

INSPECTION REPORT

VICTORIA INFANT SCHOOL

Tipton, West Midlands.

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103921

Headteacher: Mrs Anne Evans

Reporting inspector: Janet Gill
18706

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th February 2001

Inspection number: 206874

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

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Queens Road
Tipton
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Postcode: DY4 8PH

Telephone number: 0121 557 1923

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Keith Aston

Date of previous inspection: 5th October 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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18706	Janet Gill	Registered inspector	English Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
14226	Alison Willatts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
22182	Fiona Robinson	Team inspector	Science Art and design Music Equal opportunities	
21816	Beryl Thomas	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language Geography History Religious Education	
20007	Trevor Neat	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Tipton in the West Midlands. It has 226 full-time pupils in nine classes from reception to Year 2, with a further 74 part-time children in the nursery. Most of the pupils come from the surrounding area. The school is about the same size as at the last inspection and is larger than the average sized school. There are approximately equal numbers of boys and girls. Children are admitted at the start of the year of their fourth birthday. Attainment on entry to the nursery is low and to reception, well below average; it is weakest in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and social skills. Just over 20 per cent of the pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is above average. 23 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language and, of these 11 per cent are at an early stage of English acquisition. There are 17 per cent of pupils with special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. One child has a statement of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Victoria Infant School is an effective school. The headteacher, supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors, is providing the school with good leadership. She has already achieved good improvements. The quality of teaching is good, is having an impact on learning and, as a result, standards are improving. Pupils achieve standards that are average at the end of Year 2 in mathematics and science. Standards achieved are still below in English, but this is from a low starting point. Children are enthusiastic, enjoy their learning and make good progress. The school has a low income; it uses its resources well and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very clear leadership, directed at improving the quality of education and raising levels of achievement. She is well supported by all staff and governors.
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection; it is now good. Progress is good and standards are improving rapidly.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in a caring school where relationships are very good.
- Financial planning supports the school's educational priorities very well.

What could be improved

- Provision for information and communication technology (ICT) is not as good as in many other effective schools.
- The role of the co-ordinator has shortcomings.
- Procedures for assessment in the Foundation Stage, science, ICT and the foundation subjects.
- Planning to include the specific needs of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Outdoor provision for children in the reception classes

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in October 1998 has been very good. Under the clear direction of the headteacher, supported by the governing body, leadership and management have improved and are good. The school has taken very positive steps to address the key issues raised in the previous report in relation to standards, teaching, curriculum, planning and assessment. Standards in English are below average, but improving rapidly and in Year 1 around the national average. Standards have improved in mathematics and science and are now average. In many other subjects there have also been improvements and standards are now at least satisfactory. There have been significant improvements to the quality of teaching. 97 per cent of lessons observed were satisfactory or better, with 69 per cent good or very good. This has had a significant impact upon the progress pupils make and, standards they achieve. Curriculum and planning have been reviewed and are now satisfactory. The staff use guidance from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to help them decide what to teach and when. The curriculum needs of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are not clearly identified on planning. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is satisfactory overall. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection with very

effective procedures in place for assessment in English and mathematics. However, assessment in other subjects and the Foundation Stage are not sufficient to monitor pupils' progress over time. The school is in a strong position to continue to tackle its priorities.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	E	E	E	E	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Writing	E*	E	E	D	
Mathematics	E	E	E	E	

In the 2000 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average. In comparison with pupils from schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, results were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. Too few pupils achieved the higher levels. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, and pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) achieved similar standards. Teacher assessments in science indicate that the standards are well below in comparison to the national average and of similar schools. Despite the below average levels, standards are rapidly improving. The improvement between the 1999 National Curriculum tests and the latest tests was greater than the national trend in all four subjects. Children enter the nursery with low attainment; they achieve well and make good progress throughout the school. The school is setting appropriate targets for pupils based on what they can already do, and provides good extra support for numeracy and extended writing to improve their performance in national tests. This is already having a positive impact on standards pupils are achieving.

The weaknesses relating to standards in English and mathematics identified in the previous report have been successfully addressed in most areas. Currently, standards in English are below average but rapidly improving. In Year 1, they are around the national average. In mathematics and science there has been a vast improvement and standards are around the national average at the end of the key stage. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is having a positive impact upon standards and the good progress pupils make. Satisfactory standards have been maintained in information and communication technology (ICT), and pupils are beginning to learn in a more systematic manner. The lack of suitable computers and software limits the amount of time pupils can spend learning ICT, and these skills are not extended across other subjects. Standards are at least satisfactory in other subjects and have been maintained in religious education, music and physical education, and improved in art and design, design and technology, geography and history.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes to school are good. The pupils enjoy coming to school, work well together, sustain concentration, work hard and give of their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour throughout the school is good. Pupils behave well in the playground and play well together. There are occasional lapses in behaviour, but this is mainly restlessness and inattention when the pace of lessons is slow. There is good racial harmony. Bullying is not an issue in the school. There have been no exclusions during recent years.

Personal development and relationships	Pupils have very good relationships with each other and with the staff. They have various responsibilities, such as older pupils looking after younger ones. They are kind and encourage each other.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory; it is below the national average. In spite of the best efforts of the school, children are taken out of school for prolonged holidays and do not always return on the date specified. This has an impact on progress as pupils miss important work.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 6 years	aged 6-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is now good across the school. In 97 per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching is satisfactory or better, 69 per cent good or better, with just over a quarter very good. This is high quality teaching and one of the main reasons for pupils' positive attitudes to their learning and the good progress that they make. The strongest teaching is in Year 1. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm, work hard and present their work well. The teaching of English and mathematics is good including the teaching of basic skills. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented effectively and consequently, standards are rising. Literacy is used well across other subjects and numeracy is put to satisfactory use across the curriculum. Overall planning is satisfactory; although many aspects of planning are good, particularly the common format which includes specific learning objectives. The identification in lessons of specific learning needs of SEN and EAL pupils is a weakness. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons, with most pupils responding well, but there are occasions when the pace of the lesson slows and pupils become inattentive and restless. Day-to-day assessment procedures are good. Lessons are evaluated and outcomes are used to plan subsequent lessons. Marking is positive and helps pupils improve their work. From the time they enter the school, children are effectively encouraged to work together and, where appropriate, to work independently. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in evaluating their own learning and working towards their individual targets. This is particularly effective in literacy. The use of homework is good; it is relevant to the lesson and consolidates and extends learning well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides an appropriate curriculum with an emphasis on English and mathematics although provision for ICT is not good enough. All the subjects of the National Curriculum as well as health and sex education are included. Too few opportunities are planned for children in the reception classes to work and play outside. The school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is sound provision for pupils with special educational needs. Their needs, as set out in their individual education plan (IEP), are not specifically identified in teachers' planning. This hampers progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	They make sound progress overall, although the curriculum is often inappropriate, and their needs are not targeted carefully enough in withdrawal lessons, nor are they identified on class teachers' planning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, it enhances the quality of learning. The school encourages pupils to think about, and care for, others. The principles of right and wrong, together with care of the environment and property, are clearly taught.

	Pupils are encouraged to relate effectively to others, take responsibility for themselves and others and participate fully in the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a safe, secure and caring learning environment, where children are happy. Health and safety and child protection procedures are good. Assessment procedures have improved in English and mathematics, but not in science, ICT and the foundation subjects.

Parents are encouraged to help in school and at home. This has a positive effect on the pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher sets a very clear vision and direction for the school and is very aware of what the school needs to do next to improve. This is shared with the staff and governors. There is very effective teamwork between the headteacher and deputy and a strong commitment from everyone to continue to raise standards. The role of the subject co-ordinator has shortcomings.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their statutory duties well. They are very supportive of the headteacher. They know the school well and are committed to its further development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school works hard to self-evaluate its successes and weaknesses and is aware of its overall performance. The school has taken very good action to improve and is now an effective school.
The strategic use of resources	There is very secure use of funds available to the school. Day-to-day procedures are very efficient as a result of the school's administrator. The school offers good value for money.

There are a good number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and classroom support assistants. This provision impacts well on the progress of pupils. The quantity and quality of learning resources are good. This helps pupils to learn more effectively. However, a lack of sufficient up-to-date computers and suitable software hinders the development of pupils' ICT skills. The accommodation is of good quality and maintained very well by the site manager, but the problems of noise affecting work in neighbouring classrooms persist. The principles of best value are well understood and implemented by the headteacher and governors.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like to come to school. • They like the 'open door' philosophy of the school. • They are happy with the children's progress. • Teaching has improved. • Standards are improving in literacy and numeracy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They would like to see more extra-curricular activities

Inspection evidence supports all parents' positive views. A few parents thought that the school did not provide sufficient out of school activities; inspectors judged the provision of extra-curricular opportunities satisfactory and similar to that found in other schools of its type.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children start in the nursery at the beginning of the year in which they are four with attainment that is low compared to national expectations. Many children have poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics, social and personal independence. This is similar to standards at the time of the previous inspection. There are a significant number of children entering the nursery with special educational needs (SEN), particularly speech and communication and English as an additional language (EAL). Children's needs are assessed and identified and with early intervention by skilled staff, children make good progress through the nursery and reception classes. By the end of the Foundation Stage, it is likely that children will achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional, mathematical and creative development. In knowledge and understanding of the world, children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in most aspects except science. In physical development, children are likely to achieve early learning goals in fine motor control, but not all children achieve them in gross motor control due to limited opportunities for outside physical activities. By the end of the Foundation Stage it is likely that a few children will reach the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy development, but it is unlikely for the majority.
2. In the 2000, Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests, the standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below the national average. Results were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing when compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. Too few pupils achieved the higher levels. There were no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, and pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL) achieved similar standards. Teacher assessments in science indicate that the standards are well below in comparison to the average and of similar schools. Despite the below average levels, standards are rapidly improving. The improvement between the 1999 National Curriculum tests and the latest tests was greater than the national trend in all four subjects. The school sets targets in reading, writing and mathematics on the information from the baseline assessment and present work. Work is then planned well to raise the attainment of particular groups of pupils. For example, in the current year, the focus is to improve the attainment of the higher attaining pupils in mathematics and increase the percentages of higher levels in the national tests.
3. The weaknesses relating to standards in English and mathematics, identified in the previous report, have been successfully addressed in most areas. In English, standards are still below average but have improved and are still improving. The reasons standards are not higher in English is linked partly to the number of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and special educational needs (SEN). Many of the present Year 2 were not so well taught in the past. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is having a positive impact upon standards, particularly in Year 1, where standards are around the national average. Pupils do not reach the higher levels in English at present, because when writing they do not use lively and interesting vocabulary, extended sentences, more advanced punctuation and handwriting is not in a joined script. In reading some pupils have difficulty in understanding texts and being able to interpret the underlying meaning. The school's analysis of pupil's work has led to a greater focus on extended writing with very specific targets identified in each lesson. During group reading, procedures have been put in place to improve comprehension skills. These strategies are proving successful and coupled with the positive impact of the Literacy Strategy ensures that pupils make good progress and, consequently, standards are rising.
4. Literacy skills are developed effectively across the curriculum. Many of the pupils listen well respond confidently to questions. For example, in mathematics pupils explain methods of making ten and use correct terminology for three-dimensional shapes. In a Year 2 design and technology lesson, pupils clearly describe the processes for disassembling boxes using appropriate vocabulary. Pupils record their work in science, history and geography using appropriate format and terminology.

