

INSPECTION REPORT

St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104380

Headteacher: Mrs O. C. Kolek

Reporting inspector: Mr P. M. Allen
17531

Dates of inspection: 11th – 13th March 2002

Inspection number: 211788

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 5 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Malins Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M. Holloway

Date of previous inspection: 15th March 1999

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17531	Mr P. Allen	Registered inspector	Music Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? What should the school do to improve further?
11474	Mr P. Berry	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17310	Mrs A. McAskie	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History	How well are pupils taught?
29381	Mrs A. Brangan	Team inspector	Science Geography Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22482	Mr B. Potter	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Teresa's Catholic Primary School is a just below average sized primary school. It serves a well-established housing estate with a mixed range of housing, to the west of Wolverhampton. The proportion of children who are Catholic is 24 per cent. Virtually all the children have had experience of pre-school education. Of the 182 pupils on roll, there are more boys than girls and, in some year groups there is a significant gender imbalance. Over 50 per cent of the children are of UK white heritage background, just under 40 per cent are from an Indian heritage background and 10 per cent are from a black Caribbean heritage background. There are 64 children for whom English is an additional language, of whom four are at an early stage of English language acquisition. There are seven classes, one for each year group. Thirty pupils are on the special educational needs register, this proportion being below the national average; none of them has a Statement of Special Educational Need. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. Although it varies from year to year, attainment on entry to the school is below what could be expected, especially in language and communication skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Overall, this is an effective school which is becoming more effective. The children are given a very good start to their schooling in the Reception year. The school is making good steps forward in its aim of raising standards. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are sound and in line with national averages at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. The staff are very conscientious and committed to the school. The quality of teaching in the Reception class is very good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is sound overall and sometimes good. The school benefits from the positive and caring leadership of the headteacher and gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- ◆ Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved at both key stages over recent years.
- ◆ The caring ethos of the school helps to promote very good harmony within its multi-ethnic community.
- ◆ The children in the Reception class are given a very good start to their schooling.
- ◆ The provision for spiritual and cultural development is very good. The provision for social and moral development is good.
- ◆ The staff work very hard and are committed to the school and its children.
- ◆ The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good.

What could be improved

- ◆ Standards across the school, especially in writing.
- ◆ The provision for information and communication technology and design and technology.
- ◆ The school's self-analysis of its performance and standards.
- ◆ The school's partnership with parents.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a steady improvement since its previous inspection in March 1999. Most, although not all, of the issues have been addressed. Progress and levels of attainment have improved in English, mathematics and science but not sufficiently so in information and communication technology. The school has developed schemes of work to promote progression in learning; these schemes are currently being reviewed. Most of the minor issues have been addressed, although there is still a need to further develop assessment, parental involvement in children's learning, homework and, most significantly, the provision for design and technology. Since the previous inspection the quality of teaching has improved with more effective planning and better teaching of basic skills; this has led to the improvement of standards in English, mathematics and science. The staff have a shared will and capacity to improve the quality of education and to continue to raise standards.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	D	D	C	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	E	C	C	A	
Science	C	C	C	B	

Virtually all the children in the youngest age group are likely to meet most of the nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals and a small minority are likely to exceed them. Standards at the end of Year 2 are sound and in line with national averages in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Year 6 are sound and in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. These standards are higher than those described in the previous report. All the evidence indicates that standards are rising in these core subjects. There is recognition in the school that standards need to be higher in written work. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory because pupils do not receive their full National Curriculum entitlement. Whilst standards in other subjects are mainly satisfactory, standards in design and technology are unsatisfactory because pupils do not currently have access to all the appropriate experiences. The school is setting targets, most notably at Key Stage 2, to improve upon its results in the core subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school, this being particularly marked in Reception and Year 1. Across the school most pupils work hard to achieve their best.
Behaviour, in and out	Behaviour is usually good across the school, including at

of classrooms	lunchtime when dining. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors.
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Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. There are good relationships between pupils and staff and between the pupils themselves.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. Except for a small minority, most pupils have good attendance records. Attendance figures are affected by long term holidays taken to visit relatives in India.

The pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and relationships have a positive impact on the quality of learning. Every pupil's contributions and efforts are valued.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	very good	satisfactory	satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching in the Reception class is very good. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Much of the teaching seen was in English and mathematics. The skills of literacy were taught soundly during the inspection, although there is a need to target raising standards in written work at both key stages. The skills of numeracy were usually taught well. The teaching generally meets the needs of the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The quality of teaching is enhanced by the good quality of support provided by the nursery nurses.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum is sound, except in design and technology and, most significantly, in information and communication technology; both are underrepresented in the timetable. Pupils are not given opportunities for swimming as part of the physical education curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is good and this is reflected in the good progress made by these pupils.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for the pupils is good. They achieve well and fit exceptionally well into the very harmonious family atmosphere.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for spiritual and cultural development and good provision for moral and social development; the pupils respond well in these areas.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school ensures the health, safety, care and protection of all pupils. The school is making good steps forward in its monitoring of attainment and progress.

The school needs to improve communication in further developing its partnership with parents, so that parents are more closely involved in the life of the school. The school is aware of and

beginning to address the need to provide an appropriate information and communication technology curriculum.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, helped by the deputy headteacher, is providing clear and positive leadership, with good support from the staff. The school is well managed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body needs to develop its role, to enable it to become more closely involved in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Although a positive start has been made in the school's self-analysis of its performance, this aspect of the school's work is insufficiently developed.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources except in information and communication technology. There are firm plans in place to allocate surplus income, for example in order to develop a computer room and an outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage.

The accommodation is relatively spacious. Teacher staffing is adequate and the school has valuably increased the level of classroom support. The school is well resourced in most, but not all, areas. Information and communication technology resources are underdeveloped and resources in some foundation subjects such as design and technology, history and geography need further development. The Reception class is under-resourced in outdoor play equipment. The school gives appropriate consideration to the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Of the 182 questionnaires sent out only 35 were returned, hence only the views of a small minority were represented.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The children like school. ◆ The good progress the children make. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Some parents are unclear about the school's expectations for homework ◆ Some parents feel that the school could be more approachable and does not work sufficiently closely with them ◆ Some feel they are not sufficiently well informed about their children's progress. ◆ Some feel there could be more extra-curricular activities.

Parents' concerns about the consistency and regularity of homework are understandable and the school has firm plans to review the arrangements to make them clearer. The number of extra-curricular activities is similar to those provided in most schools of a similar size. In terms of approachability and keeping parents better informed, it is clear that there is a need to

improve communication and the relationship between school and the parents. A close partnership can have a positive impact on the teaching and learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Raising standards is the school's main priority. At the time of the previous inspection in March 1999, standards were judged to be low and below national averages in English, mathematics and science at the end of both key stages. At Key Stage 1, whilst most achieved level 2, the expected standards for a typical 7 year old, in the tests, very few achieved the higher level 3; at Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils achieving level 4, the expected standards for a typical 11 year old, was well below average as was the proportion achieving the higher level 5.
2. A clear pattern was identified in the report of results at the end of both key stages which were well below national averages with pupils making insufficient progress. Standards in information and communication technology and in design and technology were also judged to be low across the school with pupils making unsatisfactory progress. This set of judgements informed the main key issues for action which were to improve the progress and overall attainment of pupils, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology are still unsatisfactory because pupils do not access the full range of experience in these subjects. The school has been successful in raising standards in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. At the time of the current inspection, standards were judged to be sound and in line with national averages at the end of Years 2 and 6 in each of the subjects.
3. A strength of the school is the very good teaching in the Foundation Stage by both the teacher and the nursery nurse. This ensures that children make a very positive start to school life, including those children with English as an additional language, several of whom start school at an early stage of English language acquisition. Assessments undertaken soon after children enter the Reception year indicate that, although there is a wide range of attainment which varies from year to year, overall attainment is below what could be expected, especially in language and communication skills. In the Reception year, the children achieve well relative to their abilities. This is the case for the children from each of the ethnic backgrounds represented in the school population. This progress and the standards the children attain are an improvement on those described in the previous report.
4. In the area of personal, social and emotional development and in knowledge and understanding of the world, the vast majority are in line to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of their Reception year and a small number are likely to exceed them. In communication, language and literacy, although the vast majority are likely to meet most of the goals, fewer will meet the higher level competencies in writing. A small number of children are likely to exceed the goals, through very good progress in reading. In the area of mathematical development, a small number will not reach the goals, although a small number will exceed them. In the physical area, all are likely to achieve the goals with a small number exceeding them, whilst in the creative area virtually all the children will meet the goals, with few, if any, likely to exceed them.
5. At the time of the inspection, standards at the end of Year 2 were judged to be satisfactory and broadly in line with national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. These judgements are reflected in the 2001 results in reading but not in writing and mathematics where standards were lower than those observed during the inspection.

Standards in science at the end of Year 2 are sound and in line with what is expected. Although overall standards vary from year to year with the different cohorts, national performance data indicates a steady rise in standards confirming that current standards across the school represent a clear improvement in each subject since the previous inspection in 1999.

6. Standards at the end of Year 6 are sound and in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science. This is clearly reflected in the 2001 results where standards in English and in science were in line with national averages and above those of similar schools, whilst standards in mathematics were in line with the national average and well above that for similar schools. National performance data analysing results over previous years, makes very clear the improvement in the results at Key Stage 2. Most pupils at both key stages are making good progress relative to their abilities. At both key stages, there is no evidence of significant variation in the performance of boys when compared with the performance of girls. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and the impact of this has enabled standards to rise.

7. The school is setting targets, most notably at Key Stage 2, to continue its improvement in standards in the core subjects. In spite of the overall improvement in standards in English, there is clear recognition in the school that its main priority is further raising standards in the area of written work. Improvements in writing have not matched those in reading. In recent years there have been too few pupils attaining level 3 in writing at Key Stage 1 and too few pupils attaining level 5 in the writing element of the Key Stage 2 tests. In 2001, in the writing aspect of the Key Stage 2 English tests, half of the pupils did not reach the appropriate level 4. The school has made a start in addressing its target of improving standards in writing but much remains to be done.

8. The previous report was critical of standards in information and communication technology and design and technology. Insufficient improvements have been made and consequently standards in these two subjects are still unsatisfactory. Standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory because pupils do not receive their full National Curriculum entitlement. Whilst standards in the other subjects are broadly satisfactory, standards in design and technology are unsatisfactory because pupils do not currently have access to all the appropriate experiences; design and technology is underrepresented in the curriculum.

9. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the school and this enables them to make good progress. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and this enables them to participate fully in lessons. Inspection evidence indicated that many of these pupils are outperforming their peers, most clearly in standards achieved in the Key Stage 2 tests. Too little has been done by the school to consider attainment by gender and by ethnicity and this needs to be addressed to better inform the school on its targets for improvement, as part of an ongoing process of self-analysis of its performance and standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils enjoy coming to school. Their attitudes towards learning are good across both key stages; in the Reception class the children's attitudes are very good. Children respond eagerly to their teachers' questions and usually listen attentively to information. During a Year 6 numeracy lesson, for example, the pupils demonstrated a keen interest in their work on a

temperature conversion graph and participated with enthusiasm in the mental arithmetic card game. This enthusiasm is evident in most lessons.

11. The standard of behaviour was judged to be good, even though a small number of parents indicated a concern about pupils' behaviour in school. During the inspection, there was a complete absence of oppressive or aggressive behaviour. There have been no exclusions in the period since the previous inspection and discussions with pupils supported the judgement that good behaviour is the norm. During the breaks, pupils play harmoniously, sometimes boisterously, but always in good spirit. Good orderly movement around the buildings allows the school to function efficiently.

12. The school is a welcoming establishment, where pupils and staff relate well to each other. There are good relationships between the pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils of all ages and both sexes mix well, with the older pupils caring for their younger friends. It is particularly evident that pupils of all racial backgrounds integrate harmoniously and the school is rightly proud of its record of successful social inclusion. There is a very high level of respect shown by the pupils for the feelings and opinions of others. Pupils collaborate well when required to work together and they are able to work with suitable concentration when working individually.

13. Pupils' personal development is sound. They accept responsibilities, such as being monitors to help with jobs around the classroom, although, as stated in the previous report, there could be more opportunities provided for pupils to develop their own initiative. The pupils are friendly, trustworthy and courteous. The Year 2 pupils benefit from a short residential visit and there is provision for educational visits and extra-curricular activities. The pupils participate in a wide range of work for local, national and international charities. The pupils' successful 'Day of Peace' in response to the events of September 2001, was widely praised in the press and the media.

14. The level of attendance is satisfactory but it is below the average for primary schools. There are a number of pupils whose attendance levels are below 80 per cent. Attendance figures are affected by long term holidays taken to visit relatives in India. The level of unauthorised absence is in line with that expected for primary schools. Late arrival by pupils had previously been a problem but, due to the school's efforts, pupils' promptness has greatly improved.

15. The school has a caring Christian family ethos, where the pupils gain in confidence and self-discipline. The pupils' good attitudes and behaviour have a positive impact on the quality of their learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. There have been significant improvements in teaching since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching during this inspection was very good in one seventh of lessons seen, good in one fifth and satisfactory in virtually all the rest. The quality of teaching in the Reception class and Year 1 is consistently good or very good enabling pupils to make a very positive start to their schooling. In the other classes it is satisfactory overall and sometimes it is good, particularly in Year 4. Most of the teaching seen in mathematics and music was good. Teaching is often less effective in the foundation subjects especially in design and technology. The teaching caters well for pupils with English as an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs.

17. Most of the issues raised at the previous inspection have been addressed and this is the main contributory factor in the improving standards found in English, mathematics and science. There is now a higher proportion of good teaching and unsatisfactory teaching has been almost eliminated. The quality of planning and day-to-day assessments has improved. Expectations of standards and amount of work are defined in learning objectives in lessons. Confidence in teaching information and communication technology has grown.

18. Teachers plan lessons in detail and identify what pupils are expected to learn. Where planning is most effective, teachers show good understanding of subjects and provide challenging activities which help pupils to make progress. Weaknesses occur where planning fails to take sufficient account of the pupils' various stages of learning. In these instances, there is sometimes too little difference in the level of challenge of written work set for the various abilities. This is particularly so in history, geography, art and design and design and technology.

19. Planning for literacy and numeracy lessons is thorough. Lessons are organised to allow most pupils to keep up with the work and to complete the tasks in the time available. In literacy lessons teachers use a range of texts which pupils enjoy; this is apparent in the enthusiasm which pupils have for reading. Appropriate attention is given to the teaching of grammar, punctuation, spelling and handwriting. In some classes too much emphasis is placed on exercises to reinforce these skills at the expense of free writing. Careful instruction is given in handwriting but teachers do not always insist on high enough standards when pupils produce independent written work.

20. Teachers are increasingly giving pupils opportunities to apply their literacy skills in other subjects such as history, where pupils were observed using skimming and scanning strategies to find information quickly and examining the difference between opinion and fact when studying historical texts. Teachers need to make more use of such opportunities. In writing, the teaching needs to provide more opportunities for writing for different purposes and audiences, together with more opportunities for extended writing, including the development of detail. In mathematics, pupils are becoming skilled in using a range of strategies for solving mental calculations. They enjoy the challenges which teachers set them. Where teaching is particularly good the teachers' own enthusiasm makes pupils interested and excited, so that they are eager to learn.

21. Teachers know their pupils well and carefully group them according to their needs. Good quality introductions to lessons usually include revision of work done previously. Clear instruction ensures that pupils know what they have to do. This was evident in a geography lesson where the teacher carefully explained the methods pupils had to use in an investigation about mountain rescue and also in science lessons where activities were well explained enabling pupils to start their work quickly and efficiently. Teachers generally use questions effectively to find out what pupils know and to make them think; for example, in a mathematics lesson where the teacher's searching questions required pupils to explain how constructing a line graph was appropriate for the task they were set. The teacher set high expectations in the quality of answers she would accept. There are times when question and answer sessions are less effective because teachers allow a few pupils to dominate in discussion and others to take little part.

22. Although much emphasis has recently been put on providing speaking and listening opportunities in the curriculum, these skills could be better developed. In classes of younger pupils, teachers often speak slowly and clearly with good expression, which helps to gain the

pupils' interest and ensures that they understand what is being said. Teachers make good use of the plenary session at the end of lessons to consolidate learning and to celebrate pupils' successes.

23. Classrooms are generally well organised and resources readily available and well used. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and in most lessons teachers effectively manage the behaviour of pupils, who generally respond with good co-operation and enthusiasm. Teachers ensure lessons are inclusive to all pupils. Good opportunities are provided for collaborative work where groups include an appropriate mix of boys, girls and the various ethnic groups. The harmony with which pupils work together and share is a strength of the school. Staff provide good support for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. The classroom support workers, who are all qualified nursery nurses, work very effectively, often with groups, and make a significant contribution to the quality of the teaching. The teachers are very appreciative of their work and the positive impact it has.

24. In the best lessons a stimulating range of activities captures the interests of the pupils. Teachers ensure that time targets given for completing work are met. The pace is brisk and teachers have high expectations of both the amount and quality of work produced. Where expectations are high pupils rise to the challenge, think independently and work well. Where teaching is less successful, the teacher's expectations of the amount and level of written work done is insufficiently high. In some classes teachers give insufficient guidance on the amount of written work they expect pupils to complete and consequently pupils are not as productive as they could be. Occasionally lessons are too long and pupils lose interest.

25. Work is marked regularly but marking standards are not consistent across the school. Insufficient use is made of teachers' comments which give pupils guidance on how they can improve their work. Homework is used to extend learning but there is some inconsistency in its use across the school. During the inspection there were times when information and communication technology was used effectively to support teaching and learning but this is an area for development. The school is aware of the need to build up a wide range of software to support learning in all areas of the curriculum.

26. An encouraging start has been made on the monitoring of teaching and learning as part of the school's targets to raise standards. The teaching and learning policy contains useful guidance for teachers on providing a high quality curriculum. The refinement of procedures to include more specific targets for improvement can enhance teacher performance, thus impacting on attainment and progress. In this way the school can become more effective.

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

27. The school offers a curriculum that appropriately places priority on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils are not receiving their full National Curriculum entitlement in information and communication technology. Additionally, pupils do not have all the appropriate experiences in design and technology. At the time of the previous report, both information and communication technology and design and technology provision were criticised and standards were judged to be unsatisfactory. The school is aware of these shortcomings and of the important need to address them. All staff have attended training to increase their knowledge and expertise in information and communication technology. Access

to training in design and technology has proved difficult and the school is seeking ways of providing training in this subject. The statutory requirement for swimming within the physical education programme of study at Key Stage 2 is not being met. The school needs to resolve this and ensure full access to the pool at the local secondary school which helpfully incurs no transport costs.

28. Health education, including sex education and drugs awareness, is provided by the school with support from the school nurse. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is sound. Pupils are taught the principles of healthy living and healthy eating in science and in physical education they are taught about the effects of exercise on their bodies.

29. The teaching and learning for the youngest children is a strength of the school. A good range of experiences enables the vast majority of these children to meet the nationally prescribed Early Learning Goals. Good principles for Foundation Stage education effectively support the high quality of teaching, the good management of support staff and the use of the broad range of stimulating resources, which will be significantly improved with the planned outdoor play area.

30. Curriculum planning has improved significantly since the last inspection but now needs to more clearly cover information and communication technology and design and technology. Overall, medium term planning is now more consistent across the school and is monitored by co-ordinators. There are now agreed criteria for short term planning. Schemes of work have improved since the previous inspection and are now in place with ongoing review for all subjects. The foundation subjects mainly follow the national schemes of guidance. All subject policies have been recently reviewed and updated.

31. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported and provision for them is good across both key stages. At the time of the inspection there were 30 pupils on the register of special educational needs. The school has amended its documentation to take into account the revised Code of Practice for special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs have clear and helpful individual education plans, including appropriate targets, mainly based on literacy and numeracy skills. These are regularly monitored and reviewed. Parents are closely involved and there is good support from the nursery nurses and the local education authority's support service. Very good use of the co-ordinator's expertise is now in place, including release time to discuss these pupils with their class teachers, enabling staff to write plans co-operatively. This is an improvement since the previous report which identified a lack of precision in the individual education plan targets and insufficient guidance for class teachers.

32. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and at the time of the inspection there were four pupils at the early stage of English language acquisition. A teacher with special responsibility for these pupils was on sick leave at the time of the inspection; a bilingual assistant was providing temporary support. The 64 pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated into the school's harmonious community and many attain very well as their language and communication skills continue to develop. Pupils of all abilities receive equal access to the curriculum provided. The school is becoming increasingly aware of the entitlement of the higher attaining pupils and a policy has been written to guide their provision. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the time of the previous inspection.

33. Overall, the school has effective strategies for teaching both literacy and numeracy and these are having a positive impact on attainment in English and mathematics. Nevertheless,

more effective strategies are needed to target improvement in writing across the school. Learning objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons and there are useful plenary sessions when work is reviewed. Booster teaching for individuals or small groups in literacy and numeracy is helping raise standards across both key stages.

