one lesson, the children use magnifying glasses to look closely at a cress seed when exploring the features of living things. They know that magnifying glasses make things look bigger and that a seedling has a seed, a stem and a root. Good questioning by the teacher helps the children to realise that cut flowers have no roots; that plants need water and roots draw up. Well prepared resources are provided to enable the children to learn the parts of a flower and to label and position the parts correctly. They care for the fish and observe worms in a wormery. The children identify sources of light and match clothes appropriately for hot and cold weather. The children acquire early mapping skills as they plan their journey from home to school. The maps produced show a good understanding of how to follow a route. When using the computer most children control the mouse and move the cursor with the expected skill. They use tape recorders, and Roamers (electronically controlled toy) from time to time. They know how to make different shades of green by mixing blue and yellow, adding white for paler shades and comparing the range of shades with those on a paint chart. Regular visits to the local area, for example, the library, church, a farm and Cannock Chase extend their knowledge of the local environment.
62. Through discussion and questioning children began to understand how things have changed from long ago. They show a growing awareness of the passage of time using appropriate language such as yesterday, tomorrow, the weekend and next week. Through stories and assemblies children learn about celebrations and festivals in their own and other cultures and become familiar with stories with the Bible. A visiting speaker explained the meaning of Hannukah, for example. The children take part in fund raising activities for charities at home and abroad, developing an awareness of the needs and circumstances of those less fortunate than themselves. Many children are likely to exceed the expected levels by the time they start in Year 1.

Physical development

63. Attainment in this area of learning is above the level expected for children of this age in spite of the unsatisfactory outdoor provision. They change independently for hall lessons and outdoor games. The children jog, hop, skip and move in different directions as they warm up. They respond very well to instructions, work hard and sustain physical energetic activity well. On the playground they show good awareness of space and are already achieving the early learning goals in this respect. They use the balls with good control as they roll, bounce, throw and catch. In a movement lesson, based on Jack and the Beanstalk, they listen very well, following the instructions on the broadcast and from the teacher. They follow different pathways, moving with high knees. They show good awareness of the mood of the music contrasting the light, gentle dancing to the harp music, with the heavy, angry movements of the giant. They creep quietly, run fast and climb the beanstalk with good control and co-ordination. Effective intervention and good use of demonstration by the adults results in very good learning in this lesson. The children show good independence and work with enjoyment. Fine motor skills develop well with increasing control of brushes, pencils, scissors and crayons. Most children make good progress, showing good control and co-ordination well before they join Year 1.

Creative development

64. Standards are above average in this area of learning. There are many good opportunities for children to paint, model, draw and use collage and construction materials. The children select tools with confidence for example, when mixing blue and yellow paint to make shades of green. Supportive intervention by the classroom assistant encourages children to observe carefully and express their ideas creatively. For example, a group persevered with observational paintings of plants guided by the classroom assistant who drew their attention to the shapes and colours of leaves and flowers. The results were of a good standard, including that from a lower attainer who produced a detailed painting of hyacinths with careful attention to colour, shape and size. He was very proud of his work. The children enjoy singing and music making. Opportunities are provided for children to explore a range of percussion instruments and to develop an increasing repertoire of songs and rhymes. By the time they start in Year 1 most children will have achieved the expected levels and many will exceed these as a result of good teaching.

ENGLISH

- The standards achieved in English by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are well above average.
- Standards in speaking and listening are very good throughout the school.
- Teaching is good overall and enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress.
- The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve well against their individual targets.
- The management of English is good; this is reflected in the good improvement made to writing.

65. Standards by the age of seven are above average in reading and well above average in writing, speaking and listening. By the age of eleven standards are well above average across the board. These high standards are a result of consistently good teaching and learning. There is a whole school commitment to hard work and high standards. Basic skills are very well taught. Pupils are very well motivated by interesting and challenging tasks. They enjoy learning. Standards have improved very well throughout the school since the last inspection. High standards are borne out by the SATs results which were above average in English by eleven years of age and the standards achieved by seven year olds were very high in reading and well above average in writing. Results in reading were amongst the top five per cent nationally. Pupils make consistently good progress throughout the school and there is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. The very good provision for pupils with special educational needs ensures that support is well targeted and tasks are matched appropriately to pupils' needs. As a result they make good progress towards their targets in their individual education plans.
66. Since the previous inspection the National Literacy Strategy has been implemented very successfully and resources improved to support this. The school's scheme of work ensures a balance of coverage and careful progress of skills. The introduction of strategies such as additional literacy support and booster classes and the improved resources such as a new reading scheme, better library provision and writing scheme for Years 3 to 6, together with the introduction of target setting in writing are among the more recent improvements contributing to high standards. Such initiatives are supporting the good quality teaching and learning that are resulting in the very good standards. The school is proud of the fact that its performance in SATs places it in the top 25 per cent of schools in the county
67. Speaking and listening skills are well above average throughout the school. Pupils make very good gains in learning because teachers provide rich opportunities for pupils to engage in extended conversations. Effective questioning is used consistently by teachers to extend pupils' understanding and use of English, promoting confidence in speaking aloud. Pupils are encouraged to express ideas and opinions about texts used in literacy hours. In a Year 2 class assembly pupils speak aloud clearly and confidently to a large audience. They recite an extended poem about 'Zacchaeus' with good expression. Individually they share prayers for forgiveness, which they have written and join in the Lord's Prayer. They speak articulately with clarity and expression. Teachers provide good role models for speaking aloud. Older pupils often draw on the text in the literacy hours to support their ideas. For example in a Year 5 lesson when discussing 'The Highwayman' pupils made good suggestions in discussing what the poem was about. They explored the motivation of characters and make good inferences with appropriate guidance from the teacher, using the text well. Role-play, debated and discussion contributed effectively to pupils' progress in speaking and listening skills.
68. Pupils attain above average standards in reading by the age of seven and well above average by the age of eleven. Average attaining pupils and many lower attaining pupils in Year 2 have a secure understanding of initial sounds, helping them to tackle unfamiliar words with confidence. Whilst lower attainers lack the fluency and expression of higher attaining readers, who use punctuation for effect in their reading, reading confidently and with good understanding, they nevertheless employ several strategies including phonic skills to help them read. Older pupils and higher attaining younger pupils are eager to discuss their reading and express their preferences. They have a good knowledge of authors and are familiar with a wide range of reading, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry books. For example, Year 2 readers discussed favourite authors such as J. K. Rowling, Jacqueline Wilson and Dick King-Smith. They identified non-fiction interests such as learning about the planets and the solar system. Many pupils are borrowers at local libraries and most have a good selection to choose from at home. This helps develop wide range reading habits. The recently improved library facility in school provides a range of fiction and non-fiction resources, although the quantity of books is not very extensive. Plans are in hand to develop the use of the library for private study and research and to promote more widely the use of library skills, which at present are underdeveloped for many pupils. The use of reading diaries is inconsistent.