5. Inspection evidence indicates pupils are achieving well in mathematics and standards are rising. In the scrutiny of work, discussion with pupils and the observation of lessons, it is evident that standards are average when compared nationally. This is a vast improvement on the standards seen during the last inspection. Generally, pupils have low levels of mathematical knowledge and understanding when they join the school. Most make good progress, including those with SEN and EAL. The pupils achieve best in their number work, partly because the school places much emphasis on these skills in lessons and oral mental work. Most round up or down numbers as high as 100, and sequence numbers involving hundreds, tens and units. They solve simple money problems mentally, but do not always remember to include tens produced in the units column, when finding the total.
6. The school is aware of the need to look more closely at how numeracy can be developed more fully through work in other subjects, such as geography and science. Some examples were seen in history when pupils put dates in the correct order on a time line and when they carefully measured dowel rods in design and technology.
7. Inspection findings indicate that standards in science have improved considerably since the last inspection because of good teaching and effective planning in science. An analysis of pupils' work shows that they make good progress throughout the key stage and achieve well from a low level of understanding. Standards in the current Year 2 are now average. Most pupils' enquiry skills are improving and they understand how to conduct a fair test and record measurements accurately. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of electrical circuits and light and explain the reasons for night and day. In their work on sound, teachers challenge the Year 1 pupils well and most understand that sound is caused by vibration.
8. By the time they are seven, pupils reach satisfactory standards in information and communication technology (ICT). This was the case at the time of the last inspection. National planning guidance has been adopted to ensure that pupils learn skills in a systematic way. Overall, they make satisfactory progress at school in relation to their prior attainment. However, there are not enough up-to-date computers to ensure that pupils get access to them as frequently as they should, and inspection evidence shows that the existing equipment is underused. These factors reduce the amount of progress that the majority of pupils make.
9. Standards have been maintained in religious education; at the time of the previous inspection expectations were in line with that set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make sound progress in their understanding and knowledge of Christianity and other world faiths. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. There is no longer an over reliance on the use of collective worship to teach some of the religious education and, pupils now have opportunities to explore ideas through role-play, drama, handling artefacts or visiting places of worship.
10. Good improvements have been made in many other subjects in the school. Pupils across the school make at least satisfactory progress in all other subjects. Standards have been maintained in music and are satisfactory, although singing is of higher quality. Satisfactory standards have been sustained in physical education. Pupils in Year 1 display satisfactory levels of control and agility when jumping, climbing and balancing on the floor and apparatus and, Year 2 pupils produce a suitable range of movements to illustrate the mood and feelings of music from different cultures. Standards have improved in design and technology and now meet national expectations; pupils' skills develop satisfactorily especially in making and evaluating. In art and design, attainment is good; pupils use a range of media to good effect in both two and three-dimensional work. In geography, standards are above average, pupils are aware of the local features of Tipton and have an understanding of places beyond their locality, such as Africa and use good geographical language. Standards are above average in history. Pupils understand that changes have occurred over time and discuss the lives of some important people and events in history. They are aware that photographs, books, pictures, objects, and sources could be used to find out about the past.
11. Most pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make satisfactory progress. Although pupils' needs have been identified in individual educational plans (IEPs), they are not specifically targeted in lessons. Teachers do not include targets in planning and reinforce them in lessons; this is particularly noticeable in literacy and numeracy. Individual education plans for pupils with

speech and language difficulties are not shared with class teachers; consequently, the good work carried out by a member of the support staff with the speech therapist is not built upon in class. This hampers overall progress.

12. The number of children, with English as an additional language (EAL), entering the school has risen. On entry to school the attainment of children is often low, particularly in English. 27 per cent of pupils have EAL and around 11 per cent of these are at an early stage of language acquisition. Overall, these pupils make satisfactory progress. The pupils with good levels of English make equal progress as the other pupils as noted in the recent National Curriculum tests. However, for those at an early stage of English language acquisition in Key Stage 1, progress is often slower, particularly in literacy. This is due to the unsatisfactory provision during literacy lessons. Work is not appropriate and not suitably matched to the ability of these children. In the reception class, good support is being given by a bilingual assistant; this is helping a pupil make good progress and access the full curriculum well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The children enter the school with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the reception class they are achieving the early learning goals in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the skilful teaching in both the nursery and reception classes where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The relationship between the staff and children, and care of them is very good. Children quickly learn to work and to have respect for each other, when they work together. They quickly become very independent, and concentrate and persevere in their learning asking for help when required. All staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour. Children respond well, learn to know what is right and what is wrong quickly and why they should behave in an appropriate way. In reception, children discuss the things that we do to keep people happy, as well as understand the very simple rules for the class. Children in both classes line up quietly and walk quietly through school. However, as yet, children in nursery are not always encouraged to tidy away.
14. The pupils' attitudes to learning are good. The school has managed to maintain this healthy attitude to learning, which was identified as a strength in the last inspection report. Pupils are keen to come to school and enjoy the majority of their lessons. They work hard and try to give of their best in lessons, especially when the teaching is stimulating and the pace of the lesson is good. They work co-operatively in pairs and groups, for instance in dance and PE. Pupils are not particularly guided in the selection of partner or group but generally there is a healthy mix of ethnicity and gender in the groups. The majority of pupils are capable of independent work and can sustain concentration for reasonable lengths of time. During a music session, very young pupils were able to sit and listen to music, which they enjoyed all the more as there were no interruptions. The majority of parents are happy with the positive attitude to learning that the school promotes.
15. Behaviour throughout the school is good. The good standard of behaviour has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are courteous and friendly to each other, staff and visitors. They respect one another's property and look after the books and equipment they use in lessons. Any unacceptable behaviour, when a minority of pupils may be inattentive or restless, is associated to a slower pace in lessons. They behave well in the playground and play well together. They move around the school quietly, responding positively to instruction from the staff. Pupils are treated with respect by staff who make good use of praise and reward to promote good behaviour, in accordance with the behaviour policy. Parents are pleased with the standards of behaviour expected by the school. Bullying is not an issue in the school. Any incidents of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with effectively by the headteacher. There is no oppressive or racist behaviour in the school. There were no exclusions in the last reporting year.
16. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with the staff. Pupils are kind to each other and look after one another, especially in the playground. The staff know the pupils well which helps them, especially the very young ones, to feel happy and secure in the school. Pupils are pleased to encourage each other. For instance when a pupil has produced a good piece of work, they will give a round of applause. Pupils have various responsibilities in the school and

the classrooms, for example taking the registers to the office, older pupils looking after the younger ones at playtime, and keeping the library tidy. These responsibilities, together with the circle time and personal and social education sessions, help to promote pupils' personal development in a positive manner. These sessions, together with the expectations of good behaviour the school promotes, help the pupils to learn right from wrong. Year 2 pupils have the opportunity to go on residential visits. This also has a positive effect on their personal and social development.

17. Attendance is unsatisfactory and has deteriorated since the last inspection. It is below the national average. The attendance percentage for the academic year 1999 – 2000 was 89.8 per cent. The attendance figures for the academic year 2000 – 2001 show some improvement to date but are still below the national average. The most significant reason for the poor attendance figures is that some families take prolonged holidays during term time, and do not always return on the date specified. This has an impact on progress as pupils miss important work. The school makes a concerted effort to encourage good attendance through letters to parents, newsletters and interviews with parents. The Educational Welfare Officer visits the school regularly and supports the school in its efforts to improve attendance figures. Unauthorised absence is reported as 0.4 per cent of available sessions. This is slightly above the national average. Late arrival at school is not a significant problem. The school secretary monitors late-comers and the Educational Welfare Officer is also involved in promoting prompt arrival at school where necessary. Registers are marked in accordance with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching was a key issue in the previous inspection. There were still significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching noted when Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools (HMI) reported in 1999. Since then it has improved considerably. This is helping pupils make better progress and subsequently standards are rising. The improvement has largely been associated with considerable training from the local education authority and then rigorous monitoring, including classroom observations by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and schemes of work based on Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) national guidance, together with more focused planning and improved assessment procedures have also contributed towards the improvement.
19. Overall teaching is good, with the strongest teaching in Year 1. In 69 per cent of lessons the quality of teaching is good or better, just over a quarter is very good and three per cent is unsatisfactory. Children are well taught when they start school by the three nursery nurses in the nursery. Teaching is good in the nursery with some very good teaching seen. Very good teamwork helps to create a safe, secure and stimulating environment where effective learning takes place and all the children make good progress. This is helping to raise their achievement. The overall quality of teaching is good in the reception classes but ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. This has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The use of resources is good, well organised and accessible to all children. Facilities for outdoor play and the provision of wheeled vehicles in the nursery are good, but there is no suitable outside arrangements for reception children. Since the previous report the achievements and learning of children in the Foundation Stage have continued to improve.
20. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs throughout the school are satisfactory, with some instances of good teaching. This happens when the targets in the pupils' IEPs are used specifically in small group teaching, as in the nursery. Teachers address pupils' needs generally within class. Specific targets are not identified in planning. There are occasions when pupils are set for literacy when the teacher in charge of the set does not obtain or refer to the IEPs. Consequently, targets are not specified on planning and teachers do not build on the work of, for instance, the Speech Therapist. The newly appointed special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has already changed the IEPs to be more specific, and is keen to develop good links with the teachers and support staff. Specific teaching of pupils with EAL is barely satisfactory in the literacy withdrawal group. Teaching does not match the precise needs of all the children and planning does not take into account the needs of each individual, considering the wide variety of ability in language acquisition. However, for the

majority of the time, most pupils are well supported in classes and often make equally good progress as their English-speaking peers.

