

INSPECTION REPORT

WHITTINGTON OVAL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Yardley, Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103374

Headteacher: Mrs R L Chahal

Reporting inspector: Dr J N Thorp
6327

Dates of inspection: 29 January - 1 February 2001

Inspection number: 211951

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and Infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Whittington Oval
Yardley
Birmingham

Postcode: B33 8JG

Telephone number: 0121 783 3248

Fax number: 0121 785 1170

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr G Millington

Date of previous inspection: March 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6327	Dr J N Thorp	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements; How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
13874	Ms J Chesterfield	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?
16971	Mr R W Hardaker	Team inspector	Mathematics; design and technology; physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
23276	Ms M Mann	Team inspector	The foundation stage; music; religious education	
29959	Ms K Fleming	Team inspector	Science; art; special educational needs; English as an additional language	
20970	Ms I Wakefield	Team inspector	English; geography; history; equal opportunities	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Wessex Education

1 Albert Road
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1SE

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Whittington Oval Primary School is located in Yardley, south east of the centre of Birmingham. It is a larger school, with 479 pupils aged three to eleven on roll organised into 14 classes and nursery. Children are admitted into the nursery at the beginning of the year in which they become four and into the main school at the beginning of the year they become five. Their attainment on entry to the school is frequently below average. The majority of the school's pupils are white; there are 19 pupils from families in which English is not their first language, which is similar to that found in other schools. The main community languages are Urdu and Panjabi. Around 52 per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is much higher than the national average. At present there are six pupils with statements of special educational need; in total 35 per cent of pupils are on the school's special educational needs register, which is higher than in similar schools. The school is currently part of the Kitts Green and Shard End Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is improving rapidly. The leadership and management of the school are outstanding, creating a demanding yet caring environment in which pupils are fully supported and enabled to learn. The headteacher clearly and effectively communicates her high expectations of teaching, learning and behaviour, creating a culture of improvement in which everyone shares a commitment and determination to raise standards of attainment. All the staff and the majority of pupils have responded most positively. Teaching has improved considerably, and this is contributing to the quality of pupils' learning and the good progress many of them make throughout the school. The school's considerable strengths outweigh any weaknesses. It serves its pupils and the community very well indeed and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher's leadership of the school is excellent; she provides clear educational direction and manages it most effectively
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good
- The quality of teaching and the range of learning opportunities provided for children under five is very good
- Teaching is good overall; arrangements for the development of teachers' skills are very good
- Curriculum planning and procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring progress are very good
- Very good educational and personal support and guidance are provided for pupils

What could be improved

- Standards in speaking and listening and writing throughout the school
- Opportunities to work with the computers in other subjects
- Attendance is not as good as it could be, despite the efforts of the school to improve it
- The behaviour of a minority of pupils, which inhibits teaching and learning for the majority
- The setting of homework, which is inconsistent across the school

The areas for improvement identified in this report will form the basis of the governors' action plan for development, which will be sent to all parents.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When it was last inspected in March 1999, the school had serious weaknesses in a number of important areas: in standards of attainment, the quality of teaching, leadership and management of the school and attendance. The school also had a deficit budget at that time. There has been very good progress made in addressing these issues; under the very effective direction of the new headteacher, the improvement made since the last inspection has been excellent. **The serious weaknesses identified at that time have been successfully addressed.** Standards have risen in most subjects where they were too low and, other than in English, standards are now at levels expected of pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. A careful evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in teaching and a clear programme of development and support has seen the quality of teaching improve throughout the school. The appointment of a permanent headteacher, with most effective management skills, has overcome the serious weakness in leadership and management and this has also ensured the school no longer has a deficit budget.

There are other aspects of the work of the school in which there has been notable improvement. The curriculum for information and communication technology now fully meets statutory requirements. The very good procedures in place for monitoring and encouraging attendance have been successful in raising the level of attendance, although it remains below average. Action taken to find out how well the school is doing is now very good; curriculum development led by senior managers is having a positive impact and provides further targets for improvement in the school's development plan. Given the most effective leadership and management skills of the headteacher, the effective teamwork among staff and their commitment to improve the quality of education provided, the school is very well placed to continue improving.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E*	E*	E	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E among the lowest 5% E*
mathematics	E	E	D	B	
science	E	E	D	C	

The most recent test results indicate that standards of attainment are beginning to improve; last year the rate of improvement was better than that in other schools nationally. Standards in mathematics and science remain below the national average and in English they are well below average. However, when standards are compared to those of pupils in similar schools they are above average in mathematics and average in science and English. One important factor to take into account in analysing these results is the consistently high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each of the year groups. Despite the nature of the cohorts, the school's performance targets were exceeded in 2000. Appropriate targets have been set for individual pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2001.

Inspectors found that the standards in reading among pupils who are currently working towards the ends of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are close to those expected, but below average in speaking and listening and writing. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly in line with those expected. In other subjects in which a judgement could be made, standards are in line with those expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to school. Most are well motivated and eager to learn; they listen well in class and get on with their work. A significant minority of pupils, however, does not share this positive attitude to their work in school. Their lack of attention and concentration in class stops them from learning effectively.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is satisfactory. Most pupils obey instructions quickly so teachers have to spend little time establishing order. Those pupils who have behaviour difficulties are well supported. Pupils move around the school sensibly; most are polite and courteous. Outside in the playground, pupils from all backgrounds play well together and in the main show an awareness of others.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Pupils are beginning to take advantage of the opportunities provided by the school. They are starting to show more independence and self-assurance, although they often lack confidence in speaking in front of others. Relationships in the school are satisfactory, but sometimes there are tensions when individuals fall out and retaliate to others. Relationships between adults and children are good.
Attendance	Attendance has improved slowly since the last inspection, but it is still low compared with national figures. The rate of unauthorised absence is still well above the national average. Most absence is caused by illness, but a significant minority of parents keep their children at home unnecessarily, or withhold the reasons for their absences. Most pupils arrive at school on time, but a significant number arrive late each day, disrupting the start of the morning session.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. In more than nine out of ten lessons teaching is satisfactory or better; in around two-thirds of lessons teaching is at least good and, in nearly a quarter, teaching is very good. In only three lessons was teaching unsatisfactory. The quality of the teaching is having a major impact on the progress pupils make and the improved standards they now achieve.

The teaching of children aged under five in both the nursery and reception classes is of a consistently high standard. The quality of teaching during literacy and numeracy lessons throughout the school is consistently good; some lessons are of a high quality, especially in Years 2 and 6. Teachers at the school work very hard and pupils now benefit from the considerable effort they put into their teaching. Most teachers manage their pupils' behaviour well, although in a very small number of lessons, teachers lack

appropriate strategies for managing the class allowing the behaviour of a significant minority to disrupt the learning of the majority of the pupils in the class.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which meets statutory requirements; previous weaknesses in curricular provision have been overcome. Curriculum planning is good. There is a good range of after school clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils are withdrawn for very well planned and high quality individual support, which enables them to make good progress. This is a strength of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Support staff are sensitive to individual pupils' needs and this is helping to improve their communication skills and to raise levels of self-esteem.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory overall. Provision for spiritual and social development is satisfactory overall; provision for moral and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has maintained and improved on the high standard of this aspect of its work since the last inspection. The high quality of the support and guidance offered to the pupils is a strength of the school. The welfare of pupils is of paramount importance at all times. Systems for improving attendance and punctuality are very good. Procedures for assessment and the use of assessment are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has a very clear vision for the school based on a striving for continuing improvement. This vision has successfully been communicated to the whole staff and governing body and is now an integral part of the school culture. It gives the whole school very clear direction and purpose.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is now more effective than it was at the last inspection and largely fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's strategy for teacher appraisal and performance management is good. The structures in place to monitor standards throughout the school are very good.
The strategic use of resources	The school's system for financial planning is good; the school manages its available resources well. Prudent budgeting has enabled the governing body to wipe out the deficit that was a cause for concern in the last report.

The school is well staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum. Resources for learning are much better than at the last inspection. The accommodation is satisfactory in the main, although the school lacks suitable outdoor play facilities for children under five and the playground is in poor condition.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards of attainment and progress • All pupils get a lot of help • Pupils are taught manners • Pupils are taught right from wrong • Most teachers are approachable • Breakfast club is helpful • Much hard work goes into the school and it is improving a lot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour of some of the pupils • The amount of homework given - and the consistent implementation of the homework policy • The information parents receive about how well their children are getting on • Relationships between the school and some parents • The range of extra-curricular activities

Inspectors agreed with the positive views expressed by parents. Some of the things which parents would like to see improved have already begun to do so. There is now a clear behaviour policy, which is having an impact on the management of pupils' behaviour. The information provided for parents about how well their children are getting on is satisfactory. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. Inspectors agreed that the school's homework policy is not sufficiently consistently implemented, with the result that pupils in different classes have different experiences of homework. Inspectors also found that some parents were not yet sufficiently aware of how much the school has changed for the better.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When pupils leave the school at the age of eleven, their attainment in mathematics and science is in line with the national average. Standards in English are not as good as they could be, particularly in speaking and listening and writing, which are below average.
2. Children's attainment on entry to the school varies considerably; overall it is frequently below average. Few of the children entering the school have acquired sound basic skills and a significant proportion of them come to the school with poorly developed speaking skills. Where this is the case, it inhibits their ability to communicate well with both adults and with other children. Children's knowledge of numbers is generally better than their early literacy skills as they enter the school.
3. Young children make good progress in their learning through the nursery and the reception classes, and by the beginning of Year 1 their attainment is broadly average. By the end of the Foundation Stage (this includes the Nursery and Reception classes) most children are ready to start their work on the National Curriculum, although a small number of others still need to develop their early learning in preparation for this move. These young children quickly adapt to classroom routines and most are able to get on well with each other. By the age of five children understand that print carries meaning and enjoy using books. By the end of the Foundation Stage, better readers are able to read a variety of simple books, using a range of strategies to decode words. Children listen attentively to stories with a satisfactory understanding of the story line. These young children begin to recognise numbers to ten; most children can sequence numbers to ten in the correct order. The higher attaining children begin to acquire simple strategies for counting on, or adding on one. Although children enter the nursery with little basic general knowledge, they make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage most have achieved the early learning goals set for the age group. Children learn to understand change and to develop a sense of time in the context of their work on their own development. Children develop control over their own movements, enabling them to participate in a range of physical activities. They learn to mix paint and experiment using different media and materials which they do well. These young children benefit from the good opportunities provided for imaginative role play; they enjoy stories and action rhymes and are learning to think imaginatively
4. The results of statutory assessment in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000 indicate that the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was close to the national average. The proportion attaining a higher level was well below the national average. Overall, while pupils' performance in the reading test was below the national average, it was well above that achieved by pupils in similar schools. In the writing test, pupils' attainment was close to the national average, and again better than that achieved by pupils in similar schools. Likewise in mathematics, attainment was close to that of all pupils nationally but better than that achieved in similar schools.
5. While there are signs of improvement at this stage, standards attained by current Year 2 pupils remain below average in both writing and speaking and listening. Standards in reading are improving with pupils' attainment now generally higher than it is in writing and around the standard expected. Pupils are increasingly confident with their reading and this enables them to make progress in improving their accuracy. Some children enjoy talking about books, although few talk confidently about stories they have read. The majority of pupils have some difficulty expressing themselves appropriately in writing. In mathematics, standards have improved slightly over the period 1996 - 2000 and now the attainment of Year 2 pupils is average. Although their recall is often slow, they can now demonstrate knowledge of appropriate number facts. This

general advance is the result of improvements to the curriculum and teaching, with introduction of the national numeracy strategy.