Few include diagnostic information to help pupils improve their skills. In the best practice parents, pupils, teachers and support staff comment in readers' diaries. Assessment and recording of reading has been identified by the school as an area for development. This would be a useful step to take. There is an increasing focus on language in other areas of the curriculum. This is helping to reinforce these important skills and contribute well to pupils' confidence in reading.

69. Standards in writing are well above average by the age of seven and the age of eleven. The very good standards are a result of the careful targeting of writing following analysis of earlier assessment information and also of good and very good teaching which motivates pupils to learn. Very good links are made to other areas of the curriculum and teachers present pupils with challenging, exciting and purposeful writing experiences. For example pupils in Year 2 write accounts of the lives of famous people long ago such as Grace Darling and Florence Nightingale. They write prayers of forgiveness and in geography compare life in St. Lucia with life in England finding out about food, school life and the landscapes. They produce an informative leaflet on electricity with instructions for making a circuit, produce non-fiction information about 'owls' and create a glossary of scientific terms. There is a very good focus on extended story writing. Pupils create exciting openings to stories such as this from a pupils in Year 6 'It was a cold winters day – the type of day when the frost on the window sill would send a little shiver down the back of your spine - such a minuscule shiver which would make the day much more interesting...' Pupils choose exciting vocabulary often making use of dictionaries in their search for powerful language. Punctuation is used accurately for additional effect. Good descriptions abound in their writing. Year 6 pupils write poetry in various forms with confidence and understanding. A poem about the sky for instance used some very good imagery, "...a space expander, a cloud demander, a flying sea..." shows imaginative use of language and understanding of the poetry form. Pupils in Year 6 are very aware of the audience for whom they are writing. A humorous letter of thanks to a pig for example began, "Dear Pet Pig, thank you for the packet of mud. How did you guess brown was my favourite colour?" Writing alternative versions of fairy tales in the first person captures the readers attention from the start, "I bet you've heard of Little Red Riding Hood, but I bet you haven't heard the proper story..." Pupils take great pride in their writing and enjoy sharing it with others in the class. They are confident when appraising each other's work and their critical analysis helps them refine their writing.
70. Pupils write for an increasing range of purposes as they move through the school. In Year 2 for example, they write stories, prayers, descriptive writing, poetry and non-fiction writing such as instructions for making sandwiches. By Year 6, this has extended to include a wide range of poetry forms, letters, book reviews, formal accounts, debates, play-scripts and newspaper reports. Standards of handwriting and presentation are good throughout the school for the majority of pupils. Skills are developed carefully and systematically so that pupils have developed a fluent cursive style by the time they leave the school. Good attention is given to punctuation, grammar and spelling strategies ensuring good standards in these areas. The school is not complacent having included spelling and handwriting within the next steps for development. Work is regularly marked but not all teachers identify areas for improvement. Individual targets are set following termly levelling of writing. Although some teachers refer to these when marking the practice is not consistent. Incorporating target setting within the marking process consistently across the school would further pupils' knowledge of their own learning.
71. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good with particular strengths in writing and speaking and listening. Pupils thoroughly enjoy their English lessons and relationships during collaborative work are excellent. English lessons make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although there are missed opportunities to extend pupils' multicultural awareness for example, when explaining 'rap' poetry in Year 3 there was little mention of African-American roots.
72. Teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school. Often it is very good. Most teachers share learning objectives at the start of lessons so that pupils are clear about what they have to do. Confident, lively teaching is reflected in the quality of pupils' work. The brisk pace to lessons ensures pupils work hard and cover a good amount of work. Basic skills are very well taught ensuring pupils build systematically on their learning. Higher attainers are well challenged through interesting and demanding tasks. There is good attention to extending pupils writing in a variety of forms. Pupils have opportunities to develop word processing and research skills through the use of computers but there is room for further development in the use of ICT to support learning in English.

73. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Well-planned activities and well-targeted use of additional support ensures all pupils understand and participate fully in lessons. The good attention to inclusion results in many of these pupils achieving well and making good progress towards their targets.
74. English is well managed by the co-ordinator who gives good support to colleagues. The next steps for development include further development of assessment and the use of assessment information and target setting. The school has set realistic targets based on assessment data for end of Year 6 tests that predict a broadly average profile. In looking at the work completed so far, inspectors are of the view that these targets are too cautious and that an above average proportion are capable of attaining the expected level 4. Furthermore, that a much higher proportion than seen nationally are capable of attaining at the higher level 5 in English. The development of the library including resources and provision for pupils' private study has implications for learning across all areas of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

- Standards in mathematics show a good, improving picture.
- Standards are well above average at the ages of seven and eleven years.
- Teaching and learning are both good.
- Very good use is made of learning support assistants to provide well-targeted support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Good management ensures a clear direction for the subject but has yet to find ways to share the very good and excellent teaching practice that exists to raise standards even higher.
- There is insufficient planned use of information and communication technology to aid pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge development.
- Assessment opportunities need fine tuning, enabling individual pupil's progress to be available at a glance.

75. There has been an upward trend in the school's SATs results since the last inspection, with the latest results in May 2001 showing significant improvement over four years, particularly in the proportion of pupils who are now attaining the higher levels in both Year 2 and Year 6.
76. Standards in mathematics are well above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is clearly indicated in the work pupils undertaken in lessons and from the sample of work that inspectors' scrutinised. The maintenance of high standards has largely been achieved by good leadership, consistently good teaching, and by improving the good quality of teachers' planning based on the very effective use of national guidelines linked to the monitoring of pupils' progress. Teachers clearly identify what they want pupils to learn, and this is always shared with the class at the beginnings of lessons. The subject enjoys a high profile throughout the school with many informative displays, which include clear links with other subject areas, such as geography, where data was collected about traffic movements outside school.
77. Since the previous inspection the school has rightly focused greater attention on practical problem solving. Most homework contains a real life problem for pupils to solve, thus suitably supporting pupils' understanding of numeracy to a higher level. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing their calculation skills in relation to their abilities. This is because teachers plan work for them, and teaching assistants give them very good support. They are given praise and encouragement to raise their self esteem. For example, in a Year 2 lesson involving counting forwards and backwards in nines using a system that incorporated counting first in tens, then taking one off. Special educational needs' pupils were encouraged to share their work with the rest of the class in the discussion at the end of the lesson. The support given by the teaching assistant was of very high quality. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls throughout the school.
78. At the start of each lesson, well-planned quick thinking sessions incorporating a range of numerical skills enhances pupils' enjoyment, motivation and interest. For example in Year 4, the brisk, accurate answers clearly consolidated pupils' understanding of multiplication tables. The firm manner and high expectations, coupled with a subtle humour as pupils gave the 'thumbs up' or 'thumbs down' to a range of answers certainly enriched learning at the highest levels. The many strategies that pupils use to find the correct answers are a very strong feature of such lessons, enabling all to share and celebrate success. Occasionally, some teachers were observed

to rush this opening session as they tried to set a brisk pace and in so doing were keen to find answers to problems rather than explore and extend pupils' thinking strategies.

79. Pupils enter full time education with broadly average standards in mathematics. They make a good start in the reception class, and this is built upon throughout Year 1 and, by the time they are seven years of age, pupils are achieving very well. Teachers know their children well and they have formed very good relationships with them. The good teaching in a Year 1 lessons, enabled pupils to accurately record addition and subtraction problems relating to number patterns. The reporting session at the end of the lesson suitably enhanced pupils' speaking and listening skills, when pupils described how they had arrived at their answer. Teachers make very good use of a variety of visual and practical resources. This has a positive effect on pupils' very good learning and the ability to think numerically. Teachers make effective, good use of well-displayed mathematical vocabulary that forms part of the numeracy corner found in all classrooms. The good quality teaching that takes place in Year 1 and Year 2 has a very positive impact on the high standards observed in the upper part of the school. Close scrutiny of pupils' work in the present Year 2, shows it to be of the same good quality as elsewhere in Key Stage 1.
80. Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall. The quality of teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to excellent. Two of the lessons were of very good quality and this leads to pupils rapidly learning a range of challenging numeracy skills. As a result of very good and excellent teaching, pupils' behaviour is very good, most working with the minimum of supervision and producing a range of independent work of accurate quality. In the excellent lesson observed, the teacher's high levels of energy and enthusiasm coupled with her very confident subject knowledge, led to high levels of pupil motivation. For them, learning was fun and well focused. Pupils' written work was also of very high quality. The range of resources, including an overhead projector, dice, and mathematical vocabulary displayed in the numeracy area had a very positive impact on the high levels of learning for all pupils. Higher attaining pupils were suitably challenged to devise and record their own solutions to problems, lower attaining pupils were very well supported by confident learning support assistants who provided the necessary encouragement. In the satisfactory lesson observed, the initial 'pacey' mental session was followed by a slowing of pace and a lack of sustained challenge for the higher attaining pupils, who undertake the same work as others before moving on to the planned extension work. This invariably slows progress and pupils begin to lose concentration. The suitable use of information and communication technology programs to enhance learning in Year 5 supports learning well, for example pupils presenting work on a 'number wall' in a confident manner. Nevertheless, the planned use of ICT to support ongoing numeracy skills is, at best, satisfactory. This is very evident when reviewing pupils' work and examining displays related to data handling.
81. The subject is well managed by the deputy headteacher, who took up the post last September. She has clearly identified the subject's strengths and areas for development using available data. The school is successfully developing the use of non-statutory tests to track pupils' progress from Year 2 to Year 6. Nevertheless, the school is aware of the need to evaluate the present assessment systems to give a clearer, shared focus in order to raise standards still higher. The sharing of individual targets with pupils, at present displayed in the front of workbooks, to move their learning forward requires greater clarity and focus. In all classes resources are accessible, of good quality and the range available is appropriate to the needs of all pupils.