21. Teaching of English and mathematics is good and is having a significant impact on raising standards. The systematic teaching of literacy and numeracy skills has improved since the previous inspection. Their knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is good, as is their technical competence in the teaching of basic skills. The teachers have worked hard to implement the literacy hour, which they teach well. Basic skills, including phonics are taught well. For example, in several lessons the teacher helped pupils to be aware of particular sounds, which meant they could successfully identify them in the shared text. The shared text and plenary sessions are usually good or very good, when teachers give their pupils good opportunities to participate, which they do well. Literacy skills are developed well across the curriculum. Teachers promote the use of specific vocabulary in other subjects well. This helps pupils to understand and use correct terminology when discussing and explaining their work.
22. Teachers use good methods when teaching mathematics to make learning more interesting. This helps pupils to gain skills, knowledge and understanding effectively when working with numbers. As a result, their numeracy skills are developed effectively. Good features include the mental introductions that are often linked well to the following planned activities, and questioning that is targeted well to meet the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment. However, sometimes teachers forget to check early enough, how well each group in the class is getting on. The rate of learning is decreased when this happens. There is satisfactory teaching of numeracy across the curriculum. For example, when the teacher encourages Year 2 pupils to measure the dowel rods carefully before they are sawn in design and technology.
23. Very little teaching of ICT skills was observed but the quality of those lessons seen was satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers plan well to make maximum use of the available equipment. They produce good lesson plans, make regular checks on the progress of different groups, and manage pupils well. These strengths of the teaching have a positive effect on the standards that pupils attain. In parts of some lessons, however, the teaching lacks liveliness and pace. This dampens pupils' enthusiasm and reduces the progress that they make. Teachers make limited use of ICT in other subjects.
24. Overall planning is satisfactory; although many aspects of planning are good, particularly the common format which includes specific learning objectives. These are effectively shared with the pupils, which help them to be very clear about what they are going to achieve. At the end of lessons the teacher and pupils together assess whether they have achieved the learning objectives. This is very good practice. The lack of the identification of specific learning needs of SEN and EAL pupils is a weakness and, on some occasions the teacher is not aware of what targets are in the IEP. This means that specific targets cannot be reinforced, as in the work of the Speech Therapist. Day-to-day assessment procedures are good. Lessons are evaluated and outcomes are used to plan subsequent lessons. Marking is positive and helps pupils improve their work. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in evaluating their own learning and working towards their individual targets; this they do well. It is particularly effective in literacy.
25. From the time they enter the school, children are effectively encouraged to work together and, where appropriate, to work independently. The way teachers use individual learning targets is effective in promoting self-esteem. Teachers manage pupils well in lessons, with most pupils responding well, but there are occasions when the pace of the lesson slows and pupils become inattentive and restless. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm, work hard and present their work well. Pupils' learning in the vast majority of lessons is at least satisfactory. In 64 per cent of lessons, learning is good or better. The use of homework is good; particularly in literacy and numeracy where tasks are chosen to suit the needs of different groups of pupils; it is relevant to the lesson and consolidates and extends learning well.

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

26. The quality and range of the curriculum has improved considerably since the last inspection. The school has wisely spent a great deal of time and effort in considering, constructing and agreeing a good quality framework to guide teachers' planning. The deputy headteacher has

worked hard and well to lead this development. Further thought is currently being given to the best way to draw up policies for individual subjects. National planning guidance has been used effectively to ensure that teachers know what to teach and that learning is based securely on what has already been taught. A good strategy for teaching literacy skills promotes learning well. There are satisfactory arrangements for teaching numeracy skills. The school has produced its own programme of work for English that takes full account of its own circumstances and the needs of the majority of its pupils, although the programme for teaching English for the withdrawal groups of EAL pupils is not always satisfactory. It now plans to produce similar programmes for other subjects. Statutory requirements to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are met.

27. The range and quality of the curriculum provides ample opportunities for pupils to make systematic progress. Good arrangements to check how much time is given to teaching different subjects help to provide pupils with a balanced curriculum. In response to a criticism raised in the last report, teachers now plan together to ensure that pupils of similar age in different classes are taught the same things, and have equal opportunities to benefit from the curriculum. They do this well and this is now a strength of the school's curricular provision. The teachers know individual pupils well and work hard to support them all. However, in neither its medium nor its short-term planning, does the school yet identify effectively the needs of pupils whose home language is not English or those who have special educational needs. This has a negative effect on the progress that these pupils make, particularly those with low levels of English acquisition.
28. The school makes adequate provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. For example, by educating them about the misuse of drugs. However, due to the need to focus on raising standards in English and mathematics, no written guidance has been drawn up to advise the teachers. As a result the provision that is made is inconsistent. For example, not all classes have regular timetabled opportunities to carry out this sort of work.
29. The parents commented that they would like to see more provision for extra-curricular opportunities. Provision is, however, similar to that found in other schools of its type. The links that the school has with the community make a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' opportunities to learn; for instance, local clergy contribute to their spiritual development in assemblies. Activities that the school shares with local colleges of higher education have a positive influence on its work. For example, the school welcomes students training to be teachers and nursery nurses, and both teachers and pupils benefit from the new ideas they bring.
30. Equality of access and opportunity is satisfactory. Teaching and non-teaching staff provide positive role models and the wide range of activities provided avoid racial or gender stereotyping. Both girls and boys are encouraged to be involved in activities, including those with SEN and EAL. The provision for personal and health development is satisfactory and is a current area of development in the school.
31. Provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development, which was satisfactory at the last inspection, has improved considerably in the intervening period and is now good. Provision for social and moral development has been maintained and is still good. Teachers take advantage of appropriate opportunities to develop spiritual occasions across the curriculum. This is evident in some science activities when pupils are fascinated as they explore how sound travels. Assemblies are increasingly used to enable pupils to consider the effect of what they say and their actions on others. The collective worship is mainly Christian in nature, but has developed a strong multi-faith dimension. It meets statutory requirements. The school has a positive moral ethos of encouraging pupils to think about and care for others and the principles of right and wrong, along with care of the environment and property, are clearly taught.
32. Pupils' social development is good and they are encouraged to relate effectively to others, take responsibility for themselves and others and participate fully in the school. On the residential visit to Edgmond Hall, Year 2 pupils experience living together as a community. The school provides valuable opportunities for pupils to study art and design, listen to music and experience African and Indian dance in the PE curriculum. There is a strong multi-faith

dimension to the RE curriculum and a good range of trips and visits help to enrich pupils' experiences.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school is a safe and secure learning environment where the pupils are cared for well. Staff know the pupils well and are aware of their differing needs, including any cultural differences. However, there are no formal procedures for monitoring and evaluating pupils' personal development at present. Educational support is provided through annual reports to parents and the assessment procedures in place. Pupils with SEN are supported through their IEPs, which are written in consultation with their parents. The targets of the IEPs are not always included in teachers' planning, consequently there are missed opportunities to reinforce the work that takes place with specialists. The behaviour policy, which includes anti-bullying procedures, supports the positive attitudes to good behaviour promoted by the school. The staff use praise and reward to good effect. The procedures for dealing with oppressive or racist behaviour are in place but are rarely needed. The procedures to monitor and support attendance are detailed and thorough. Attendance figures are checked each week for the attention of the Education Welfare Officer. Absences, including holidays, are reviewed each half term and parents are contacted as necessary.
34. The school has a current child protection policy. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and all staff are aware of this. The headteacher has undertaken suitable training. The school works with social services when necessary and has a good working relationship with the school nurse team. The staff are well aware of the necessary procedures and are happy to approach the headteacher if they have concerns about any of the pupils.
35. The school is meeting statutory requirements in its provision for pupils with statements of SEN. Suitable facilities are available and satisfactory care arrangements are in place.
36. The pupils are well cared for in buildings, which are clean and tidy. The health and safety sub-committee inspects the building and site annually. Visitors must use the main entrance which is monitored by the school administrative officer. The playground is safe and can be adequately supervised though the convex shape makes this difficult. The playground surface is very rough and abrasive. Pupils who have fallen on this have sustained severe grazes. First aid provision is satisfactory. Two members of staff have appropriate first aid training.
37. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is satisfactory overall. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection, with very effective procedures in place for assessment in English and mathematics. Constant monitoring and assessment throughout the school support academic progress well. Teachers regularly check pupils' progress through observations, questioning and tests. In English and mathematics, assessments are used regularly to indicate pupils' development against age-related expectations. Teachers use this information to identify pupils with special educational needs and to set targets for individual pupils. However, assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage, science, ICT, religious education and most foundation subjects are not sufficient to monitor pupils' progress over time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school's relationship with parents is satisfactory. The school keeps them informed of their children's progress and welcomes them into the school. Parents receive a written report once a year from the school. This gives them information about their children's academic progress. Parents of pupils with SEN are kept informed about their children's progress through termly meetings to discuss the pupils' IEP. Newsletters are sent out once a term though these mainly contain retrospective information. Other information is sent to parents when necessary. Parent/teacher evenings are held once a term; these are well attended. A recent meeting for parents to discuss the National Curriculum tests was very well attended. Parents are generally happy with the standards of education and pastoral care the school gives to their children.
39. Parents are encouraged to help in the school. Some parents have been trained by the local education authority to help to raise standards in reading as part of a local initiative; this is already proving successful. Additional help is given for pupils to learn high frequency words

with trained volunteers for a short time each day for eight weeks. These strategies are proving beneficial and good progress is evident. Other parents help with school outings or generally in the classrooms.