6. In science, teacher assessments in 2000 indicated that standards were below the national average. Overall, the performance of seven-year-olds in science was close to that of pupils in similar schools. The standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 are around the level expected of pupils at this age.
7. The results of statutory assessment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 indicate that a below average proportion of eleven-year-olds attained the expected levels. The proportion achieving a higher level was well below average. Results were also below average in comparison with similar schools, indicating that pupils had made unsatisfactory progress through Key Stage 2 in this subject. Standards of pupils' speaking remain below average throughout this key stage. In mathematics a below average proportion of pupils attained the expected levels, although this was comparable with pupils in similar schools. In science, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected levels was also below the national average, but in line with that of pupils in similar schools. The inspection found that attainment of pupils currently in Year 6 is better and around average in English, mathematics and science. This is the result of the improved quality of teaching this cohort of pupils has received over the past two years.
8. Over the four years 1997 - 2000 standards in English have remained below average, although there was a significant improvement in 2000. In mathematics and science, standards have improved year on year at a rate faster than that nationally. Standards among pupils currently in Year 6 are better and this improvement should continue. There remains a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs throughout the school however, and this needs to be taken into account when comparing standards of attainment with those of other schools.
9. By the age of eleven pupils' achievement in literacy remains slightly below average and this has an adverse effect on the progress that they can make in other subjects. For example, pupils are not yet able to use their literacy skills to best effect when researching information in history. The improving and now satisfactory standard of their numeracy is apparent in pupils' use of graphs and tables, and in their ability to measure in design and technology for example.
10. Standards in information and communication technology are average by the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This is the result of the improved resources which are now available and the improved quality of the teaching. Standards have been successfully raised, although pupils still have too few opportunities to work with the computers in other subjects.
11. In both key stages, standards in art, geography, history, music and religious education are in line with those expected. In design and technology at Key Stage 1 and in physical education at Key Stage 2 there was insufficient evidence available to support a judgement about the standards of pupils' attainment.
12. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans. This progress is achieved through the able support of their class teacher and trained learning support assistants who deliver well planned work, much of which is carefully planned specifically for them. Good intervention procedures are now in place to identify and support pupils with behavioural problems, which ensures these pupils make good progress in their work. This aspect has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress; their needs are adequately catered for through planned support.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The school achieves similar standards in this area of its work as it did at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' personal development has improved and attendance too is still improving, although it has not yet reached a satisfactory level.
14. Pupils' attitudes to the school and to their studies are good. Most are eager to learn and well motivated. They listen well in class and get on with their work. Many are keen to take part in new initiatives developed by the school, such as peer counselling or the playground games scheme. A significant minority of pupils do not share this positive attitude to the school's life and work. Their lack of attention and inability to concentrate in class stops them from learning effectively.
15. Behaviour in class and around the school is satisfactory. Pupils obey instructions quickly in lessons so that teachers have to spend little time establishing order. Those pupils who have behaviour difficulties are well supported and managed so that they rarely cause disruption. This occurs occasionally in a few classes where teachers do not always have the skills to control behaviour effectively. Pupils move around the school sensibly and are polite and courteous. In the playground, pupils from all backgrounds play amicably together and show an awareness of others. Any incidents of bullying or racism are taken seriously and tackled quickly by the school. There have been twelve temporary and two permanent exclusions in the last year. This figure is high by comparison with other primary schools, but pupils are given good support to reintegrate when they return and most react positively to this.
16. Pupils' personal development is now satisfactory. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are beginning to take advantage of the initiatives developed by the school. They are starting to show more independence in lessons and in other opportunities offered to them. Pupils in Year 6, for example, had the self-assurance to successfully run a class council meeting and agree on decisions amongst themselves. They were justifiably proud of their achievement here. Often, though, pupils lack confidence in speaking before others and are unable to express their opinions lucidly.
17. Relationships in the school are also satisfactory. Most pupils get on well together, but there are sometimes still tensions between individuals when they fall out and are tempted to retaliate. Relationships between adults and children are generally good, although in a few classes teachers do not always generate a respectful response from their pupils. Some children show less respect for the midday staff than they do for their teachers, taking their time to do as they are told and reacting to incidents in a way which they know is unacceptable.
18. Rates of attendance have improved slowly but steadily since the last inspection, as a result of the hard work of the school, but are still very low compared with national figures. The rate of unauthorised absence is still well above the national average. Most absence is caused by illness, but some parents take their children out of school for holidays during term time. A small but significant minority fails to co-operate with the school by keeping their children at home unnecessarily, or by withholding the reasons for their absences. Some parents of children in the nursery do not enable their children to make a settled start to their school life by bringing them regularly to their nursery sessions.
19. Punctuality is satisfactory for the majority of pupils. However, there are significant numbers of latecomers in most classes each day and a few pupils arrive late almost every day. This disrupts the start of the morning session.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently good, with more than six out of ten lessons good or very good. In more than nine out of ten lessons teaching is satisfactory or better. This represents a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when a significant

amount of teaching was unsatisfactory. Everyone at the school deserves great credit for this improvement. The teaching of children under five, in both the nursery and reception classes, is frequently very good and a real strength of the school. Similarly in Years 2 and 6 teaching was very good in a high proportion of lessons. Throughout the school teachers know their pupils well and most communicate appropriate expectations of them from the start. Pupils now understand what is required of them during their time in the school. Teachers have created an environment for learning which is attractive and stimulating; their classrooms are well organised, with resources carefully arranged and readily accessible. Teachers at the school work hard and pupils benefit from the considerable effort they put into their teaching.

21. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach. In some subjects their knowledge is excellent and this has a positive effect on the work they do with their pupils. In a good information and communication technology lesson, for example, the teacher was able to introduce the lesson clearly, providing pupils with research tasks to undertake on the computers. The skilful use of technical support also enabled small groups of pupils to work with the new interactive screen. The lesson was managed most purposefully, enabling all pupils to make good progress. In a numeracy lesson with Year 6 pupils, the teacher's own knowledge and understanding enabled her to pose questions to challenge pupils' mathematical thinking and to explain the structures of a number of three-dimensional shapes. In this lesson expectations of pupils were very high, the teacher's management of the class was excellent and these factors contributed to the pupils making very good progress.
22. Most teachers draw on a range of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour well and motivate their learning. They generally have good relationships with their pupils, often managing their classes with humour. Interaction with pupils is good and teachers' positive response to their pupils' efforts is clearly motivating and enabling them to manage their learning well. This was well illustrated in one literacy lesson where a class of Year 6 pupils was working on furthering their understanding of a text. The teacher was clearly building very effectively on her pupils' existing knowledge and was continually demanding yet supportive of individuals, providing appropriate reinforcement as they developed their understanding. Importantly she provided time for them to consider aspects of the text. Most effectively too, the disciplined approach adopted here enabled pupils to respond to the teachers' high expectations.
23. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and provide an appropriate variety of activities to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding or skills. The best lessons contain many strengths. For example, in one design and technology lesson with Year 3 pupils, the teacher identified a clear learning objective and successfully developed the lesson to enable pupils to achieve it. The lesson was very well organised, with careful preparation of the required resources. The teacher provided pupils with very good opportunities to work on their own designs and models, but she could support individuals where needed. Pupils responded very well indeed to this approach, their interest was fully retained throughout, which contributed to most effective learning. Such skilful teaching has a very positive impact on the good progress pupils make in these lessons.
24. The quality of teaching during literacy and numeracy lessons throughout the school is frequently good; some lessons are of a very high quality. Some lessons in Key Stage 1 however, lack structure because the recommendations of the literacy strategy are not fully implemented. Where teaching is good, teachers' planning is thorough and their organisation of the various activities is effective. Lessons are generally lively, interesting and well managed with good pace. In one lesson with Year 6 pupils the teacher very effectively kept her pupils engaged on a variety of research activities as they worked towards a comparison of different sources of information. There was good discussion of the various sources. The teacher was confident, had a very good relationship with her pupils and her direct teaching was good as she managed their learning purposefully. Teachers use questions very well in both literacy and numeracy lessons, at times to check pupils' understanding and at times to ensure full participation.

25. Where teaching is satisfactory but less effective than in these good lessons there is sometimes an insufficiently specific focus on particular learning objectives, or these are inappropriate for some of the pupils in the class. In a very small number of lessons where the teaching was unsatisfactory, teachers had insufficiently well developed strategies to manage pupils' attention and behaviour. In these lessons the behaviour of a significant minority of the pupils causes undue distraction, inhibiting the progress that the majority makes. As a result some pupils lose interest and fail to keep themselves engaged in the lesson.
26. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent across the school, although most teachers are conscientious in their marking of pupils' work. Verbally they respond warmly and positively to pupils' efforts and they are frequently generous in praising the achievements of individuals. This serves to motivate and encourage pupils. However, they make insufficient use of opportunities in marking to inform pupils and their parents of ways in which they can improve their work. The quality of teachers' handwriting in pupils' books is not always as good as it should be.
27. Teaching of those pupils with special educational needs is good. In general, these pupils work on the same topics as the rest of the class but with additional support and sometimes using simpler material. Withdrawal or support work is carefully planned and focused on the targets in the individual education plans, and pupils with statements benefit from good quality individualised work. The co-ordinator provides very good support for individuals; her teaching is successful through her secure understanding of the needs of the pupils who respond well to her calm positive approach. In Years 4 and 6 the pupils are taught in ability groups for literacy and numeracy and this has a good impact on the learning of pupils with special educational needs as the lessons are well focused to address their needs. Through careful interpretation of data the school have identified a gifted and talented group of pupils in each year group and provision for this group is being addressed and monitored by the headteacher.
28. The quality of teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory overall, which is reflected in their progress.
29. Overall the quality of teaching is now having a most positive effect on the progress that pupils make as they move through the school.

