

# INSPECTION REPORT

**GOLDENHILL, ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC  
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Goldenhill

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 124314

Headteacher: Mr J Tierney

Reporting inspector: David Penney  
23039

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Inspection number: 213414

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Mobberley Road Goldenhill Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire
Postcode:	ST6 5RN
Telephone number:	(01782) 235393
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Christine Hulme
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23039	David Penney	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Science Design and technology Information communication technology and Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are the pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
8986	Philip Andrew	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
21245	Bill Lowe	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30823	Brenda Clarke	Team inspector	Foundation stage Mathematics Art Physical education	How well does the school care for its pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Goldenhill, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School is an average-sized school serving the Roman Catholic parish of St Joseph's in Goldenhill, which is an area of mixed local authority and private housing. It has 231 boys and girls on roll, 29 of whom attend the nursery class full-time. Overall, there are broadly equal numbers of boys and girls, but Year 1 has many more girls than boys while Year 3 has many more boys than girls. All pupils come from a white ethnic background; no pupils speak English as an additional language.

This school serves the children from the local travellers' site and these form ten per cent of the school roll, which is a high proportion when compared to all schools nationally. Forty-three pupils (18.6 per cent) are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average. There are 38 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; three of these have statements of special educational need, which is in line with national and local averages. Pupils' attainment on entry to compulsory education is broadly average.

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

The school is a good one that gives good value for money. Pupils' standards, as measured in the national tests in 2001, are at least above the national average for 2000 and are more often well above it at the ages of seven and eleven. The school's results have improved significantly since 2000. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who behave well and make generally good progress throughout the school, although there are dips in the nursery and in Year 2. The quality of teaching is good, overall, although some known weaknesses are still to be addressed effectively. Systems and structures for planning and assessing the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are good; further work is known to be necessary in other subjects. Standards of care for pupils remain high. The monitoring and evaluation of the work of the school by the headteacher and senior staff are effective. However, the time is now right for this work to be extended to include other managers, as appropriate and as indicated on the school's development plan.

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

- Pupils' results in the national tests at the ages of seven and eleven have improved significantly over time and again in 2001.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and confident learners with very good attitudes to school; they behave well, overall.
- The quality of teaching is good, overall, with examples of very good teaching in each key stage and of excellent teaching in Years 3 and 6.
- The school gives high quality care to all pupils and ensures that they develop well as individuals; the ethos is very good.
- The partnership with parents is strong.
- The school's aims are reflected very well in its practice.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good.
- The school has acted decisively and effectively in response to the previous inspection report.

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

- The planning for subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not good enough, because it does not ensure that teachers plan work that builds logically on what pupils already know, understand and can do.
- Assessment procedures are not robust enough in some subjects and, more generally, the information being gained from assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is not being used well enough by teachers to plan work that matches individuals' developing needs closely.
- Provision in the nursery is not good enough, because it does not ensure that children acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding in a logical sequence and, therefore, make the progress of which they are capable.
- The role of managers at all levels needs to be developed to include regular and frequent monitoring and rigorous evaluation of relevant aspects of the school's work, especially, as appropriate, the quality of teaching and learning.

*The school's strengths are greater than its weaknesses and the areas for improvement will form the basis of*

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the inspection in May 1999, which identified the school as having serious weaknesses, good progress has been made and the school is well placed to improve still further. Standards have risen sharply in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, as shown in the results of national tests. The quality of teaching has improved, although areas of weakness remain. Planning structures have been developed that support teachers' efforts well in the core subjects; it is now timely to extend these structures to other subjects. In the same subjects, assessment information is used well to allow teachers to plan further work that closely matches the developing needs of individual pupils; this is an area for further development in other subjects. The headteacher has improved the effectiveness of leadership and management by delegating much responsibility to a very strong senior management team. The role of other managers still needs to be developed fully. The governors have improved their critical role, but have yet to form a full strategic view of the school's development.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

<b>Key</b>
well above average    A
above average        B
average                C
below average        D
well below average    E

The table shows that the school's results have improved at a rate that, over time, matches the national trend of improvement and which recently has exceeded it. Pupils' results in the national tests in the year 2000 at the age of eleven matched national averages in English and mathematics and were well above them in science. When compared with schools that had similar results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1996, pupils' results are well above average in mathematics and, in English and science, are very high and in the top five per cent nationally. However, the results of pupils aged seven in the national tests in 2000, although greatly improved on the previous year's results, remained well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. Results for 2001 at the ages of both seven and eleven show improvements in each tested area. The school's targets for English and mathematics in 2000 were exceeded. Inspection findings are that children make barely adequate progress in the nursery class, but good progress in the reception class. They enter Year 1 with attainment that is broadly in line with that expected of their age, except in their language work which is above average. By the age of seven, they attain standards that are above average in English and mathematics. Standards match the nationally expected levels in science, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education, but are below them in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. No judgement is possible about standards in music. By the age of eleven, pupils attain standards that exceed the national average in English, mathematics, science and music. In geography, history, ICT and physical education, standards match those expected. Standards are below expected levels in art and design and design and technology. Pupils make good progress, overall, through the school, although their rate of progress slows in the nursery class and in Year 2. The targets set for 2002 in English and mathematics are suitably challenging and, if the present rate of progress is maintained, are attainable.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. They are very enthusiastic learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in class and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils respect each other and are sociable.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	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 and learning is good, overall. Nearly eight per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory and so just over 92 per cent of teaching was at least satisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory in just over 21 per cent of lessons, good in a further 34 per cent and very good in nearly 29 per cent more. In nearly eight per cent of lessons, teaching was excellent. It is only satisfactory, overall, in the Foundation Stage because of weaknesses in the planning of work in the nursery class; in the reception class, teaching is more usually good or better. It is good, overall, for the pupils aged from five to seven. The quality of teaching and learning in Year 1 is at least good in all subjects but there are known weaknesses, particularly in planning and behaviour management in Year 2 that result in pupils' rate of progress slowing; however, their learning is broadly adequate in this class because they work hard at their tasks. The teaching of pupils aged from seven to eleven is strong, particularly in Years 3 and 6, because teachers manage pupils' behaviour well, expect them to give of their best, choose interesting and relevant work for them and have a good, sometimes very good, grasp of what they are teaching. As a result, pupils are well motivated, concentrate hard and make good efforts to produce acceptable standards of work. The teaching of English, including literacy, ICT and physical education is good for the five-to-seven year olds and it is satisfactory in mathematics, including numeracy, and science. Too little teaching of art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music was seen for a reliable judgement to be made, although there are some good examples from Year 1 in many of these subjects. The seven-to-eleven year olds are well taught in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, geography, ICT, music and physical education. Because of the timing of the inspection, little or no teaching of art and design, design and technology or history was seen and a judgement cannot be made. Throughout the school, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and children from travellers' families are met well because they receive good teaching that focuses closely on their individual needs.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory for the five to eleven-year-old pupils and in the reception class. There are weaknesses in the provision and planning in the nursery class. More work is needed in all subjects, other than English, mathematics and science, to ensure that pupils' skills are developed in a logical sequence.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good in the Foundation Stage and very good thereafter because of the many initiatives that support pupils' efforts to learn.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. It is very good for pupils' spiritual development and satisfactory for their cultural development.
How well the school cares	Good, overall. More work is needed to ensure that all the available



for its pupils	assessment information is used effectively in all subjects. It is a very caring school, overall.
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The partnership between the school and parents is very good.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good, overall. The headteacher gives a good steer to the work of the school and is very well supported by senior colleagues. The role of other managers needs to be developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Broadly satisfactorily, although they need to develop a strategic view of the school's development. Their role as a critical friend has improved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Improvements, instituted as a result of the analysis of national tests, have led to an increase in pupils' standards. The development plan is sound, but needs to incorporate a more strategic view of the school's direction.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school makes satisfactory efforts to get the best value for its spending. The school development plan has very little detail beyond the current year.

There are good levels of experienced and well-qualified teachers who are well supported by effective classroom assistants. The accommodation and resources are sound.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children make good progress because the teachers have high expectations of them.</li> <li>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching is good.</li> <li>• They are able to approach the school with questions or complaints easily.</li> <li>• They are kept well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school is led and managed well.</li> <li>• Their children are helped to become mature and responsible people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the broad thrust of all the positive views expressed; there are, however, areas of the school where the teaching is not strong enough and some aspects of leadership and management need strengthening further. The range of activities outside lessons is sound, although there is nothing for the younger pupils, which is not unusual in primary schools. Homework is used satisfactorily to reinforce and extend pupils' work in class and is appropriate for this age of child.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the national tests in 2000, which is the latest year for which there are national comparative figures, pupils aged seven attained standards that were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared with similar schools, results were well below average in writing and mathematics and were very low in reading. Nevertheless, these results were a considerable improvement over the previous year. In all tests, the average results were adversely affected by there being few pupils who achieved higher levels in the tests and many more than was the case nationally who achieved low results, a significant proportion of whom were boys.
2. In the same year, the proportion of eleven-year-olds who attained the nationally expected level matched the national average in English and mathematics and was well above it in science. When compared to schools whose cohorts scored similar results in the tests for seven-year-olds in 1996, these results are well above average for mathematics and, in English and science are very high and in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. Much of this success is because of the greatly improved proportion of pupils who achieved the higher levels, particularly in science. In all tests, girls did better than the boys, whose performance is improving and is now above that of their gender nationally in science, although remaining below it in English and mathematics. Standards have improved at a rate that, over time, matches the national trend, but which, recently, has exceeded it.
3. Inspection evidence shows that children enter the nursery with standards that are broadly in line with those expected. They make satisfactory progress in personal and social, mathematical and physical development, but unsatisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative skills, and development of communication, language and literacy skills because of weaknesses in planning that are explained later in this report. Their attainment on entry to the school in the reception class remains broadly average with some particular difficulties in early reading skills. They make satisfactory progress, overall, in this year group, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, but good progress in communication, language and literacy and their personal and social development. By the age of five, their attainment in communication, language and literacy is above average and their attainment in other areas of learning – personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development – is in line with that expected.
4. Between the ages of five and seven, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, make good progress in mathematics, including numeracy, and satisfactory progress in English, including literacy, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education. They make insufficient progress in art and design, design and technology, geography and history. Because of the timing of the inspection, it was not possible to judge pupils' progress in music. By the age of seven, pupils' standards are above average in English and mathematics. They match expected standards in science, ICT and physical education. There was a lack of written evidence in history and geography, but, through talking to pupils about their work, it is clear that standards are below those expected, as they are in art and design and design and technology. No judgement is possible about pupils' standards in music.
5. The progress of pupils in Year 2, particularly the higher-attaining ones, is slower than it should be in most subjects, other than English, because of weaknesses in teaching and management that are explained elsewhere in this report.
6. Between the ages of seven and eleven, all pupils make good progress in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, science and music. Their progress is satisfactory in geography, history, ICT and physical education, but is unsatisfactory in art and design and design and technology. As a result, standards by the age of eleven are well above average in science, partly because of some very effective and well-targeted revision in the weeks before the national tests. They are above average in English, including literacy, mathematics and

music. Pupils' standards match those expected in geography, history, ICT and physical education, but are below them in art and design and design and technology. The needs of higher-attaining pupils are met well in English, mathematics and science, for example through the provision of a 'club' for those pupils who might achieve very high levels in mathematics – the *'Level 6 Club'*.