40. The school suffers from lack of support from those parents who take their children on prolonged holidays during term time. This causes disruption within the school and puts the children at a disadvantage because they miss so much of their education. The school makes a great effort to point these facts out to parents and to support the pupils on their return.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management of the school is now good and having a positive impact on pupils' achievements. The school benefits from the very good leadership provided by the headteacher, ably supported by a very efficient and effective deputy headteacher, all the staff and the governing body. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when the management of the school was satisfactory, although the inspection team recognised that it was an improving situation. The headteacher sets a very clear vision and direction for the school and is very aware about what the school needs to do next to improve still further; this is shared with the staff and governors. Very good teamwork, particularly between the headteacher and deputy headteacher, and very strong commitment from everyone has a very positive impact on raising standards. The school's aims and values are reflected in the very positive ethos where there are very harmonious working relationships.
42. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The school has taken very positive steps to address the key issues raised in the previous report in relation to standards of achievement, teaching and learning, curriculum, planning and assessment. The standards in English are below average at the end of the key stage, but are improving rapidly in Year 1 where they are around the national average. Standards have improved in mathematics and are at the national average by the end of the key stage. In many subjects there have also been improvements, for example, in science, art and design, design and technology, geography and history. In other subjects average standards have been maintained. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching. 97 per cent of teaching observed was satisfactory or better, with 69 per cent good or very good. The curriculum and planning has been reviewed and is now satisfactory. The staff use National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and QCA national guidance as a basis for deciding what to teach and when. There are effective year teams that work together well in order that pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The curriculum needs of pupils with SEN and EAL are not clearly identified when planning. Assessment of pupils' attainment and progress is satisfactory overall. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection with very effective procedures in place for assessment in English and mathematics. However, assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage, science, ICT, religious education and most foundation subjects are not sufficient to monitor pupils' progress over time. Regular procedures are taken to monitor pupils' work, which is particularly good in English and developing in other subjects. The school sets targets for reading, writing and mathematics, which are based on data from the baseline assessments, past and present work. Actual results are analysed and if there are shortcomings in the national tests, subsequent work is planned to address the issues.
43. Delegation to staff of management responsibilities is satisfactory. Since the previous inspection, there are co-ordinators for all subjects. Many are new in post but all support the management structure of the school and are keen to raise standards. The co-ordinator for English has been very effective in raising standards in English; she monitors teaching and learning and has developed very good assessment procedures in the subject. Good systems are in place to monitor mathematics. However, the school is aware that in the other subjects the co-ordinator's role needs developing and this is set as a target priority for the summer term. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has only been in post since January, but has already made useful changes to pupils' IEPs and drawn up an action plan for development. She has started to liaise with the governor with responsibility for special educational needs and the support staff who work directly with the pupils. The role of the co-ordinators for Early Years and English as an additional language are not fully effective. The Early Years co-ordinator does not have an overview of the work of both the nursery and reception classes. The Foundation Stage functions as two very separate areas rather than a cohesive whole. The overall management of

English as an additional language is not effective. There is some liaison between the co-ordinators for English as an additional language, English, and special educational needs to help everyone to be very aware of the needs of all the pupils, but this is not rigorous enough.

44. The governing body is effective, is properly constituted and fulfils its statutory duties well. Governors ensure they are now well informed by the headteacher about all aspects of the school. They are fully aware of the outstanding issues and are well placed to move further forward. They recognise that the school has overcome many weaknesses, particularly with regard to unsatisfactory teaching and low standards, yet they understand that the school still has to raise the achievement of the pupils. The governors fully support the headteacher in her vision for the school. They carefully assess plans and decisions before they are put into practice. There is now a close and open working relationship. This ultimately benefits the school and has meant that improvement has been particularly rapid during the last year.
45. There are a good number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers and classroom support assistants. This provision impacts well on the progress of pupils throughout the school. The quantity and quality of materials, books and equipment available to teachers and pupils are generally good. This helps pupils to learn more effectively. However, a lack of sufficient up-to-date computers and suitable software hinders the development of pupils' ICT skills. The accommodation is of good quality overall, but the problems of noise affecting work in neighbouring classrooms persist.
46. The school makes good use of the resources available to it. Money given to it for particular purposes, such as that allocated to meet pupils' special educational needs, is spent efficiently. The principles of best value are applied well. Governors and managers are not content to compare the results that their pupils achieve with other schools in their area, but judge themselves against all the schools in the country that are of a similar nature. The school is prudent in its spending. For example, the costs of site management are shared with the neighbouring junior school.
47. Senior managers and governors focus very clearly on ensuring that expenditure helps to raise standards. Spending is targeted effectively. For instance, the deputy headteacher is not class based for the present academic year. She has assisted the headteacher in monitoring the quality of teaching and learning, developing whole school planning and started to set up assessment procedures. This has had a positive effect on standards. Financial control is very good. The school makes good use of local education authority support, and the governing body monitors spending regularly and effectively. Day-to-day administration is smooth and unobtrusive. The school administrative officer works very effectively with the headteacher to support all the members of the school family.
48. The good practice in financial management identified in the last inspection report has been maintained. Better use is now made of the accommodation and classroom resources. Unit costs per pupil are low and standards are rising. The school now gives good value for the money invested in it.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

49. To continue to develop the effectiveness of the school and further improve the quality of education and raise standards of achievement, the governing body, with the headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Improve the provision made for ICT by:
 - implementing the planned development of a scheme of work designed to meet the school's needs;
 - increasing the number of up-to-date computers and printers, and the amount and range of software, when resources allow;
 - planning how pupils' ICT skills can be developed through work in other subjects;
 - taking steps to ensure that maximum use is made of ICT equipment;
 - devising a systematic means of assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress to ensure that information about what pupils know, understand and can do is used effectively to inform planning.Paragraphs: 8, 23, 45, 106, 107, 108 and 110.
- (2) Develop the role of the co-ordinator by:
 - providing training in classroom observation especially in relation to monitoring the quality of teaching and pupils' work;
 - reviewing the management role of the Foundation Stage co-ordinator in order to develop a cohesive team between the nursery and reception classes to ensure continuity of teaching and learning;
 - reviewing the management of English as an additional language to ensure the pupils have appropriate provision within lessons that will address their individual needs.Paragraphs: 26, 43, 53, 58, 95, 120 and 125.
- (3) Develop systematic assessment systems in the Foundation Stage, science, ICT and the foundation subjects in order to:
 - monitor pupils' progress over time;
 - identify assessment opportunities in planning.Paragraphs: 37, 42, 59, 86, 89, 95, 100, 105, 115, 120 and 125.
- (4) Review whole school planning to ensure that the needs of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) and for whom English is an additional language (EAL) are identified clearly in all subjects, but particularly in English and mathematics.
Paragraphs: 11, 12, 20, 24, 25, 27, 53, 69 and 73.
- (5) Ensure that the children in the reception classes receive their full entitlement to the physical area of learning by:
 - developing a secure outside area for outdoor play;
 - ensuring more opportunities are planned for children to play and exercise outdoors;
 - providing suitable large equipment and storage, when financial resources allow.Paragraphs: 1, 19, 59 and 65.

In addition the following minor issue should be addressed:

- continue attempts to improve pupils' attendance through regular communication with parents especially with regard to holidays in term time.
Paragraphs: 17 and 40.

ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

50. Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) form a significant proportion of the school population. The principal languages spoken at home include Punjabi, Urdu, Bengali and Gujarati. The pupils are mainly of Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian heritage. About 11 per cent of pupils are at an early stage of English acquisition throughout the school. The numbers of children with EAL has risen since the last inspection.
51. The headteacher, staff and governors are strongly committed to raising standards in the school for all children. There is a full time EAL co-ordinator in school. As some of the EAL pupils have no, or little, English language when they come into the school and require considerable support, a bilingual assistant was appointed to work in the reception classes and is already having an impact upon the progress being made. The nursery children do not have a bilingual speaker and the EAL co-ordinator is only in their base one afternoon a week.
52. The school analysed the targets set for the pupils who lacked communication skills, were reluctant speakers and writers, had poor phonological awareness and poor progress in recognition of the high frequency words. Their needs were not being met fully in a class situation, so pupils in Year 1 and 2 that required additional language development were grouped together for a parallel literacy hour. Targets were set for these pupils last year; this resulted in raising standards, increasing self-esteem and developing speaking and listening skills. In the recent National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, EAL pupils achieved the higher level 3 equally as well as the other pupils.
53. The school makes a thorough assessment of children's language development and uses this information to identify which children are likely to need additional support. Criteria were set out for how the teacher for EAL and SEN would plan the programme of work together to ensure that the work is suitable and challenging for bilingual children. The group of pupils who require help this year need more focus on language and writing skills. There is a huge range of ability, far too great to be addressed in the strict format of the literacy hour. Teaching does not match the needs of all the children. Planning does not take into account the needs of each individual, considering the wide variety of ability in language acquisition. The session is too long for some pupils to sit and concentrate, particularly when the selected text is too difficult for most pupils to understand and the content far beyond their conceptual level. The timing of pupils being withdrawn from lessons with the EAL teacher for SEN support is inappropriate and limits learning and progress.
54. Adults place a very high priority on English and are skilled at promoting literacy and oracy skills, particularly in literacy lessons and in the nursery and reception classes. The bilingual pupils in reception make good progress in their English acquisition; hence opportunities to benefit from the rest of the curriculum for these pupils are good. This is due to very effective support and encouragement from the bilingual teacher. Every one in school helps pupils to work hard, persevere with activities and have confidence to discuss their work with their teachers and other adults. As a result, pupils generally work well within the whole class.
55. The recent National Curriculum tests and other standardised tests were analysed to assess any difficulties. In mathematics and science, children did not understand or use subject vocabulary. The provision of specific subject vocabulary and a close match to pupils' needs are helping to address these issues. In the nursery and reception classes, the staff are successfully promoting specific vocabulary when they work with the children. Class teachers and other adults in Years 1 and 2 are encouraging specific subject vocabulary when they work with the pupils in class.
56. Everybody at the school works very hard to promote racial harmony and a tolerance of different cultures and beliefs, particularly in religious education, geography, art and design and in their recognition of festivals and celebrations throughout the year. The headteacher and staff are particularly good role models and show respect and value all the children; consequently the outcome is a racially harmonious school where there are very good relationships between all members of the school community.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	27	42	28	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	37	226
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	49