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

30. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum relevant to the interests of pupils and to enriching their lives. The curriculum meets statutory requirements, including in information and communication technology, which was a weakness identified in the last inspection report. The curriculum complies with the requirements for religious education. A policy is in place for health education, including sex education, and work has started on incorporating a policy for drugs education.
31. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage has been fully implemented; the provision of large apparatus to promote these children's learning has been improved. Children under five in the nursery have a wide range of learning opportunities in spacious accommodation. All the early learning goals identified for this age group are addressed.
32. Weaknesses in curricular provision in information and communication technology have been overcome, to which the setting up of a computer suite has contributed positively. All classes are timetabled to use this facility, which provides access not only to computer use but also to the Internet. Some pupils who do not have this access at home are excited by the opportunities offered

at school and know that they can use the Internet to find information. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used in most other lessons however.

33. Planning across all subjects is equally thorough. Coverage of history and geography alternates appropriately on a half termly basis. Several national schemes of work have been adopted in some subjects in both key stages; in others separate schemes have been written by subject co-ordinators, as in history and geography for example. Individual co-ordinators have been well supported in this work by the headteacher.
34. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Those pupils with statements of special educational need receive the specified amount of support, while other pupils are withdrawn for very well planned individual support from the co-ordinator. These sessions are of a high quality and focus well on individual needs. Provision is very well organised and ensures that pupils with special educational needs have access to a good quality broad curriculum. Pupils are identified early in their school career so there is a minimum delay in obtaining extra help. This enables the pupils to make good progress. The work undertaken with these pupils is a strength of the school.
35. Literacy has received a strong focus in the last year. A variety of appropriate strategies to improve standards of literacy has been adopted. The impact of the national literacy strategy, which was one year behind in commencing, is now apparent in all pupils' work. Its effectiveness is clear in the links between it and the independent written work that pupils undertake.
36. There are good extra-curricular activities provided in a range of clubs, including information and communication technology, homework, dance/drama, mathematics and recorder. Football and netball are played. Pupils participate enthusiastically in these activities. Further initiatives include holiday clubs, funded by the Education Action Zone, to boost pupils' learning with the provision of extra coaching before they start their new classes. Visits to museums, art galleries and the theatre also enrich the curriculum and are recorded in some of the effective displays around school, as for example in that about *Our visit to Stansfield*. In some subjects the planned range of visits is an integral part of the curriculum, as in history for example, for which the co-ordinator has tried to organise a visit for every year group to coincide with their history topics. In this subject visitors into school contribute effectively through oral history, talking with pupils about their experiences of the past.
37. Links with business, the community and parents, funded by the Education Action Zone, are satisfactory, although these could be extended to provide a greater variety of links with outside organisations. There are strong links with the local secondary school, in particular through an initiative known as *Masterclass* which has been set up to cater for high ability pupils. In these sessions pupils are enabled to participate in science, design and technology and information and communication technology activities with students from the secondary school.
38. All groups of pupils have equality of access to all aspects of school life; they are offered opportunities to participate in all areas of the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities.
39. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The co-ordinator for these areas has produced relevant policies and has successfully established *Circle Time* (group discussions) in all classes, introducing it by doing a model lesson in each key stage. There is a perceived need for the development of respect for others, particularly focusing on relationships in Year 6 where these tend to be problematic. Circle time in a Year 6 class was also used for promoting independence.
40. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and contributes effectively to pupils' personal development.

41. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, school assemblies playing a part usually based on a theme which can be developed in class assemblies through the week allowing time and space for reflection. Collective worship complies with requirements but opportunities across the curriculum are not always followed up.
42. The provision the school makes for moral development is good. Pupils are taught to respect one another and this message is steadily gaining ground. Rules are displayed in each classroom. Having been drawn up by pupils themselves, they have relevance and meaning to each age group. Teachers refer to the rules which are displayed in classrooms. Pupils generally respond well to the behaviour policy and can distinguish right from wrong.
43. Provision for pupils' social development is satisfactory with some good features. Pupils generally work and play together amicably. They are well supported in the playground by the dinner supervisors. A playworker visits weekly to teach games. Pupils collaborate with one another in lesson time when working in groups. Older pupils are given responsibility for simple tasks such as taking the registers to classes, but few of them help or play with younger pupils, for example at break or lunch times. They were, however, involved as part of their English assessment, in an initiative to write stories for the children under five. This was seen to be a great success and is to be repeated. The residential visits that they make are an important element and they join with other primary and secondary schools to perform productions, for example *Jason and the Argonauts* and *The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe*.
44. Provision for cultural development is good. Visits to places of interest locally, such as Blakesley Hall, contribute to the overall acquisition of cultural values. At times visiting experts work effectively alongside teachers, for example in providing information about different periods of history in a very entertaining way, giving pupils 'hands on' experience of historical artefacts and clothes. Pupils' outings to the theatre and the traditional playground games which they are taught also make a positive contribution. Multicultural education is supported by work in religious education. Six different religions are studied and visits are made to a mosque and to a Christian church. Displays around the school reflect these areas of study.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. The school has been successful in maintaining and improving on high standards in this area of its work since the time of the last inspection. The very good quality of the support and guidance offered to the pupils is a strength of the school. Each individual's strengths and weaknesses are given full consideration, and good use is made of the right support services to provide help where required. The special needs co-ordinator keeps a close overview of pupils with particular problems. A range of good policies underpins consistent practice in pastoral care throughout the school. The welfare of pupils is of paramount importance at all times. Children in the nursery are carefully settled into school life through a well-planned induction programme, including the 'play and stay' sessions. The commitment to being a 'healthy school' is evident in the provision of a breakfast club open to all pupils and of milk and fruit in every class at break times. The school's daily routines are well organised and run smoothly, so that pupils feel secure in their environment.
46. Arrangements for child protection are very good. The headteacher is the member of staff with responsibility for this, and the special educational needs co-ordinator deputises for her. All teachers, support staff and midday staff have been trained, and future training for new staff is planned. The school's policy provides good guidelines for staff to follow. Pupils are taught appropriately about keeping safe through the school's programme for health education, assemblies and visiting speakers.

47. Support for pupils with special educational needs is particularly good because of the skilful way in which their needs are identified and regularly assessed ensuring they receive the help they need. The procedures comply with the code of practice and regular monitoring by the special needs co-ordinator of individual education plans ensures that targets are reviewed and updated as necessary and pupils make good progress as a result. The school makes good use of external professionals such as the educational psychologist and local authority support services for additional advice. The school uses an excellent strategy the *Framework for Intervention*, which has been devised by the local education authority to provide support to schools in dealing with pupils with a range of behavioural and emotional problems.
48. Health and safety issues are well managed in the school. Current and past concerns are all in hand. These include the condition of the toilets, the positioning of coat pegs and the classroom doors which open outwards. There are clear systems for reporting and attending to problems. First aid is also well administered. All staff have been trained and pupils are well tended. Incidents and treatment are properly recorded, and both class teachers and parents are informed of what has happened.
49. Systems for monitoring and improving attendance and punctuality are very good. The school works tirelessly to try to ensure that parents send their children in regularly. Every day administrative staff monitor lateness and absence, chasing up reasons for these by phone or letter. There is very good liaison with the educational welfare officer who visits the homes of persistent absentees and latecomers at the request of the school. The services of other support agencies are also called upon where necessary. Very good use is made of computer generated reports to track individuals and look for patterns of absence. Notice boards at the entrance and around the school impress the importance of attendance on pupils and parents, and celebrate the achievement of classes with the fewest absences. Leaflets to parents remind them of the impact of poor attendance on their children, while the breakfast club provides an incentive for early arrival each day. Most teachers call the register promptly each morning and request reasons for absence and lateness. In a few classes, however, the register is not called but taken by sight while pupils read and latecomers arrive. This does not help to encourage pupils to get to school on time.
50. Discipline and good behaviour are very well promoted. The policy is consistently implemented across the school, and rules are displayed prominently inside and out to remind children of the school's expectations. Most teachers are successful in managing behaviour effectively. One of the school's strengths is the support it provides for controlling challenging behaviour. Classroom assistants and special needs staff work closely with children who have behaviour problems, special clubs are available for them at lunchtimes, and outside agencies are used to meet their particular needs. Pupils returning to school after a period of exclusion are treated sensitively and follow tailor-made reintegration programmes. A great deal of work is done to develop pupils' social skills and to help avoid possible conflict. In the playground, for example, training for pupils and staff is being undertaken on traditional games and equipment. Circle time is generally well used to give pupils the chance to express their views and listen to those of others. In Year 6, the development of a class council is a very good initiative to promote pupils' independence and respect for others. The school plans to extend this further. Bullying and racism are taken seriously and handled very firmly, with the involvement of parents.
51. Pupils' progress is very well monitored and supported, because the school's procedures for assessment and the use of assessment are very good. The tracking of pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English and mathematics is a real strength. Pupils undertake standardised tests twice a year. The results of these are carefully analysed to establish levels of attainment for each pupil in reading, writing and mathematics, which are linked to national standards. The 'class statements', which are then produced across the school, provide a clear picture of both group and individual needs. These are used by all teachers to plan their classroom organisation, their use of support staff and the focus for their teaching of skills. In Year 6, for example, recent testing has shown

weaknesses in mathematics, so teachers have introduced an extra lesson each week along with a maths homework club. Assessment is also used to home in on individual needs, and pupils have their personal targets stuck in the front of their exercise books to remind them of what they need to improve. The staff responsible for assessment work very hard to co-ordinate the information, which is consistently well applied throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

52. Since the last inspection, there have been many very good new developments in the school's work to forge a strong partnership with its parent community. Consequently, most parents are positive about the school. They feel that their children enjoy school and that their teachers have high expectations of them. They also feel that the school is approachable if parents have any worries about their children. Some parents have concerns about a number of issues. Several are dissatisfied with the school's arrangements for homework. This is understandable, as homework is not always provided in line with the school's homework policy. As a result, parents often do not know what to expect, particularly as homework diaries are not currently used consistently across the school. Other parents are unhappy with the school's extra-curricular activities, the information they receive on their children's progress, and the efforts the school makes to work closely with parents. These concerns are not justified. Provision for extra-curricular activities and information on progress are both good, and the school tries very hard to work closely with parents.
53. The school's links with parents are good. The school makes very good efforts to involve parents in its work and in their children's learning, and increasingly more and more parents are responding positively. Special workshops called *Inspire* are excellent examples of the way in which the school welcomes parents into the school to work with their children. Staff prepare and present these very carefully to make sure that they are both useful and enjoyable for all the participants. The headteacher has also introduced school improvement meetings for parents, another excellent initiative which provide a forum for full and frank discussions between the school and parents who have concerns. The headteacher's readiness to tackle parents' issues in this way is an indication of her wholehearted commitment to building good relationships with the parent community. Other very good strategies adopted by the school include assessment workshops, curriculum meetings and courses for parents. Teachers are readily accessible to parents, and the nursery teacher has particular responsibility for developing links with parents as soon as their children start school. Parents' views on school improvement are valued and are sought through questionnaires.
54. Information for parents is good. The newly revised prospectus is well presented and now contains all the details required by law. There are still some omissions from the governors' annual report to parents. Regular, welcoming weekly newsletters are sent out, and leaflets on areas such as behaviour, attendance and homework are produced to keep parents up to date with school policies. Insufficient information is sent out to let parents know what children will be studying each term. Reports to parents on their children's progress are also good. They are full and detailed, focusing appropriately on pupils' attainment. However, they do not consistently make clear to parents how well children are doing compared with expectations for their age, nor what they need to do to improve.
55. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly involved in formal reviews of their children's progress. The school works hard to ensure those parents attend these meetings. The *Inspire* workshops, when parents of pupils with special educational needs work with the co-ordinator and their child to develop strategies to enable them to gain confidence in taking a more active role in their child's education, are very valuable.
56. The contribution of parents to the school's work is satisfactory. Many hear their children read at home and attend parent-teacher consultation evenings to discuss their progress. A number of