7. Standards in English, mathematics and science at the age of seven and eleven have improved significantly since the last inspection as a result of an effective whole-school emphasis on them. However, as a result of this emphasis, standards in some other subjects have deteriorated.
8. Pupils' skills of oracy and literacy are used soundly in other subjects. For example, oracy skills are used effectively when pupils in Year 6 discuss the results of their traffic survey and literacy skills are used to record the results of science experiments and to enable pupils in Year 1 to write to older people to ask for historical information. Numeracy skills are used soundly in science, as in Year 4 where the results of an experiment are presented clearly, using a Venn diagram. However, they are not used routinely in other subjects, such as design and technology or geography.
9. The school's targets for English and mathematics in 2000 were realistic and challenging; pupils just failed to meet them in English and just exceeded them in mathematics. Those for 2001 were higher and also challenging; early indications are that they have been exceeded in both subjects.

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

10. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, have a very positive attitude to school that is encouraged and developed by the strong Christian ethos. Their enthusiasm for school, their high expectations, good behaviour and very good personal relationships are major strengths of the school. These strengths underpin the attainment, development and progress of all pupils.
11. Children aged under five years of age make positive relationships with adults and each other. They are well behaved and biddable, listening to their teachers well. They are developing good work habits and concentrate for long periods of time. They demonstrate good levels of motivation and listen patiently to the views of others.
12. Parents feel strongly that pupils' behaviour is good; the inspection team agrees. Behaviour throughout the school in the classrooms, moving about the school and in the playgrounds is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There were no incidences of oppressive behaviour seen during the inspection and no evidence that any took place. There have been no exclusions in the last year.
13. The very good relationships between the pupils and the adults and amongst the pupils themselves are a great strength of the school. Nearly all pupils show good respect for each other and for adults; they understand the consequent effects of the actions they take. The pupils are very willing to undertake duties and responsibilities, which is very much encouraged from Year 3 onwards. Many instances of responsibilities undertaken were seen, for example keeping the tables clear during lunch. The School Council meets monthly and has a very mature attitude. An example of this is the very popular and well-supported development of hot toast and crumpets for morning break.
14. The pupils have a very positive attitude to learning and like to come to school; parent's answers to the questionnaire strongly confirm this view. In lessons, they listen carefully to the teachers and are keen to answer questions. When working individually and in groups they work hard, maintain their concentration and help each other. These attitudes contribute significantly to the attainment and progress made by the pupils.
15. Attendance is satisfactory, although at nearly 93 per cent is below the national average. The high proportion of travellers' children on the roll affects the overall figure. There is no problem with late arrival.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Nearly eight per cent of lessons were of an unsatisfactory quality. Just over 21 per cent were satisfactorily taught and a further 34 per cent were well taught. Teaching was very good in nearly 29 per cent of lessons and in nearly eight per cent of lessons teaching was outstanding. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was a serious weakness of the school.
17. The teaching of English, ICT and physical education is good throughout the school. It is good for the seven to eleven year old pupils, overall, in mathematics, geography and music and is satisfactory in science. The teaching of mathematics for the five to seven year old pupils is satisfactory, overall. No teaching of art and design, design and technology or history was seen during the inspection and so no reliable judgement can be given. In addition, there is insufficient evidence to enable an overall judgement about teaching standards to be made in geography or music for pupils aged from five to seven.
18. The teaching of children aged from three to five years of age is satisfactory, overall. It is good, overall, for pupils aged from five to seven and from seven to eleven. There are, however, weaknesses in teaching in some classes that have an adverse effect on the rate of pupils' progress and the standards they attain.
19. No teaching in the nursery class was better than satisfactory while none in the reception class was less than satisfactory and most was good or very good. There are weaknesses in the planning and wider provision in the nursery class that adversely affect the quality of teaching and learning. These include the knowledge of the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum, the expectations held of the rate at which children should make progress and the effectiveness of the strategies used to ensure that children learn.
20. No teaching in Year 1 was less than good and it was strong in all subjects. In Year 2, there are weaknesses that match many of those that characterise the least effective lessons, as detailed below, although this excludes English, which is taught at least well in both classes. In Years 3 to 6, no teaching was less than satisfactory; one lesson only was satisfactory and the rest were good or better. Three lessons were outstandingly well taught. The teaching in Years 3 and 6 is consistently strong.
21. Strengths in teaching generally throughout the school are:
  - the very good use made of classroom assistants, who make a good contribution to the progress made by pupils,
  - very good relationships and
  - clear learning objectives that are shared with the pupils to alert them to what they have to accomplish in the lesson and well-chosen tasks to fulfil the objectives.

As a result, pupils generally learn well, because lessons are focused on meaningful tasks and they are happy and confident learners.

22. Where teaching is most effective, teachers' subject knowledge is very good, which enables them to sort out problems that pupils encounter and to keep the lesson moving at a good pace that ensures that pupils participate fully. A good example of this was in a Year 6 physical education lesson taken outside in wet weather that did not dampen the pupils' enthusiasm! Teachers choose activities well to interest and involve all pupils, for example in the music lessons that concentrate on the singing of songs for the end-of-term concert. The quality of relationships and behaviour management is very good and so pupils are kept fully engaged in the lesson and are confident to ask any necessary questions and to make suggestions or comments to the teacher or the class as a whole. Levels of challenge and expectations are high and so all pupils are fully and productively engaged in meaningful tasks. All available resources are used well. As a result, pupils make good or very good progress in lessons and over time.
23. Where teaching is least effective, for example in the nursery and in Year 2, there are weaknesses in:

- teachers' subject knowledge, for example in a mathematics lesson;
  - behaviour management, which is too insecure and so pupils do not pay adequate attention;
  - teachers' low expectations of pupils' application to task, attention to the teacher and standards of work. For example, pupils' work is not marked fully or regularly enough and higher-attaining pupils were set inappropriate work in science;
  - the slow pace of lessons and insufficient challenge to gain and retain pupils' interest and concentration;
  - planning, which lacks sufficient rigour and results in teachers losing opportunities to develop pupils' skills, for example in the nursery class.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good, because teachers take full account of the targets contained in their individual education plans (IEPs) in English and mathematics lessons and make suitable provision for them more informally in other lessons. They are well catered for within the school's very good, caring ethos.
25. The specialist teaching for Travellers' children is good. Support is tightly focused on pupils with the greatest need, in line with the guidelines for the Service. It is effective in helping these children concentrate and participate in classroom activities as individuals or in small groups and is highly instrumental in ensuring that they are able to make progress at the same rate as their peers.

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

26. Since the inspection of May 1999 the school has maintained the satisfactory level of curriculum provision noted in that report for pupils aged seven years old and over. However, the school has not managed to maintain the good curriculum provision noted in the same report for pupils aged under-five.
27. Current inspection findings are that curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. Although the statutory curriculum is in place for the under-fives, the range and quality of learning opportunities provided for them are unsatisfactory. Whereas planning in the nursery is appropriately based on the requirements of the early learning goals (which are the standards to be reached by average five year old children), the stated learning intentions are too broad, for example, "make own book". The learning objectives that form an essential part of the planning do not contain sufficient detail of how children's skills should be developed through relevant and meaningful tasks. The provision for nursery age children fails to provide sufficient adaptation of the 'stepping stones' (this is the name given to the national guidelines for the education of children aged under five years old) to assure the progress of individuals at an acceptable rate. There is a lack of structure in the planning that would assure the development of the children's ability to make choices and work independently.
28. In the reception class, the weekly planning in English and mathematics is very detailed, with appropriate learning objectives. Learning objectives are also made clear in the daily planning. Planning in other areas of learning is less well developed and lacks the necessary structures and steps in progression that are evident in English and mathematics.
29. For pupils of the age of seven years and above, the curriculum in English and mathematics is planned to meet the requirements of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. The school's curriculum provision for science is good, a considerable improvement on that reported in May 1999 when it was judged to have weaknesses. However, in all other subjects the schemes of work being used fail to provide sufficient guidelines to ensure that teachers develop individuals' skills in a logical sequence of progression rather than just providing for the acquisition of knowledge. Despite this weakness in the schemes of work, inspection findings are that, for pupils of seven years of age and over, the school provides a curriculum that is balanced and broadly based and that meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The school has successfully addressed the weakness in overall curriculum planning, identified in the report of May 1999 and a satisfactory 'curriculum map' has been produced. The school recognises the need for further development of this map to ensure that it has enough detail to make it an effective working document.