34. The school has satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities. There are three recorder groups, an activities club, cycling proficiency and a computer club. Friendly football matches are played throughout the year with other primary schools. A sewing club has been recently introduced. The number of extra-curricular activities is similar to those provided in most schools of a similar size.

35. Pupils have opportunities to visit places of interest to complement the topics being studied. These include Twycross Zoo, Harvington Hall, the Black Country Museum and a day in London. Year 2 pupils benefit from an annual residential one night stay at the Kingswood Activity Centre where they learn about plants, habitats and land use, comparing it with their own environment. Pupils also benefit from visitors to the school such as a potter working alongside the pupils supporting their efforts. The 'Timezone' history group brought the era of the Romans and Celts alive by dressing up the pupils and re-enacting battle scenes. The pupils well remember being taught 'Roman writing using feathers and ink'. An African musician demonstrated and involved the pupils in African music and dancing. All these activities add value to the curriculum, adding a richness and quality to the pupils' experiences.

36. The community makes an effective contribution to the pupils' learning. The school lays considerable emphasis on promoting a Catholic ethos and is successful in developing Christian values. The priest is a frequent visitor to the school and says Mass, to which parishioners are invited. Pupils visit the elderly at Bethrey House to sing carols in December and perform a selection of songs in the spring term. A Jamaican parent created a display in the Reception area about her home country using the flag, national costume, Anansi (a mythical spider), food and the national flower. Another Indian parent gave a talk to the Year 4 class about her life in India. She compared the way of life in India with Parkfields. Through these experiences the school encourages pupils to learn to respect the values and beliefs of other pupils and adults.

37. Children are well prepared for admission to school through close liaison with local nursery schools. Links with the secondary school are very effective. Years 5 and 6 enjoy the opportunity to visit their new school which provides information and communication technology and athletics 'taster' days.

38. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development and good provision for their moral and social development. The pupils respond well in these areas. In the daily act of worship, pupils are given many opportunities to reflect on the world around them and about such things as love and peace. The school choir recorded their own CD 'The Light of the World' as part of their very successful 'Day of Peace' campaign.

39. Throughout the school, there are many spiritual focal points, such as the candles in the entrance hall. Awe and wonder are inspired by the good range of artefacts, posters and paintings displayed throughout the school. Spiritual education starts in the Reception class where the significance of life is celebrated in many ways; for example, through 'Slither' the pet snake, the incubation of chick eggs and the growing of bean plants. The word 'special' is regularly used by all staff in order to signify distinctive and unique qualities.

40. Provision for pupils' moral and social development continues to be good. The school teaches the principles that distinguish right from wrong. Each class has its own set of rules, which have been developed by the pupils. Pupils know the school's rules and respond accordingly. Pupils' self-esteem is promoted through the celebration of achievements in assemblies and within each classroom. Pupils learn to trust each other and play in harmony. They are encouraged to take responsibility and to develop an understanding of the effect of their actions upon the lives of others. They learn to value truthfulness and fairness. Many charities are supported, such as the CAFOD fund. Social development is fostered through the educational and residential visits.

41. The pupils' cultural development is very good and has improved considerably since the previous report. Locally the school had great success in a local education authority competition, as a consequence of which the Christmas cards from both the Mayor and the Director of Education used drawings by St. Teresa's pupils. Amongst the educational visits are trips to the London War Cabinet Museum for Year 6, a history museum for Year 5 and Harvington Hall for Year 4. In geography, the pupils learn to contrast life in their own urban area with that in the rural village of nearby Trysull, whilst others look further afield, studying Tocvaro, a Mexican village. The diversity of cultures from all over the world is reflected in the many good displays and artefacts around the school. 'Barnaby Bear' takes trips around the world in a number of displays. Visitors into the school have contributed to the work on village life in India and also the Jamaican culture. The school is currently trying to develop a book of world cookery recipes with help from pupils' friends and families. In these ways, the school promotes a celebration of the ethnic diversity of the cultures represented in the school population.

42. The very good provision for spiritual and cultural development and the good provision for social and moral development impact positively on all aspects of school life. It makes a significant contribution to the harmony and peace that are evident within the school. The provision in these areas is a strength of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school has a commitment to raising standards and assessment has improved since the previous inspection, especially in the use of evaluation of lessons to inform future planning.

44. Very good procedures are in place for assessing attainment in the Foundation Stage in all the required areas of learning. Recording systems are detailed and thorough. Assessments are made on entry and at the end of the Foundation Stage using guidelines provided by the local education authority. These ensure that pupils receive any necessary extra support at an early stage. Assessment is well used in planning to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met.

45. Throughout the school procedures for assessing and recording of attainment are satisfactory. Much work has recently been done to develop assessment techniques through moderation exercises and scrutiny of planning for assessment opportunities. Achievements in all subjects are entered in 'gathering records' which are passed to the next teacher at the end of each academic year. In English, mathematics and science, work is regularly moderated and examples included in a school portfolio. Individual targets are set for pupils each half term.

46. From Year 2 onwards, pupils are involved in setting personal targets. These targets need to be more specific to reflect higher expectations of the amount and level of work set and ensure that success can be more easily measured. Older pupils are given exemplar materials in English and made aware of what they need to do in order to make their work better. Teachers' marking of written work is inconsistent across the school; it is often confined to ticks and words of praise and does not focus sufficiently on how the pupil might

improve. The policy needs revising to provide more helpful guidelines. Arrangements for reporting to parents can be enhanced by providing more than one consultation evening for parents to discuss progress.

47. The school is beginning to focus on the collection of data and to analyse and interpret the results of pupils' attainment in national tests. This work is at an early stage of development and currently only the senior management team is involved. There is a recognition of the need to include all teachers so that information from the analysis of results can be used to help in setting teaching objectives and targets for inclusion in the school development plan and subject action plans.

48. The school provides a happy, caring, family environment for its pupils. There are many good policies and procedures, which underpin the practical support and guidance for the pupils and ensure that pastoral matters are dealt with promptly. The staff know the pupils well and provide good supervision. Pupils' individual needs are well met throughout the school; particularly good provision is made for those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Parents spoke highly of this aspect of the school's provision and particularly praised the welcome given to new starters in the Reception class, where the children are made to feel very special. Should any pupils have concerns, the school operates a useful 'Worry Box' where notes can be posted to alert staff.

49. The staff are generally well versed in the school's procedures, although there is no formal staff handbook available for new or temporary staff. The good behaviour and anti bullying policies, together with the class rules, are consistently applied in order to maintain appropriate discipline. The school monitors and promotes attendance well; a very capable and supportive bilingual education welfare officer works closely with the school. Registers are generally completed in line with statutory requirements but there is some inconsistency and some informality in the completion and the tallying.

50. Arrangements for child protection matters are good, being covered by the designated teacher; other staff are suitably trained. There are an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid but this could be extended further, for example, to all midday supervisors. The school maintains an appropriate accident book and is improving its recording procedures to include minor accidents such as head bumps. External agencies, including the school nurse, give good support.

51. Personal, social and health education is delivered across the curriculum, particularly in religious education lessons, and through 'circle time' for the younger pupils. There is no formal policy or planning of delivery to ensure that all topics are adequately covered. The school does have suitable sex and drugs education policies. A healthy lifestyle is promoted. Although education in safety matters is generally covered, the school needs to ensure that it makes suitable arrangements for pupils to receive swimming lessons. There is a good health and safety policy, regular recorded inspections are undertaken and the staff carry out risk assessments where necessary. The playgrounds would benefit if larger areas and better

surfacing could be provided. The conscientious caretaker and her cleaning staff keep the school clean and tidy.

52. The promotion of pupils' personal development is good with celebration of achievement being given a high profile. The school is successful in meeting its aims and fulfilling its mission statement. Effective support and guidance is provided to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. This enhances the quality of education and supports the standards that are achieved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. The school has a good partnership with its parents in the Reception and Key Stage 1 classes. Evidence indicates that the partnership is less effective with parents of children in the Key Stage 2 classes. This deterioration seems partly linked to the break up of the Parents' Association a couple of years ago and partly due to an apparent lack of interest amongst some parents. The school has tried, for example, to put on curricular information events for parents but there has been a poor response. The loss of interest is also shown in the significant reduction in the percentage return of inspection questionnaires for this inspection, compared to the previous one. The school may need to put more effort into better communications, particularly with those parents who do not have close contact with the school.

54. In the inspection questionnaire, one third of the small number of returns were generally negative. Discussions with parents at the pre-inspection meeting and at the school gates during the inspection gave a more positive picture. Virtually all parents of younger children said that they had no concerns and the teachers were very approachable. With the parents of older children there were some concerns noted regarding accessibility, a number believing that it was necessary to have a formal appointment, which is contrary to the school's policy. Several parents gave opposing views, citing the accessibility of the staff. The school needs to more clearly promote approachability.

55. The school provides a sound range of information for parents. There is a regular newsletter and occasional booklets detailing curricular information. The school has a good prospectus and the governing body's annual report is well presented. The pupils' end of year reports have suitable comments on the individual pupils' progress but there is little detail on attainment, other than the statutory information in Years 2 and 6. The school is aware of the necessity to amend the reports for the Foundation Stage to reflect the areas of learning rather than the subjects of the National Curriculum. Many parents indicated that they would like better information on their children's progress with at least one additional parent consultation evening each year; currently the school has only one such event at the end of the school year, although it does have a class group session for parents in the autumn term. The school is beginning to develop its use of targets for pupils, which it shares with the parents.

56. Although the school does have an appropriate homework policy, a number of parents were unclear on the requirements and viewed the provision to be inconsistent. Where the homework diaries are properly used, there is evidence of the policy working well but discussions with pupils indicated that the provision does not always match the policy. The school has firm plans to review the homework arrangements and make them clearer. Some parents would prefer more extra-curricular activities but the inspection judges the provision to be similar to that provided by most schools of a similar size. The parents' involvement with the school is minimal, although helpers are available for trips, there is currently little help provided in school.

57. Overall, the school has a sound partnership with its parents although there are misconceptions on both sides. In the pre-inspection documentation the school noted a very good partnership with parents, which is clearly not the case for some Key Stage 2 parents, whose perception of school is one of poor accessibility. The school is aware of the need to take the lead in rebuilding bridges to create a better partnership with parents, by improving communications where necessary and ensuring that parents' involvement in school life is increased, so that it better benefits the quality of education provided for the pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The headteacher is very conscientious, providing positive and caring leadership. With the good support of the deputy headteacher and staff, the headteacher is managing change and giving a clear direction for the development and improvement of the school.