parents are very enthusiastic and committed to the school. They provide valuable help as governors and support staff and are about to start a parent-teacher association. However, few parents volunteer to help in school. Some do not support the school by ensuring that their children attend regularly and arrive on time, and some do not uphold the school rules. A small number express their dissatisfactions with the school inappropriately. This is unhelpful and detracts from the school's everyday priorities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. Overall leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She has a very clear vision for the school based on a striving for continuing improvement. This vision has successfully been communicated to the whole staff and governing body and is now an accepted part of the school culture. It gives the whole school very clear direction and purpose. This is reinforced by a clearly defined school improvement plan, which is effectively monitored and regularly evaluated by the governing body and senior management team. All members of the senior management team along with the deputy headteacher and the governing body give her very good support.
58. The school has made excellent improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning has improved considerably and this has contributed positively to raising standards in English and mathematics, shown in the significant improvement in performance in the most recent standard assessment tests. There were some shortcomings in management and leadership in the last report. These are now considerably strengthened since the appointment of a permanent appointee to the post of headteacher and are strengths of the school. As a result morale in school is high. The school's aims and values are wholly appropriate and the school promotes them very well in all its work. Whittington Oval is a caring and rapidly improving school.
59. The school has made a considerable investment in training members of the senior management team. This has given them the skills and knowledge to make a very good contribution to management. They have clearly defined duties and they carry them out very effectively. For example, the key stage co-ordinators monitor standards effectively and support colleagues well. The structures in place to monitor standards throughout the school are very good. The headteacher effectively monitors teaching in all classes. She gives teachers oral and written feedback on performance and advises them on areas for further development. The English and mathematics co-ordinators also monitor teaching effectively and also support colleagues effectively. With the headteacher and the governing body they analyse the attainment of pupils in tests and the results are used to identify aspects of the curriculum that need developing and learning skills that need further reinforcing. For example, additional funding is being targeted at pupils in Year 5 who it is felt need extra support to help them achieve appropriate levels of attainment in mathematics by the time they leave the school. Pupils are set individual and group achievement targets. These are appropriately challenging and the school meets them very well.
60. Management of special needs by the co-ordinator is very good. Funds allocated are very well used and teaching and support staff are effectively deployed. The co-ordinator has a clear view of provision and has worked successfully to raise the profile of special needs within the school. Training is given to teachers on identification procedures for special needs and learning support assistants meet regularly with the co-ordinator to plan and review their work. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs has a good knowledge of this aspect and liaises termly with the co-ordinator to ensure the governing body receives regular reports.
61. The school's strategy for teacher appraisal and performance management is good. The headteacher has regular reviews with teachers and sets targets for continuous professional development. Teacher performance is reviewed through a process of direct lesson observation. The governing body monitors the performance of the headteacher and the deputy headteacher. They are both set

targets and these are reviewed annually. At the last review it was considered that both had exceeded the targets set. The training programme available to teachers in the school is effective in raising professional effectiveness. Much of this training has been provided by the headteacher and has been targeted in specific areas linked to the school improvement plan. Focused training in English and mathematics for all staff has contributed to the recent improvement in the application of the national numeracy and literacy strategies throughout the school. Arrangements for supporting newly qualified teachers are fully in place and they receive good support from a trained mentor, the deputy headteacher and the headteacher. Their teaching performance is regularly monitored and their professional development needs are being well addressed. The school is effectively involved in the training of new teachers. It has good links with a local training institution and several teachers are trained mentors and able to effectively supervise students in school.

62. The effectiveness of the governing body in fulfilling its responsibilities is good. This represents an improvement since the last report. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They receive very full and open reports from the headteacher on a regular basis, which they carefully scrutinise and ask questions about the contents. They also receive reports from members of the senior management team. These keep them well informed. Governors are actively involved in monitoring standards. With the headteacher they carefully scrutinise the annual performance of pupils in the national tests of attainment. Governors with responsibility for literacy and numeracy meet with the appropriate subject co-ordinators to discuss standards. This enables them to evaluate the effect of the school's spending decisions on standards. There is effective governor involvement in the strategic management of the school. Most governors are in good position to make strategic decisions because they know and talk about relevant issues with good understanding.
63. The governing body largely fulfils its statutory responsibilities although the most recent annual report to parents did not fully meet all requirements.
64. The school's system for financial planning is good with the school managing its available resources well. Guided by priorities outlined in the school improvement plan, the budget is appropriately allocated and kept under constant review by the finance committee ably informed by the effective finance administrator. Prudent budgeting has enabled the governing body to wipe out the deficit to the budget that was a cause for concern in the last report.
65. The school uses funds designated for particular purposes very well. The school is involved in a number of initiatives, for example the Education Action Zone. Unlike at the time of the last inspection, the school now maximises the benefits to be gained from such involvement through effective management and planning. For example, the school organises a Breakfast Club, funded by the Education Action Zone, presently serving 65 pupils daily. This is having a positive effect on attendance and punctuality. Standards funds are put to good use centring on school improvement. For example, one element of funding is used to employ a member of staff to work with children with identified behavioural problems training them in what is considered to be 'appropriate behaviour'. This is making a positive contribution to improving standards of behaviour in the school.
66. Effective routines are in place for the day-to-day running of the school and these ensure that the school runs smoothly. The school's accounts were last audited in March 2000. The auditor found the school to be well run and managed. Some minor recommendations were made and the governors have addressed these. Good use is made of educational technology in the administration of the school. For example, all assessment data is kept on computer, regularly updated and available to teaching staff through a number of networked computers. Analysis of data is computer assisted. The school has good procedures in place to ensure the cost effectiveness of the goods and services it purchases and the services it provides. It consults parents, for example

parents have been asked their opinion about the content of a new discipline policy. The school carefully monitors the effectiveness of new initiatives and new policies.

67. The school is very well staffed to meet the demands of the curriculum. All teachers have clearly designated responsibilities. Subject co-ordinators generally manage subjects well. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Staffing is now more stable, since there is now less turnover of staff than was the case at the time of the last inspection. The school has a good number of well-trained learning support assistants who give very good support in the classrooms, working in effective partnership with teachers. Resources for teaching are at least satisfactory and those for English and mathematics are good, as are resources in information and communications technology. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
68. Accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms and other areas of the school are maintained as stimulating and interesting environments. Attractive displays of pupils' work are on show in classrooms and corridors. There are useful additional spaces used effectively for small group teaching. The last report was concerned with the state of some of the toilet facilities. These are due to be replaced in the very near future. The governing body has drawn up a programme of building redevelopment, which is shortly due to commence. The school lacks suitable outdoor play facilities for children under five in the reception classes. The playground is in a poor state of repair; its condition is unsatisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. Considerable work has already been done to improve this school over a short period of time and rapid progress has been made. To improve the school further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- ❑ Raise standards of pupils' attainment in all aspects of English, throughout the school, by:
 - (a) implementing existing policies for teaching and learning in English rigorously and consistently throughout the school;
 - (b) building on the flexible use of the national literacy strategy;
 - (c) developing pupils' skills of planning, drafting and re-drafting, more often using the computers;
 - (d) extending pupils' skills in literacy through other subjects of the curriculum
 - (e) providing focused targeted support programmes to address underachievement.

(Paragraphs: 1; 4; 5; 7; 8-9; 82-84; 88)

- ❑ Take steps to ensure that pupils have opportunities to use the full range of their skills in information and communication technology across the curriculum by:
 - (a) ensuring teachers' lesson plans indicate how the computers might be used to support pupils' learning in each subject;
 - (b) ensuring there are sufficient software resources to support pupils' work with the computers in all subjects ;
 - (c) providing more opportunities for pupils to use the computers in all areas of the curriculum.

(Paragraphs: 10; 32; 126; 130)

- ❑ Improve the behaviour and attitudes to learning of the significant minority of pupils who disrupt the learning of others in some lessons, by:
 - (a) ensuring that all staff, pupils and parents are fully aware of the content of the existing behaviour management policy and of the strategies already being pursued in the school;
 - (b) implementing the policy in full;
 - (c) devising and agreeing an increased range of strategies to manage pupils' behaviour and implementing them consistently;
 - (d) upgrading some teachers' class management skills;
 - (e) monitoring the effectiveness of supervision in lessons, around the school and in the playground and providing additional support where this is needed;
 - (f) devising strategies to improve pupils' attitudes to learning, including the provision of opportunities for them to take appropriate responsibility and teaching the study skills needed for them to work independently.

(Paragraphs: 14; 17; 25; 109)

- ❑ Ensure that homework is used consistently across the school to enhance pupils' learning, by
 - (a) ensuring that all teachers, pupils and parents are fully aware of the contents of the existing homework policy;
 - (b) ensuring that parents are informed about the school's expectations of homework for pupils of different ages;
 - (c) monitoring the setting of homework to different classes;
 - (d) ensuring that pupils in all classes keep a homework diary.

(Paragraphs: 52; 91; 105)

- ❑ Continue to pursue vigorously the strategies already in place to improve pupils' attendance.