30. Since the publication of the last report the school has made considerable improvements in its provision for the teaching of English, science and mathematics. The strategies being used to teach literacy are very effective in driving up standards; those for teaching numeracy skills are good. The school is now providing its pupils with a good preparation in these subjects for the next stage of their education.
31. It is the policy of the governing body to provide sex education at the appropriate time and parents have been informed about their right to withdraw their children if they so wish. The curriculum includes a very good programme of personal, social and health education that covers such diverse areas as personal relationships, how the body works and drug abuse. Its underlying themes, however, as with so much of the work done in the school, are the importance of loving others and showing mutual respect and understanding.
32. The school is well aware of its responsibility to ensure that all pupils receive equal opportunities and is making good provision to ensure that this takes place in all areas of its work. In the classrooms, pupils are grouped according to their needs and the work provided for them is usually well matched to these needs. The school provides a very good range of curricular opportunities for those of its pupils who have special educational needs. Records and reviews are well maintained and are used to inform special needs provision for individual pupils. Reviews of IEPs are carried out regularly and, where necessary, involve all appropriate agencies and the parents of the pupils concerned. Pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated into the whole life of the school.
33. Provision for children from travelling families is good. A specialist teacher provides effective support on two occasions each week for those children with the greatest need. This enables them to begin to overcome the effects of interrupted or limited school experiences. They are given work to take with them during short absences. These children are further supported by the inclusive nature of the school's ethos, which ensures that their personal and emotional needs are fully met. Liaison with the West Midland Service for Travellers' Children is good.
34. The curriculum is enriched with the satisfactory provision of extra-curricular activities that include football, netball and an Internet club. There is a recorder group that meets one evening a week. The school provides the opportunity for both boys and girls to join a number of different teams and is seeking grant funding from the local education authority to extend its provision in September 2001.
35. The school makes good use of the local community to provide a range of experiences for its pupils. For example, there have been a number of visits to local shops and factories. The local Catholic Church and related organisations play an important role in the life of the school. The school maintains constructive relationships with its partner schools and, in particular, with the local high school.
36. Overall the school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good and makes an important contribution to its overall ethos.
37. In its work to provide for the spiritual development of the pupils the school is very successful. This is a considerable improvement on that noted in the report of May 1999 when it was seen as satisfactory. There is within the school a high quality ethos that is based on the concept of a living religion. There is constant reference to the importance of loving one another, kindness and individual worth. During the inspection this was best illustrated with the celebration of the Mass in which all sections of the school community took part. The celebration provided an opportunity for the pupils to read the lessons and say the prayers. A makeshift altar with candles and a crucifix was used very well to provide a focus for the act of worship and the congregation were given the opportunity for quiet reflection. Displays in corridors and classrooms often have a spiritual element, for example, the work done on Joseph's coat of many colours, the importance of baptism and photographs showing the pupils who had recently taken their first communion. Classes regularly pray together.
38. The school's provision for the moral development of its pupils is good. The personal, social and health education programme covers areas such as friends and friendships, the development of personal talents, teamwork and feeling good about themselves. In their work, pupils are given the opportunity to think about the "hidden persuaders" such as peer pressure,

friends, bullies and the importance of making up your own mind and doing the right thing. They are encouraged to celebrate the achievements of others and did so quite spontaneously on a number of occasions during the inspection. As part of this work pupils are encouraged to say nice things about each other, for example, on flowers made of paper on which nice things had been written on the petals about the person whose photograph appeared in the centre. Not being afraid to say that you are sorry is emphasised, for example, when pupils included in their work a short prayer saying sorry to God. Pupils are taught about living properly and caring for one another. They have produced written work on the morality of having animals in circuses that showed them to be well aware of the issues involved.

39. It is difficult to isolate the social development of the pupils from the moral and spiritual because the school's provision is such that all these elements are closely interwoven to such a degree that to separate them is almost impossible. However, there is an atmosphere in the school that is best described as helpful co-operation. The pupils are polite and generally very helpful. They are given opportunities to develop a sense of social responsibility by performing tasks such as being a monitor or captain of one of the teams. Pupils perform the roles of House Captains and members of the school council. The school is developing a Family Life Education Programme in co-operation with various sections of the local community. In this area of its work, the school is successful and is providing a good social education for its pupils.
40. As part of its satisfactory cultural education programme, the school provides the opportunity for pupils to look at contemporary art movements, such as Pointillism. They study the art forms of other cultures, for example, the well-produced work in an Indian style done by pupils. The school has contacts with the Ethnic Minority Achievement Service through which they have obtained the services of an Afro/Caribbean poet and musician, who tells stories from around the world and demonstrates the music of different cultures. In their history work, pupils have studied the social development of other cultures such as the Ancient Egyptians and Romans.

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

41. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress, personal development and welfare is good, overall.
42. In the last inspection report, the insufficient and inconsistent use made of assessment information to plan work that matched the needs of pupils was a serious weakness.
43. This has significantly improved in English, mathematics and science throughout the school and is now good in these subjects. The results of annual tests are carefully analysed to reveal any difference in performance between groups of pupils; for example, pupils with special educational needs or travellers' children. The good quality information acquired in these subjects through a planned programme of tests and assessments enables senior staff to track the attainment and progress of individuals, groups and year groups over time and to make predictions for individual levels of attainment. It also enables them to make informed decisions about such things as additional targeted help. Additionally, after delivering literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers evaluate their planning, using this assessment to inform the next lessons. These initiatives have been crucial in raising pupils' attainment in national tests.
44. In subjects of the National Curriculum, other than English, maths and science, assessment procedures are unhelpful. This is because, although assessments are completed half-termly via a series of tick lists that indicate how well each pupil has understood an aspect of work, they tend to record the completion of activities rather than the extent to which individuals have developed key skills. These lists have limited use as an effective assessment tool.
45. Monitoring of children's attainment and personal development in the nursery is done on a termly basis and is not informed by regular, ongoing assessment and recording procedures. Good use is made of the baseline assessments carried out in the reception class to ascertain the next stage of learning for each child and to assist the early identification of pupils with special educational needs.

46. The school provides good care and support for the welfare and well being of all the pupils. These values and attitudes are implicit in the school's Christian ethos and policies and is a strength of the school.
47. All necessary procedures for monitoring and promoting the progress of pupils with special educational needs are in order. Their IEPs are appropriate and contain good targets for improvement that are regularly reviewed and updated. All statutory requirements are met in full.
48. The procedures for child protection are good and fully understood by all the staff. There is a named member of staff responsible for the systems and any action. The school works closely with outside agencies and is supported well by the educational welfare officer, as appropriate. Routine health and safety checks have been satisfactorily completed within the correct time scale. The health and safety issues raised at the last inspection have all been satisfactorily addressed.
49. The school has a very stable pupil roll. For example, 90 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 started in reception and thus the teachers know the pupils very well. This knowledge is very helpful in supporting the personal development of the pupils. The procedures are good and are now more formalised because teachers report on pupils' attitudes in the annual reports to parents. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
50. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and for monitoring late arrival are very good. The policy is clear and simple and diligently implemented. The school works closely with the educational welfare officer who organises clinics for families with problems, so that solutions can be sought and agreed with all parties.
51. The procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. The policy is co-ordinated by the headteacher and is consistently implemented across the whole school. An area for development is the provision of formal training in the procedures for the lunchtime supervisors.

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

52. The parents have a very good view of the school, as was made clear by the discussion at the parents meeting and in the answers to the parents' questionnaire. The school is very well supported by a strong Parent Teachers' Association and through the parish.
53. The school has very effective links with the parents. These links are developed well through a wide range of means:
  - the school newsletter;
  - the Parent Teachers' Association;
  - the meeting each term to discuss the progress made by individual pupils;
  - the parent governors; and
  - the easy and informal access the parents have to the teachers.
54. In addition, the vast majority of the families are well known to all the staff. These extensive links with the parents result in a good involvement with the work of the school, including working in classrooms, for example, in Year 5 science lessons. The current group of classroom assistants was recruited from parents who had been helping in school. Parents make a good contribution to their children's learning both at home and in the school. Very good use is made of the homework diaries and, immediately before the national tests, parents' help was effectively sought to raise their children's standards, for example, in science.
55. The quality of the information for the parents about their child's progress is very good and this is an improvement since the last report. Meetings are held in the autumn term with the parents of children starting in the reception class and with all other parents to set and agree the targets for the year ahead. In the spring term, the National Curriculum tests are explained to the parents of pupils in Years 2 and 6 and an indication is given of the likely results for each pupil. The summer term meeting is to discuss the annual reports. There is a good attendance at all these meetings with nearly full attendance in the spring term. The annual written reports



to parents are very good; they give an assessment for attainment in English, mathematics and science and a grading for effort and achievement in all other subjects. In addition to this annual provision, short weekly reports are sent to parents of the pupils in Years 3 to 6 to indicate their progress, including an indication of achievements in homework, and parents are encouraged to respond. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the regular reviews of their children's IEPs. Parents in this school are very well informed as to their children's progress throughout the school year and this is a substantial improvement since the previous inspection report.

56. The Parent Teachers' Association is very strong and provides much financial support for the school. It is well supported by the parents. The headteacher and/or the deputy headteacher attend all meetings, which are held monthly, and give a report on the school to the parents. This is welcomed by parents and reinforces the school's links with them.

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

57. Leadership and management of the school are good, overall.
58. The previous report stated that the headteacher did not delegate sufficiently, limiting senior teachers and the governing body in their strategic management of the school. Procedures for monitoring teaching and learning needed to be strengthened and there was little focus on the raising of standards. The school acted quickly on these issues, resulting in very good improvement in most aspects of this key issue and in very good action, overall, to meet the targets set. Delegation by the headteacher is much improved. A strong senior management team, working as a cohesive unit, now supports him and provides a good educational steer to the work of the school. They regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Teachers' weekly planning is also rigorously reviewed. These initiatives have been a key feature in improving the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom and a major force in moving the school forward. Key stage co-ordinators make a sound contribution to management. They provide a good aid to communication and are clear about their roles and responsibilities. They have yet to develop their roles to include a robust overview of standards and provision in their areas of the school.
59. After the last inspection, the school appropriately focused on raising standards in English, mathematics and science. This has resulted in co-ordinators for other subject being insufficiently involved in the monitoring process to give them greater awareness of standards of work throughout the school and to develop the curriculum in their own subjects. Co-ordinators do not have opportunities to support teachers in lessons nor to check the effectiveness of curricular provision; this has already been recognised as a priority for development in the current development plan. This lack of effective and rigorous oversight has adversely affected the attainment that pupils make in the foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, with specific underachievement in art and design and design technology. Nevertheless, many co-ordinators have worked very hard and effectively to bring their subjects to the current point of development and have clear ideas of what is now needed to improve standards and provision in their subjects. The headteacher and foundation stage co-ordinator acknowledge a lack of rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning in the nursery and the need to train staff and develop a more structured approach to young children's learning.
60. The headteacher has developed effective systems to evaluate the school's performance. Careful account is taken of all relevant data. For example, strengths and weaknesses of pupils' answers to questions in national tests are rigorously analysed and the information thus obtained is used in planning the pupils' future programme. Ambitious targets, set for each cohort and for groups and individual pupils, are rigorously monitored at key points in the year to ensure that they are being met. This initiative, driven by the headteacher and senior management team, has been instrumental in raising standards significantly year on year at both reporting ages – seven and eleven. Detailed school review procedures give a realistic overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and appropriately identify the initiatives required to move the school forward. The current school development plan gives good detail, providing a major focus for senior management. It contains very little detail beyond the current year and is not particularly effective as a long-term management tool. The educational priorities set out in the school development plan are fully supported by the financial planning.