59. The outcome of the previous inspection left the school with considerable challenges, especially concerned with raising standards and issues concerning the monitoring of teaching and curriculum development. The school has made satisfactory improvements in addressing these issues. Various strategies were put in place and there has been some success in meeting their objectives. There still remain issues concerning the headteacher's monitoring role which she and senior management need to continue to address further by further developing self-evaluation across the school through systematic review of all aspects of school life, leading to targets for improvement. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm and commitment of the staff gives the school a good capacity for further improvement.

60. The aims of the school that focus on the social and personal development of the individual are well promoted, relationships are good and Christian principles underpin all its work. All staff, including the nursery nurses, are working hard and are committed to raising standards with equal opportunity for all pupils. The school acknowledges the diversity of faiths and cultures within the school community and takes appropriate opportunity to celebrate the festivals that are part of the heritage of cultures represented in the school.

61. The headteacher communicates effectively with the staff and governors to ensure that everyone understands the school's priorities for development and that they are working successfully as a team towards the same goals. She maintains a good balance between the strategic administrative element of her work and a growing impetus to improve the monitoring element. Working closely with the deputy headteacher, she monitors the work of the teachers in the classroom and has satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of all staff. As a result of this work and the provision of training, which has resulted in a teaching force that is now more knowledgeable and confident, standards of teaching have improved since the previous inspection.

62. Members of the senior management team have clear areas of responsibility and are effectively deployed in their roles. The role of subject leaders is at various stages of development. In English, mathematics and science, for example, teachers work hard in their roles to monitor standards and evaluate the effectiveness of pupils' learning. In other areas of the curriculum some monitoring also takes place and subject leaders write biannual reports about their subject which feed into the school development plan and have implications for resource provision. The performance management procedures now in place ensure that all teachers are subject to a regular review of their teaching.

63. Governors, the headteacher and senior management all understand their roles in performance management. Performance management targets are based upon the evaluation of previous work and related to the schools' improvement objectives. These good procedures have helped to focus teachers' attention on to the school's priorities and what they can do to help to address those needs and raise standards.

64. The school has a part time teacher, funded by an Ethnic Minority Additional Grant, to support the social and academic needs of pupils from ethnic minorities, including those with English as an additional language. This teacher was on sick leave during the period of inspection but it is not apparent that the attainment of these pupils is specifically monitored in order to improve resources and identify any group or groups which may not be achieving as well as other groups. Successfully addressing this matter could have significant impact upon the overall standards of attainment in the school.

65. The governing body fulfils its legal duties satisfactorily and overall is effective in its work. Governors are supportive of the school and its headteacher and, for the most part, are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. There are good procedures to ensure that individual governors are kept well informed but overall there is a need to develop their roles to enable them to become more involved in monitoring the work of the school and be more involved in shaping the direction of the work of the school. The governing body has appropriately appointed link governors for special educational needs, health and safety, training, equal opportunities and road safety.

66. The school has established effective and efficient working practices to plan, manage and monitor its finances. Budget setting is satisfactorily linked to development planning and reflects the educational needs of the pupils. The current large underspend has arisen over several years. The school has very good plans to reduce this amount which will much improve the use of existing space in the school, partly through the creation of an outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage. There are plans to enhance security and provide disabled access. Importantly, it will provide additional space for the information and communication technology suite, the provision of which will enable the school to provide much enhanced opportunities for pupils to develop essential computer skills.

67. For administrative purposes, the school makes satisfactory use of computers. Financial control and day-to-day administration by the secretary is good. This is a well managed school. Specific grants received by the school are used for the purpose for which they are intended and there is a detailed record of how the money is spent. For example, good use of additional funding can be seen in the high quality of support provided across the classes.

68. Arrangements for the induction of new staff to the school are very informal. The school does not have a named induction mentor, these duties being carried out informally by the headteacher and her deputy. Teacher staffing is adequate and the school has valuably increased the level of classroom support. The trained and effective support staff are well deployed, providing good support for teachers. The attainment, progress and self-esteem of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are particularly enhanced by their work.

69. The accommodation is relatively spacious. Classroom accommodation is good and adjoining teaching and work areas are satisfactorily used. The school is well maintained by the caretaker and is enhanced by some good quality displays that support and value pupils' achievement. The Christian ethos of the school is very apparent in many displays. The large

library is in the process of development and consequently was not well used during the inspection.

70. Outdoor provision is satisfactory, with both hard and grassed areas. The playground has had some remedial work to improve its safety but further work is likely to be needed in the not too distant future. Resources are satisfactory in most, but not all areas. Information and communication technology resources are underdeveloped and resources in other foundation subjects, such as design and technology, history and geography need further development. The Reception class is under-resourced in outdoor play equipment.

71. Effective procedures are in place for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs; the school has responded quickly to ensure compliance with the new national guidelines. Analysis and review of the attainment of boys and girls and the attainment of pupils from differing ethnic backgrounds is underdeveloped in the school, and, as such an area for development. Nevertheless, the quality of care within the school ensures that all pupils are treated as individuals and this enriches the quality of education provided.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors' action plan will set out how the areas for improvement identified during the inspection are to be addressed.

In order to further raise standards and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ Raise standards across the school, especially in writing by:
 - *developing target setting based on National Curriculum level descriptors;*
 - *promoting greater productivity on the part of the pupils;*
 - *raising expectations of what the higher attainers can achieve;*
 - *continuing to develop the good support for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language;*
 - *improving the quality of marking to better promote high standards;*
 - *continuing to raise the profile of writing in the school;*
 - *creating more opportunities for pupils to write for a variety of purposes and audiences;*
 - *giving pupils more opportunities for extended writing, including the development of detail;*
 - *giving pupils more opportunities to write and make a personal response in foundation subjects;*
 - *improving and making more consistent the standards of presentation and handwriting;*

(paragraphs 7, 18, 19, 20, 24, 33, 94, 100, 105, 107, 109, 123 and 141)

- ◆ Improve the provision for information and communication technology and design and technology by:
 - *continuing to develop confidence through information and communication technology training;*

- *continuing to review, extend and renew computer provision;*
- *developing a range of software to support learning in all areas of the curriculum, except for physical education;*
- *providing more routine use of computers in all classrooms;*
- *building up staff confidence through design and technology training;*
- *further developing resources in design and technology;*
- *systematically ensuring that pupils have regular and full access to the programmes of study in design and technology;*

(paragraphs 2, 8, 25, 27, 30, 126, 135, 137, 138, 151, 152, 153, 155 and 157)

◆ Develop self-evaluation of the school's performance by:

- *close scrutiny of all available data to analyse pupils' performance by gender and by ethnic background in order to develop target setting to enable all pupils to achieve as well as they can;*
- *the monitoring of all aspects of provision, including standards, resources and planning;*
- *developing a systematic approach to subject evaluation;*
- *the continuation of structured monitoring of teaching and learning which includes target setting and review;*

(paragraphs 9, 26, 47, 59, 64, 109 and 117)

◆ Improve the school's partnership with parents by:

- *giving consideration to 'open house' sessions for parents during the day;*
- *canvassing the views of parents to identify any concerns;*
- *improving communication at all levels;*
- *encouraging parents to become more involved in their children's learning by helping in school;*
- *reviewing and making clearer the homework arrangements;*
- *providing more than one consultation evening;*
- *raising the profile of the governors in adding their support to this.*

(paragraphs 53, 54, 55, 56 and 57)

In addition to the above areas, the following less critical areas should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 27, 65, 164 and 166:

- ◆ The provision of swimming lessons;
- ◆ The involvement of the governing body.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	20	17	2	0	0
Percentage	0	15	44	37	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	58

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	64

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.6

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 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	13	15	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	11	10	13
	Total	22	20	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (75)	71 (88)	86 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	11
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	20	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (72)	75 (94)	82 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	13	19	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	12
	Girls	13	15	16
	Total	23	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (83)	75 (76)	88 (97)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	8	10
	Girls	16	15	16
	Total	24	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (69)	72 (76)	81 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	17
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	6
Indian	63
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	77
Any other minority ethnic group	24

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23 : 1
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	123

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	401,224
Total expenditure	405,271
Expenditure per pupil	1,968
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,149
Balance carried forward to next year	21,102

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	182
Number of questionnaires returned	35

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	40	6	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	34	54	6	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	40	14	3	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	37	20	9	0
The teaching is good.	43	43	8	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	26	23	14	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	26	6	11	11
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	29	3	5	6
The school works closely with parents.	26	40	25	6	3
The school is well led and managed.	46	29	16	9	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	43	3	5	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	26	23	19	9

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

72. The very good teaching in the Foundation Stage (Reception class) ensures that the children make a very positive start to school life. This is one of the school's strengths. The provision has improved since the previous inspection and children are making better progress. Although levels of attainment vary from year to year, baseline assessments made soon after the start of the Reception year indicate that standards are below what could be expected, especially in speaking and listening and early writing skills. The early assessments indicate that few children, if any, exceed the expectations in listening and none meet the higher expectations in speaking. This is partly because there are a significant number of children with English as an additional language, including a small number at an early stage of language acquisition. Initially, this has a negative impact on the standards achieved, especially in communication, language and literacy and in knowledge and understanding of the world, but with the patience and care of the staff, children start to develop very quickly in their acquisition of English so that by the end of their time in Reception, progress has been marked, enabling children to better access all the learning opportunities on offer.

73. The quality of education in Reception is good in spite of the lack of an outdoor play area. The Reception class benefits from the very good support of a full time nursery nurse. A feature of the teaching is the excellent partnership between the teacher and the nursery nurse, providing opportunities for children to learn well with high expectations, thus enabling them to achieve well relative to their abilities. The nursery nurse and the experienced teacher provide a consistent, very supportive approach.

74. A lot of thought and co-operation goes into planning the work, which makes good use of the good range of resources which support most of the areas of learning. The school has firm plans to develop a secure outdoor environment with a range of large toys and equipment. This should enable the children to enjoy experiences across the areas of experience within an outdoor play setting. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the hard work and sensitivity of the staff. All staff are warm and caring and every child is valued as an individual. The supportive relationships enable the children to feel happy during their introduction to school. All the parents spoken to were very appreciative of this. Self-esteem is promoted all the time, with the words 'Well done' being heard throughout the sessions. This has a strong impact on the children's attitudes to learning. A lot of informal assessments are undertaken and there is a useful, coherent system for recording individual children's progress in each of the areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. If the current rate of progress continues, the vast majority of the children are in line to meet the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning, although few, if any, are likely to exceed them. This represents very good progress. Success in this area is due to the excellent level of care and the very good teaching which the children receive.