(Paragraphs: 13; 18-19; 49; 65)

The headteacher, staff and governors may also consider the following less significant aspect for inclusion in the action plan:

- Improve the opportunities for outdoor play for children under five in the reception classes.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	79
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	38

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	23	43	30	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39	426
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		197

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8	136

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	19

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	42
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	45

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	33	29	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	26	29
	Girls	28	28	28
	Total	54	54	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (75)	87 (80)	92 (78)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	29	28
	Girls	27	28	24
	Total	52	57	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (78)	92 (79)	84 (81)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	27	28	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	20	23
	Girls	14	16	20
	Total	32	36	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	58 (35)	65 (42)	78 (55)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	24
	Girls	16	15	21
	Total	36	35	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (40)	64 (49)	82 (55)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	9
Black – other	0
Indian	7
Pakistani	18
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	301
Any other minority ethnic group	38

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	12	2
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.7
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	170

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	39

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	269

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 - 2000
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	£
Total income	935 593.00
Total expenditure	883 296.00
Expenditure per pupil	1 977.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	132.00
Balance carried forward to next year	52 429.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	479
Number of questionnaires returned	122

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	34	3	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	54	8	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	44	12	5	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	38	20	9	3
The teaching is good.	39	49	9	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	38	24	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	46	42	7	1	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	41	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	25	43	20	4	7
The school is well led and managed.	33	40	12	2	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	34	45	9	4	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	34	23	7	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

70. The educational provision for children under five is very good. There are sixty children in the reception unit and twenty-three in the nursery who receive full time education. Fifty-three children are taught on a part-time basis in the nursery. There are two separate sessions each day and one yearly intake. Children enter the nursery at the beginning of the academic year in which they will be four years old. There is a very good and relevant induction process which includes an open day for parents and children to see the nursery in action, a talk with the head and Foundation Stage staff, a series of 'play and stay' days, a comprehensive welcome book and a 'Things I can do' booklet. The latter begins the child's nursery profile, which is ongoing and is passed through to the reception unit. During the first half term, the local authority assessment test is administered and is revisited throughout the Foundation Stage. These assessments, together with teachers' very good diagnostic assessments and records, are carefully analysed and provide good information against which future achievement can be measured. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are identified early and given appropriate support.
71. The last inspection report found the provision for children under five to be of a high quality but that their creative work was generally underdeveloped. In this inspection, the curriculum provided throughout the Foundation Stage is very good in all areas of learning. The foundation curriculum has been fully implemented and all children, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. They are prepared well for the next stage of their education.

Personal, social and emotional development

72. On entry into school the majority of children have poor personal and social skills. They make very good progress in this area of learning and achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Staff in both the nursery and reception unit have high expectations of the children's behaviour and consistently praise children's efforts, encouraging self-esteem. The children, very quickly, learn to work as part of a group. This development is supported by the very good planning and organisation of class and group work and the high calibre of the support staff.
73. Children become increasingly aware that their actions can affect other people. For example, nursery children are learning to take turns and listen to each other in circle time. They empathise wholeheartedly with the three little pigs' feelings when meeting the wolf and show a good understanding of the right and wrong way to behave. Children are encouraged to be independent from the outset and reception children cope well with changing their own shoes and clothes and putting equipment away tidily. They are learning to be part of the larger school community and listen attentively to the stories in full assemblies. Staff provide very good role models for the children and show courtesy and respect to each other and to the children. There is a very good rapport between staff and children and effective liaison between the nursery and the reception unit staff. Staff work as a mutually supportive team for the benefit of the children in this vital area of development, thus enabling the children to feel secure, confident and positive when approaching their work.

Communication, language and literacy

74. The majority of children enter school with skills below those expected for this age group, with particularly poor speaking skills. Through good teaching and very well planned, organised and purposeful activities, the majority of children achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children's listening skills develop very well and most learn to concentrate for

relatively long periods on specific tasks. Staff use every opportunity to extend children's language skills and to help individuals to gain confidence in their speaking. For example, children are able to relate well to the story where Biff, Chip and family end up going to Macdonalds for a meal! They express their thoughts confidently in complete sentences, such as, "I would go by bus and when I got there I would have chips, nuggets and a milk shake". The Literacy Framework is adopted well in both nursery and reception classes. Children listen attentively to stories and teachers' skilful, open ended questions enable them to assemble their own ideas and, with support, to express them and so extend their vocabulary. Higher attainers in the nursery make good attempts at writing their own names, whilst middle attainers trace over words and sentences. There are many opportunities in the nursery and reception for independent writing, for example, in the post office and florist's shop. Planned intervention and support from adults in these role play activities help the children to develop literacy and language skills. Children in the reception unit, including the lower attainers, know some initial sounds and understand the need for spaces in their writing. For example, one child wrote, "The dgan wr sln", meaning "The dragon was sleeping". Higher attainers write their names and are beginning to write their own sentences, holding their pencils correctly. Some children identify capital letters and full stops. All children understand that print carries meaning and enjoy using books. At the end of the Foundation Stage, higher and average attainers are able to read a variety of simple books and use a range of strategies to decode words. The children enjoy poems and learning rhyming words and phrases. In some lessons, more emphasis on phonic work and in repeating sounds and rhyming words would enable lower attaining pupils to develop reading and speaking skills further.

75. There is a good balance between whole class and group teaching plus opportunities for children to choose their own tasks. Computers are used regularly to support pupils' development in this area of learning and pupils access the simple programs well. Teachers' planning is very well organised and relevant to the children's needs. Assessment is detailed and analysed to inform future planning, including the targeting and tracking of individual children. Pupils make good progress in this area of learning.

Mathematical development

76. On entry, children have underdeveloped skills in mathematical understanding. They make good progress in both the nursery and reception units and the majority are in line with expectations at the end of the Foundation Stage. Teachers use all opportunities to develop numeracy skills, for example at register time, at snack time, in stories such as Goldilocks, when collecting apparatus and in music sessions. The use of mathematical language is encouraged both orally and in displays, for example in labelling paintings of shapes and in patterns of spots and stripes. Nursery children sort objects for shape, size, colour and texture and, through a variety of practical, well structured activities in the sand, water, home corner and florist's shop, are acquiring good number skills. They try, with support, to record their work.
77. The skills of the children in the reception unit are extended with counting games, rhymes and songs and the use of structural apparatus and mathematical puzzles. Higher attainers count confidently to ten and some beyond. They recognise, match and write the numbers accurately. Higher and middle attainers find the total number of items in two groups and thus develop a practical understanding of addition. For example, children's work in small supervised groups throwing ten beanbags into a frog bucket, after which they add together those in the bucket and those in the lily pond. Children then record their work accurately. Numbers, in the main, are well formed and neat.
78. Numerous activities, such as bead threading, games involving dice and the computer, give the children rich practical mathematical experiences to support more formal learning in the future. Well planned lessons and focused tasks for specific groups, including children with special

educational needs, enable the children to have positive attitudes and respond well to the good teaching in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

79. Children enter the nursery with little basic general knowledge. Good progress is made and the majority achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children learn about their homes and families and their own development, showing a keen interest in their photographs when babies. They are beginning to have a sense of time and how people change and to understand the importance of eating foods which make them healthy. They discuss their likes and dislikes when touching, smelling and tasting various items of food. In sessions such as this one, they also extend their language skills too, with the use of words such as "flavour" "salty", "hairy". They recognise and understand signs and symbols, for example, post office, friendship stop and library, and learn how other cultures celebrate their special occasions. This is exemplified by the colourful nursery presentation of 'Chinese New Year' and the displays of Eid and Diwali with notices written in English and Punjabi. Children are given experiences with computers in both the units and in the computer suite. Children are skilful in manipulating the mouse and know how to press the keys on the computer to cause a change on the screen. They use a variety of programs to support their learning. They plant bulbs, watch and sequence their growth and record their observations. For example, one child wrote, "Its grewed". They are developing technological understanding through opportunities for model making, for example, designing and modelling clay snowmen and making pizzas. They are acquiring a good knowledge of the seasons and the reasons for wearing different clothes in summer and in winter, in hot countries and in cold places. Teaching is lively, imaginative and challenging and children enjoy the investigative tasks in this area of learning.

Physical development

80. Children enter the nursery with skills in line with those expected of this age group. They make good progress in developing these skills, the majority achieving the goals at the end of the Foundation Stage with a few children exceeding them. There is a spacious hall and a good range of colourful, safe apparatus, suitable for the age group. Children have opportunities to jump, run, climb and balance and show an awareness of space, respecting each other's needs. For example, in a lesson in which children are learning to balance a bean bag, children gently pick up their own bags, pretending they are baby birds. They try hard not to hurt or disturb anyone else's bird. They can aim and throw balls and use words to describe the activities such as "over", "under", "through", "behind". Nursery children benefit from having a secure, large grassed and hard play area plus a good range of mobile toys, which extend and support their physical skills. Reception children do not have these outdoor facilities and equipment and the nursery building is too far away for the reception children to share the resource easily. Children have many experiences in cutting, sticking, using modelling tools, crayons and felt tips and their finer physical skills are developing well. Children in the reception unit work confidently, safely and independently when using equipment. Children dress appropriately for lessons and are very obedient, responding well to the good and sensitive teaching.

Creative development

81. Children enter school with limited skills and experience in this area of learning. A warm, colourful, interesting and lively environment, plus good teaching, helps to stimulate the children's interest in creating paintings, collages and models, of which they are justifiably proud. They learn to mix paint and experiment using different media and materials, which they do very well, with good staff support. There are opportunities throughout the day for imaginative role play, supported by a good range of dressing up clothes. The children enjoy stories and action rhymes and are learning to think imaginatively, for example, when passing Teddy round in circle time.

There is a sufficient range of musical instruments in the units for the children to explore the different sounds of the instruments. In music lessons, they learn to recognise the differences between high and low and soft and quiet sounds and are gaining confidence in performing for each other. Listening skills are developing well. Some incidental singing of rhymes was observed, but more singing in class assemblies and to reinforce learning in other subjects would enhance pupils' development even further.

ENGLISH

82. Results of the most recent national tests show that the standards of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are around the national average in reading and writing, but that at the end of Key Stage 2 they are well below the national average. However, standards are improving, at times faster than the rate of improvement nationally. Last year the school's targets for improvement were exceeded.
83. Evidence obtained during the inspection indicates that current standards in reading in both key stages are close to the national average. There is more variation in writing and standards are lower, although there has still been some improvement. Standards in speaking and listening in both key stages are below average. The introduction of the national literacy strategy has had an important effect on achievement, as has extra funding for additional literacy support from the Education Action Zone. Consequently the reason for the improvements made in reading and writing is the better teaching and the strong focus which has been put on addressing these areas of literacy during the past year. These factors, together with consistent planning and assessment, have enhanced pupils' learning. Starting from a below average base on entry pupils are now making satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
84. Standards in speaking and listening are below average in both key stages, but improving. In Key Stage 1 pupils are often happy to talk to adults while in Key Stage 2 they are frequently reticent and less willing to interact or volunteer conversation with adults, although they answer questions readily enough. These pupils have not always had the advantage of the good teaching in English that is now established, which is one reason why their speaking skills are still not as good as they could be. However, the school is aware of these unsatisfactory standards and is taking action to remedy the situation. A speaking and listening initiative is already in place, with one class seen to have as its week's focus 'taking a turn in speaking and listening' for example. In another class the teacher talked to the pupils about unusual, old vocabulary, promoting an interest in language to which the pupils responded positively. In a Year 6 class the teacher required small groups of pupils to discuss together and predict what might happen next in a story. The strong work ethos in a number of classes allows for careful listening. This disciplined approach is helping to develop pupils' skills of speaking and listening.
85. Standards in reading are developing satisfactorily resulting in a sound rate of progress across the school. They are average at the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 1 pupils have reading books and diaries. Some take their books home regularly and read to an adult and, where this is well supported, it is successful in improving standards of pupils' reading and their love of books. Pupils know the routine of parents signing the diary indicating that they have read the book speeds up the rate at which they can have their books changed. Some talk about taking books home from the school library and buying books from the Book Fair, which was being held in school during the inspection. Pupils in this key stage are acquiring phonic skills through systematically planned teaching based on the national literacy strategy. All pupils share in guided reading with their teachers on a weekly basis, which is effectively helping them make progress and to have the confidence to attempt to read new words. Many of them can now read accurately by themselves

from their reading books; some pupils add expression to indicate meaning and can talk about their books, recalling stories well.

86. Pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 generally read simple texts independently and accurately. They begin to develop confidence and fluency. They correct themselves when they make a mistake and sometimes scan ahead when reading. Higher attainers at the end of Key Stage 2 discuss plots and characters and read with expression. They understand terms like “alliteration”, “dialogue” and “characterisation”. Many pupils read well by the end of Key Stage 2 but some find it difficult to explain terms such as “illustration” although it is almost certain that they know the meaning of these words. This is another indication of their underdeveloped speaking skills. Other pupils with average attainment can explain such phrases as “perusing the menu”. In both key stages pupils share 'big books' with their teachers and very much enjoy being read to. They focus well on the text in these books and this helps their learning. Poetry featured in several classes during the inspection and pupils showed an awareness of style, pattern and poetical language, as in *Meg Merrilees* for example. Pupils' knowledge of authors is limited. The majority of those asked mentioned Roald Dahl, although one pupil enjoyed the poems of Michael Rosen. The introduction of the national literacy strategy has been influential in improving pupils' reading skills, with teachers providing a range of interesting texts.
87. Standards in writing in Key Stage 1 are close to the national average. Pupils in Year 1 copy their teacher's writing at first, although letter formation is not always accurate. Some can write one sentence independently whilst higher attainers are able to write a few sentences, for example one pupil describes three musical instruments and how to play them. In Year 2 pupils progress from using full stops at the end of their writing only, to using full stops and capital letters more consistently and forming their letters more confidently, although there are still some errors. Their work is generally carefully presented. Pupils write independently, increasing their output steadily and showing more control; sentence structures remain very simple. Nevertheless clear progress can be seen from the beginning of Year 1 to the spring term in Year 2.
88. Standards in Key Stage 2 are improving and the work seen of some of the pupils in Year 6 was in line with the national average. Pupils in Year 4 begin to write longer pieces of text, using their imagination to good effect. They use “and” and “but” to create longer sentences. Some choose vocabulary well, using sentences like, for example, “It went dark, it was gloomy and scary”. Their stories have a sound structure with a clear ending and demarcation of sentences is increasingly correct. Higher attainers use commas for lists and, occasionally, for separate clauses. They begin to use speech marks appropriately. While pupils gradually produce longer pieces of narrative writing, their handwriting is not joined. At this stage some of their writing is well structured, with appropriate use of adjectives and adverbs. Higher attainers generally use more complex sentences and sometimes include similes. Their use of punctuation becomes more correct and appropriate. In Year 6 pupils experience writing for a variety of purposes, for example letter writing, poems and narrative writing. They redraft their work as they make progress towards their individual targets, although on too few occasions using the computer. Their extended writing builds on the literacy work that they do. They begin to use connectives such as “so” and “because”. Higher attaining pupils write for an extended range of purposes, including autobiography and biography for example. They begin to use literary techniques such as repetition in their writing and use correct punctuation including exclamation marks and commas to introduce and conclude direct speech. Their writing is enhanced by adverbs and subordinate clauses and among these pupils some of it is of high quality. Overall however, standards in writing of a majority of pupils are not as good as they could be by the end of Key Stage 2.
89. Teaching is good throughout the school, with particular strengths in Years 2 and 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection and it is having a direct effect on standards. The meticulous and consistent planning which has been introduced, together with regular assessment, is also having an effect on the way pupils achieve. In the best lessons, learning objectives are

made very clear to the pupils at the start and returned to in the plenary session at the end. As a result pupils know what they have to do when they start and the outcomes are communicated to them before the lesson finishes. Teachers pay strict attention to the national literacy strategy and this focus has a beneficial effect on achievement. The lively approach by the majority of teachers keeps pupils concentrating and on task. There is a good pace to most lessons and pupils are given every opportunity to maximise their learning. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils in the main and most employ a range of strategies to maintain an orderly working atmosphere. Pupils know what is expected and generally respond appropriately. In Year 6 expectations are particularly high; teachers use sophisticated language to which higher attaining pupils, in particular, respond positively. Where teachers do not have this rapport, both teaching and learning are restricted.

90. Throughout the school teachers explain tasks clearly and pupils start their independent work promptly. In the best lessons teachers specify how long pupils have to complete tasks and remind them when the time is nearly spent. Where teachers are less clear in their instruction, pupils work at a slower pace and don't always complete their assignments. Good management and control in the majority of classes means that pupils stay on task. Progress is made in these lessons. Teachers have high expectations of the presentation of work and pupils respond to this well, never failing to write the date and the heading and underline them. They do this immediately without being told. In Year 2 teachers provided appropriate models for expressive reading of a poem and pupils followed their example enthusiastically. In Year 6 teachers give appropriate targets for pupils to work to whilst writing narrative pieces. This helps them to focus on the important issues. The correct grammar and literary terms used by teachers have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. The majority of teachers have several ways of maintaining pupils' attention, like varying their voices to emphasise the importance of listening for example. In one class this paid off when a pupil heard the word "entranced" and provided a suitable definition. Teachers are expert at reading and telling stories and pupils in one class in Key Stage 2 sighed with disappointment when the story was cut short for independent work to be allocated.
91. Assessment is built into the very good planning and this is effective in providing new targets for pupils. They know what those targets are and they are aware of what they must do to achieve them. Teachers are conversant with National Curriculum levels in English, which makes assessment and onward planning more effective. The marking of pupils' work is consistently good. Teachers are aware that marking needs to be diagnostic and formative as well as congratulatory or punitive. They refer to pupil's targets and say what needs to be done to make work more accurate. For example, in one book the teacher had written, "You have the right elements of an autobiography here, but we could do with more information". Information and communication technology was used in many classrooms, always relevant to the focus of the lesson, but not used effectively for drafting and editing. There is a scheme for homework but the setting of this is not consistent in complementing the work in school.
92. Considering the late start by the school in adopting the national literacy strategy and the time taken to adapt according to the needs of the pupils, its effectiveness in promoting literacy learning is remarkable. The English co-ordinator, under the leadership of the headteacher, is to be congratulated for her perception of what was needed to raise the standards of English in the school and for her skill in establishing the systems of planning and assessment which are now having such benefits. This strong, knowledgeable leadership and the co-operative efforts of all the teachers has been instrumental in making the breakthrough to higher standards of teaching and learning. Initiatives planned for the future should ensure continued improvement. This is needed in speaking and listening and homework.
93. Since the last report there have been significant improvements in the majority of weaknesses identified. There has been a great input into strategic planning to raise the standard of literacy throughout the school.

MATHEMATICS

94. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 attain expected standards in numeracy and in all other areas of mathematics. Standards now are improving considerably, representing a good improvement since the last report. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs receive good classroom support and make good progress.
95. By the age of seven, most pupils add and subtract numbers to 20 accurately using appropriate strategies. With encouragement they explain how they find the answer. They identify simple number sequences, continue them and explain their patterns. They know the differences between odd and even numbers and can describe some of their respective characteristics. They read and write numbers up to 100 being able to count them sequentially and order them. Higher attaining pupils know what each digit in a two digit number represents. They recognise and continue quite complex number sequences. They can also double and halve numbers. This represents good achievement. Pupils are developing their understanding and knowledge of shape and identify and name correctly a number of two and three-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining pupils are able to describe some of the properties of these shapes. Pupils use a good range of mathematical vocabulary when discussing their work. For example, they use words such as circle, cube, cuboid, straight line and edge when describing shapes. When describing numbers they sometimes use the terms “more than” and “less than”.
96. Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory grasp of number. They use a range of strategies when calculating and applying the four number rules. They have a satisfactory understanding of properties of numbers. For example, they know that when two even numbers are multiplied together the answer is even. They draw and measure accurately, using a protractor to measure angles. They measure perimeters of shapes and calculate areas of shapes. Higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of notation including parts of a whole to a hundredth part. They convert fractions to decimals. They have no difficulty suggesting pairs of factors for whole numbers up to 200.
97. Overall, the quality of teaching throughout the school is good. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is never less than satisfactory, often good and sometimes very good. Teachers are applying the national numeracy strategy well. Teachers plan well and their lessons include a range of appropriate activities that meet the learning needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Most lessons have well-defined learning objectives which teachers make clear to pupils when lessons begin. They generally set a lively pace of work. Teachers use ends of sessions well to assess and reinforce learning. They also make good use of resources to help pupils' learning and understanding. The subject is well resourced with sufficient equipment being available to meet the demands of the national numeracy strategy. This is an improvement since the last report. In some parts of the school, pupils are set in teaching groups that correspond to levels of pupils' attainment. This organisation makes planning less demanding on teachers and it is making a good contribution to the progress pupils are making.
98. Behaviour of pupils in lessons, which was a concern in the last report, is good. Pupils enjoy mathematics, particularly the oral and mental sessions in numeracy lessons, in which they take part enthusiastically. They co-operate well when working collaboratively and work hard when engaged on mathematical activities.
99. Information and communications technology to develop pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding is used effectively in some areas of the school. For example, Year 6 pupils use computers well to explore and draw a range of regular and irregular shapes and to construct nets. However, opportunities to use computers in mathematics are limited overall. Pupils use their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum, for example counting beats in music, measuring in design and technology, and describing movement sequences in dance and

gymnastics. Overall, however, opportunities for pupils to apply their mathematical skills across all areas of the curriculum are limited.

100. The co-ordinator gives very good leadership. He supports teachers well and very effectively monitors all aspects of the subject, including teachers' planning, pupils' completed work and classroom teaching. He scrutinises assessment test results thoroughly and uses the results of analysis to build a clear view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses. There is a well-devised action plan in place for the further development of the subject.