61. The staff work very well together as a cohesive team and have worked very hard and effectively to address the serious weaknesses identified in the last report. There is a good sense of shared commitment amongst staff to continue to improve the provision for the sake of the pupils. The school has a caring ethos and its aims and values are reflected very well throughout all aspects of its work. This is a strength of the school. Parents consider the caring and consistent leadership by the headteacher to be of utmost value to their children. They acknowledge the hard work of teachers to effect improvements since the last inspection.
62. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities satisfactorily and is very supportive of the school's life and work. There has been sound improvement since the last inspection. Comprehensive minutes of meetings are now kept. An effective committee structure is in place, enabling the governors to keep a closer watch on the work of the school. However, there are no terms of reference for committees, and no set times when committees will meet. Governors gain a satisfactory overview of the school through regular visits to observe lessons and meet staff. However, governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses is still superficial, limiting their ability to take a strategic view and to have input into shaping the school's future direction.
63. The strategic use of resources is satisfactorily planned, properly used and monitored, which effectively addresses a key issue and is an improvement since the last inspection. The budget is carefully controlled and fully monitored. The use of specific grants is correctly allocated and controlled, as is other funding. The administration of all ordering and payment for goods is correctly undertaken. The principles of best value are considered and used in all financial matters, but the school is still developing the principles of comparison and consultation in the wider sense across the whole range of the school's responsibilities.
64. New technology is effectively used throughout the school administration. It is used to ensure the efficient running of all the proper systems and functions, such as the monitoring and analysis of attendance patterns.
65. There is a good match of qualified teachers and support staff for the delivery of the curriculum, overall. However, the policy of the local education authority is to have nursery nurses operating the early years curriculum in nursery classes with support from a classroom assistant. This places additional pressure on the Foundation Stage co-ordinator and the headteacher to assure the effective delivery of an appropriate curriculum and has not, in this school, been sufficiently successful.
66. There is a good induction policy for newly qualified teachers and this has been fully implemented in the current school year with good support from all the staff in the school and from the local education authority. In addition, there is a good induction policy for all teachers joining the staff, thus helping to assure a clear and consistent understanding of the school's policies and ethos.
67. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. Buildings are to be improved in the immediate future by the replacement of two temporary classrooms with permanent buildings. There are extensive grounds, but these are in need of maintenance. In the main buildings, the toilets for the pupils are placed near the classrooms and, despite thorough daily cleaning, there is an unpleasant smell.
68. Resources, overall, are satisfactory. For science, they are good. There are areas for improvement, however, in the library, which is generally inadequate, looks disorganised and has a poor stock of non-fiction books. In addition, there is a need for suitable atlases for older pupils and the further purchase of suitable software, for example of appropriate encyclopaedias for younger pupils.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to improve standards and provision still further, particularly in art and design and design and technology throughout the school and in geography and history in Key Stage 1, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (a) develop schemes of work in all subjects that ensure that all pupils develop the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding in a logical sequence.

Paragraphs: 29, 106, 125, 129, 132, 140, 146, 152, 156 and 162.

- (b) use the information gained from all assessment in all subjects to ensure that teachers plan work that is closely matched to the developing needs and aptitudes of all pupils.

Paragraphs: 44, 129, 133, 138, 140, 146, 152, 156 and 162.

- (c) improve provision and planning in the nursery class to ensure that those responsible plan work to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding in a logical sequence in all areas of learning.

Paragraphs: 19, 23, 27, 45, 71, 76, 78, 81, 84, 86 and 88.

- (d) extend the role of all managers to include regular and frequent monitoring and the rigorous evaluation of all relevant aspects of the school's work, especially further improvements in the quality of teaching, where appropriate.

Paragraphs: 5, 18, 20, 23, 58, 59, 65, 71, 98, 106, 110, 116, 118, 122, 129, 133, 140, 146, 148, 151 and 156.

### **Other issues that should be considered are:**

- improving the governors' strategic view of the school's development.
- developing the use of ICT to support pupils' work in other subjects more fully.
- reviewing how the library is used to develop pupils' research skills.

Paragraphs: 62, 68, 94, 99, 133, 150, 152 and 156.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7.9	28.9	34.2	21.1	7.9	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)	29	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		43

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	37
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	3

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	8	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	15
	Girls	7	6	8
	Total	19	18	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (52)	67 (39)	85 (68)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	14	11
	Girls	7	6	4
	Total	17	20	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (48)	74 (55)	56 (58)
	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	14	33

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	16
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	23	23	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (68)	70 (59)	85 (53)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	10	12
	Girls	13	11	11
	Total	24	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (68)	64 (74)	70 (71)
	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	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	176
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	28.9

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

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	78

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

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

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9.7
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	422,240
Total expenditure	421,490
Expenditure per pupil	1,801
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	750

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	234
Number of questionnaires returned	62

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	27	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	32	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	47	8	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	42	10	0	3
The teaching is good.	68	27	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	40	2	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	26	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	26	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	35	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	58	34	3	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	35	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	31	19	3	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 Foundation Stage comprises the nursery and the reception classes. Children enter the nursery with broadly average abilities. They make satisfactory progress in personal and social, mathematical and physical development, but unsatisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative skills, and development of communication, language and literacy skills. Children settle well into the nursery, which most children attend on a full time basis. They clearly enjoy their nursery education and are happy and interested in the activities.
71. The quality of teaching in the nursery is unsatisfactory, overall. Although some relevant activities are planned, too few children work on focused tasks with their nursery nurses. Planning outlines activities and broadly what children are to learn, but gives insufficient detail of the specific teaching and progressive steps required to enable children to make progress. This weak planning means that many activities lack structure and valuable learning opportunities are missed. The ongoing assessment of children's academic progress and personal development is also unsatisfactory. In line with the policy for nursery education in Stoke on Trent, two trained nursery nurses staff the nursery and overall management of the nursery is the responsibility of the headteacher and key staff. The headteacher and Foundation Stage coordinator are aware of the gaps in nursery provision and have identified the need to train staff appropriately, to monitor the quality of teaching and learning more vigorously and to make changes in nursery personnel.
72. Results of baseline assessment show that children's attainment is broadly average on entry to the reception class and that by the end of the reception year, children have made at least satisfactory progress in all aspects of their learning. Children make good progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening and their personal and social development. They are well-motivated learners, who try hard and concentrate for long periods of time. Their attainment in communication, language and literacy is above that of most schools in the local education authority.
73. Teaching in the reception class is good. The quality of planning for literacy and numeracy is very detailed. Children are taught in small progressive steps, which enable them to learn in a systematic way. There are effective systems to assess children's progress, which inform the provision of work for differing ability groups. The effective use of other adults in the class to support small group provision is a key factor in the good progress that children make; it also allows children with special educational needs to be well supported and to make good progress. In the other areas of learning, progress is satisfactory, overall, but planning is sometimes less specific. Since the last inspection report, there has been good improvement in the reception class where teaching is now carefully structured to meet the needs of differing abilities of children.
74. Throughout the Foundation Stage, relationships with parents are good. There is an effective induction programme, enabling parents and children to attend nursery sessions prior to entry, and a useful booklet outlining ways in which parents can prepare their children for nursery education. Both classes have an open door policy and communication between parents and teachers is good. Provision for outdoor play is good, but the lack of structured activities and limited use of this area is an area for development.

### **Personal, social and emotional education**

75. The personal and social development of children is sound in the nursery and good in the reception class. Most achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. Children make positive relationships with adults and each other. Children are well behaved and biddable, listening to their teachers well. The reception teacher and staff provide good role models for social relationships, working well together as a cohesive team. Reception children appropriately spend more time on structured numeracy and literacy lessons. They are developing good work habits and concentrate for long periods of time. They demonstrate



good levels of motivation and respond well to a sound range of opportunities from handling a ball efficiently in games to investigating the process of weaving. Children take turns when involved in class discussions and patiently listen to the views of others.

76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the nursery and good in the reception class. The nursery staff provide sound opportunities from children to work together so they learn to share. Self-help skills such as collecting snack and self-registering at the start of the day are well promoted. However, opportunities are missed to develop independent skills. For example, children rarely access or put away equipment, and there are no systems of labels or pictures on shelves etc. to aid children in this aspect. Occasions such as snack time are not used well to develop children's social skills, as they watch television at this time. In the reception class, there are high expectations that children will work hard and persevere. For instance, while the teacher focuses on one group, others work independently with the minimum of fuss. The well-structured numeracy and literacy hours include a good range of interesting activities that engage children. This contributes to their interest and desire to try hard. In other areas of learning there are limited planned opportunities for children to practise independence through choosing activities and accessing the equipment they need.

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

77. Attainment by the end of the foundation stage is above that found in most schools. Children make unsatisfactory progress in the nursery, but good progress in the reception class, due to the carefully structured programme they receive. By the end of the foundation stage, most will achieve, and many will exceed, the early learning goals in this area. In the nursery, children listen attentively to their teachers. Most are quick to engage in conversation with visitors and talk about their activities with enthusiasm. Most children recognise their names. They are not consistently taught letter sounds or given formal opportunities to write, but a small minority are beginning to include letters and shapes in their emergent writing. Scrutiny of children's work shows that few have developed appropriate pencil control. Reception children listen for an extended period of time. They confidently link sounds in letters and many can write in simple sentences using capital letters and full stops. Their overall progress in reading is good. Most use picture and context clues well. They name author and illustrator and can adapt their expression when a question mark or exclamation mark is used.
78. In the nursery, sound opportunities occur for language development when adults work with small groups of children. For example, children were very attentive as their teacher taught them the names of different parts of the body. However, there are too few opportunities such as this for planned adult intervention to develop children's speaking and listening skills. Opportunities are missed to include reading and writing in the nursery environment, such as the provision of an office area, labels on drawers and furniture, or to write lists in the home corner etc. There is no structured approach to the early development of phonics and writing.
79. The quality of teaching in the reception class is very good. Effective revision of previously taught work gives children good support. Work is planned in small achievable stages, which effectively build on earlier work so that children learn in a systematic way. Staff maintain comprehensive records, evaluate the work done and adapt their planning to provide activities at exactly the right level, enabling children to gain confidence as they acquire new skills. The good links between home and school through reading diaries and homework are pivotal to the very good progress that children make in this class.

### **Mathematical development**

80. Most children enter the nursery class with broadly average numeracy skills. Standards in mathematics by the age of five are securely in line with national expectations and children make good progress through the Foundation Stage. They practise counting up to 10 and enjoy singing a range of number songs such as "*Five Little Fishes*". Most children recognise and match simple shapes, understand *heavy* and *light* when weighing and can match picture dominoes with help. Children in the reception class make sound progress and the majority have achieved the area of learning in this aspect. Most can recognise numbers to 10. High achieving pupils recognise numbers greater than 20, add numbers together to make 10 and find missing numbers in simple equations.