76. The area of personal and social development is seen as a priority and children progress very well in this area. Children gain confidence in a range of familiar and new situations; they establish effective relationships with the adults. They learn to select and use activities and resources independently; for example, when making choices from water and

sand play, role-play, construction, painting and writing. Children learn to share and take turns such as when using the computer.

77. They learn to share equipment without difficulty, are kind to one another and learn to cooperate well. The staff's expectations are high. The children are enthusiastic about their learning and become well engaged. They learn to listen attentively to stories such as favourite ones like 'The Enormous Turnip' and 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. The adults encourage the children to become independent so that they become confident in making choices and making decisions. Each day a child is nominated as a 'very special person' and expected to bring something 'very special' to school. During the inspection one child brought a polyanthus flower which provided a very useful focus point. This reflects the ethos of care and the value of every individual. The adults provide good role models and treat the children with respect and friendliness.

78. The children have a positive approach to all the new experiences on offer and most are happy to work both with or without adult supervision and are willing to join in with adult initiated activities. Their enthusiasm is clear to see. Children show curiosity when looking at the fish and the tadpoles. They are fascinated with the incubation of eggs. They show curiosity when learning about the properties of the many materials available, such as water, sand and play dough and when accessing new images by clicking the computer mouse. The quality of learning is good and children make very good progress.

Communication, language and literacy

79. In this area of learning the vast majority of children will meet the Early Learning Goals, but a smaller number will meet the higher level competencies such as those concerned with writing. A very small number are likely to exceed the goals. A strong emphasis is placed on early reading skills and most children make good progress in this area. Competency in this area accesses all other areas and so is given a high profile. As many children arrive at school with limited language skills, including ones with little or no English, the promotion of speaking skills is a very high priority.

80. The children listen attentively in a large group. They enjoy familiar stories such as 'The Gingerbread Man' and 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt'. The children show good listening skills, enjoying stories at the listening station. They are learning to follow instructions; for example, when playing letter recognition games. They have a growing vocabulary which shows very good progress over time. They take part in imaginative play in 'Storyland', enacting the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Although they enjoy sharing and choosing books from the very good selection, they have few opportunities to take books home.

81. The teaching in 'circle time' makes an important contribution to speaking and listening as do the many opportunities for working with small groups. In one such time observed, the children were using coloured play dough to create sunflowers. 'We need to share', said one child and the others agreed.

82. The children listen attentively in assemblies and show good understanding of what is said to them in response to the teacher's questions and explanations. They 'trace' copy adults' writing, sometimes off the chalkboard and start to write independently. They enjoy books and develop word recognition skills. The vast majority are making very good progress in early reading skills. Imaginative use is made of a 'word ladder' and a 'washing line' to promote 'sounding out of letters and word recognition. A sound range of information and communication technology software helps the children to reinforce and practise their skills.

There are plans to further develop the amount of software. The quality of teaching in this area is very good.

Mathematical development

83. In this area of learning, the vast majority of children will probably meet the Early Learning Goals and a small number will exceed them. Although the children work well across the various aspects of mathematical development, a number are less confident in using and applying number because of their limited language development. This is especially the case with children for whom English is an additional language who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Quite quickly the children show confidence in counting to nine and some can count beyond that. Most join in the excellent range of number rhymes, counting games and begin to learn to write numbers. They learn to sequence events such as the times of the day and are beginning to sequence days of the week.

84. Children enjoy games which involve matching, sorting and sequencing. Many opportunities are taken for counting and practical activities which promote number recognition. Some children are able to match and recognise, numbers to 20. Children are encouraged to recognise and use mathematical and positional language confidently; for example, words like 'bigger', 'smaller', 'above', 'below' and 'behind'. Higher attainers can work out one more or one less than a number from one to ten and, in practical activities and discussion, they begin to use the vocabulary involved in adding and subtracting. They are given a good range of mathematical experiences and opportunities to practise these skills. Very good teaching was observed in this area of development, resulting in the very good progress made in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. In this area of learning the vast majority of children are likely to meet the goals and a small number, mainly those with good language skills, will exceed them. The children who have difficulty in expressing themselves and in sharing their knowledge, attain less well in this area. Although in the main the children are given a good range of experiences to help them to find out about the world and they make good progress working towards the required competencies, few opportunities are provided to go out of school to learn about the local area. They learn about their own history in the family through time lines, making use of photographs. They look at old teddy bears and study Victorian toys and games. They enjoy using construction kits to make models and making pancakes to celebrate Shrove Tuesday.

86. They learn about the seasons of the year and the characteristics of each one. They plant two sorts of beans and measure their growth; they grow, paint and model sunflowers. They gain an understanding of hibernation through the habits of 'Slither' the class snake. At the time of the inspection, the children were eagerly counting down the days to when the incubated chicken eggs would be likely to hatch.

87. Although the children enjoy using the computers independently and show appropriate levels of skill in controlling the mouse to play various games, there is recognition of the need to further develop software to better support this aspect of the work. The children begin to learn about their own cultures and heritages partly through learning more about festivals such as Diwali and Christmas. The quality of the teaching observed in this area was good.

Physical development

88. Although many children attain better in gross motor skills compared with fine motor skills, they are all likely to attain the goals for this area of learning, with a small number likely to exceed them. Children enter the school with a wide range of physical abilities. The standards of attainment are affected by the lack of a designated outdoor activity area for children in the Foundation Stage. Children can only engage in energetic physical activity during their physical education lessons and at playtime. There are no opportunities for children to choose to work out of doors or to develop their skills of co-ordination and balance through using wheeled toys and large equipment.

89. There are firm plans for an outdoor play area to be created and for the development of appropriate resources, as the school is aware of this gap in its provision. Early on, children learn to hold a pencil, control a paintbrush effectively and join pieces of construction kits. Fine motor skills are developed through a range of activities such as cutting, sticking, modelling and manipulating mouldable materials and, as a result, most begin to control their fingers and hands well. They handle tools, objects and materials safely, although the provision could be improved to include opportunities for using equipment such as saws, hammers and nails. Children use the computer mouse with increasing control. The quality of teaching observed in this area of learning, such as that seen in the development of fine motor skills, was good.

Creative development

90. Virtually all the children are likely to achieve the goals, although few, if any, are likely to exceed them. Children enjoy the creative area of learning which is well taught and well provided for in the classroom. They paint and experiment with a good range of resources. They can recognise the primary colours red, blue and yellow and they use crayons and felt tips to create increasingly colourful drawings. They create colourful sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. They do careful observational drawings of fruit and vegetables and also model them in play dough.

91. During the year, children increasingly use their imagination in art, dance, imaginative play and role-play involving traditional fairy stories. They sing simple songs from memory, begin to recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns and match movements to music. They use instruments to depict the story of 'Humpty Dumpty' in sound. They sing a very good range of number rhymes, action songs and nursery rhymes. The quality of imaginative play is generally good and children enjoy playing in the role-play area. The provision for the creative area of learning offers a good variety of experiences and is well taught, being an important part of the provision for the Foundation Stage. The teacher and the nursery nurse are very committed to the children. The very good relationships underpin the teaching and the learning. The children respond well to the high expectations made of them, enabling them to make good progress.

ENGLISH

92. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory and in line with national averages. In reading they are above average compared with those found in similar schools. Attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national averages and above that found in similar schools. These standards are higher than those described at the previous inspection and the evidence suggests that standards are steadily rising and that pupils are making satisfactory progress. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

93. Judgements in English are made on lesson observations, mainly those made of the literacy hour in each of the classes, talking with pupils and hearing readers. They are also based on a close and detailed examination of pupils' work in all subjects, on work on display and on data and information collected from the school's records and assessments, including those of individual pupils.

94. The school has addressed most of the issues raised at the previous inspection and has worked hard since then to raise standards. In addition to the literacy hour, each class now has a period of extended writing each week to increase the range of writing purposes. There is a recognition in the school that standards of written work need to be higher. The policy gives appropriate guidance with special reference to providing opportunities for developing writing across the curriculum. There is too little evidence of writing in other subjects being used effectively to raise writing standards and this is an area for further development. The introduction of a handwriting scheme has improved the speed with which pupils work but the standard of handwriting and presentation is still not always sufficiently high. Although the quality of writing in handwriting books is satisfactory and often good, written work in other books does not always reflect the pupils' best efforts.

95. The variety of reading and reference books has been increased and the school is now adequately resourced with appropriate texts. During the inspection little use was made of the library. The plans for development of this room as a research centre suffered a recent set back when all the resources provided were stolen. Teachers use assessment well to plan appropriate work and record keeping is consistent throughout the school. The language co-ordinator now plays a more active role in monitoring teaching and learning through scrutiny of planning and pupils' work. The school has appreciated the guidance it has received from the local education authority support team in helping to raise standards.

96. The school has worked hard to improve opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills and pupils have made steady progress. Such activities as dramatising stories, circle drama, reading favourite poems to the class, 'minute talks' and freeze frames have provided opportunities for pupils to speak clearly and confidently. Recent staff development led by a local storyteller and writer with a focus on speaking, listening and drama has helped to build staff confidence. Although much emphasis has recently been put on providing speaking and listening opportunities in the curriculum, skills could be better developed in introductions to English lessons when sometimes teachers accept answers from volunteers and fail to encourage the more reluctant pupils to take part.

97. Pupils make a good start to their learning. When they enter the school many pupils lack confidence in speaking and their listening skills are not well developed. The very good teaching they receive in the Reception year equips them well for the National Literacy Strategy. By the age of 7 pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other and are able to follow instructions. Most of them talk confidently in small groups, to the whole class and to adults, about their experiences, and are beginning to express their own ideas and personal preferences. They listen carefully to stories, instructions and questions. They answer simple questions appropriately,

98. In Year 1, the teacher begins to promote a love of books. Pupils are taught to find information from pictures and word shape. Together the teacher and pupils examine books to find the title, author and illustrator and they learn about the contents page and index. They begin to distinguish between books which tell them stories and those where they find

information about such things as minibeasts. Young pupils enjoy reading in the teacher directed groups and class reading sessions or when reading to an adult.

99. Good systematic teaching of basic skills enables pupils to learn their letter sounds and develop a sight vocabulary of key words. When reading individually, they use their phonic knowledge to build simple words. By the end of Year 2, many are confident readers. Most have developed sufficient fluency, accuracy and understanding to enable them to read aloud with expression and to effectively use books and worksheets for written assignments. They successfully use a range of reading cues to help them to read unfamiliar words. They spell simple words correctly from memory and the pupils of higher ability competently use simple dictionaries to help them spell more complicated words.