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	45

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	62

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	35
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.8%
National comparative data	5.2%

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	39	44	83

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	28	32
	Girls	38	38	37
	Total	63	66	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (72)	80 (73)	83 (75)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	29	31
	Girls	34	34	37
	Total	57	63	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (72)	76 (75)	82 (76)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	9
Pakistani	15
Bangladeshi	11
Chinese	0
White	111
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.7
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	4.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	110

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.25
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	477191
Total expenditure	475986
Expenditure per pupil	1493
Balance brought forward from previous year	28178
Balance carried forward to next year	29383

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	290
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	21	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	31	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	29	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	14	12	0	17
The teaching is good.	72	24	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	26	10	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	19	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	19	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	52	29	12	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	57	26	2	5	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	31	0	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	21	14	10	4

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

57. Children are admitted into their nursery class at the beginning of the school year in which they have their fourth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 38 children on roll during the morning and 36 during the afternoon. They are admitted to full time school at the beginning of the academic year in which they have their fifth birthday. The children enter the nursery with low attainment. Many begin with poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence; some pupils have little or no English language. Since the previous inspection, language development and provision for the children in the Foundation Stage have been a focus, and these areas have improved. The nursery staff complete the initial assessments, which gives them an overview of the ability of the children. They use the information to provide a broad, balanced and relevant programme, which meets the needs of each individual. During the first six weeks in reception, baseline assessment takes place in reading, phonics and mathematics. The information is used to place children into ability groups for literacy and numeracy. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional, mathematical, creative development and most aspects of knowledge and understanding and physical development. The majority of children are unlikely to achieve the learning goals in communication, language and literacy.
58. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the nursery, overall good in reception but ranging from unsatisfactory to very good. This has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The adults working in the nursery work closely together as a team, as does the reception staff. However, the co-ordinator does not have an overview of the whole Foundation Stage and there is limited teamwork between the nursery and reception classes. This does not ensure continuity of teaching and learning.
59. Overall, a satisfactory curriculum is in place for children in the Foundation Stage, which covers all the areas of learning. Indoor provision for the children is good. Rooms are colourful and bright and divided into areas where the children learn quickly. They soon learn to listen, write freely, sit quietly and look at books in the reading areas and join in the activities in the play area. However, the arrangements for outdoor activities in the reception classes, including those for physical development, are unsatisfactory. There is no outside area or suitable equipment available to promote physical development. Day-to-day assessment is sound, but systems are not in place in all areas of learning; this does not help in identifying individual needs.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. The children enter the school with immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the reception class they are achieving the early learning goals in this area. This shows good progress and reflects the good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes where children are constantly encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. The teacher's relationship with the children and care of them is very good. Children quickly learn the routines and gain rapidly in confidence. They know which group and area of the large classroom they belong to in the nursery or, which group they are in for literacy and numeracy in reception. Children quickly learn to work and to have respect for each other when working together. They rapidly become independent, concentrate and persevere in their learning and ask for help when required. All staff have very high expectations of children's behaviour; children respond well, learn to know what is right and what is wrong quickly and why they should behave in this way. In reception, children discuss the things that we do to keep people happy as well as understand the very simple rules for the class. Children in both classes line up quietly and walk quietly through school. However as yet, children in nursery are not always encouraged to tidy away. Children are encouraged to appreciate others' efforts by clapping.

Communication, Language and Literacy

61. The children enter the school with low levels of communication, language and literacy skills. The quality of teaching and learning in this area is very good. This helps children make good progress, and although many are still below average by the end of the Foundation Stage, a few are likely to achieve the early learning goals. Teachers plan the main activities well taking account of the needs of the pupils particularly those with speech problems, SEN and EAL. This is having a good impact on their learning. Much of their learning takes place through listening intently to the very good questions posed by the teachers. Elements of the literacy framework are well used by staff in reception and children now have a good understanding of books, and the meaning of a title, an author and illustrator. Teachers use good techniques of covering the key words and encouraging the use of predictions as children wonder what will happen next. The letters of the week are developed using many good techniques, for instance, the sounds *H* and *h* were being identified in the poem, 'Happy Hippo Holiday'. The children use magic boards effectively as they see at once if their efforts are correct and can instantly correct them.
62. Good clear notices, labels, instructions, and poems help children to recognise and appreciate the need for writing words and reading them. The high frequency words are being reinforced in many planned activities. Children are given good opportunities to practise writing their names and letters. Good use is made of name cards used for children to copy. On the notice board in the nursery there are good examples of mark making as the children write about 'Buster's Day' and attempt to write a letter to teddy. This is extended in reception where children have many opportunities to write letters during their free play in the afternoon. Speaking and listening through structured role-play is well developed in the four very attractive, well stocked areas; 'Teddies' Hospital', 'Grandma's Cottage', 'The Cosy Café' and 'The Sweet Shop.' Books are prominent in the classrooms and children enjoy books and are able to choose their favourite one from the well-stocked libraries in each area. Children understand that the books, which they choose, have a story and the majority are able to predict what might happen from looking at the illustrations on the page. In reception, children take books home from a reading scheme. This enables the parents to share in effective learning activities with their children. Reading also takes place in the guided reading sessions. There is very good language support for the children in reception whose home language is not English and these children make good progress.

Mathematical development

63. When children enter the nursery class their attainment in mathematics is lower than that of children of a similar age. Provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language and teaching is good, which helps children learn and make good progress. Mathematics is well taught and by the end of the Foundation Stage most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals through practical activities, such as counting the buttons on the Teddy Bear's jacket and singing counting rhymes. The most able in the nursery can count to ten and recognise the numerals and have some knowledge of shapes and colours. This knowledge is built on, and extended in reception class where the children are grouped according to ability. These children follow the numeracy strategy. The scrutiny of work indicates there has been good progress since September. Basic counting skills are taught well to the higher attaining children who are now able to count to 60. The middle ability group count well to 20 but as yet are not using *greater than*, *smaller than*, *heavier* and *lighter than* in their work and, the lower ability group, some of whom have very little English are extending their numbers to ten. Analysis of the tests shows that the lack of understanding language is preventing children achieving the higher levels in mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

64. The teaching and learning in some aspects of this area is very good; however, there is not a clear structured programme to develop the scientific area of learning sufficiently well. This restricts progress in this aspect. Most children make good progress in other areas of learning and are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. The majority of children enter school with some general knowledge but there are a number of children who have had experience of living in or travelling to other countries. Their

geographical knowledge is good. The teachers build on their natural curiosity and help them to understand the world in which they live very well indeed. During registration the days of the week are repeated and the weather discussed. By the time the children are in reception they record the day's weather in the weekly 'Weather' book and try to decide what the weather might be like tomorrow. Artwork shows that they have a clear understanding of sunny, cloudy, windy and rainy conditions. Teachers provide activities so that the children can find out about the past and present through the study of 'Toys' identifying which of these are old and which are new. Children in reception are well aware of the features in Tipton and understand the meaning of safe and unsafe places. Children enjoy experimenting with magnets, water and sand but have little opportunity to predict what might be happening. Children are given good opportunities to develop their skills in ICT. In the nursery, using the *first paint* program to dress the teddy, they quickly learn to click and drag icons using the mouse. Skills are extended in the reception class where they confidently use the mouse and keyboard to make pictures of 'The spiders song' on the computer.

Physical development

65. Teaching is good and children of all abilities make good progress in the nursery; however, the quality of teaching physical skills in the reception classes is not appropriate, consequently some children do not achieve the standards expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. The large well maintained secure outside play area is a good feature of the nursery and helps children to become aware of themselves as individuals. Nursery children can ride their wheeled vehicles well, trying to follow each other around the painted routes on the playground. They are beginning to show awareness of space and play safely avoiding crashes. Progress is much more limited when the children move into reception. Physical education lessons are not well timed; demonstration is not good and there is no opportunity to promote physical activities for these children outside. Dexterity is developed through the handling of objects such as threading, working in sand and water, rolling and cutting. Nursery children learn to work things out for themselves as they piece together jigsaws. In reception, children make good progress in developing skills with construction kits. Children decide which colour of wool to thread through the teddy bear in the nursery or the animal shapes in reception and this helps them to practise their finer skills. The many activities provided increase confidence and develop the children's use of paintbrushes, pencil, crayons, scissors, pastels, paste spreaders and collage materials. Children handle scissors well and have good cutting skills. There are many opportunities for the children to develop skills when cutting out pictures to make their own jigsaws and using split pins to join the limbs to their moveable mobiles.

Creative development

66. This area of learning is particularly well taught and most children will have achieved the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage, with some exceeding them. Children enter school with poor brush control and the pictures on display in their own 'Gallery' show an immaturity when using paint. The staff provide children with a rich environment for creative development and the attractive displays reflect the broader range of their work, showing how far children have progressed since starting school. The 'Robins on a branch' display shows a variety of painting techniques and another display, 'Winter,' shows how children have experimented with colour and a variety of materials to add texture to this collage. Children have had the opportunity to interpret the work of Picasso. The children enjoy singing nursery rhymes, joining in enthusiastically and responding to actions. Children are introduced to music in the music studio in a skilful manner. They listen well to the music of Chopin, use the words *composer* and *classical* and remember the 'Sugar plum fairy,' from the previous lesson. They are beginning to appreciate loud, quiet, fast and slow music. Children have the opportunity to create their own models from junk materials. This they do very well; this particular activity shows pupils working well beyond the early learning goals. The more able children are able to explain what they have created and why they have made this particular object.