SCIENCE

101. Standards have improved in science for seven and eleven-year-olds in the past three years, with pupils successful in exceeding their targets. Boys consistently achieve higher standards than girls.
102. The inspection found that standards of work in pupils' books and in lessons are broadly average. An analysis of pupils' work throughout the school shows adequate coverage of the science curriculum. Teachers are now placing greater emphasis on the pupils undertaking scientific experiments and this has led to an improvement in their skills of enquiry since the previous inspection.
103. In a Year 1 class studying sound and hearing, pupils made good gains in exploring how sounds are made by making their own instruments and experimenting with the sounds they made. Year 1 pupils were able to name body parts and Year 2 pupils displayed sound knowledge of different types of materials and identifying objects made of those particular materials. This work was then extended to demonstrate how materials change.
104. By the age of eleven pupils display high levels of skill in scientific enquiry in their work on mixing materials to see what changes occur and what changes cannot be reversed. They are capable of carrying out investigative work, which is well organised with pupils demonstrating their ability to carry out a fair test. A Year 4 class was set the task of determining what affects the brightness of a bulb. They were able to construct circuits competently and moved forward in their learning to construct parallel circuits using one battery. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in attaining targets that are set and this has improved since the previous inspection.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is always satisfactory but often good and very good and has improved since the previous inspection. In good lessons teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge and as a result carefully plan lessons with clear learning objectives. Resources are well organised and this ensures that lesson time is used productively and that they proceed at a good pace. Good questioning skills and careful demonstrations enable pupils to make good gains in learning. This was observed in a Year 5 lesson on the solar system, for example, when pupils went in to the playground to construct the solar system using themselves as the planets orbiting the sun. In some practical lessons the noise levels are too high, which results in the flow of learning being interrupted by the efforts of the teacher to provide a calmer atmosphere. However, pupils generally respond well to science lessons, they answer questions enthusiastically and co-operate well with each other during investigations. They show respect for the equipment and generally co-operate with each other during group work. Good support is given by learning support assistants for special educational needs pupils. In a Year 6 class special educational needs pupils were supported well when they were given an appropriate template to record their findings. Work is well presented and regularly marked by the teacher giving feedback on how to improve and giving praise when appropriate. The use of homework does not fully support the learning in lessons, however, and more could be done to ensure that homework is better structured to enhance the science curriculum.

106. The science curriculum is managed well by the co-ordinator; she has made a thorough audit of resources to ensure the effective delivery of the nationally recognised scheme of work. This scheme of work has improved teacher subject knowledge and ensured continuity and progression. She monitors the termly and weekly plans of the class teachers, providing feedback regularly, and carries out a termly work scrutiny in each year group. During the Easter holiday a Booster Club is held to revise science prior to the yearly standardised tests.

ART AND DESIGN

107. Pupils throughout the school attain the standards expected in art. They show enjoyment when engaged in art and design activities and approach the subject with enthusiasm as in a Year 3 class when pupils were involved in creating a mosaic. Good use has been made of visiting artists to address the weaknesses in the previous inspection in three-dimensional and textile work. Year 4, for example, had created pleasing pieces of work in weaving using a variety of materials. Throughout the school more attention has been paid to the systematic teaching of skills and techniques by the use of a published scheme of work and the long-term plan ensures continuity and progression in the subject. This also represents improvement since the last inspection
108. At both key stages pupils have access to a range of techniques and a variety of media. Displays around the school show paintings using watercolours and pastels and various printing techniques using string and polystyrene. In Key Stage 1 paintings are displayed which show that pupils confidently control this medium and have a good grasp of colour mixing, particularly when reproducing face colours. Pupils have observed in detail the work of famous artists such as Leonardo Da Vinci, Monet and Matisse and produced work in that style. In Key Stage 2 sketchbooks are now used to plan designs and to do preliminary sketches and this is contributing positively to improving the standards of pupils' work.
109. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In a lesson with Year 6 pupils the teacher was confident in her subject knowledge, explained the learning objectives clearly to the class and communicated her high expectations. This resulted in pupils achieving satisfactory standards of close observational drawings of World War Two artefacts and musical instruments; one pupil with special educational needs achieved a very high standard in this. Year 1 pupils, painting self portraits, were successful in observing their own images in mirrors. In one lesson poor behaviour management resulted in a lack of concentration and inappropriate behaviour from some pupils, although most pupils successfully produced a finished product.
110. Work in art sometimes complements that in other subjects, such as in history when pupils created collage pictures using black paper in the style of Ancient Greek vases. Displays are attractively presented in the school and it is clear that pupils take care when illustrating their work in other areas of the curriculum.
111. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who ensures that it is well resourced. Planning is monitored regularly to ensure curriculum coverage. The introduction of portfolios of work is planned to provide both examples of different techniques and the development of pupils' skills throughout the age range, and to enhance teachers understanding of the required standards in art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

112. Standards of eleven-year-old pupils are average which is similar to the situation at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily.
113. Unfortunately no teaching was available to be seen in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. However, these younger pupils are given the opportunity to design and make things, working with a range of materials. Work seen indicates that standards are in line with those expected of pupils

their age. They use tools to shape and cut and they learn to fix things together. For example, seven-year-olds make stick puppets following designs of their own making. They work to a purpose as these puppets are then used in the Christmas Production. These same pupils move on to make glove puppets having first learnt the skills of stitching. They youngest pupils make things with a wide range of construction kits. Teaching promotes and encourages the pupils to design.

114. Some good and some very good teaching was seen with pupils in Key Stage 2. Eight- year-old pupils, for example, were making a simple model which used a pneumatic system to create movement. These pupils demonstrated a good knowledge of ways of fixing components together. They have good skills that enable them to cut, shape and assemble a range of materials and they handle tools safely. They talk about their ideas and their models freely and they evaluate their models well, relating to their original plans and purpose. Evaluating products was a prominent part of a lesson seen with Year 5 pupils. These pupils were testing a range of bread products, discussing their general characteristics and what the bread might best be used for, like eating as toast or making sandwiches. Pupils were asked to choose their own personal preferences and encouraged to give reasons for their choices. Pupils quickly learned to classify the products against a range of criteria. Eleven-year-old pupils were developing a design specification for making a pair of slippers taking into account the suitability of materials for the given purpose. The challenge of the activity promoted sustained concentration and interest. Pupils generated a range of good ideas and evaluated each other's designs according to their suitability for the given purpose. The organisation and planning of all lessons was good. Pupils were given choice when appropriate and the opportunity to explore their own ideas. Pupils co-operate well in lessons. They show considerable interest and their obvious enjoyment is a response to enthusiastic teaching.
115. The co-ordinator works hard to support her colleagues. The scheme of work has recently been revised and meets the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The co-ordinator is right to identify the need to make further training available to support less confident staff a priority for further development.

GEOGRAPHY

116. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only one lesson, in Key Stage 2. Teachers' planning, pupils' work and discussions indicate that standards of work are in line with expectations in both key stages. One display of completed work shows different types of houses in Birmingham. This represents an improvement since the last inspection report and is a result of the work ethic in the school and the precise planning led by the headteacher and the geography co-ordinator.
117. In Key Stage 1 pupils' geographical work is undertaken as part of planned topics, for example food in Year 1 and celebrations in Year 2. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment.
118. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils studying weather patterns in different parts of the world appreciate how weather can affect towns and peoples' lives. They begin to understand some of the features of mountain environments and they use information and communications technology for research. They use maps to investigate the differences in places and begin to recognise the characteristics of contrasting areas. They make links with tourism, for example Nepal. Some pupils are unsure of the features of different locations.
119. In the lesson observed teaching was satisfactory overall. The lesson was well planned and the teacher referred to the prior attainment of the pupils. Her secure subject knowledge enabled her to give appropriate support. Good use was made of previous assessment to refine the lesson plan. However, there was insufficient pace in the lesson to ensure that all pupils made as much progress as they could.

120. National guidance for teaching and learning has been adopted in Key Stages 1 and 2. An assessment component is completed at the end of the topic being studied. These are having a positive impact on the standards pupils achieve. Internet sites have been evaluated for teachers' use and several of these provide a valuable resources to support teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has introduced a system of feedback so that teachers can state their views and preferences on planning and resources. A monitoring system has been started, with samples of pupils' work collected, which is effectively informing teachers' further assessment of their work. Residential visits contribute positively to pupils' learning. These initiatives have raised the profile of geography and have contributed to the improvements made in the subject since the last inspection.

HISTORY

121. During the inspection it was possible to observe a very small number of lessons in history. Teachers' planning, pupils' work, discussions and displays indicate that standards of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. A variety of initiatives ensures that the subject has a high priority in the curriculum, for example outings to museums and places of historical interest and visitors to the school. Thorough and consistent planning contributes to continuation through the key stages. This represents an improvement since the last inspection report when progress in Key Stage 2 was unsatisfactory.
122. Achievement in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. In the one lesson observed behaviour problems prevented the pupils maximising their learning and attainment was unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2 achievement is also satisfactory. Pupils in Year 4 examined a selection of artefacts from Tudor times, as they worked with a visiting expert. They were able to add to their knowledge effectively as they handled these artefacts and demonstrated that they could recall facts about day to day life and about Henry VIII, although not always accurately. In the one lesson observed in Year 6, pupils recalled their former learning about World War Two, including the names of people and important dates. They could make suggestions about how families protected themselves against air raids. They discussed these sensibly together to draw conclusions. Progress was made in empathising and understanding.
123. Teaching was satisfactory or better in the lessons observed. Learning objectives are always specified in the lesson planning and communicated to pupils. Lessons build on previous learning. In Key Stage 1 the teacher posed appropriate questions to enable pupils to extend their historical knowledge before undertaking a practical activity to consolidate their learning. In Key Stage 2 the teacher set the scene for role play activities well, creating atmosphere which helped pupils to empathise with people in a wartime situation. She extended their task and thereby their efforts to increase learning. Resources were used effectively to add meaning to the situation.
124. Co-ordination of the subject shows interest and enthusiasm. National guidance for planning and assessment was adopted in both key stages in September 2000. Attention is paid to giving pupils meaningful experiences in the form of visits to museums and places of historical interest to correspond with the topic being studied. An oral history element is developing well, for example in the work with the visiting expert on the Tudors, which provides pupils with an authentic view of different historical periods.
125. Displays of pupils' work show appropriate coverage of topics such as Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt. Attractive representations of William Morris wallpaper are testament to close observation, pointing to historical enquiry in this area.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