100. Pupils write for a range of purposes; for example, retelling fairy stories, writing prayers and poems. They use the structures of poems and stories which they have read, to produce their own writing; for example, stories in the style of Red Riding Hood. They are beginning to understand that a story has a beginning, a middle and an end. There is too much emphasis on the use of worksheets at the expense of opportunities for personal response. Although initially attention is paid to correctly formed letters and high standards of presentation, this tends to deteriorate when pupils are writing at length and by the end of Year 2, standards of writing and presentation are not sufficiently high and capital letters and full stops are not used consistently. There is a clear need to raise the expectations of standards of writing especially those of the higher attainers. Pupils use computer programs to reinforce and consolidate their knowledge of the blending of letter sounds and to write their stories and poems.

101. Pupils usually behave well in lessons. They join in readily with whole class reading of text and discussion and generally sustain concentration well during the literacy hour helped by the good support from nursery nurses who help provide valuable support for pupils with special educational needs. Most work steadily in their group tasks. They co-operate effectively in small groups and listen to each other's contribution.

102. At Key Stage 2, pupils continue to make steady progress. Some of the oldest pupils speak with confidence. They reflect on their favourite subjects, the highlights of their time in school, school visits which they have enjoyed and their favourite authors. By the end of Year 6 most talk and listen with assurance, giving their points of view in class discussions. Teachers give the pupils the opportunity to read a range of both fiction and information books. They join in readily with whole class reading of texts. They read with accuracy and fluency and begin to appreciate the different styles used by authors and become aware that language varies with purpose.

103. Year 4 pupils studied a collection of old poems to see how language had changed over time. In a Year 6 lesson on official documents, pupils studied an application form for a licence to drive a heavy goods vehicle. They decided that the language was very complicated, making the form difficult to understand and that it was not an interesting document to read. The teacher also used the document to alert pupils to the appropriate use of active and passive verbs. Pupils also become aware that texts can present different points of view. Year 5 pupils used their skimming and scanning techniques in order to quickly discover the differing views of work in a Victorian mill as seen by workers and the mill owner.

104. Most pupils enjoy reading. They read accurately and understand what they are reading. They talk confidently about the content of their books and of their preferences, giving reasons for their choices. They use CD-ROMs to find information for topics they are doing. The emphasis given to reading and the provision of appropriate and increasingly attractive reading

materials is making a significant contribution to the progress which pupils are making. Better use of the library and more flexibility in arrangements for taking books home would help to further increase the progress made.

105. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to write for a number of purposes and audience; such as character studies, book reviews and newspaper reports. Year 3 pupils studied the character of Pandora to try to decide why she chose to open the magic box.

They are beginning to understand the difference between fact and opinion and to express points of view. They use grammar and punctuation appropriately. Although the introduction of an extended writing lesson has increased writing opportunities, pupils still do not have sufficient opportunities to write at length. Much work is done on reinforcement exercises and writing short extracts at the expense of longer personal responses.

106. Almost all the teaching seen was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. For the youngest pupils it was very good. Teachers plan in detail and provide an interesting range of activities. Lessons are usually well organised. There is a need to ensure that all pupils are treated equally in question and answer sessions by making more direct efforts to include the more reluctant pupils.

107. The best lessons move at a brisk pace and teachers have high expectations of the amount and quality of work produced. Teachers' expectations are reflected in the pupils' written work. There is a need to systematically give pupils targets for the amount and quality of work expected. In the scrutiny of written work there was sometimes too little difference between the work of pupils of different abilities in the class and between year groups, especially in the amount and quality of free writing. There is a need to raise standards of writing in Year 6.

108. Pupils' attitudes are good and they usually behave well in lessons. Most sustain concentration well during the literacy hour and work steadily in their tasks. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for pupils to work in groups which include a mix of boys and girls and of the various ethnic groups. These sessions are invariably harmonious and usually productive. Pupils co-operate very effectively, usually stay on task and respect each other's views.

109. In literacy lessons, extra support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and this contributes to the good progress they make. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are well supported, often making better progress than many of their peers. The analysis of attainment by gender and by ethnic group is insufficiently developed in the school. Extra support through 'Springboard' and 'Booster' classes at certain times of the year also contributes to the levels of progress achieved. Work done in lessons is reinforced by regular homework. Marking is up to date but insufficient use is made of diagnostic written feedback to help pupils to improve their performance.

110. Assessment procedures are appropriate. Targets are set for pupils each half term and are assessed against specific pieces of writing to identify weaknesses or to determine progress. Useful day-to-day assessments are made of pupils' performance in order to plan future work. The school is well aware of the need to further raise standards in writing and it has high priority in the school improvement plan. Resources are improving. A new reading scheme and a range of books specifically to interest boys have recently been purchased. There is a need to increase the range of reference books and dictionaries.

MATHEMATICS

111. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 were judged to be unsatisfactory and below national averages. Standards at the time of this inspection are judged to be satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents a significant improvement; all the evidence indicates that standards are steadily rising and that pupils are making satisfactory progress. The school is aware of the need to further target increasing the number of pupils who attain the higher level 3 at Key Stage 1 and the higher level 5 at Key Stage 2. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls.

112. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can count and write and use numbers up to 100. They are confident with addition and subtraction; for example, they can add a one digit number to a three digit number and almost all have developed an understanding of appropriate mathematical language. They understand that multiplication is equal addition and can count confidently in twos, fives and tens. The higher achieving pupils establish firm concepts that relate multiplication to division and a number begin to understand the meaning of 'remainder' in connection with division. Basic skills are used in other areas, such as money and forms of measurement and more difficult concepts, involving simple fractions, are beginning to be understood.

113. Teachers develop pupils' oral and mental skills well and almost all pupils enjoy this part of the lesson, taking part with enthusiasm. There are very good opportunities for all pupils to be practically involved in their learning. Most of the competencies that pupils should achieve by the age of 7 are well covered by the varied and interesting curriculum and the large majority of pupils are working within these areas. Pupils with special educational needs have progressed well and access a similar curriculum to their peers through the good support the school provides. The needs of pupils with English as an additional language are well accommodated by teachers and adult support at both key stages and many of these pupils achieve at least as well as, and sometimes better than, their class peers.

114. By the end of Year 6, pupils have made good progress through a curriculum based firmly on the National Numeracy Strategy and good teaching which has developed their knowledge and confidence and, very importantly, their enthusiasm and enjoyment of number. The needs of all pupils have been met and pupils with special educational needs and those pupils from ethnic minority groups have made good progress alongside their class peers. Mental and oral work forms an important part of every lesson and 11 year olds are quick and confident in their response to the often very searching questions posed by their teacher. They have well developed strategies for making calculations which they use effectively in the many areas of mathematics in which they work, including all forms of measurement and exploration of shape. In learning how to construct a conversion graph, pupils show they have at their disposal the skills and knowledge to succeed, such as the understanding of an axis, knowing what is the point of origin and the ability to plot points. The success comes through the majority of pupils being able to use the conversion chart albeit with a varying degree of confidence.

115. Teaching in mathematics is good overall. Both lessons observed in the Key Stage 1 classes were good; half of the Key Stage 2 lessons were good, a quarter very good and a quarter satisfactory. Throughout the school, planning is clear and based upon the teachers' own good knowledge and understanding. This was well demonstrated in a Year 4 lesson in which the teacher carefully ensured that pupils understood that finding the fraction of an amount was the same as dividing. All teachers use the appropriate mathematical language and

constantly encourage their pupils to use the correct terms. Basic skills are well taught and through good practical involvement most pupils gain confidence to use these skills in a variety of different circumstances. Teachers are careful to make sure that the activities they give their pupils are suitable to their level of ability; this ensures they all succeed and lower attainers are provided with the help they need. Pupils are often well challenged; for example, when asked to give four interrelated statements from a fact such as $4 \times 5 = 20$. For the most part, teachers manage pupils well but often sometimes the way pupils respond to questions is inappropriate with a tendency for some pupils to call out answers. This denies the right of some other pupils to make their contribution. Very good management of pupils' responses was observed in Year 1.

116. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented and all staff have received effective training. The recommended way the lesson is to be organised is firmly established, giving the good structure that has had a positive effect on raising standards. This structure gives the pupils opportunities to develop their mental skills and practise what they have learnt. The period at the end of the lessons gives pupils opportunities to celebrate their achievements and to report on what they have learnt. It also enables the teachers to check that the desired learning has taken place and it gives good information as to what should be done next to develop the topic.

117. There is a growing use of computers to support mathematics and the school has a number of programs to enable pupils to practise and develop their skills. These opportunities will be enhanced by the further development of software and the improved facilities that are a firm part of the school's plans. The subject leadership is satisfactory. There is some monitoring and analysis of teaching and standards but it is not firmly established by regular and systematic procedures. There is insufficient analysis to consider attainment of pupils by gender and by ethnic origin. This is an area for improvement as part of the further development of school self-evaluation.

SCIENCE

118. The previous inspection found that attainment at the end of both key stages was well below average with no pupils reaching the higher level 3 at Key Stage 1. Since then, standards have risen steadily. Inspection judgements this time give an improved picture at both key stages, with pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 reaching levels which are in line with national averages. This represents improvement in the progress being made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.

119. At the time of the previous inspection a weakness across both key stages was the lack of effective assessment procedures to monitor the attainment and progress as pupils move through the school. This has been partially addressed by the introduction of assessment record books to gather information about the standards of work attained. Another weakness was the lack of a scheme of work to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum and continuity and progression. There is now a whole school scheme of work that ensures teachers have appropriate guidance to plan their work.

120. By the end of Year 2, pupils know about life cycles, can identify the properties of a range of materials and can describe how some materials are changed by heating. They know that sounds vary in volume, how a circuit is needed before electricity can flow and that forces can change the shape of objects as well as producing movement. The investigational skills seen

were at an appropriate level with most pupils able to predict and test outcomes accurately. The concept of fair testing is emerging; many pupils understand the need to control the variables, although some are not always able to achieve this in practice. This is an improvement since the previous report when pupils did not understand the fair test concept. Evidence was seen in pupils' work of testing different vehicles down a ramp and on to different surfaces to gain more understanding of friction and fair testing.

121. During Key Stage 2 pupils build on the knowledge acquired earlier; they have a sound understanding of the human skeleton, the main organs and the effects of exercise on the heart rate. They are helped to have an understanding of the need for a healthy lifestyle, the effects of the misuse of drugs and the life cycle of plants and animals, including humans. Pupils know the three states of solid, liquid and gas and how water can be changed from one to another. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils are able to predict appropriately and have more understanding of the outcome of fair testing. One Year 6 pupil correctly predicts that sand is insoluble; she says that 'Sand is insoluble in lemonade because sand is made from rock'.

122. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall with some good teaching in Years 1 and 4. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, preparing their lessons well and trying hard to ensure that the work suitably matches the ability of all pupils. These features have a positive impact on the quality of the pupils' learning, which is also satisfactory overall. In Year 1, the teacher ensures pupils have the opportunity to appreciate that each part of a plant is important for growth. Through very good use of a model plant with a stem made out of paper towels, the pupils are fascinated with the way the paper towel stem absorbs water progressively and their scientific understanding increases.

123. As pupils pass through Year 2 they learn how to handle simple scientific equipment carefully and safely and to answer questions about scientific topics. There was evidence in a lesson for Year 2 pupils of how an electrical circuit will not work without a battery or if there is a break in a circuit. Some pupils have limited vocabulary and this hinders their ability to develop the skills of being able to talk about their work using scientific language. Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently; sometimes appropriate work is given to pupils with special educational needs but the rest of the class do the same activity sheet, providing too little challenge for some.

124. At Key Stage 2, teachers ensure that pupils are given the opportunity to learn how to handle a wider variety of scientific equipment and resources to develop their knowledge and understanding. There is good use of questioning to explore and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas as was seen in a lesson in Year 6 on investigating whether solids will dissolve in liquids other than water. Teachers emphasise ways of making a fair test, as was evident in a Year 4 lesson on awareness that a switch can be used to break a circuit. Pupils write clearly about which method they consider the best; one pupil writes, 'I like the drawing pin method because it was less complicated and did not fall apart'.

125. Good displays in classes enhance the science work; for example, a Year 3 teacher uses a very good class display when developing pupils' understanding that materials are suitable for making a particular object because of their properties. In most lessons the pupils are eager to answer questions and show enjoyment in their work, especially in practical activities. Some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and this is seen when poorly presented work is accepted.

126. Teachers often encourage pupils to work with a partner for part of the lesson. Most pupils behave well and learn to take turns and share resources. Nursery nurses provide good

support for pupils with special educational needs and where needed to pupils with English as an additional language. The majority of pupils with English as an additional language are well integrated into classes and many exceed their peers academically. Throughout the school there is some use of pupils' skills using information and communication technology to enhance their work in science but this is currently underdeveloped and is an area for future development. Formal assessments are completed at the end of each half term. Resources are satisfactory.

127. The scheme of work is based upon nationally published guidelines supplemented by others and the co-ordinator is in the process of matching resources to these schemes. Staff have attended courses to improve their expertise in the subject and they disseminate to the rest of the staff to keep all members abreast of developments. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has recently started to visit classes to monitor teaching.

128. The previous report found that attainment at the end of both key stages was below national averages. Progress at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory and unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. The indications from this inspection are that attainment across both key stages is in line with national average and good progress is being achieved. This represents a significant improvement in the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

129. It was only possible to see two lessons of art and design being taught, both of these were at Key Stage 2, because of this, judgements, especially at Key Stage 1, are largely based upon teachers' plans, on displays and on discussions with pupils. This evidence indicates that the standards attained by both 7 and 11 year olds are close to being in line with the standards expected for this age. This confirms the findings of the previous inspection concerning standards.

130. By the end of Year 2, pupils have used a variety of materials and processes to communicate what they see, think and feel. Planning shows that children have been given opportunities to produce a self-portrait using various media. They draw and colour familiar objects such as fruit and vegetables when they are learning about healthy eating and start to develop skills in weaving using fabric, paper and straws. The undoubted high spot of their attainment are the clay plaques they have made which are very well finished and decorated. This came about through a visiting potter whose influence is very significant in the quality of this work.

131. By the end of Year 6, the work of the pupils in their representation of urban and rural landscapes shows some good consideration and study of the work and techniques of some great artists, including in this example Hockney, Gainsborough and Turner. In common with the whole school, these pupils have also benefited from the visiting artist from whom they have learnt, during his short visit, the technique of working with clay to produce very good results. The artist's specialist skills and knowledge had a big impact upon achievement throughout the school. Standards at Year 6 are the culmination of work throughout the school and they demonstrate sound understanding of visual and tactile qualities when they make rubbings to create a pattern of movement. Year 6 pupils, together with other pupils in the school achieved great success in the Mayor sponsored competition to design his official Christmas card.

132. Teaching was sound in the two lessons seen. Pupils were managed well and they were helped to achieve satisfactory standards. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and they are able to make the same satisfactory progress as the other pupils. A similar judgement applies to the progress of all other groups of pupils.

133. Art and design enhances the wider curriculum throughout the school. For example, it supports Year 4 science through detailed drawings of plants and history with portraits of Henry VIII and his wives. A literacy display in Year 5 is enhanced by the accompanying artwork. The work by a Japanese painter and very good ethnic displays in the Key Stage 1 areas of the school, give some opportunities for pupils to appreciate the art of other cultures. The school's use of the computer and computer programs in art and design is very underdeveloped.

134. The school action plan for art and design projects to 2003. There is a need to review policy documents and implement plans to increase teachers' knowledge and understanding and to improve pupils' opportunity to develop skills more systematically.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

135. Standards of attainment and progress for all pupils in design and technology are unsatisfactory. This very much reflects the findings of the previous inspection and is a judgement that the school very readily accepts. No lessons were seen and the school was unable to provide sufficient evidence upon which a positive judgement concerning standards could be made.

136. According to the planning, pupils are given opportunities to develop skills from the start of Key Stage 1 in cutting, sticking and joining. Some evidence can be seen of satisfactory junk models carried out by the younger pupils which employ these skills. Year 2 pupils have made a house for the work about the Great Fire of London and there is also evidence of some satisfactory work on puppets. Overall, the evidence is better preserved for the younger pupils although there is no clear evidence of designing or the satisfactory progression of skills. Some older pupils remember making cards with a 'pop-up' Santa whilst at Key Stage 1 thus indicating that they have worked with moving parts and simple mechanisms.

137. Very little can be seen of the work of the older pupils except for some weaving carried out by Year 4. Planning shows that the school aims to give experience in making pneumatic toys, money containers and moving toys but pupils do not recall these things, mentioning only Christmas cards and some more recent memories about the structure of bridges. This discussion with pupils confirms that they have some knowledge about the need to design before making but they know very little about the need to evaluate and improve the finished product.

138. The schools' planning is guided by the national scheme of work that, if adhered to, would be likely to provide a satisfactory curriculum and progression. The staff are keen to improve and it is clear that teachers' knowledge and understanding and ultimately, their confidence would improve with training. There are firm plans to address the design and technology provision, including the development of resources, in order to ensure that pupils have access to all the appropriate experiences.

GEOGRAPHY

139. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and the end of Year 6 are sound and broadly in line with those expected nationally, although there is a need to further develop map reading skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Standards of attainment have improved since the previous report when attainment was satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2.

140. At Key Stage 1, pupils successfully identify physical features of places, such as roads and houses. They undertake fieldwork in the local area and have successfully drawn simple maps of the immediate area of the school. When discussing maps and plans many pupils are confident in using expressions such as 'left', 'right', 'near' and 'far'. They locate some countries and continents on world map sheets but many are unable to distinguish the difference between a continent and a country. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to write about their work in geography. By the end of Year 2, pupils are beginning to name and locate places in the United Kingdom and further afield as they follow the journeys of 'Barnaby Bear' in India, Australia and New Zealand.

141. At Key Stage 2, pupils acquire satisfactory understanding of the factors relating to land development and to land use. They have a sound knowledge of their local area and the countries and physical features of the United Kingdom. Some of the lower attaining older pupils experience difficulty with geographical activities because of their limited basic knowledge; for example, regarding the positions of the countries of the United Kingdom. Good research by Year 5 pupils compared Parkfield with the farming community of Trysall. Perceptively one pupil writes about 'horses trotting along the road at Trysall whereas Parkfield has busy, noisy traffic on the roads'. The oldest pupils research the country of Brazil and its environment. At Key Stage 2, some pupils are not always being challenged to reach their full potential. Some written work is copied from books or the Internet with little evidence of independent writing or in depth study.

142. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall and good at Year 1. Most teachers organise the classes well so that different viewpoints are considered. Those teachers with good subject knowledge use it well to introduce the appropriate geographical terms. Teachers make evaluations of pupils' progress and are beginning to use these to adapt their plans for the next lesson. In one lesson seen, the teacher's expectations were too low and the management of pupils was insecure leading to very little work being achieved by the pupils. Year 1 pupils are encouraged to use geographical terms, which they do effectively. They develop a sense of place relation for example, between home and school. Good cross curricular links with mathematics are in place in some activities, for example, in making a block graph about the pupils' journeys to school.

143. Most pupils across both key stages are interested and involved in their work. They make sensible contributions to class discussions and co-operate well when sharing resources. Relationships are good and most pupils are supportive of each other. A significant number of pupils travel to India and make very clear comparisons between India and England. An Indian parent gave an account to Year 4 pupils about the life and the culture of India. This lesson contributed well to the school's cultural development. Pupils' experiences valuably include practical work in the local area and field study work in contrasting locations studied during residential visits. For example, pupils in Year 2 compared Wolverhampton with the rural village of Trysall.

144. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning. Monitoring of lessons is in the early stages and so far only two classes have been observed. Some resources are significantly out of date, for example, atlases and maps. The school has recently purchased a new scheme of work but is aware that other resources need renewing for the subject. Assessment is covered by keeping a record of topics and attainment targets studied by each pupil. Geography makes a good contribution to the pupils' moral and cultural development, for example, when pupils consider environmental issues such as local improvements.

HISTORY

145. No lessons were seen in history at Key Stage 1. Evidence from discussions with pupils, scrutiny of work, teachers' planning, and displays, suggests that pupils are receiving a relevant curriculum covering the required programmes of study and that they make appropriate progress. The introduction of the nationally prescribed guidelines is helping to ensure adequate coverage of topics. The small amount of teaching seen at Key Stage 2 was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Standards are now satisfactory and have risen since the previous inspection.

146. At Key Stage 1, pupils are introduced to the idea of change and the passing of time. By studying pictures, photographs and artefacts they make comparisons between olden days and the present. The youngest pupils have studied the changes in holidays, homes and toys. The older ones looked further back comparing life now with that at the time of the Stuarts. They learn about the differences in styles of clothes and homes. They know that many houses were built of wood and were close together and that this contributed to the spread of the Great Fire of London. They learn about the importance of Samuel Pepys' Diary as a source of information about the past. Pupils find evidence from books and photographs and, with help, are beginning to access information from the Internet. By the end of the key stage, through simple observations and the use of information sources, pupils are able to answer questions about the past.