ENGLISH

67. The previous report indicated that standards in English were well below average and there was unsatisfactory progress in reading and writing. The major contributory factors being the lack of a scheme of work, no systematic assessment of pupils' attainment and progress, and, unsatisfactory leadership of the subject. The school has made good progress in all three areas and standards have improved and are still improving. The improvement over the last four terms was brought about by the appointment of a new co-ordinator and the school's determination to raise standards in literacy. These better results were associated with the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, which gave the basis for a good school scheme of work. The co-ordinator has been involved in greater monitoring of planning, teaching and assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. The information gathered being used to set school, group and individual targets. Children enter the nursery with low attainment in English. This is because a significant number have speech and communication difficulties, EAL or SEN. Children make good progress and by the time they leave the school at seven, attainment is near the national average, but overall it is still below average. This is because too few pupils reach the higher levels in reading and writing. In the present Year 1 class, however, many pupils are already working at average levels and with various strategies in place there is every indication that the school will continue to improve.
68. The results of the National Curriculum tests carried out in 2000 show that seven-year-olds attained standards in reading and writing that are well below the national average for all schools. Compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the results were also well below average. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. However, standards are rising. This represents a good improvement from 1999 and at a rate greater than the national trend.
69. Inspection evidence from lessons, school monitoring and the scrutiny of work indicate that in writing, pupils do not use lively and interesting vocabulary, extended sentences and more advanced punctuation and handwriting is not in a joined script. In reading, some pupils have difficulty in understanding texts and being able to read for deeper meaning. The school has carefully analysed pupils' work and has set year, group and individual targets to incorporate into teachers' planning in the attempt to raise achievement. Extended writing sessions are held each week; three classes are set into four ability groups and the co-ordinator teaches one of the groups. Work is set according to the targets, assessed and then used to inform planning for future lessons. These targets are shared with the pupils. In reading, comprehension skills are being targeted. Additional help is given for pupils to learn high frequency words with trained parent volunteers for a short time each day for eight weeks. These strategies are proving beneficial and good progress is evident. The overall progress of pupils with SEN and EAL is satisfactory and not as good as it is for other pupils. This is because EAL needs are not being identified specifically; neither are the individual education plans used when teachers plan. Although a small group of targeted pupils with EAL go to a separate session for literacy, their individual needs are not being addressed. The pupils have a literacy hour which is suitable for a few, but for others their proficiency in English is still at an early stage. Pupils with SEN are not identified on the planning, neither are their particular targets. Teachers have no information about IEPs for pupils who are seen by the Speech Therapist and consequently cannot reinforce targets in lessons.
70. Overall standards of attainment in speaking and listening are broadly in line with the national average throughout the school. Teachers use questioning skilfully to promote speaking and listening and to elicit responses from pupils. Teachers have good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and encourage pupils to use the correct terminology, not only in literacy but also in other subjects. Many of the pupils listen well which helps them to make predictions about stories, compare two different texts describing the setting in each story, and respond confidently to questions. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, the teacher used good questioning to encourage pupils to explain methods of making ten and the correct terminology for three-dimensional shapes. In a Year 2 design and technology lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to describe the processes for disassembling boxes using correct terminology. This they did clearly and in a logical sequence, including a pupil who is in the EAL target group in the mornings.
71. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in reading are just below average, although a few pupils reach higher levels. Standards are rising and good progress is made, particularly in Year 1.

Pupils are benefiting from the introduction of the literacy hour and the increased focus on literacy. Teachers organise shared text sessions well and work effectively to maintain pupils' interest with a good range of suitable texts, both fiction and non-fiction. However, in an EAL lesson the text was not suitable for the level of pupils' language acquisition and very little progress was made by the majority of the group. Year 1 pupils make very good progress when reading 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff'. They look at the text carefully and find out about different ways text can be presented, such as a bold font when the troll is speaking. In Year 2, most pupils have a good understanding of the role of the author and illustrator and the contents page and index. Higher attaining pupils have good dictionary skills and understand where letters come in the alphabet, and confidently find words using up to the third letter. This was a group target that was set and achieved, illustrating the very good day-to-day assessment. Pupils read simple texts with increasing fluency and show in discussion that they understand them. A lower attaining pupil retells his story using graphics and text to illustrate his ideas. The higher attaining pupils read with confidence, accuracy and expression but do not have the depth of understanding to go beyond the surface of the text. This inhibits children from reaching the higher levels. Books are taken home on a regular basis, which helps pupils to practise their skills. In addition to the guided reading sessions in the literacy hour, teachers include reading at other times to ensure pupils have sufficient practise. Teachers assess pupils' reading ability during group reading sessions, identifying strengths and weaknesses; this provides valuable information for planning future work. Individual records and the recording of reading skills are being developed by the co-ordinator.

72. At the end of the key stage, writing is below the national average with few pupils reaching the higher levels. Teachers offer their pupils a good range of work within literacy and across the curriculum. They encourage their pupils to write in a variety of forms. For example, pupils write instructions for making a sandwich in design and technology, historical accounts about 'The Great Fire of London', questions for a visitor bringing animals into school and stories and poems using appropriate language and format. Most still write in a print style and form their letters satisfactorily so that they are able to read back their own writing. Although teachers remind pupils to use appropriate punctuation, full stops and capital letters are used inconsistently. Good teaching of phonics has helped to improve spelling, as seen in pupils' work since September; they use their knowledge gained in the literacy hour well.
73. Overall, teaching is good and has a significant impact upon pupils' learning and the progress they make. The teachers have worked hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy, which they do with good understanding to the requirements of the strategy. They teach basic skills well with a secure knowledge of English. Pupils enjoy literacy and the majority of pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. Overall planning is satisfactory, although it omits specific needs of pupils with EAL and SEN. Learning objectives are identified, which are effectively communicated to the pupils. Teachers use good questioning skills, listening carefully and valuing the spoken contributions from their pupils, helping them to develop the confidence to speak in front of others. They challenge pupils to think carefully and extend their thoughts and ideas into words. Day-to-day assessment procedures are used well and marking is very supportive, helping pupils know what they need to do next to improve. All pupils have literacy targets, which are reviewed regularly. This is very good practice, as pupils are aware of what it is they need to do to improve and are involved in evaluating their learning. Many pupils meet the expectations of their teachers, work hard, concentrate and persevere, working within the time limits that are set. Lessons are less successful when the pace slows, which leads to a minority of older pupils becoming restless and inattentive. There are occasions when the teacher does not step in quickly enough to stop minor disruptions, then pupils waste time and learning is affected.
74. The subject is led by a highly motivated and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She is committed to raising achievement in the school. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented and has begun to raise standards throughout the school. The co-ordinator has very good opportunities to monitor teaching and learning, which helps her to prioritise the next steps for development in the subject, such as writing. The co-ordinator supports extended writing sessions; from work completed it is evident that this is a successful initiative. Tests to monitor progress are in place and, with the results of the teacher's assessments, the school is in a powerful position when setting targets. Individual targets have been set for every child and

from this data, school targets have been set for both year groups. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend work in lessons.

MATHEMATICS

75. The results of national tests carried out in 2000 show that seven-year-olds attained standards that are well below the national average for all schools. Compared with schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, the results were also well below average. However, standards are rising, and the rate at which they improved last year was greater than the national increase. Inspection evidence also indicates that standards are improving well. The scrutiny of samples of work that pupils have already completed this academic year, discussion with them, and the observation of lessons show that pupils in the current Year 2 work at the level expected nationally. This is a vast improvement on the standards seen during the last inspection.
76. Generally, pupils have low levels of mathematical knowledge and understanding when they join the school. Most make good progress. This is true of all pupils, including those who learn more easily and those who find learning harder. Pupils with SEN and EAL make progress at a similar rate to everyone else. The pupils do best in their number work, partly because the school places much emphasis on these skills. Most round up or down numbers as high as 100, and sequence numbers involving hundreds, tens and units. They solve simple money problems mentally, but do not always remember to include tens produced in the units column, when finding the total.
77. The good progress that pupils make is due to good quality teaching. All the lessons observed in the inspection were at least satisfactory. Many were good or very good. There has been a great improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection, when one third of lessons were unsatisfactory. Senior managers, including the co-ordinator, have worked hard to bring this about. The checks that have been made on the quality of classroom practice have been very helpful in this respect. It will take some time before the full effect of this improvement is seen in the standards that pupils achieve in the national tests.
78. The pupils respond well, overall, to the good quality of teaching. For example, they take note of the teachers' helpful marking of their work and try to make the changes they suggest. They take care in the appearance of their books. Generally, their positive attitudes help them to learn effectively. However, in some lessons a significant number of pupils do not work as well as they might. They are not well motivated and do not work as quickly as they should. This was the case in a lesson for pupils in Year 1 seen during the inspection, in which some children did not concentrate fully and failed to learn the names of two-dimensional shapes properly. The moderate pace of some lessons does not help in this. These things reduce the progress that pupils make.
79. The teaching of basic skills is good. This helps pupils to gain skills, knowledge and understanding effectively when working with numbers. As a result, their numeracy skills are developed effectively. A strong feature of the teaching is the way in which teachers think carefully about how well the pupils learned during the last lesson before finalising their plans for the next one. Other good points about the teaching are questioning that is targeted well to meet the needs of pupils of different levels of attainment and firm discipline, which gives pupils the opportunity to concentrate and apply themselves. The setting of homework tasks is good and the tasks are chosen to suit the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers are starting to set targets for pupils; these are shared with pupils which helps them to be aware of their own achievements.
80. Generally, teachers use good methods to make learning more interesting. For example, in a Year 1 lesson about three-dimensional shapes, the pupils made their own versions of liquorice sweets from icing sugar. This helped them to understand the special nature of each shape. These factors have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. However, sometimes teachers forget to check early enough, how well each group in the class is getting on. The rate of learning is decreased when this happens.