81. Teaching is broadly sound in the nursery. Children regularly sing a range of number songs and this consolidates their understanding. Planned teaching, in a systematic way, is an area for development. In reception, teaching is good and children made good progress. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively introduced and is giving sound structure to learning. The teacher plans a range of relevant experiences taught in an interesting way. For instance, when learning to take away numbers from 5, the children sang the song "Five galloping Horses", and used pictures of the horses to reinforce subtraction problems. Other members of staff are used effectively to encourage children to answer questions and to maintain focus during the whole class teaching sessions and afterwards support children well in their small group activities.

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

82. By the age of five, standards are close to those expected. Children's progress in the nursery is unsatisfactory, but improves markedly in the reception class.
83. The recent visit to Manchester Airport provided an excellent opportunity for children from the nursery class to discover their world in an exciting way and to develop new language. The majority of nursery children recognise and name colours and understand terms such as *yesterday* and *tomorrow*. They are beginning to make comparisons and understand the differences between artificial and real flowers. Children confidently click and drag the mouse as they use the class computer. Reception children have good opportunities to develop this area of learning through the good range of visits to such interesting places as a bakery and garden centre. They name parts of a plant correctly and have planted seedlings. They have visited the school office, handled Hindu artefacts and listened to Jamaican music.
84. Teaching is unsatisfactory in the nursery. Overall, there are too few planned opportunities to develop children's understanding of the world through the provision of stimulating activities. There is limited use of interactive displays where children can handle a range of interesting artefacts. Additionally, opportunities are missed for pupils to make connections in their learning; for example, by extending the scope of out door play in a meaningful way. Teaching is sound in reception because of the good range of opportunities that children have to learn more about their world. This gives effective preparation for the subjects of the National Curriculum.

### **Physical development**

85. Children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning and standards of physical development by the end of the reception year are satisfactory. Nursery children push and steer wheeled vehicles accurately with gusto and speed! They demonstrated appropriate hand/eye coordination when handling brushes to paint sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh. Throughout the foundation stage, building models with construction materials effectively helps develop fine motor skills. Reception children cut, stick and glue with reasonable accuracy. They showed good control of materials as they wove string and paper to make mats. In the games lesson seen, children passed balls with good control, bouncing and catching with proficiency.
86. Teaching is sound in this area, overall, with some very good teaching seen in a games lesson. Here, the range of activities was interesting and included an element of competition so that children tried harder. The teacher's enthusiasm challenged the children to persevere, and they made good progress. While children in the reception class have access to large pieces of climbing apparatus in physical education lessons, planned opportunities for this aspect in outdoor play are very limited.

### **Creative development**

87. Standards of creative development are below those expected for children in the nursery and are satisfactory by the age of five. Overall, children's progress is satisfactory. By the end of the reception year, most will attain the early learning goals in this area. In both classes, children enjoy singing. They enjoy playing in the role-play areas, adopting appropriate roles. For example, reception children performed shampoos and sets in the class hairdressers! In collage work they makes choices in the use of use paints, pasta and mixed media.

88. Overall, the standard of role play in both classes lacks structure and provides too few opportunities for children to act out roles or consolidate other areas of learning; for example, through planned opportunities to write, read or use numbers. Additionally, a lack of clear planning about the skills to be taught sometimes narrows the scope of the activity.

## ENGLISH

89. National Curriculum tests in 2000 showed that the percentage of seven-year-old pupils who achieved the expected Level 2 in reading and writing was well below average when compared to national figures. When compared to similar schools, the results were well below average in writing and very low in reading. Test results show that boys are doing less well than girls, even when compared to the national figures. National test results for eleven-year-olds in 2000 show them to have achieved results that are in line with national averages and that, when compared with similar schools, are very high and in the top five per cent nationally. However, as for seven-year-olds, once again girls achieved at a level higher than the boys. Pupils' standards are improving at a rate that matches the national trend over time, but which, recently, has exceeded it. The school has investigated the differences in the attainment of boys and girls in the national tests and has found no underlying reason for them.
90. Inspection evidence indicates that there has been a considerable improvement in the attainment of seven-year-old pupils and that they are now achieving levels that are above national expectations in reading and are in line with them in writing. Pupils aged eleven are now attaining at a level that puts them above the national average. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress between the ages of five and seven and good progress afterwards. Inspection evidence indicates that there is no difference in the opportunities provided by the school for boys and girls and both genders are treated equally.
91. The improved results for both age groups have been achieved because of the much improved level of subject teaching, which was satisfactory to good in May 1999 and now is at least good with some very good and excellent. The school has looked to its procedures and improved the level of subject organisation and planning, using the guidance contained in the National Literacy Strategy very well. The use of assessment and the information it provides has much improved since the report of May 1999 and is now good. English is now an important element in other subjects; in the report of May 1999 it was seen as having a poor overall coverage. Target setting, the analysis of test results and a higher level of challenge for the pupils have all contributed to the improvement in overall attainment.
92. Pupils in the school listen well to their teachers and to each other. They express themselves at a good level. For example, pupils in Year 1 listen carefully to their teacher's instructions and are eager to answer questions. They speak with confidence and reasonable fluency. In Year 2, pupils express their thoughts clearly and take an active part in their lessons. Pupils in Year 6, during a lesson on traffic volume in the Goldenhill district, used their speaking and listening skills well to discuss the results of their investigations. They articulated their thoughts clearly and demonstrated good reasoning skills. Teachers seek to develop the ability of their pupils to listen and speak whenever possible; for example, at the end of lessons pupils are invited to explain to the rest of the class what they have learnt.
93. By the time they are seven, pupils have attained good standards in reading, which is a considerable improvement on those noted in the inspection of May 1999. Higher-attaining pupils have good word recognition skills, recall the events in the stories they have read and offer logical predictions about what is likely to happen next. Other pupils show good phonic skills and recognise most of the words in their reading books. For the most part, they correct their own mistakes, needing very little help from the listener. Lower-attaining pupils use phonic blends well to help with word recognition. Although their reading is sometimes slower than that of other ability groups they self-correct and remember what they have read. By the time they are eleven, most pupils read with expression and sensibly discuss what they have read. They have a wide range of reading interests, such as magazines, newspapers and poetry. They are able to express opinions in terms of favourite authors and books. For example, one pupil was reading *Black Beauty* and another said that the Harry Potter books by J.K. Rowling were his favourites. Most of the pupils interviewed about their reading said that they read regularly at home.

94. All pupils have study skills that are at least satisfactory; most are good. They use, and just as importantly, satisfactorily explain the use of, indexes, glossaries and contents pages in non-fiction books. They understand the functions of authors, publishers and illustrators. This good level of study skills is a significant improvement since the report of May 1999. As stated in the last inspection report, the library in the school still does not lend itself to the development of book retrieval skills. The school ensures that pupils experience a wide range of texts in their literacy lessons, including poetry, stories and non-fiction material. Pupils are given the opportunity to read aloud both in the literacy lessons and during school events such as the Thursday Mass when they read the lessons and prayers. Lower-attaining pupils are given the opportunity to take part in these events and are well supported by their teachers.
95. By the time pupils reach the age of seven, they are writing at a level that is in line with national averages. By the time they reach eleven years of age pupils are producing written work that is above that expected nationally. For both groups of pupils this is an improvement over the finding of the report of May 1999 when writing was judged to be below the national average and for seven-year-old pupils it is higher than their 2000 test results indicate. The school has done a great deal to improve the standard of written work over the recent past and these efforts are beginning to bear fruit. There is much more emphasis on the use of writing skills in all areas of the curriculum. For example, the letters written by Year 1 pupils to their grandparents asking for information about the past. Year 5 pupils have produced well-written extended biographies of local characters, such as Josiah Wedgwood and James Brindley, as part of their history work and based on their own research.
96. Pupils use their writing skills effectively in a number of different ways, for example, note taking, poetry writing, labelling and extended story writing. In Year 1, pupils have, as part of their work on non-fiction texts, produced their own books that show care and effort in their presentation. In Year 6, pupils have written some sensitive poems in the "Haiku" style. For example, one about spring reads:

Flowers bloom again  
Snow melts in the low sunshine  
The rain falls again

97. The standard of spelling in written work is now at least satisfactory and sometimes good, an improvement over the report of May 1999 when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of handwriting improves as pupils move through the school, but is not always consistent, although most are capable of producing a joined legible script by the time they are eleven-years-old. Pupils across the school show good levels of handwriting skills when they really try, as illustrated by the work on display in the school. By the time they are seven years of age, most pupils are developing a good understanding of the use of full stops, exclamation marks, commas and question marks. Some of the higher attaining pupils are beginning to use speech marks in their written work. At the age of eleven, most pupils are using punctuation accurately.
98. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers show a high level of commitment to ensuring that their pupils develop their knowledge of the use of English. This is done through the provision of well-planned lessons that have a clear structure and follow a logical progression. The work provided for the pupils is varied and designed to keep their interest. Opening sessions are well used by teachers to revise the knowledge covered in previous lessons. Teachers create an atmosphere of enthusiasm with the good use of their voices and body language; pupils are encouraged to take an active part in lessons. Relationships in the classrooms are very good, pupils are treated with respect and their teachers constantly seek opportunities to develop their self-esteem. An important feature of many of the lessons observed during the inspection is the good pace that many of the teachers adopt and which maintains pupil interest with frequent, but well-timed, changes of activity. Pupils are given a high level of support in the classrooms and teachers use the adult help available well. The standard of marking in pupils' books is sometimes unsatisfactory and leads to the presentation of pupils' work being below that which can reasonably be expected. This unsatisfactory practice is not consistent across the school and some marking gives detailed assessments of standards.
99. The resource provision for the subject is generally satisfactory with the exception of the school library. As noted in the last inspection report the library is generally inadequate, looks

disorganised and has a poor stock of non-fiction books. Access is often made difficult by the presence of the local library service and their bookracks. The general ambience of the library is not conducive to the development of study skills and needs to be made more comfortable and stimulating. The school's stock of fiction books needs to be enhanced, although good use is made of the local library service.

100. A hard working and dedicated co-ordinator provides good subject leadership. The co-ordinator has carried out a detailed audit of the subject and there is a detailed development plan. The local authority English advisor has been asked to help develop the monitoring of teaching. The work of pupils has been monitored, although this needs to be done with more rigour to ensure that the standard of work produced is in line with their capabilities.