SCIENCE

- Standards are above average at both key stages.
- There has been good improvement since last inspection.
- Teaching throughout the school is good and enables pupils of all abilities to learn successfully
- Good attention is paid to all aspects of the science curriculum.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to assist pupils' scientific work.

82. Pupils' attainment is above average by the ages of seven and eleven, and they make good progress throughout the school. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, nor between different groups of pupils. At the time of the school's previous inspection standards were judged to be average, and the school has therefore made good improvement since then. Factors that contribute to these standards, include good teaching throughout the school, good implementation of all aspects of the curriculum, including scientific enquiry, and very good working relationships, both between teachers and pupils, and amongst the pupils.

83. By the age of seven pupils have developed a good understanding of how to carry out investigations, and how to ensure that their tests are fair. The topics they have covered are well chosen, and their practical nature is appealing to pupils of all abilities. In Year 2, for example, pupils learn about forces, and investigate things which can be pushed and pulled in the classroom. Their teacher, in marking their work, made helpful comments, and praised them appropriately, such as when she wrote “Good predicting; what have you found out?” There is also good development of pupils’ scientific language. When teachers talk to pupils they use correct scientific language, and they expect them to use it too, in discussing their work. Such activities make a good contribution to the development of pupils’ basic language skills. The recording of results, for instance by the use of graphs, also makes a good contribution to pupils’ basic numeracy skills.
84. At the end of Year 6 pupils can identify key factors in fair testing, and base predictions on their scientific knowledge and understanding. The majority of pupils are good at applying this knowledge to a variety of situations. In work on the properties of materials, for instance, pupils can identify circumstances when changes can occur, such as when materials are heated, cooled or mixed. By this time they have experienced a broad range of activities, which systematically cover all aspects of the science curriculum.
85. Teaching is good at all stages. Teachers generally have good knowledge of the subject, which enables them to explain concepts clearly, and to promote good gains in learning for pupils of all abilities. Gifted and talented pupils, and those with special educational needs, are fully included in the work, and appropriately challenged and extended. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils learnt about shadows. The teacher managed the class very well and ensured that everyone was fully involved. In discussing the work she asked them what they know, and how the methods they used helped them to confirm their predictions about the relationship between the size of the shadow and the distance from the light-source. She tailored her questions well to suit the wide range of abilities in the class. Very good teaching such as this motivates the pupils very well and it is evident that they find the work interesting and enjoyable.
86. Throughout the school pupils show very good attitudes. They work well in groups and pairs, sharing and co-operating well. This kind of work makes a good contribution to pupils’ social development, while the discussion and questioning helps them develop their basic literacy skills. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils planted sunflower seeds. They were fascinated by the idea of how tall their sunflowers might grow, and joined in enthusiastically in a discussion of what plants need in order to grow. The teacher gave them good opportunities to predict, and she, and the support assistants involved, were all good at fostering discussion. The relationships amongst pupils were clearly excellent as they shared their ideas.
87. These good aspects of teaching all contribute towards the high standards achieved, but the use of ICT to support learning is an area which is in need of development. At present there are many occasions when teachers do not take advantage of the computer to make a worthwhile contribution to the lesson. There is a need to raise teachers’ awareness of the use of ICT, so as to improve standards further.
88. The headteacher has undertaken the management role since the previous co-ordinator left, and has ensured that the subject is given appropriate priority. He has carried out a curriculum audit, and has monitored teaching in every class, with feedback given after classroom observation. A successful Science Day was held last year, with the object of making science enjoyable and exciting. The involvement of a visiting drama group was very effective, and very much enjoyed by the pupils. In view of this success another similar day is planned for this year. The target setting to support individual achievement in literacy and numeracy is not extended to science work, and this is a missed opportunity. The targets agreed with the LEA for science lack ambition and although realistic could be revised upwards. The school has a satisfactory range of resources to support the curriculum, and they are of satisfactory quality. They are safely stored in a convenient location, and regularly updated and renewed. The school’s accommodation is satisfactory overall, but in the older classes space is rather restricted when pupils are engaged in practical activities.

ART AND DESIGN

- Standards are above average.
- All aspects of the art and design curriculum are well promoted.
- Good teaching throughout the school ensures that pupils learn very well.
- A rich curriculum provides a good combination of skills development and knowledge of famous artists
- The use of ICT is under-developed in art