81. Literacy skills are developed effectively in mathematics lessons. The school is aware of the need to look more closely at how number skills can be developed more fully through work in other subjects. Further work is needed to ensure that all teachers assess pupils' work accurately. There is good support given to those who are capable of higher attainment.

SCIENCE

82. In 2000, teachers assessed standards in science as well below average compared to those of other schools nationally. Over the past four years standards have remained stubbornly low, however, recent improvements have resulted in more seven-year olds achieving the higher levels this year. The rate of improvement from 1999 to 2000 was greater than that nationally. Overall standards have improved considerably since the last inspection because of good teaching and effective planning in science.
83. Standards in the current Year 2 are average. In their work on rolling cars down two slopes and recording measurements, teachers challenge the pupils well and most pupils understand how to conduct a fair test and record measurements accurately. There are strengths in the way many pupils record their work, however they do not use computers often enough to support the reading and the presentation of results. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of electrical circuits and light are above average for their age. They know that the sun is a source of light and can explain the reasons for night and day. In their work on sound, teachers challenge the Year 1 pupils well and most understand that sound is caused by vibration.
84. An analysis of pupils' work shows that they make consistently good progress throughout the key stage and achieve well from a low level of understanding. Teachers place an increasing emphasis on pupils undertaking their own experiments and investigating for themselves. The pupils' enquiry skills are improving and they record efficiently what they find in their science books. All pupils enjoy investigative work, including those with SEN and EAL. These pupils receive good quality support from classroom assistants and other pupils in their group.
85. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is good overall. Teachers' lesson planning is good and they give clear explanations of how to conduct fair tests and the use of wooden slopes for rolling their cars down. There are a number of strengths that account for pupils' good progress. Teachers plan together well in year group teams, so that they regularly share ideas about what works well in lessons. Teaching is based on good subject knowledge that enables teachers to ask probing questions to make children think. They also emphasise the importance of a scientific approach. This occurred in a Year 1 lesson on sound where the teacher stressed the importance of careful observation in listening to the sounds made by a variety of percussion instruments. This led to a high quality discussion about 'high' and 'low' sounds. In addition, teachers use a wide range of resources that hold pupils' interest and throughout the school pupils have a good attitude to science.
86. Co-ordination of the subject is good, marked by the joint planning that occurs within year groups and the good use of assessment of lessons to inform future planning. However, long term assessments of lessons to inform future planning are informal. Records are kept and this works effectively for the most part in influencing what they do next, but teachers do not record the development of pupils' investigative skills.

ART AND DESIGN

87. The attainment of seven-year olds in art and design exceeds that expected for their age. This is especially the case for painting and creating sculptures. When compared to the sound standards achieved in the reception classes, this shows good progress in Years 1 and 2. There has been an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were satisfactory and there has been an increase in the range of resources provided in lessons. This is reflected in the interesting and stimulating displays of pupils' work.
88. Most pupils make good progress as they express their ideas through a range of different experiences in art and design. Younger pupils have regular access to paint and collage and learn how to mix colours and apply paint with care. The Year 1 pupils' study of famous artists allowed the pupils to use techniques to create good quality paintings in the style of Kandinsky,

Monet and Van Gogh. Computer images stimulated pupils' imagination to complete good observation fruit drawings using line and tone and picture created in the style of Monet. Pupils develop their skills well in Year 2 and create good quality paper sculptures and an interesting range of tree sculptures with materials threaded through. Good links are made with geography and history, for example of the colourful 'Great Fire on London' paintings and the painting of animals, which live in the Amazon rainforest. These paintings were stimulated by a recent visit from the 'Animal Man'. There are examples of good work where the children have sculptured different models.

89. Only one lesson was observed in art and design so teachers' planning, work on display, interviews with pupils and pupils' previous work was used to make judgements. Teaching in art and design is good and pupils are challenged to undertake new experiences and experiment with new ideas. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and are confident to demonstrate techniques and skills where appropriate, for example, using and applying pressure when painting to produce lighter or darker prints. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on their work and make improvements. This is helping to raise the quality of work. Good use is made of day-to-day assessment to plan subsequent work, however there are no formal systems in place for assessing pupils' skills or progress over time.
90. The co-ordinator has great enthusiasm and expertise and is providing good, clear management of the subject. A comprehensive policy and guidelines are in place, and resources are good in quality and appropriately support learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

91. Only one lesson in Year 2 was seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of the pupils' written work and the things they have made, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils. Throughout the school pupils complete their work to standards that are generally in line with that expected for their age and abilities. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good, as a result of good teaching of basic skills, effective planning of activities and units of work for this age range. The standard of pupils' skills and understanding has improved since the last inspection, particularly in designing and evaluating their work.
92. Designs on display around the classroom walls show that pupils have good experience in all aspects of the designing and making processes and clearly understand these processes. However, their written evaluations are more limited. Good opportunities are presented for pupils to discuss their work. For example, in the lesson observed the process of disassembling boxes to make a vehicle for Barnaby Bear is explained very well and in good detail. A pupil with EAL could explain clearly how he had made his vehicle and where Barnaby Bear would sit. Pupils work with a wide range of materials that include paper, sticky tape, split pins, dowel rod and card and use a range of tools with due regard to safety.
93. The pupils in Year 1 design and make sandwiches. They select items for their sandwiches choosing appropriate food and making choices about healthy options. Good links are made with literacy as pupils record and illustrate their findings in 'Healthy Eating' posters. The response of the pupils to practical activities is good, and all pupils display a sense of responsibility when using simple tools and materials to construct their products. The lesson in Year 2 was planned well to ensure there is a good balance of skills teaching and opportunities to carry out independent activities. The pupils work well together. They co-operate with one another, share resources and exchange ideas how best to join boxes with tape.
94. The quality of teaching is good. In the lesson observed, objectives were shared effectively with the pupils at the start of the lesson and related to previous learning using boxes, disassembling them and joining them again. Good behaviour management meant that the teacher was able to work with a small group of pupils teaching them to saw dowel rod for their axles. Numeracy skills were used appropriately when pupils measured the length needed for the dowel rod. Very good attention to safety and techniques meant that pupils learnt how to saw correctly and safely. Meanwhile the rest of the class worked productively with good attention to the quality of their work. They clearly enjoy the subject and make good progress in the construction and

painting of their vehicles. During the introduction and plenary, pupils have good opportunities to evaluate their work as a consequence of effective questioning by the teacher.

95. The curriculum is now appropriately planned, using QCA national guidance alongside the school's curriculum plan. This is an improvement on the previous inspection and appears to be working well ensuring the skills of design and technology are developed in a systematic manner. However, systems for assessing and recording pupils' skills and progress have yet to be developed. With an emphasis on raising standards in English and mathematics, the development of design and technology is not one of the school's priorities at present. A new co-ordinator is managing the subject, who has a good knowledge of the requirements of the subject. She offers support to colleagues but has not, as yet, had any opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the subject. This is an area of development that the school has identified.

GEOGRAPHY

96. The last time the school was inspected, geography was unsatisfactory, there was no co-ordinator and the leadership of the subject was poor. Progress was unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection very good improvement has taken place. By the time the pupils are seven, they are attaining higher levels than those expected of this age. The deputy headteacher has rewritten and reviewed subject policies and schemes to reflect the national guidance. Whole school planning ensures that all the areas are covered within the allocated time. A co-ordinator has been appointed; leadership is satisfactory, but as yet there have been limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning. Unsatisfactory teaching has been eliminated. In the few lessons observed the quality of teaching was very good.
97. By the time the pupils are seven years of age, they have an understanding of places other than the local area. They know that they live in Tipton in the Black Country in England. They are aware of the local features and the majority of children are able to use good geographical language.
98. The pupils in Year 1 classes are enjoying travelling around the world with Barnaby Bear. Teachers skilfully use a globe to identify with the pupils the different places Barnaby visits. Pupils find out about places in an enjoyable way, as some of them do believe this bear is real. Very good learning takes place as they prepare the rucksack for him to go to different areas of the world. This helps pupils become aware that different places in the world are hot and cold. They reinforce this learning by placing the correct clothes for the correct place on a cut out of a bear. Barnaby had been taken to Spain when several photographs were taken of him. The pupils talk excitedly about one photograph showing Barney in a banana tree and on the beach. They are aware that he will need a passport to enable him to travel, and pencil to send them a postcard.
99. Each class in Year 2 has chosen their contrasting locality overseas. Pupils in two Year 2 classes are studying Cascade in Jamaica and the third is learning about Matinyani in Kenya. Pupils know that this is in Africa and are aware that conditions there are different from those in the local area. Previous work shows that pupils had been asked what did they know about Africa and to consider what they would like to find out. This good technique will ensure that children will know what they learnt when they complete their work and revisit their original questions. In conversation with the pupils most of them appear to know that Africa is made up of a lot of countries, it is near the equator and some know the difference between being rich and poor. To further their understanding the teacher provides ten different kinds of fruit and ten different kinds of vegetables that people might eat living in this place. Pupils also have the opportunity to study African art, to listen and dance to African music and read together 'The Hunter' by Paul Geraghty, 'Handa's Surprise' by Eileen Browne and 'Letang's new friend' at guided reading time. All the children enjoy their geography lessons and good achievement is made.
100. Fieldwork and residential opportunities provided enhance the learning in this area. The necessary procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress over time are not yet in place.