147. At Key Stage 2, pupils begin to understand the reasons for changes that have taken place in history. They develop their research skills, using books, pictures, videos and artefacts as sources of information. Through a study of the ancient Greeks and Egyptians, they learn about different lifestyles and how different beliefs affect people's lives. They look at the differences between the lives of the rich and poor in Tudor times. Year 4 pupils were finding out about school life and noting that only the rich could afford schooling and that girls were discouraged from formal education. They learn of the courage of the great Tudor explorers and about the effect of power by studying the life of Henry VIII and how he changed the rules to suit his own purposes.

148. The contrast between rich and poor is explored further through a study of the Victorians. Year 5 pupils were making comparisons between the rich and the poor in Victorian times by looking at lifestyles. They were also learning about the difference between opinion and fact by looking at pictures and writing done from the point of view of a mill owner and that of his workforce. Some pupils felt very strongly that life was unfair to the poor. They knew that mill owners liked to use children because they were small, cheap and were less likely to complain. They begin to appreciate the improvements which took place for the poor, through the work of such people as Lord Shaftesbury.

149. The oldest pupils study World War II and learn about how the experiences of children who were evacuees depended on how the families they lived with treated them. They then study post war Britain with reference to the life of John Lennon. Good use is made of stories and films such as 'Street Child' and 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' to extend knowledge and explore points of view.

150. The school policy needs amending to reflect the new guidelines being used. School artefacts are supplemented by loans from other sources, although this is an area for further development. The range of visits has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils study changes in the local area with special reference to mining which used to take place. Other visits include those to the Black Country Museum, Boscobel House and the Cabinet War Rooms in London. A history workshop theatre group visited school for themed days. Discussions with pupils show that these are very popular and very informative. Simple assessments are made at the end of each unit studied.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

151. Standards in information and communication technology are below average throughout the school. Information and communication technology was unsatisfactory at both key stages at the previous inspection. Improvements have been made since then. Teachers are now more confident in teaching information and communication technology and each class has regular lessons. Information and communication technology is more consistently used in other subjects. The policy has recently been updated and the school has introduced a new scheme which provides appropriate activities and enables pupils' learning to systematically build on previous attainment.

152. The role of the co-ordinator has been significantly developed. She has a clearly defined job description and plays an active role in monitoring learning through scrutiny of teachers' planning. The resources have been improved, although some computers being used are old and unreliable. Each classroom, the library and quiet room all have Internet links. Progress in learning has been inhibited by the repeated theft of computers and problems with the Internet service provider.

153. Insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. Scrutiny of work, schemes and records suggest that pupils have some experience in all strands of the curriculum but have too little opportunity to learn and practise skills other than those needed for word processing, accessing information and using programs which reinforce learning. The areas of spreadsheets, modelling, control and monitoring are underdeveloped.

154. At Key Stage 1, pupils begin to develop basic mouse skills, operate simple programs, follow instructions and use keyboard commands. They are introduced to the idea that giving instructions makes things happen. They create simple pictures. They use listening centres independently to practise reading skills. By the end of Year 2, pupils have some experience of simple word processing. They write simple poems and stories and make graphs of such things as favourite foods. They can give accurate commands to enable a programmable vehicle to make simple movements. Pupils use programs designed to reinforce English and mathematical skills, although occasionally the programs are too difficult for some pupils to work on independently.

155. At Key Stage 2, the work done does not adequately cover all aspects of the required programmes of study. Pupils can draft and edit written work, for example, favourite stories, poems about special people and book reviews. They make posters on such subjects as warning about the dangers of electricity. They use their skills to access information from a CD-ROM and the Internet to use in other subjects such as history, geography and science. They make pictures and patterns. They collect data and make graphs; for example, of their dream, most recent and favourite holidays. The oldest pupils explore large databases on the Internet to get information on such things as football league tables. They have too little opportunity for practice to become confident independent learners. Attainment is variable and often depends on whether there is access to a computer at home.

156. Some use is made of information and communication technology to support work in other subjects, such as in accessing information on plants from a CD-ROM and writing up the results of experiments and information on life in Tudor Britain, but this is an area for significant development. Work on control techniques is restricted to use of the programmable vehicle. Use of Excel access programs is not well developed. There is a computer club for Years 5 and 6 when pupils have the opportunity to visit the neighbouring secondary school and use their equipment.

157. The school recognises the growing importance of information and communication technology as a core subject and its role in helping to raise standards across the curriculum. It is a priority in the school development plan. Resources are gradually improving. Good use is made of the school's digital camera and a new sound system has recently been installed in the hall. There is a range of interesting software and a new interactive 'smart board' is helping to provide better class and group demonstrations. The quality of learning for all groups of pupils is adversely affected by the inability to provide consistent access to equipment. The school has plans for further development of equipment and hopes to provide a computer suite.

MUSIC

158. Most of the music teaching is provided by a specialist teacher who works part time, ensuring that in most weeks each class receives a 30 to 40 minute session. Although the teaching and learning is good, the work is disadvantaged by the lack of clear planning which means that the supplementary music work which the class teachers provide is on an arbitrary, rather than a structured, basis. It is difficult to identify whether the appropriate strands of learning are being covered.

159. Although there are a number of pupils in each year group who show good musical ability, overall standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations, except in singing where they are good. Pupils enjoy all aspects of music and participate with enthusiasm. They contribute sensitively and creatively to discussions and show respect for the views of others. During a hymn practice for Key Stage 2, pupils sang enthusiastically, recalling the words of several Easter songs, including 'Sing a song, sing a joyful song' and 'On we go to Jerusalem'. Pupils of all ages enjoy singing and recall the words and, during most music lessons the pupils mixed well, showing good levels of co-operation.

160. At Key Stage 1, pupils confidently sing a wide range of songs from memory, deriving pleasure from making music within a large group. They follow tunes accurately and sing with clear diction. They enjoy a good range of songs including 'Sing a Song of Winter Weather', 'New Seeds are Growing' and 'Easter Jubilation'. They identify and sing soft and loud sounds.

They say 'St Teresa's' repetitively from soft to loud and back again. Taking account of musical instructions, they use their voices to repeat short, melodic patterns. They learn to accompany tunes using untuned percussion instruments and gain experience of using tuned percussion instruments. By the end of Year 2, pupils are able to use symbols to represent sounds and understand how different moods and effects can be created by the elements of music.

161. At Key Stage 2, pupils learn to create musical effects by using sounds. They further explore pitch using voices and tuned percussion. Year 3 pupils understand that music is written on five lines, that some notes are on the line and some are in a space; they identify notes by their location. They are able to identify low and high sounding instruments. They are able to sequence notes to fit in a bar. They learn to read and play simple notation on a glockenspiel and on a xylophone. They are given good opportunities to appraise pieces of music such as Mozart's 'Horn Concerto' and Debussy's 'Claire de Lune'. Singing continues to improve and, at the time of the inspection, the pupils were practising 'My Grandfather's Clock' and 'Any Old Iron' in readiness for a visit to a local home for the elderly. Pupils continue to make sound progress and by the end of Year 6, they are able to suggest ways to improve their own and others' work and say how they have achieved their intentions.

162. The quality of teaching is good and benefits significantly from the high quality of singing and playing by the music specialist. Expectations are high and the pupils generally respond well. In practical sessions every pupil has access to an instrument. In a Year 1 lesson, very good use was made of teddy bears which had low, middle and high pitched squeaky voices to make good teaching points.

163. Much of the activity follows a scheme of work which is guided by a commercial music scheme. From Year 2 upward, pupils are given the opportunity to play the recorder leading to three groups. The co-ordinator leads the subject with enthusiasm. Assessments are undertaken informally and not in the way detailed in the policy. Resources are good, with a suitable range of good quality percussion instruments. The co-ordinator's interest in the subject and her enthusiasm for music contributes significantly to the singing standards achieved. The popular school choir which performs locally, for example, in church services, has made a compact disc. The choir takes part in the annual Catholic Schools' Christmas Concert. Each term there is a production with Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 performing alternately; recent productions have included a Key Stage 1 opera 'Song of the Sea' and a Key Stage 2 opera 'Tale of the Black Country', both composed by the co-ordinator.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

164. During the inspection, lessons were observed in games at Key Stage 1; no lessons were observed at Key Stage 2. Plans show that all requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are met at both key stages, except for a lack of swimming at Key Stage 2, as a consequence of which, statutory requirements are not being met. Pupils made satisfactory progress in the physical education lessons observed.

165. At Key Stage 1, most pupils demonstrate the typical control and creativity in their movements for their age group. Most collaborate sensibly when engaged in group work, although a significant minority of pupils, mainly boys delayed one lesson's pace because of their unacceptable behaviour, talking and not following the teacher's instructions. Most pupils have a sound awareness of the changes that happen to their bodies during exercise. Year 1 pupils confidently throw and catch balls with their partners. Good hand and eye co-

ordination is practised by throwing and catching the ball high in the air whilst standing still and then moving. Pupils move confidently around the hall, showing clear awareness of space and other pupils. Year 2 develop further skills of catching and throwing a ball accurately. Most pupils are beginning to develop good team spirit. Both classes understand the short term effect of exercise on their bodies and the need to warm up for and to recover from exercise.

166. At Key Stage 2, evidence from planning indicates that pupils are given opportunities to improve levels of co-ordination, expression and control in gymnastics. Plans include opportunities for pupils to work individually and with others, linking movements appropriately and improving performance by evaluating, refining and practising. The games' skills planned for are in line with those expected of similar ages. Evidence indicates that most aspects are suitably included in a well balanced programme apart from swimming. The school is very well located to use the swimming pool of the adjoining secondary school and the access of this needs to be addressed as a priority.

167. The quality of teaching seen at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory and sometimes good. The teachers provide clear instructions and enthusiasm, allowing all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, to make good gains in their skills. Members of staff show enthusiasm, joining in and demonstrating for their pupils. They have good subject knowledge and understanding.

168. The pupils join in appropriately, enjoying themselves, making a good physical and creative effort and taking a pride in the quality of their performance. Teachers often take the opportunity to use pupils to demonstrate good practice and opportunities are usually taken to discuss the quality of the work seen. Teachers provide help and support for the pupils in all aspects of their work, and in particular they emphasise the need for safety. Most pupils behave well, working independently and with a partner or group and collect equipment carefully and safely. Occasionally a minority of pupils are off task when they do not give their full attention to the teacher.

169. The co-ordinator is interested in the subject and increases her expertise by attending courses regularly and later disseminates information to the staff. The policy was reviewed and amended in March 2001. The scheme of work follows national guidance but is also supported by two other commercial schemes. The school has adapted these schemes to their current needs and this has helped to introduce continuity and consistency into the delivery of the subject. Assessment is by outcome and future evaluation on lesson plans. The school is well resourced. Overall the planning has improved since the last report but no other significant improvements have taken place.