89. By the time they reach the ends of years 2 and 6 pupils' levels of attainment are above those found nationally. At the school's previous inspection standards were found to be average, and so there has been good improvement since then.
90. Throughout the school pupils are given a good range of activities, which develop their art and design skills systematically. There is a good combination of practical work, and study of the work of famous artists. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and evaluate their work, and to use correct art and design language. Lessons seen in both key stages were well taught, and teachers generally make them enjoyable and challenging for all their pupils. In the infant classes pupils learn to share ideas, by investigating a range of materials and processes. In a Year 1 lesson seen during the inspection pupils studied the shape, colour and form of different vegetables, and then made collage repeat patterns. They worked very well in pairs, discussing their ideas and many were proud of the work they produced. There was a very good working atmosphere, and a lively pace of work was maintained throughout the lesson. The class teacher and two support assistants all worked well to support pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs who were fully included in the work.
91. The teaching of art and design is good throughout the school. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject, and their teaching of basic art skills is very good. They manage their pupils very well, so that they are kept on task, and use the time very well. In a Year 3 lesson pupils were looking at everyday signs, and the teacher skilfully merged information about the work of Andy Warhol and Paul Klee with the teaching of collage and painting skills. There was great amusement in the class when they tried to follow instructions on dance steps for the tango! The very good quality teaching ensured that pupils' interest and concentration were maximised throughout, and that they worked as independently as possible.
92. In all parts of the school art displays contribute well to an attractive visual environment. These displays are of high quality and show the broad and exciting curriculum which is provided. Through their study of the work of famous artists from around the world pupils learn about a variety of cultures, and the spiritual element is fostered through a developing appreciation of the place of art in Christianity, as well as in other religions. Pupils have taken part in an annual art workshop in Lichfield cathedral. At present computers are not used sufficiently to support the work, although examples were seen of the use of graphics software to produce computer-generated pictures.
93. The subject is effectively managed, and resources well organised. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject and monitors standards by looking at pupils' work displayed around the school. The assessment of art and design is largely informal, but self evaluation sheets have been introduced which give pupils the opportunity to record their feelings about their work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is good development of all aspects of the design process • Pupils are well taught and very well managed. • Pupils show positive attitudes to learning. • The work is accessible to pupils of all abilities. • There is a need to integrate ICT better into activities. |
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94. At the ages of 7 and 11, pupils attain average standards. During the inspection it was not possible to see any lessons taught, but evidence was gathered from other sources, such as pupils' earlier work, displays around the school, and discussions with teachers and pupils. All these confirmed that standards are satisfactory. The school has maintained standards at this level since the time of the previous inspection.
95. Pupils in all classes had displays that showed their work in design and technology. A feature of much of the work is the good development of the whole process of designing, making and evaluating. Discussion with Year 6 pupils shows that they have a good understanding of the importance of thinking about the purpose of objects, and which materials will meet that purpose best. In designing a pair of slippers, for instance, they stress the importance of knowing whether they were for a child, a teenager, or an elderly person. The designs stood up to scrutiny well and the finished products were of good quality and showed pupils' individuality. Pupils show good attitudes to the subject and told inspectors they like DT!. The good range of practical activities is accessible to pupils of all abilities, and makes a good contribution to their social development.

96. Evidence from pupils' work showed that the use of ICT to support learning in DT is underdeveloped. Whilst the recommendations of the official guidelines followed by the school provide many examples of ways of using the computer, teachers are not at present making use of these suggestions. Assessment sheets provided by the same guidelines are used to record pupils' attainment at the end of the year but do not feed forward into planning.
97. Previous work also shows that teachers are good at choosing interesting activities, which will be equally appealing to girls and boys, and to pupils of all abilities. In a topic on musical instruments for example, Year 5 pupils had designed their own percussion instruments. They evaluated them well, taking on board appearance as well as more technical considerations. For example, commenting on practical aspects, such as how to attach elastic bands securely to make strings that would be both robust and tuneful.
98. The subject is effectively managed, but is at a transitional stage. The head-teacher is temporarily co-ordinating the subject, but with a view to a new member of staff taking over the role in the near future. There is a satisfactory range of resources, which are well organised, with due regard to safety issues.

GEOGRAPHY

- Standards are above average at all ages and this picture is much the same as when the school was inspected before.
- Boys and girls of all ages make good progress in geography.
- The curriculum for geography is exciting and enables pupils to contrast and compare a range of places. However links to the multi-cultural society of Britain today are less well fostered when considering some of the issues; this is a missed opportunity.
- The use of ICT to support pupils' geographical studies is insufficient.
- The co-ordinator is giving effective leadership but has yet to monitor the standards being achieved in geography and this is the next step for development.

99. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. These good standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils across the school, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in geography.
100. Pupils make good progress in geography, their highly developed writing skills helps them to record a good amount of what they learn about in geography and they achieve well. For example, Year 4 pupils study India to find out more about its climate, economy and living conditions, so that they can compare them to their own locality and understand how influences such as climate affect people's way of life. In a lesson observed, effective teaching successfully introduced a collection of books to be used by pupils to research their findings, however the use of the computer to help bring the lesson alive was not possible as the class does not have access to the Internet. The well-planned use of an appropriate video provided a very good springboard that successfully motivated pupils' interest. The use of taped background music from India created a very positive learning atmosphere. Higher attaining pupils successfully completed accurate lists of similar and dissimilar geographical facts between India and Lichfield. Pupils' enthusiasm was very evident during the sharing of discoveries with their friends. A very attractive wall display on India complemented the activity. However, there were some missed opportunities to develop the multi-cultural aspect, including the difference between religions. In Year 5, pupils study the rain cycle and world climate, the need for fresh water and the effect on a village without clean water. A pupil's journey to school enhances map work, and well-known landmarks are correctly located on a map. They have a good understanding of environmental issues through these traffic surveys, and carefully consider how traffic problems could be solved. A very detailed, clear map of the school is clearly labelled, successfully developing pupils' understanding of a plan view. They carry out investigative work about the weather through more in depth studies of specific areas of the world, such as Europe and India.
101. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed their geography skills well. Pupils further develop their understanding of the water cycle when related to river systems and soil erosion. The school is aware of the need to develop the regular use of ICT to support pupils learning and widen the opportunities. Most topics have CD-ROM of information for pupils to interrogate. However, the opportunity to use the additional resources is very limited.