HISTORY

101. It was not possible to see a history lesson during the course of this inspection. Judgement has been based on the scrutiny of work since September, teachers' planning and discussion with the teachers and pupils.
102. Standards are better now than they were at the last inspection. By the time the pupils are seven, most are reaching levels higher than normally seen. This good improvement since the last inspection is due to a complete review of the history scheme and policy, which are used well to inform teachers planning, good leadership in the school, and the appointment of a well-informed co-ordinator who is keen to develop the role further.
103. By the age of seven, pupils have an understanding of how some things have changed in their life since they were born. They are able to name some important people and events in history, for example, Florence Nightingale.
104. Pupils have a good understanding of the fire of London. They explain in great detail the house where the fire started, how it spread and what they had seen on a video showing Samuel Pepys hiding his diary, cheese and wine in a hole covered with soil to keep them safe. Most pupils are beginning to understand the meaning of today, yesterday, a long time ago and a very long time ago. Pupils could explain the time line in their classroom and why the dates 1666, 1820, 1910, 1993 and 2000 were placed on it. They are aware that photographs, books, pictures, objects, and sources could be used to find out about the past. Talking to the pupils, it was obvious that they enjoyed their history lessons. Good quality enquiry questions placed around the displays in the school help the pupils to think and find out about the event or person rather than just learn facts.
105. The school adopted and is now adapting the recent National Curriculum guidance. This provides the structure for lessons but the school does not have the necessary procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. By the time they are seven, pupils reach satisfactory standards in ICT. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. Since that time, more equipment has been bought, and the new co-ordinator has carried out valuable work to check the standards that pupils achieve and to ensure that their skills are being developed systematically. National planning guidance has been adopted to ensure that pupils learn in a systematic way. However, the school has yet to draft its own programme of work to suit its particular needs, although this is planned. Also, its policy for ICT needs updating to take account of the requirements of the revised National Curriculum.
107. Relatively few pupils have the opportunity to use computers at home. Overall, they make good progress at school in relation to their low prior attainment. However, there are not enough up-to-date computers to ensure that pupils use them as frequently as they should, and inspection evidence shows that the existing equipment is underused. These factors reduce the amount of time for pupils to acquire new skills and build on existing ones. This limits the overall progress pupils make.
108. Pupils achieve well in computer-based art activities, because more time is devoted to this sort of work. They develop their skills in art and design lessons by, for example, copying Monet's style of painting. They link their use of art programs to their work in mathematics by 'painting' symmetrical butterflies. Other activities such as using computers to display information gained from a traffic census, help the work that pupils do in both mathematics and ICT. Pupils' skills are developed appropriately in English lessons. For example, pupils in Year 1 develop word processing skills by drafting poems, such as the one in which, 'Our dog Meg ate the peg'. However, more software is needed to allow ICT skills to be developed and exploited

appropriately in other subjects such as geography and science. The school has yet to plan effectively how ICT skills will be developed through work in other subjects.

109. Pupils enjoy using computers. They co-operate well in working with the equipment and treat it with respect. Their positive attitudes help them to learn effectively. In a lesson in which they were observed using a word bank to write their own sentences on the computer, their desire to learn helped them to concentrate well on what was being taught. Few lessons of ICT were observed during the inspection, but the quality of teaching and learning seen was satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers plan well to make maximum use of the available equipment. They produce good lesson plans, make regular checks of the progress of different groups, and control pupils well. These strengths of the teaching have a positive effect on the standards that pupils attain. In parts of some lessons, however, the teaching lacks liveliness and pace. This dampens pupils' enthusiasm and reduces the progress that they make.
110. The work of the conscientious co-ordinator is contributing effectively to raising standards and increasing the confidence of teachers. She is aware of the need to develop a systematic way of assessing and recording pupils' attainment and ensuring that this information is used to inform curriculum and lesson planning.

MUSIC

111. The previous inspection report found pupils' attainment to be in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils made satisfactory progress overall, but good progress with their singing. These standards have been maintained and pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. This is due to the successful teaching of a well-structured curriculum and a continued effort to maintain the good progress pupils make with their singing.
112. Pupils throughout the school enjoy their music making activities. The class music tuition provided by the visiting specialist teacher enhances the provision for Year 1 pupils. This enables the more able pupils to achieve well. Pupils throughout the school achieve good standards of singing both in assembly and in music lessons. There was no opportunity to judge pupils' progress in composing music. However, the ability to compose and record is being developed steadily in Key Stage 1.
113. Year 1 pupils sing well showing good control of dynamics, pitch and rhythm. This was evident in a Year 1 performance of 'Jack Frost'. They read and perform songs and hymns competently and teachers make effective use of action songs in assembly, for example 'I've got a Body' and 'The Wise Man Built his Home'. Pupils listen attentively to music and make appropriate comments about the mood of the music, the rhythm and the tempo. Pupils learn to create percussion parts to songs and sometimes record their singing in order to listen to, assess and improve what they have done.
114. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. Music is taught by class teachers and the specialist music teacher. The standard of teaching is of a good standard, because teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is secure. Pupils are taught to improvise music and to evaluate their performances. The music co-ordinator ensures that the pupils' love for music is developed effectively in assemblies. Where the quality of teaching is good, pupils make good progress because they are fully involved in an appropriate balance of practical activities and listening to the teacher.
115. There is a structured approach to teaching music. However, there is still a need to develop, record and relate their compositions. Good systems are in place for short-term assessment, however there are no formal systems in place for monitoring pupils' progress over time. Music continues to make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The links to other subjects are good, particularly to geography and PE.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. The previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment was generally in line with that expected for their age. The school has maintained these standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make at least satisfactory progress by the end of the key stage. Pupils in Year 1 consistently make good progress.
117. Pupils in Year 1 travel over and under a variety of apparatus displaying satisfactory levels of control and agility when jumping, climbing and balancing on the floor and apparatus. During the lessons, pupils link several movements and demonstrate their skills with confidence to the class. There are very good links with topic work in Year 2 and cultural links are enhanced well. Pupils listen to Indian or African music and produce a suitable range of movements to illustrate the mood and feelings of the music. Pupils responded well and danced co-operatively in pairs to produce sequences of movements to illustrate the snake charmer's music. In one Year 2 class, pupils listened carefully to slow music and could discuss how it made them feel 'sleepy'. However, on some occasions pupils sat for too long listening to music, which led to inactivity in the lesson and some pupils became restless. During swimming lessons all pupils observed safety rules at the pool, that is, 'no running' and behaved well throughout the lesson. All were keen to swim and a few could swim without flotation aids. All made a great effort to improve with two pupils swimming confidently on their backs.
118. Learning by all pupils is promoted well because attention is given to explaining how to improve performance. It could be enhanced further if more opportunities were taken to encourage pupils to comment on their own and each other's work. Pupils enjoy PE particularly when the teacher makes it fun, as in the 'beans game' warm up in Year 1. They have good attitudes and the majority display good behaviour during lessons. Pupils are keen and attentive; they listen carefully to the teachers' instructions following reminders about 'good listening'.
119. The quality of teaching is good overall and best in Year 1. Planning is clearly linked to the scheme of work. Teachers set a good example and are appropriately dressed to lead physical education lessons. They provide good opportunities for warm up and cool down at the beginning and end of lessons. In the best lessons, in Year 1, pupils check their pulse prior to the warm up and again afterwards. Following questioning, it is clear that they are aware of the reasons why they warm up prior to exercise. Obviously very good routines have been established with good attention to health and safety. This is evident when Year 1 pupils put the equipment away with good attention to lifting and carrying equipment correctly. In most lessons teachers use resources, including time, effectively; and take time to teach and reinforce skills. As a result pupils' learning and performance are enhanced. For example, following a demonstration and discussion of jumping and landing from apparatus, pupils' performance improved.
120. The subject is led satisfactorily by the new co-ordinator, who is enthusiastic and keen to develop a school scheme based on the QCA national guidance and school curriculum map. She has not had, as yet, the opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in physical education. There is a good balance of gymnastics, dance, games and, in Year 2, swimming. Each aspect is taught for half a term, which gives pupils good opportunities to learn and consolidate physical skills. There is still no consistent assessment of pupils' PE skills, which was an issue in the last report. Resources include a well-equipped hall with a wide range of large apparatus, but grassed and outside hard play areas are limited.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

121. Religious education at the time of the previous inspection was in line with the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and progress was satisfactory for pupils of seven years of age. Although this is still the case, there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils make sound progress in their understanding and knowledge of Christianity and that of other world faiths. There is no longer an over reliance on the use of collective worship to teach some of the RE curriculum. Teachers had relied too much on pupils recording the lesson by copying, writing and drawing a picture and there were insufficient opportunities for pupils to explore ideas through role-play, drama, handling artefacts or visiting places of worship. To address this, teachers are developing speaking and listening skills through oral lessons using a wide variety of strategies, resulting in very little written work to be seen.

Teachers' plans show, however, that the locally agreed syllabus for RE is now being covered satisfactorily.

122. Pupils in Year 1 are excited when they see the teachers with bags and sacks full of items. The very good use of enquiry questions and clues helps pupils to think about what will come next as the teacher slowly takes out one object after another. After the pupils have worked out the destination they have to decide how they think the teacher feels. They are then given the opportunity to work in pairs telling each other about a journey they have made. They begin to talk about their experiences and express their feelings. Some pupils use the words, 'special place', as they talk about journeys, but they do not think that all places are 'special', for instance, a visit to hospital or visiting someone who is sick. Very good relationships exist in these classes.
123. Year 2 pupils are building on their prior learning about Muslims, looking at their beliefs and the relationships between people and animals through listening to the story, 'Muhammad and the crying camel'. The pupils began to feel sorry for the camel and soon realised why it was crying. This resulted in much discussion about their own pets and how to look after them, not just giving them food and water, but love and respect.
124. In discussion with the pupils, they were happy to explain how the school had celebrated Diwali and Christmas. Pupils remembered making the little lamps named 'diva' and the importance of the diva lamp. A number of children celebrate Diwali and can explain what happens.
125. The co-ordinator is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses contained in the previous report and knows the changes that have taken place. She has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. She is aware that although some good improvement has taken place since the previous inspection, there are still some issues to address. As yet, there are no procedures in place to assess pupils' progress and achievements in religious education.