## **MATHEMATICS**

101. The national tests in the year 2000 showed that pupils' attainment by the age of seven was well below the national average and well below that of similar schools. Two thirds of the pupils did not achieve Level 2A or above. Since 1997, results have been below, or well below the national averages. In the year 2001, pupils' attainment increased dramatically. All pupils have attained Level 2, the recommended level for seven year olds and a third have achieved the higher Level 3. Pupils' attainment by the age of 7 is now likely to be above the national average. This shows very good improvement since the last inspection.
102. In the National Curriculum assessments in the same year, pupils' attainment at the age of eleven was in line with the national average and well above that of similar schools. This shows very good improvement for this cohort of pupils when compared with their Year 2 test results. All pupils in the present Year 6 class have attained the recommended Level 4 and over one third have gained the higher Level 5. Additionally, pupils have achieved exceptionally well in the 2001 tests and their attainment is likely to be well above the national average.
103. Based on classroom observations and scrutiny of pupils' work, the findings of this inspection are that pupils' attainment is above national averages at the ages of seven and eleven, with particularly good achievement in the recent tests. The school has continued to raise pupils' attainment consistently over the last three years, moving eleven year old pupils from attainment that was well below national averages at the time of the last inspection to attainment that is now well above. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, make good progress, overall, and very good progress in their mental ability to manipulate numbers quickly.
104. The very good rise in pupils' attainment throughout the school is directly attributable to the effective measures put in place by the headteacher and senior management team. Strengths and weaknesses in pupils' answers to test questions have been analysed and measures put in place to address weaknesses; for example, pupils' ability to interpret a range of graphs. The headteacher and senior staff now regularly monitor the standards of teaching and learning in classrooms. Pupils are given individual targets, which are frequently checked through a system of regular testing. Groups of pupils are targeted and given additional classroom support to ensure that they reach the targets set. The headteacher, who has an enthusiasm for mathematics and very good subject knowledge, now teaches all mathematics lessons in Year 6. Additionally, the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has given a good structure to the mathematics curriculum and has focused teachers' planning to ensure that mathematics is taught at a good pace and in small progressive steps.
105. By the end of Year 2, most pupils add two 2-digit numbers together accurately, using appropriate pencil and paper methods. They recognise numbers over 100 and have a good understanding of place value. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of early multiplication and division and successfully manipulate problems within the multiplication tables of 2, 5, and 10. They securely add and calculate the change required in money problems. They effectively gather and interpret information for column graphs, using tally charts. They recognise right angles in a range of 2D shapes and know how to use rulers to measure in centimetres.
106. Pupils' progress is good, overall, between the ages of five and seven. It is swift in Year 1 due to the very good teaching and learning that takes place. In Year 1, pupils make good progress

in their work habits. They present their work well, concentrate for sustained periods of time in lessons and show interest and enthusiasm for mathematics. They record their work accurately and write numerals correctly. They make good progress in adding and subtracting numbers to 20 and in their developing understanding of tens and units. In the Year 1 lesson on recording data, pupils made very good progress in their ability to gather information independently and to record this correctly. Progress slows in Year 2, because the work that pupils are set takes too little account of individual needs and standards of presentation of work are unsatisfactory. Throughout the key stage there are too few opportunities for pupils to investigate number problems and patterns. Opportunities for pupils to access independently the materials they require to solve problems are limited.

107. By the age of eleven, pupils' skills of using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, when calculating problems in their heads, are good. They transpose fractions into decimals and percentages, with higher-attaining pupils calculating decimals to three places. Pupils know how to use brackets to demarcate their work and are beginning to work with simple algebraic equations. They correctly recognise all lines of symmetry and demonstrate a good understanding of angles in geometry work.
108. Progress is consistently good between the ages of seven and eleven. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils present their work in different ways. In Year 3, pupils begin to use one square for more than one number, whilst in Year 4, pupils effectively organise information into Venn and Carroll diagrams. Year 5 pupils confidently use four quadrants to plot co-ordinates on a graph, demonstrating a good understanding of numbers with a value of less than zero. Pupils use information and communication technology appropriately to produce a good range of computer-generated graphs, but computers are rarely used in lessons to reinforce other work in mathematics. Additionally, pupils have too few opportunities to apply the work they have learnt in mathematics to their work in other subjects; for example, in measurement and calculations in design and technology or geography. However, one good example of such application was seen in a Year 4 science lesson where pupils were required to order information on translucent, transparent and opaque materials in Venn diagram form.
109. The school ensures that the needs of all pupils are effectively met. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective targeted support they receive. The attainment and progress of travellers' children are carefully monitored to ensure that they make optimum progress. Additionally, high achieving pupils in Year 6 have received extra curricular mathematical support in a "*Level 6 Club*", thus catering well for their differing needs.
110. The quality of teaching was good or better in five out of the six lessons seen. One lesson in Year 3 was excellent. It is satisfactory, overall, for the five to seven year olds and good for the older pupils. Where teaching is good, there is comprehensive planning that builds carefully in small progressive stages, so that pupils gain confidence. For example, in a Year 6 introductory lesson on algebra, pupils first played a game using dice and simple number facts. These facts were then translated into abbreviated form and finally into algebraic equations. In most lessons, the work is effectively matched to the differing needs of pupils. The purpose of the lesson is shared with pupils so that they develop a good understanding about their learning and what to do to improve. Lessons are well structured so that there is a good level of direct teaching interspersed with pupils' work. Activities are relevant so that children are interested and keen to try. In three lessons observed, the work was insufficiently differentiated for the differing abilities of children, so that progress, whilst sound, was less pronounced. In the one unsatisfactory Year 2 lesson on data handling, lack of subject knowledge and insufficient, detailed explanation resulted in pupils not fully understanding how to construct a graph and they made insufficient progress.
111. In all the lessons seen, additional classroom assistants were used very effectively to support groups and individual children, enabling the teacher to provide focused teaching to smaller groups. The systematic provision of homework makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils' work is regularly marked, but rarely contains pointers for improvement. Pupils frequently do not correct their work. Most teachers provide pupils with individual targets, which are regularly updated; however, this system is not consistent throughout the school.

112. The subject is well led by the headteacher. His action to assure the rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning is a significant factor in the improved results in national tests. There are good systems for assessing pupils' progress over time through systematic testing procedures. Additionally, teachers regularly evaluate their numeracy lessons, adapting planning accordingly where problems have arisen. The school is now fully focused on raising pupils' attainment and subsequent progress.

## SCIENCE

113. There are no national tests for pupils aged seven in this subject. However, teachers' assessments of pupils' standards in 2000 indicated that they were very low in all aspects of the subject, with no pupils achieving higher levels.
114. In the national tests for eleven year olds in the same year, which is the latest year for which there are national comparative data, pupils' standards were well above the national average and, when compared to similar schools, were very high and in the top five per cent of this type of school, nationally. This was because, while the percentage of pupils achieving at least the expected level was close to the national figure, there were many more pupils achieving higher levels than was the case nationally. Both boys and girls performed better than their genders nationally and girls did better as a group in the school than did the boys. These results were a significant improvement over those for previous years.
115. Validated data from the national tests for 2001 show that these results have been bettered again this year; all pupils achieved at least the expected levels and a very high proportion of them achieved even higher levels than these.
116. Inspection findings are that pupils' standards are broadly in line with the national average at the age of seven and are well above them at the age of eleven. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall, although there are examples of good teaching throughout the school. From the age of five to seven, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, make satisfactory progress, overall, although their progress in Year 1 is good. Weaknesses in the teaching strategies used in Year 2, including over-reliance on undemanding worksheets and the lack of suitable work for higher-attaining pupils, mean that too many do not make the progress of which they are capable. Between the ages of seven and eleven all pupils make good progress. Because of well-targeted revision work immediately prior to the national tests in Year 6, including the good involvement of parents to help revision, their progress at this stage is very swift.
117. In nearly all classes, there is a good emphasis on developing pupils' skills of scientific enquiry. In Year 1, pupils predict sensibly, for example, that the thickness of a material will be a factor in how well it muffles sound. They then test satisfactorily and record their results clearly in a variety of ways, enabling them to draw simple and appropriate conclusions. Their standards are above those expected because the teaching is good. The teacher has a good understanding of how pupils learn and relationships are very good. As a result, the tasks set are interesting and involve pupils actively in developing their skills for a high proportion of the time. Pupils are motivated very well by these tasks and interact well with each other. There is a pervading ethic that encourages and supports hard work and effort.
118. Pupils in Year 2 do not have enough opportunity to develop these enquiry skills and their standards in this aspect are below the national average. They suggest reasons, for example, for the small number of creatures in traps, based adequately on their understanding of habitats. They sometimes give suggestions of how to improve experimental methods. Teaching and learning in this lesson were broadly satisfactory, but the evidence from pupils' work throughout the year indicates that too many worksheets are being used. This limits the rate at which pupils, particularly the potentially higher-attaining ones, develop their scientific skills. It also limits the extent to which their skills of literacy can be used and extended.
119. Between the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' rate of progress is much more consistently good, particularly in their acquisition of scientific knowledge. However, the continued emphasis on developing skills of scientific enquiry is becoming effective, particularly with the younger pupils in this age group. Year 3 pupils realise that forces, particularly air resistance, affect their movements. They begin to construct a fair test with help, taking variables into account. The average- and higher-attaining pupils begin to make sensible hypotheses, for example, that the size of a parachute will affect its rate of descent, which is above the standards expected. This indicates that these pupils have made very good progress this year since the standards they were assessed as achieving as Year 2 pupils last year were well below the national average, as reported above. These skills are extended well in Year 4 when pupils measure the rates at which various solids dissolve in water. They have a good understanding of what constitutes a fair test and give good attention to keeping all necessary



variables constant. In Year 5, pupils construct and carry out reasonable fair tests. Although the lower-attaining pupils do not draw valid conclusions from their tests, all other pupils do so and higher-attaining pupils justify their explanations clearly. Pupils in Year 6 have a reasonable understanding of how to conduct fair tests. They measure accurately and evaluate the results of their work soundly, although often in simple terms, perhaps suggesting ways in which they can improve their experiments.