102. Teachers have a good knowledge of geography, and teaching is at least good. This results in pupils being interested in the subject and most learn at a good pace. In Year 1, pupils' very good speaking and listening skills contribute successfully as they confidently use a range of terms, for example *buildings, cave, sand and field*, to describe features before recording them on a map. Higher attaining pupils, noticing the spaced horizontal and vertical lines, successfully interpreted them as a *grid feature*, reading letters and numbers at the side of the map to locate features. Most of the work they undertake at this young age is of a practical nature, and this successfully develops their knowledge of their place in the world. They understand which countries make up the British Isles and use atlases to locate and name major cities. Basic skills for studying geography are developed by pupils being given good opportunities to collect data about the local area of Lichfield and conduct surveys, for example to assess the impact of traffic.
103. The subject is led by a temporary teacher working two days each week. Nevertheless, she is providing effective leadership and has identified areas for improvement, including the planned use of ICT, to underpin geographical skills. The school has adopted the nationally agreed guidelines for the subject, and this ensures that pupils will receive good coverage of the programmes of study for geography on a two year rolling programme. The management of geography is satisfactory. Although the co-ordinator sees class teachers' planning and periodically checks this against the scheme of work, no full monitoring role of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' work have been established with a view to raising the present standards higher. This now needs to be built into the school's monitoring and evaluation practice.

HISTORY

- Standards are above average at seven and eleven years
- Teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress
- The use of ICT to support pupils' historical research in particular is under-developed.

104. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This maintains the standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities make good gains in their learning throughout the school, this being suitably enhanced by pupils' very confident speaking and listening skills, as observed in Year 6. Enthusiastic teaching, including the good use of resources and the pupils' very good levels of enthusiasm, interest and involvement, reflect the subject's high profile throughout the school.
105. By the age of seven, pupils show a developing sense of chronology by using terms concerned with the passing of time, and by recognising ways in which their own lives differ from the lives of people in the past in their comparison of toys, games and seaside holidays past and present. Pupils are familiar with prominent people and significant events from the past, including Grace Darling. However, their written work shows limited evidence of the consequence of these events on our lives today. In Year 3, pupils understand that the past can be divided into different periods of time such as Anglo-Saxons. They know that archaeological evidence provides clues to life at those times. The use of appropriate challenging questions – "What, when, why?" – in relation to the discoveries made enhances pupils' learning at appropriate levels. By Year 6, pupils have developed good research skills, aided by their confident reading and writing ability. Pupils, using a range of material from the 'Beatles' Age', realise the importance of using and comparing different sources of information to build up a picture of the past. For example, the use of vinyl records compared with today's very compact CDs. Pupils are developing an awareness of recent history and how it has affected life today. However, opportunities to undertake independent studies are limited.
106. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are well prepared and introduced with clear targets that are shared with pupils so they understand the purpose of the lesson. However in Year 6, where pupils were identifying marketing and design with the arrival of 'The Beatles' and 'Pop Music', insufficient focus was given to the pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, to guide them into undertaking their own research, resulting in some lack of pace. In most lessons, pupils are questioned well and speaking and listening skills are enhanced during planned opportunities to give and discuss opinions. The carefully planned Year 3 lesson, including reading an extract from 'Beowulf' clearly illustrated to pupils how important people were buried during Anglo-Saxon times. Pupils show a strong interest in history, particularly when lessons are well prepared and resourced. They concentrate well and work co-operatively in groups, sharing ideas and tasks, which contribute to effective learning for all pupils.

107. The school is aware of the need to develop greater links with literacy, in order that pupils can practise and develop their literacy skills through research and writing for a range of audiences. Written accounts by pupils in Year 5 reflecting life in Victorian times show a good grasp of the facts and a clear understanding of life at that time. Nevertheless, this does not feature prominently throughout the school. Some pupils' research topics using CD-ROM, but the use of ICT is under-developed.
108. There is now a detailed scheme of work for history that follows national guidelines, and this helps to ensure continuity and progression in learning. Good use is made of historical artefacts and local buildings to enhance pupils' understanding of the past and present.
109. The subject co-ordinator is well organised and knowledgeable. Although she monitors teachers' planning and checks this against the scheme of work, no detailed monitoring of teaching quality has taken place. This is limiting the effect of the role of the co-ordinator on improving standards uniformly across the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- Standards are average overall.
- All areas of the curriculum covered, however teachers' confidence in using ICT across the curriculum is variable and this leads to inconsistencies in approaches and the quality of experiences provided.
- There is too much outdated equipment, which causes 'crashes' and is unsuitable for running modern software.
- The school is falling behind other schools in the quality of its provision.