126. Standards of pupils' attainment are in line with those expected at the ends of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The improvement in standards since the previous inspection has resulted from the recent upgrading of resources, the development of teachers' skills in teaching the subject and the systematic and determined management of curriculum development. Such has been the improvement that in some aspects of their work in information and communication technology, pupils' skills are better than those expected, for example in their ability to use the Internet for research purposes. In other aspects of their work however, progress has not been so rapid and pupils still have too few opportunities to use the computers in their work in other subjects. The school is tackling this situation very positively. Following the completion of the computer suite, which now affords teachers very good opportunities to extend pupils' skills, there is a plan to extend systematically the numbers of computers available in each classroom.
127. In Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils acquire satisfactory basic skills and are achieving well. In Years 1 and 2 pupils are provided with well-structured opportunities to use the computers and become familiar with a range of information and communication technology. Consequently, they make good progress and by the end of the key stage they achieve standards expected of seven-year-olds. Many load programs from within the computer and close them down when they have finished. They learn to use the keyboard and mouse with control and understanding and operate a range of programs effectively. Younger pupils develop basic keyboard skills, showing they can operate the caps lock and spacebar and they learn to use a word processing program to construct sentences. They can use a word bank to retrieve words about their pets. By Year 2 pupils' developing mouse control enables them to use a program to create a picture successfully. In a good lesson at this key stage, for example, pupils were able to use the flood-fill tool to complete a picture in the style of Mondrian.
128. In Key Stage 2 pupils' learning is also good, contributing positively to the good progress they make. By the end of this key stage pupils have a secure understanding of information and communication technology and they have the skills expected of pupils their age. Younger pupils can use the computer to organise and reorganise text, as they show in their *Downhill Racer* poem for example, and they add appropriate punctuation to text. They begin to develop the skills of re-drafting, able to replace selected words in the text with synonyms. They use cut and paste and move text using drag and drop techniques, which enables them to sort out parts of sentences. Early in this key stage pupils learn to access the Internet. Pupils can log on using their user name and password and by Year 4, they successfully search for information, as they did about Martin Luther King for example. Pupils are also able to search a given database for information.
129. These skills are successfully developed through Years 5 and 6. By the end of the key stage pupils use spreadsheets successfully, for example to calculate the area of a shape from the information given, or to compare project costings as the inputted information is changed. Pupils use a word processing program to write their own stories and show they can combine text and graphics importing clip art illustrations. They have shown they can use a desktop publishing program successfully, as in their design and production of Christmas cards. They can also use logo, managing to control turns to create shapes and later to calculate angles. In lessons, pupils demonstrated that they can investigate a variety of web sites, using the Internet effectively to search for information, and in one particularly good lesson, compare and evaluate different sources of information.
130. Overall the teaching is satisfactory. Most teachers use the school's new computer suite to good effect to teach appropriate skills and this is having a significant impact on raising standards. While there is evidence of teachers providing opportunities for pupils to use the computers available in classrooms in other subjects, as yet this is not as extensive as it could be. In mathematics, for example, some younger pupils had opportunity to use the computer for an extension activity providing further addition practice, while some others' understanding of circuits was extended in a science lesson. In a very good lesson with the older pupils in Key Stage 2, the teacher made very

good use of the computers to support pupils' learning in numeracy. She provided opportunity for her pupils to work with logo to further their understanding of angles of rotation in the construction of a shape and the calculation of internal angles. In other subjects however, pupils throughout the school have too few opportunities to work with the computers. While they develop appropriate word-processing skills, for example, pupils' completed work indicates that they have too few opportunities for re-drafting their writing using the computers.

131. Curriculum leadership in information and communication technology is very good. The co-ordinator has successfully managed the development of the subject since the last inspection and a great deal has been achieved in improving a subject which was poor at that time. The computer suite now provides an excellent resource. A clear policy and a scheme of work now inform teaching and learning in the subject effectively. A good programme of professional development has improved teachers' skills and this is enabling them to manage pupils' learning much more effectively. The co-ordinator has also contributed to the improvement of teachers' skills by providing model lessons and working alongside some teachers during their lessons. Extending teachers' skills further remains a priority however. The co-ordinator effectively monitors planning, teaching and pupils' work and this provides clear information about the quality of teaching and learning and the extent to which the computers are used across the curriculum.

MUSIC

132. By the ages of seven and eleven, standards are in line with what is expected. The last inspection reported that there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on standards achieved. Pupils follow a published scheme which covers all key aspects of music, supplemented by teachers' work, for example, when preparing pupils to take part in inter-school activities.
133. Pupils in Key Stage 1 differentiate between high and low sounds and are developing an appropriate understanding of pitch and rhythm. For example, pupils listen to sounds created by weather conditions such as the wind and can identify them, making appropriate hand signals to depict high and low sounds. Pupils in a Year 2 class showed a good understanding of the different sections of a song, distinguishing between call and response. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils clap a rhythm accurately and devise their own rhythmic patterns. They name and hold untuned percussion instruments correctly and play rhythms accurately. They sing songs from memory and some pupils in Year 2 sing with enjoyment; however, much of the singing lacks precision, good phrasing and attack.
134. Pupils in Key Stage 2 produce their own compositions, often linked to other subjects. For example, pupils create a piece of music depicting war and link it with history, using a variety of instruments. Pupils are given good opportunities to listen to music of different tempos and confidently choose instruments which create the most effective sounds and feelings for their compositions. At the end of the key stage, most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of musical terms such as *crescendo* and *diminuendo* and are familiar with musical form and patterns in music. They have good listening skills and collaborate well when evaluating and developing sounds to include in compositions. The small sample of singing heard lacked good breathing, vitality and expression.
135. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. In the better lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge and are well-prepared. Their class management in these practical lessons is very good. Some non-specialist teachers, however, lack the subject knowledge to develop pupils' skills further. Furthermore, in the less successful lessons in Key Stage 1, inadequate preparation and class management prevents otherwise well-planned lessons being fully completed.
136. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject further. There is a small recorder group which meets regularly. To increase the number of instrumentalists in the school is a priority

and is in the future subject planning. There is no choir, but pupils from Years 5 and 6 have very good opportunities to join with other primary schools in festivals and concerts. Special choirs are formed at Christmas time and for summer concerts and the pupils entertain their parents and senior citizens with their recorder playing and singing. To help raise standards, a music specialist has been into school to work with Year 1 in singing and composition and is to work with other groups in the near future. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities. They also have their own percussion group and entertain in the community. Special initiatives, instigated by the local secondary school and involving Key Stage 2 pupils, enable pupils to gain experiences in music, dance and drama plus performing in a local public venue, for example, in *Jason and the Argonauts*. Musicians, actors and artists will be visiting the school this term to help pupils with their forthcoming production of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. These experiences support pupils' musical and social development and provide valuable links with other subjects.

137. Resources are appropriate in the main, although there is a lack of sufficient tuned percussion instruments and school recorders to fully enhance pupils' musical development. Currently, resources are being reallocated to a central location which will be easily accessible to staff and pupils. Most lessons take place in classrooms so there are few opportunities for pupils to explore and develop their musical skills through movement or sing to live accompaniment, as space is limited. Information and communication technology has been incorporated into the music scheme in Key Stage 2, so that for example, pupils research famous bands. Music contributes satisfactorily to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, although it is not always incorporated sufficiently into whole school and class assemblies to heighten pupils' awareness of music and extend their learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Standards for pupils at seven years of age are average. It was not possible to see any pupils in Key Stage 2 working in lessons in dance or gymnastics but one swimming lesson was observed and the standard of attainment of the pupils was average. This is a similar picture of standards to that of the last inspection, but the provision for pupils to participate in competitive sports has improved. More outdoor games equipment is available and this is also an improvement.
139. The youngest pupils work enthusiastically in gymnastics both on the floor and on low level equipment. They learn to balance, stretch, roll and travel backwards and forwards. They learn to practise movement sequences in order to improve performance. They are encouraged by their teachers to evaluate their own and the performances of others and use a range of movement vocabulary, for example *travel, jump, roll, balance*. The youngest pupils are effectively taught how to handle equipment safely, for example the correct ways to lift, carry and move benches. When getting out and putting away equipment pupils co-operate extremely well with each other. Seven-year-olds enjoy dance lessons. These pupils demonstrate a good awareness of space which they use well. Working effectively in groups of threes and fours pupils develop a range of movement actions into dance sequences. They respond well to music interpreting rhythm and pitch through movement. Good lesson planning and the effective use of the tape recorder by the teacher in replaying sections of music in order to reinforce learning contribute to the sound progress pupils make.
140. In Key Stage 2 pupils learn to swim and standards are average. Pupils make good progress in swimming lessons responding very well to very effective instruction. Swimming lessons are well organised and pupils are divided into groups according to levels of swimming proficiency. They work in appropriate depths of water allowing them to be confident and feel safe. By the time they leave school most pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres. Opportunities are available for pupils to work towards gaining awards for distance swimming and personal survival. This is an effective incentive to pupils to work hard at swimming and many pupils succeed in gaining these awards.

141. The co-ordinator is well informed in teaching physical education and he supports colleagues well, for example in providing training in teaching dance and gymnastics and helping them improve lesson planning. With the help of other colleagues he organises a good range of extra-curricular activities. Older pupils, for example, have opportunities to engage in competitive team games against teams from other schools in netball, football and rounders.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

142. In the previous report the school was not exploring religious rituals in sufficient depth to draw out the similarities and differences between the beliefs and life-styles of the religions, as required by the locally agreed syllabus. This has now been fully addressed and pupils visit sacred places of many faiths to support their learning. In the last report there was little extended writing in this subject and the contribution to the development of literacy was limited. Pupils now write in a number of styles and their class discussions and writing are making a good contribution to literacy.
143. Pupils reach standards at the end of both key stages consistent with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In some elements of the work in Key Stage 2 they achieve well above average standards. For example, in the breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding of faiths other than their own.
144. Pupils in Key Stage 1 know that there are different places in which to worship and that special events are celebrated in them. For example, three Muslim pupils explain and enact their reactions to the call to prayer in the mosque for their peers. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the prayer sounds by listening to an authentic tape. They can identify different parts of the mosque, for example, minaret and dome, and are developing an understanding of the beliefs of others and the signs and symbols associated with religions, for example, the sign of the cross in Christian Baptism. Pupils have a basic knowledge of the life of Jesus and some of the Bible stories. They record their work appropriately, showing a good understanding of events using their own words. For example, when sequencing the Christmas Story, one Year 2 pupil wrote, "The wise men broute prents". The majority of pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and understand that other people's views should be respected. For example, when listening to a story about friendship, pupils empathise with those who have no friends and are able to differentiate very definitely between friendly and unfriendly actions.
145. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have a very good knowledge of many of the major beliefs, symbols and observances of Christians, Muslims, Jews, and Hindus. For example, in a lesson exploring the underlying beliefs of the Hindu concept of God, pupils were able to compare this with the perceptions of other religions confidently. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experience in listening to and recording stories in both the Old and New Testament. They express their thoughts sensitively. For example, one pupil wrote, "I think that each time Mary held Jesus, she felt that she was lucky and the best mother in the world". Pupils are encouraged to think about moral values, for example, how faith can lead to helping people in need and how thoughts may be expressed in actions, such as working for charitable causes. Religious celebrations and festivals, such as Diwali, Eid, Christmas and Easter are studied in Key Stage 1 and are revisited and extended in Key Stage 2.
146. Teaching is good, overall. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 2, but judgements have been made by analysing the wide range of work in books and on display and through discussions. Planning in conjunction with the agreed syllabus is very good and is consistent across both key stages. Assessment is built into the planning. It is ongoing and there are assessments at the end of specific units in Key Stage 2. Regular audits are made of pupils' progress. Work is clearly and appropriately planned for pupils of different abilities.

147. Currently the co-ordinator is on long-term leave. The acting co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, attends appropriate courses and feeds back to staff so that all are aware of current developments. Resources are good and sufficient to support all areas of religious education. Pupils have many opportunities to visit places of worship including a church, a temple and a mosque. Many visitors come into school, such as an Anglican vicar to perform communion and a Hindu woman to talk about Diwali celebrations, including food. These visits support pupils' learning and their understanding of other people's faiths. Religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.