120. Pupils' progress between the ages of seven and eleven is good in lessons and over time because of improvements in the scheme of work and how teachers use the associated assessment procedures, which are now a good support to their efforts in class. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they focus well on teaching the basic skills, which ensures that pupils develop a good understanding. They manage pupils' behaviour well, overall, although some older pupils do not always listen well enough to benefit from good quality teaching. They disrupt the lesson and, therefore, the rate of learning is slowed for the whole class, as the teacher has to spend too much time in assuring good order. The activities are well chosen and interest pupils so that they are generally well motivated and work hard to solve the problems set. Sometimes, they are drawn into the 'magic' of discovery through very good strategies employed by the teacher, for example in a Year 3 lesson into air resistance.
121. As mentioned earlier, the time allocated to revision immediately before the national tests is highly effective in raising the levels attained in the tests. Pupils' individual needs are catered for well, including those of pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attaining ones, with the result that they are very well prepared for the test situation.
122. Since the previous inspection, leadership and management of the subject have improved and are now good; the subject co-ordinator has been effective in improving standards and provision. Much effort has gone into improving the scheme of work and the use teachers make of the available assessment information, together with helping teachers to develop the effectiveness of their practice. This has largely been successful and standards of teaching and learning have improved, overall, since the last inspection. The school has already identified continuing weaknesses in practice and has taken steps to address them; these need to continue to ensure that teaching and learning are of a consistent standard throughout the school. A good level of resources supports pupils' progress.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

123. Pupils' attainment in art at the ages of seven and eleven during the last inspection was judged to be below national expectations. The findings of this inspection show a similar picture – pupils' attainment by the ages of seven and eleven is still below national expectations. A lack of basic skills, together with too few opportunities to experiment with a range of materials and tools, limit pupils' progress, which is unsatisfactory through the school. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only one art lesson, for the older pupils. This means that no overall judgement on teaching can be made. Work was scrutinised in classrooms and around the school, work in pupils' sketchbooks was analysed and discussions were held with pupils and staff.
124. The majority of artwork on display during the inspection was that used in other subjects; for example, drawing the eye in science, or illustrating Tudor costume in history. This gave pupils limited opportunities to develop and explore new art skills or to evaluate and adapt their work. The school has rightly focused on raising standards in English, mathematics and science, and so the other subjects of the National Curriculum have received limited focus. This has adversely affected the progress that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, make in art and design and their subsequent standards. At the present time, pupils' artwork has a low profile in the school.
125. Very little artwork was available for scrutiny from pupils aged between five and seven. Pupils in Year 1 work with a variety of materials such as wool, ribbon and raffia, successfully weaving these into Hessian material. They use a satisfactory range of mark making materials such as crayon, pastels and paint. They print patterns, using two colours. Year 2 pupils have looked closely at facial features, producing portraits with reasonable proportion and detail. Overall, these pupils make insufficient progress in developing skills of close observation. Their drawing and painting lack detail. Scrutiny of the yearly sample of work for these pupils

- shows a lack of opportunities to create pictures, using computer-generated art, and very limited opportunities to experiment with a range of media.
126. Between the ages of seven and eleven, artwork is used chiefly to support work in other subjects; however, this work lacks an art focus and shows pupils' standards in art to be barely satisfactory. Some good artwork was seen in Year 5. Here, pupils studied an aspect over a sustained period, enabling them to develop a new skill successfully and to produce work of good quality. They examined the work of artists using pointillism, before experimenting with pencils to create texture and depth in drawing. They then used this technique to successfully paint individual still-life pictures in the pointillist style.
  127. Progress throughout the school is unsatisfactory. Pupils have too few opportunities to study the work of artists, using the artists' techniques to influence their own work. They have too few opportunities to develop an aspect of work in depth, over a period of time. Opportunities to experiment with printmaking techniques, pattern and texture are limited.
  128. In the one lesson seen, pupils were taught to create figures with movement. Teaching was very good. The teacher was very enthusiastic and imparted this to her class, generating interest. Very good subject knowledge enabled the teacher to make basic points very clearly so that pupils understood the task well. Pupils were given a free choice of materials, enabling them to express their ideas individually. The pupils made very good progress, because they evaluated their work and made changes and because the activity was sufficiently challenging. The high expectations of the teacher resulted in pupils working with endeavour, keen to produce good work. Overall, scrutiny of pupils' work shows that provision for art has limited challenge and that teachers' expectations are generally not high enough. The use of sketchbooks is under developed and used inconsistently throughout the school.
  129. Co-ordination of the subject is broadly satisfactory, but in need of further development. The coordinator is new to this role and has had no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the classrooms. The scheme of work for art is unsatisfactory because it is a list of activities and does not outline the skills that are required to ensure that pupils learn in a consistent and progressive way. There is a useful procedure for assessing how well each pupil has completed an art topic, but this is not used to adapt or inform future learning. There is a satisfactory range of easily accessible resources to support the art curriculum. While the art curriculum now includes a satisfactory range of sculpture and three-dimensional work, the overall improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

130. No teaching of design and technology was observed and so no judgements are possible about its effectiveness. Other judgements are made on the basis of a scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display, of teachers' plans and records and through discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator. Pupils' standards at the ages of seven and eleven, including those of pupils with special educational needs and those from travelling families, are below those expected nationally and they do not make as much progress as they should through the school.
131. Because of the school's need to focus since the last inspection on the raising of standards in English, mathematics and science, little emphasis has been put on design and technology and there has been, as a consequence, insufficient improvement in this subject since that inspection.
132. There are examples of work from many classes that show satisfactory skills in making things; for example, Year 5 pupils design reasonably effective posters that encourage people to walk to school. In addition, there are examples of pupils' project work at a good standard from, for example, Year 3, who make effective pop-up cards, and Year 6, who have built an attractive model of the improvements about to be effected to the outside play area. However, there is insufficient evidence that these experiences build routinely and systematically into a good enough grasp of the whole design process, except in Year 1, where pupils have a sound grasp of design, making and evaluation of their products.
133. The co-ordinator has a sound grasp of what is needed to improve the subject. She has already recognised that the current scheme of work is inadequate, as it does not identify which skills pupils are expected to gain at what stage in their development. She is clear that this is a major contributory factor to the unsatisfactory standards being achieved and that it is a priority

for development, as is the consistent use by teachers of the existing adequate assessment procedures to devise work that meets the needs of individual pupils closely. As she has no time allocated to monitor and evaluate the standards of teaching and learning, she is not able to account fully enough for the standards in the subject; this is an area that needs to be addressed. Insufficient use is being made of computer technology to aid design.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

134. It was possible to observe lessons only in Years 3, 5 and 6 during the inspection and, therefore, the judgements given below are based on those observations, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of their work. Given the absence of any work done by pupils in Year 2 and no teacher's planning for it, making judgements based on work scrutiny is not possible. The results of a discussion with pupils from Year 2 clearly demonstrate that they are attaining at a level below national expectations and that progress, overall, is unsatisfactory. By the time they reach the age of eleven, they have made satisfactory progress and their standards are in line with those expected nationally. These judgements include pupils with special educational needs and pupils from travelling families.
135. With the exception of those judgements given above, no other reliable ones are possible for pupils aged seven.
136. In Year 1, pupils develop their geography skills satisfactorily; they find places on a map correctly and have a reasonable knowledge of how traffic is controlled. Pupils in Year 3 are aware of the differences between their own locality and other places. They name, for example, some of the features that attract tourists to seaside locations, such as hotels, boat trips, beaches and gift shops. They are aware of the difference weather can make to seaside towns, particularly during the winter, and know that their own locality is not so dependent for visitors on good weather. Pupils in Year 6 have conducted a very well organised survey of traffic volume in Goldenhill. Using a speed gun, they first estimated and then measured the speed of passing traffic. Using their mathematics skills satisfactorily, they produced tally charts and then graphs to illustrate their results. During this activity, the pupils developed their ability to consider evidence and use it to identify problems and suggest solutions in a sound fashion. Pupils in Year 6 have studied the effects of erosion and have produced some very good diagrams and notes on the characteristics of rivers. They use the language of the subject well, for example, the use of "river" words such as meander, source, tributaries and transportation.
137. The teaching observed for the seven to eleven year old pupils is of good quality, overall. Teachers use methods that are well focused on objectives. They give clear explanations and their lessons follow a logical sequence of development. There is a good level of questioning and teachers use their voices well. Pupils are encouraged to put forward their ideas and do so sensibly and clearly. Lessons have a good pace. Resources are used well and are securely focused on the objectives set out in the planning.
138. The good quality of teaching results in good progress for all pupils, including those with special education needs, between the ages of seven and eleven. The progress made by pupils aged from five to seven is less consistent. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that pupils in Year 1 are making satisfactory progress, whereas, for pupils in Year 2, it is unsatisfactory, due to the absence of work and teacher's planning. The scrutiny of pupils' work clearly demonstrates that the quality of marking is not consistent and ranges from the minimal to detailed assessment. The school has taken note of the point made in the report of May 1999 about the over use of worksheets and they were much less a feature of the work examined during the current inspection.
139. The subject maintains satisfactory links with other areas of the curriculum, for example mathematics, through the use of graphs, survey counts and temperature charts. In their geography work, pupils use their writing skills soundly to produce labelled diagrams, letters and pieces of descriptive writing. ICT is used well to produce graphs and pieces of writing. The school provides a number of good opportunities for pupils to take part in visits to places connected with their geography work. For example, they have visited Cannock Chase, Chasewater, Manchester Airport and an outdoor activity centre.

140. The subject co-ordinator has a sound vision of how she wants to develop the subject and the steps necessary to achieve those aims. She is aware of the need to improve the way that teachers use the current assessment and recording methods so that work is planned to meet pupils' needs to a much greater degree than it is at the present time. The curriculum provided is unsatisfactory in that it lacks the important element of planning for skill development. Skill development is taking place at the moment, but it is done on an ad-hoc basis and needs to become an integral part of whole school planning for the subject. As part of the development of the subject it is important that the co-ordinator monitors the work done in classrooms more consistently and ensures that the scheme of work is being followed throughout the school. The resources available to teachers are generally satisfactory, but there is a need for more atlases that are suitable for the different age ranges and abilities of the pupils.