110. Pupils' attainment at the ends of years 2 and 6 is broadly average, but there are areas of weakness which are in need of development. Since the school's last inspection satisfactory standards have just about been maintained overall. At present the school is in a transitional stage between classroom-based computers, and a new ICT suite. This, however, is not the sole cause of weaknesses, and even when the new facilities are fully in use there will be shortfalls in its size that will mean some classes can only be taught in two groups. There is still the need for managers and governors to look carefully at the school's approach to ICT whilst pressing ahead with the action plan already in place. Staff training has been undertaken but there is still more to be done, not least to ensure that new staff members are fully up to speed. Assessment is at an early stage of development; most teachers have a shared understanding about what needs to be assessed but pupils' learning is not currently tracked or evaluated at sufficiently regular intervals to identify those who need more practice as opposed to those who need to refine and/or extend their skills further.
111. By the age of 7 pupils have learnt the basics of controlling the computer by means of the keyboard and mouse. They have had experience of basic operations such as word processing and simple graphics, and have had some experience of how the computer can be used to find information. Their experiences in these areas are, however, often fragmentary, as they often have to wait for turns, with long gaps between experiences.
112. At the age of 11 pupils have continued to develop their understanding of the different aspects of ICT, but again their experiences do not build into a broad curriculum, and the school's lack of computers, both in terms of quality and quantity, once again hampers better progress. In a Year 5 lesson, for example, pupils were learning about spreadsheets. Because it was difficult to see the computer screen, the teacher went through the basic operations of entering formulae into the spreadsheet, on a flipchart. Although the lesson was well taught, the fact that it could not be done at first hand on the computer restricted the learning for most pupils. When they later went on to enter their own data, they again had to wait their turns on one of the two computers available. Throughout the school pupils show positive attitudes to ICT, many have computers at home, and are confident in basic operations.
113. In lessons seen during the inspection, at both key stages, many opportunities were missed to make use of the computers to support work in different subjects. The contribution of electronic mail, for instance, to learning, in both basic literacy skills and across the curriculum, is underdeveloped. In the great majority of lessons seen the computers were unused, and, often, not switched on. There were many occasions when the use of the computer would have greatly contributed to the quality of learning in the lesson, but nevertheless this benefit was unrealised. The issue of teachers' confidence in integrating ICT into their work across the curriculum is an urgent one for the school. Some training has been given, but the need for further development is still there. When the new ICT suite is fully operational it cannot be properly used unless teachers are confident and aware of opportunities.

114. The school also needs to develop a more consistent approach to the teaching of ICT. The nationally recommended guidelines have been adopted, and these should now form the basis of the way in which teachers work, both in the development of ICT skills, and in its use across the curriculum. The provision of more up-to-date hardware and software should also be given priority. The school's current plans for the new ICT suite may well prove insufficient to meet its needs, and careful monitoring will be necessary. Maximum use of this valuable new resource will be necessary to ensure that all pupils have equal access, and that all aspects of the curriculum are given adequate coverage.
115. The aspect of the curriculum covering making things happen through computer control is inconsistent at present. Whilst pupils are given experiences which contribute to this area, these do not give sufficient depth of understanding, nor do they develop the pupils' skills, knowledge or understanding in a systematic way. Teachers' confidence in dealing with this aspect of the curriculum is in need of development, in line with the strategies suggested in the official guidelines.
116. The subject is effectively managed by the headteacher, and many developments have been carried through. The policy and scheme of work for the subject have been in place since 2000, and are due to be reviewed in 2002/3.

MUSIC

- At the age of seven years, pupils attain above average standards in music and well above average standards at eleven years. This demonstrates very good learning overall accelerated in the junior classes because of very good specialist teaching.
- Music makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils sing joyfully and tunefully in assemblies.
- The scheme of work provides rich musical experience with good balanced coverage across the whole music curriculum.
- The very good and at times excellent teaching by the music specialist motivates pupils very well. They enjoy music.
- There has been very good improvement since the last inspection.

117. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2 and well above average at the end of Year 6. The very good improvement since the last inspection is largely due to the very good quality teaching by the music specialist, the well-balanced curriculum, which provides very good coverage of all elements of music and the rich experience, planned. As a result pupils are well challenged, highly motivated and participate with enthusiasm and joy. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress as they move through the school. Instrumental tuition for the flute, together with choir and recorder groups has a positive impact upon the standards of the most able in particular. Those pupils achieve very well, developing a love of music.
118. Younger pupils sing a wide range of songs from memory. They sing sweetly and tunefully assisted by a visiting pianist. In a Year 2 assembly pupils perform confidently to an audience. In Year 1 and 2 play simple rhythms using a range of untuned percussion instruments. They identify long and short notes using hand signals and perform simple compositions following a series of symbols. They handle instruments with care and respect. Year 2 pupils learn the basics of recorder playing. By the age of eleven pupils sing tunefully with clear diction and tonal quality. They sing in three-part harmony with confidence and very good expression. The teacher's enthusiasm and excitement is conveyed to the pupils as they sing "Engine Engine Number 9" in three parts and move to the rhythm keeping very good time. Pupils in the school choir sing in several parts. They convey feelings and mood through their singing. In all lessons pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the opportunity to listen and appraise music, to develop rhythm national average notation, to sing and to use tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments to compositions. They build very well on these skills inspired by exciting teaching. Listening skills are very good. Pupils listen in a purposeful and structured way. Year 5 pupils, for example, confidently matched several pieces of music to the mood and the majority could identify a requiem, a national anthem, lullaby and a pastoral piece. Listening to the French national anthem for example, one boy said 'It sounds quite important – the trumpet'. 'Like they just won the war' said another. Pupils could explain the meaning of pastoral and knew that a requiem was music for the dead. Pupils' use written notation confidently to compose tunes and knew how to record in their music books.

119. The curriculum ensures good balanced coverage of the programme of study. Class teachers support the specialist teacher well in lessons and learn much about the teaching of music. Self evaluation skills are systematically developed so that by the time they are eleven pupils critically appraise their own and others performance with confidence and maturity. This enables them to improve and is another reason why standards are high. Very good links to literacy increases pupils' musical vocabulary very well, most pupils having a good understanding of terms such as crescendo, diminuendo and dynamics. Pupils' knowledge of the pentatonic scale how to record music and different time signatures contributes effectively to skills in numeracy. The brisk pace and very well planned challenging tasks, together with the expertise and high expectations of the music specialist are characteristics of the very good teaching seen and reasons why learning is very good overall. The very good attention to ensuring all pupils are fully involved in lessons and are well supported results in higher attainers and pupils with special educational needs achieving very well. The thorough planning identifies enough opportunities for computers to support learning in music.
120. Music is not included in the current school development plan because the school has had to concentrate on literacy and numeracy. Although these has been no recent training, teachers' presence and involvement in music in music lessons led by the music specialist has given them very good guidance and support. Positive steps have been taken to develop assessment in music following the national guidance.
121. Whilst music is satisfactory resourced the lack of multicultural instruments limits opportunities to extend pupils' experience of the more unusual instruments from other countries. All pupils have the opportunity to participate in concerts, class assemblies and other performances throughout the year. For example, pupils sing in the Catholic Church for services. They perform at Lichfield's Art Festival, sing in Lichfield to raise money for charity and several pupils are involved in choirs and an orchestra outside the school. Extra curricular activities make a good contribution to music with many pupils belonging to the choir and recorder groups. The valuable contribution of parents in helping with the choir and playing the guitar is much appreciated by the school. Music is an important part of school life for many pupils. It plays a valuable role in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and in their personal development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Standards in PE are average in Years 2 and 6.
- The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in gymnastics and results in pupils achieving well in many lessons.
- Extra-curricular activities make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development; parents give good support with after school clubs.
- As a result of training for all staff and monitoring of teachers by the headteacher and LEA advisor, standards in gymnastics have improved overall. This is enhanced by new gymnastic equipment.
- Pupils make good progress in swimming so that by Year 6 all pupils are able to swim at least the required length.

122. Standards in PE are average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 with some strengths in gymnastics. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and in gymnastics standards have improved. This is a result of the good training received, the purchase of high quality equipment for gymnastics and the monitoring of teaching undertaken by the headteacher and school advisor. Over their time in school pupils develop confidence self discipline and other personal qualities as well as acquiring skills and knowledge in physical education. The younger children quickly develop confidence and independence, sustaining energetic activity well and sharing good physical awareness. In Years 1 and 2 pupils' build steadily on these early skills in gymnastics, dance and games. This continues in Years 3 to 6 where pupils achieve well in many lessons, particularly in gymnastics and swimming, where they attain good standards and greatly improved in gymnastics since the last inspection. In other aspects of PE pupils attain average standards. Teachers ensure all pupils participate fully and support staff are well deployed to enable pupils with special educational needs to achieve as well as others in the class.
123. By the age of seven pupils climb, balance, slide and roll on the apparatus. Skills are well developed and pupils show good control and co-ordination, particularly when jumping off the apparatus. They combine floor and apparatus work into a simple sequence, with good imagination in many cases. Higher attaining pupils link their sequence of movements smoothly and thoughtfully. In games pupils throw and catch a ball with reasonable skill but are less adept at sending or catching a bounced ball.

124. By the age of eleven pupils show good control and co-ordination in gymnastics. They sustain energetic activity well and work at a good level refining their sequence of shapes and balances, linking movements successfully and smoothly. Pupils have a good understanding of games such as rounders but whilst higher attainers strike the ball accurately a significant proportion still have not mastered control of the rounders baton or good hand-eye co-ordination. Skills in tennis are at the level expected but no one shows a particular talent for the game. Pupils are confident and willing to perform in front of their peers. They have well developed skills in self and peer evaluation which enables them to refine their performance. This is a very positive feature of most lessons. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have regular swimming lessons working towards the local authority's swimming swards. They make good progress so that by the end of Year 6 all pupils are able to swim with many at the more advanced levels.
125. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory. In gymnastics and swimming it is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The good teaching is characterised by the teacher's high expectations, interesting and challenging tasks which motivate pupils well and result in a high level of enjoyment in lessons. Pupils are keen to participate and behave well because lessons proceed at a brisk pace and pupils are very involved throughout. Skills are carefully taught and systematically developed. Pupils develop a good sense of teamwork co-operating well and supporting each other. Teachers consider the needs of individual pupils, targeting support appropriately to enable pupils with special educational needs to succeed. Teachers are confident in their own knowledge. They make good use of demonstration and pupils' self evaluation which results in pupils having a good knowledge of their own learning and improving skills through practice. Where teaching is less effective tasks are undemanding and the pace is slow with pupils spending too long waiting for their turn. Inappropriate dress including outdoor shoes and coats in a games lesson does not promote high standards. There are missed opportunities to highlight the impact of exercise on the body, linking PE to science, occasionally the teacher's lack of confidence shows as she reads from the planning sheet held throughout the lesson. Although pupils take responsibility for moving apparatus and do so sensibly, rules for carrying equipment are not always clearly established. For example, one boy struggled to carry a floor mat on his own in a Year 2 lesson.
126. The management of the subject is satisfactory. A newly appointed teacher under the guidance of the headteacher has recently taken on responsibility for the subject. The implementation of the national guidance for PE ensures appropriate coverage and progression. Resources are satisfactory, with good resources in gymnastics, which are contributing to improving standards. Pupils compete regularly and often very successfully against other schools in football, netball, swimming, cross-country, cricket, athletics and rounders. They are particularly proud of their success in cross-country. The oldest pupils participate in a residential experience including outdoor and adventurous activities contributing effectively to their personal development. There is good provision for extra curricular activities. Parents and secondary school pupils assist in the after school clubs giving good support to the school. The subject makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.