## **HISTORY**

141. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe any lessons and so the judgements given are based on a scrutiny of the work of pupils. No judgements are possible about the overall quality of teaching.
142. The scrutiny of pupils' work, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, indicates that they are making satisfactory progress between the ages of seven and eleven. By the time they reach the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected nationally.
143. However, the progress made by pupils aged between five and seven is less consistent; pupils in Year 1 are making satisfactory progress but the progress of pupils in Year 2 is unsatisfactory. The school was able to produce only one example of work done by pupils in Year 2 with a connection to history. This was a piece of extended writing done as a class on Florence Nightingale, as part of their literacy work, and this demonstrated a satisfactory ability to order events. However, the school was unable to produce any work done in history as a discrete subject for pupils in Year 2; nor was there any teacher's planning available for scrutiny. Therefore, the judgement on the attainment of pupils aged seven must be that it is below that expected nationally.
144. Pupils in Year 1 have a basic understanding of chronological order and demonstrate an ability to distinguish between past and present. They make sound comparisons between the toys used by children in the past and their own. This has developed a satisfactory ability to sequence objects in terms of time. Year 3 pupils demonstrate good skill development in understanding sources of historical knowledge such as artefacts, buildings and stories. They have studied the different types of food available in the past and compared them to their own, thus developing their ability to state preferences soundly. In their work on Ancient Rome, they produced some very careful written work about the Roman villa. In Year 5, pupils demonstrate a satisfactory ability to frame historical questions. Their work on Ancient Egypt forms a good link to geography and literacy with maps and written descriptions. Some of the pupils produced good factual accounts of Egyptian burial customs. Their ability to select important information from written sources is satisfactory. In good, extended written accounts of the life of Anne Frank, pupils in Year 6 showed a sensitive awareness of the Nazi persecution of the Jews and their use of concentration camps. They have studied the rise of Hitler and are aware of the suffering caused by the war. The work produced by pupils in Year 6 shows an interest in the subject and is, on the whole, well presented.
145. The school ensures that the pupils are given the opportunity to visit a good range of places connected to the subject. For example, visits to places such as the Wedgwood, Industrial, Gladstone and Middleport School museums, Ford Green Hall and the Etruria Canal Boats.
146. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision of how she wants to develop the subject and the steps necessary to achieve those aims. She is aware of the need to ensure that her colleagues use the information gained from assessment to plan work that closely meets the needs of individual pupils as their skills develop. However, the curriculum provided is itself unsatisfactory, because it lacks the important element of planning for skill development. The co-ordinator needs to ensure that this aspect of provision for the subject becomes an integral part of the school's scheme of work for history. As part of the development of the subject it is important that the co-ordinator monitors the work done in classrooms more consistently and

ensures that the scheme of work is being followed in all classes. The resources available to teach the subject are generally satisfactory in quantity and condition.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

147. Pupils' standards are broadly in line with those expected nationally at the ages of seven and eleven and they make satisfactory progress through the school, including when they are from travelling families or have special educational needs. These standards are better than those of the previous inspection and have been brought about through improvements in computer hardware and in the quality of leadership in the subject.
148. In Year 1, pupils name a good range of examples of the use of ICT in their daily lives, including pelican crossings, bank cash machines and remote control cars. They competently give instructions to each other or to a programmable toy to control movement. Higher-attaining pupils use mathematical skills to good effect when they estimate distance soundly. Pupils in this year group achieve standards that are above those expected. Pupils aged seven use the mouse confidently to log on. They scroll through menus competently and input and access information satisfactorily, for example, to access information about minibeasts. However, because the language used in the program was too difficult, the lesson was not as useful as it could have been in reinforcing and extending work done in science lessons.
149. Pupils aged between seven and eleven make satisfactory progress with an emphasis on word-processing and the handling of data. Pupils in Year 3, for example, change the size and font of the text they type in, for example, to write their poems. These skills are developed soundly so that Year 5 pupils also change the text's colour, highlight important parts of it and use the shift key routinely to insert capital letters. Pupils in Year 4 draw bar charts while those in Year 6 also use pie charts and line graphs to show the results of, for example, traffic surveys. These older pupils make good changes to the colour of their charts to add interest and emphasis to their presentation.
150. The word-processing and data handling aspects of ICT are used well to support work in some other subjects, for example, geography. However, the school would benefit from extending the use of ICT to provide routine support in other ways, for example through its use in art and design, design and technology and music.
151. The quality of teaching and learning is, overall, good throughout the school, because teachers are confident with ICT and teach the basic skills well. This enables them to help pupils with difficulties and ensures that lessons flow well. They set tasks that are generally appropriate so that pupils are interested and see the relevance of what they are doing. This motivates them to try hard and they sustain concentration for long periods of time. However, when the teacher has not thought the lesson through adequately enough, as in a Year 2 lesson about accessing information from an encyclopaedia, pupils become frustrated because the language is too difficult for them to understand and they cannot complete the task set. More often, teachers' planning is good because it identifies exactly what pupils are expected to gain from the lesson, which the teacher often shares with the pupils to give them an idea of what to expect and the purpose of the exercise. The management of pupils' behaviour is good and relationships are warm enough to give pupils confidence in asking for help, knowing that it will be given freely. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning, behave well and co-operate well with each other.
152. The scheme of work is adequate but would benefit from a clearer identification of which skills teachers should expect from pupils at each stage of their development. The co-ordinator has a very good grasp of what is needed to improve standards and provision still further, including ensuring that manageable assessment procedures are used consistently throughout the school so that teachers can plan more effectively for pupils' developing needs. There are enough computers to deliver the required curriculum; these are sited in the Year 6 classroom that also, therefore, acts as a computer suite. All classes are timetabled to use the suite each week, which has had a beneficial effect on standards and which has no discernible adverse effect on the Year 6 pupils who have to vacate their room. The school is aware of some deficiencies in software and has realistic plans to address the problem.

## **MUSIC**

153. No teaching of music was seen during the inspection for the five to seven year old pupils and so no judgements are possible about the standards of teaching and learning. However, the

standard of singing of the older pupils aged from seven to eleven is good and they make good progress, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families. This is because the quality of teaching is at least good and often very good, particularly by the music co-ordinator.

154. In their practice for the end-of-term concert, pupils in Years 3 and 4 sang a number of Victorian music hall songs and others, with good attention to pitch, rhythm and timbre. They enunciated their words clearly and generally reached high notes well, because they breathed properly and opened their mouths fully. In this session, the quality of teaching was very good. Important coaching points were made at the correct time, which ensured that pupils' performance improved. The teacher chose the songs well to interest and involve pupils; this helped to ensure that they all concentrated very well and took part whole-heartedly. The teacher's own piano-playing expertise was high and she accompanied the singers very sensitively, striking a very good balance between supporting and leading the singing. As a result, the tunes were paced well and pupils were fully involved throughout. Year 5 pupils, in their concert practice, sang with great verve and good attention to rhythm and pitch. They thoroughly enjoyed the Rock and Roll music chosen for them and responded very well to the teacher, who focused well on those specific aspects of singing that needed improvement. The teacher sensitively balanced the need to repeat passages of music to ensure that performance levels improved with the need to keep the lesson moving and keep the pupils thoroughly involved in their lesson. This was accomplished well, which ensured that pupils made good progress in the lesson, even though some boys continued to talk while she was instructing the class.
155. The curriculum is enriched by visits from professional musicians. For example, an Afro-Caribbean drummer and, separately, the trombonists from the Royal Opera's orchestra gave recitals in the school, as did the local authority's peripatetic music staff. However, following a governing body decision, there is no instrumental teaching by peripatetic staff in the school. A secondary school pupil takes a recorder club for Year 6 pupils each week. Pupils give a satisfactory number of performances out of school, including singing at a local supermarket (and meeting the Tweenies!) and for Senior Citizens.
156. The leadership and management of the subject are good, overall, because the co-ordinator leads by example and provides good support for her colleagues. The scheme of work is now adequate, which is an improvement since the previous inspection, but needs to focus more clearly on how to develop logically the essential skills that underlie the subject. As in the last inspection, assessment procedures need to be developed further to ensure that all teachers plan work that caters adequately for individual pupil's needs and abilities. The co-ordinator has no time allocated to monitor teaching and evaluate its impact on learning; this is unsatisfactory as she is unable to account for the standards or provision in the subject. In addition, the use of ICT to support work in composition and performance is not developed enough. Because of the necessary emphasis on improving standards and provision in English, mathematics and science, the development of this subject has taken a back seat. Nevertheless, and in that context, the rate and extent of improvements since the last inspection have been broadly satisfactory.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

157. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils attain standards appropriate to their ages. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from travelling families, make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection.
158. During Years 1 and 2, pupils gain an understanding of what happens to their bodies during vigorous exercise. They show developing control over their actions. For instance, in a small apparatus lesson, Year 1 pupils bounced balls a number of times prior to catching them. They then demonstrated good hand/eye coordination in partner work as they threw and retrieved, anticipating the ball's direction by moving towards it. They also showed developing social skills as they negotiated who should throw or receive, taking turns and playing fairly. Pupils in Year 2 adapt their running to incorporate fast speed and a slower jogging pace. By Year 4, pupils have developed good ball skills. They are learning a range of technical words with which to describe their work; for example, *retrieve* and *dribble*. In the Year 6 games lesson

using basketball skills, pupils demonstrated very good progress in their understanding of *block* and *move* tactics, successfully using these in a competitive game.

159. Teaching is good, overall, with very good teaching seen in Years 1 and 6. All teachers ensure that pupils warm up and cool down appropriately and that all change into suitable clothing. Teachers give effective demonstrations of skills to be learnt and this gives good support to pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson pupils' ability to pitch a ball with accuracy, precision and control was greatly enhanced by the teacher's demonstration of these techniques. Teachers give clear instructions, thus ensuring that pupils know exactly what is required. They organise pupils well, resulting in lessons running smoothly. In the very good lessons, teachers plan activities that build progressively on previously taught skills. This gives pupils confidence to try new activities. Lessons continue at a good pace, so that pupils retain concentration and work hard. They enjoy physical education lessons, cooperate well in groups and listen respectfully to the views of others. Most children behave well. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen, the behaviour management of pupils was not good enough. This resulted in pupils not following instructions carefully and making insufficient progress. Pupils without their kit sat out for the entire lesson, missing a valuable opportunity to exercise.
160. Most of the small and large apparatus required for lessons is stored in a separate room and, because of this, the older pupils set out the large apparatus used by infant classes. This arrangement is inappropriate as it limits opportunities for pupils to learn how to handle apparatus safely, make choices in their learning and may result in a lack of progression and challenge.
161. There is a satisfactory range of out-of-school activities such as football, netball and cricket. There are good opportunities for older pupils to compete in inter-school sporting fixtures. Pupils also enjoy outdoor and adventurous activities during their visits to Kingswood Education Centre. The practice of pupils in Years 3-6 showering after games lessons makes a valuable contribution to their personal and social education. Pupils from Year 2 onwards have weekly swimming lessons; resulting in the majority becoming proficient swimmers by the time they leave the school.
162. The coordinator is knowledgeable, very enthusiastic and provides a good role model for pupils in her energetic approach to the subject. There is no formal procedure to assess pupils' work, or to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. The school provides an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum for physical education. There is a scheme of work which outlines the activities to be taught, but does not indicate the development and progression of skills. This gives insufficient guidance to teachers. These weaknesses are recognised by the school and actions to redress these issues are indicated in the current school development plan.