

INSPECTION REPORT

HALLOW C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hallow, Worcester

LEA area: Worcestershire

Unique reference number: 116882

Headteacher: Mrs S Foster-Agg

Reporting inspector: Mr Clive Drake
2442

Dates of inspection: 18 - 22 February 2002

Inspection number: 222021

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Main Road
Hallow
Worcester

Postcode: WR2 6LD

Telephone number: 01905 640354

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Jackson

Date of previous inspection: February 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2442	Clive Drake	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History Music	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9417	Elizabeth Owen	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18346	Rod Bristow	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Art and design Physical education Foundation Stage Equal opportunities Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hallow is a Church of England Aided Primary School for boys and girls aged between four and 11. The school is situated in the village of Hallow, near Worcester. Pupils come from Hallow, other nearby villages and suburbs in the north of Worcester. It is smaller than average for a primary school, having 134 pupils on roll, 19 of whom were under five at the start of the school year. The number on roll shows a small reduction of seven pupils since the previous inspection in February 2000. With an admission limit of 30, the school appears to be under-subscribed. However, the building of two additional classrooms has led to the admission limit being raised as from September 2001 and numbers on roll have not yet had time to increase to reflect the capacity of the building. Pupils are organised into five mixed age-group classes. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Just over 13 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and none has a statement of special educational need. Both these figures are below the national average for primary schools. The nature of pupils' special educational needs varies, but includes specific learning difficulties, sensory impairment and autistic tendencies.

Children's attainment on entry to the reception class is around average overall, although it varies from year to year because of the comparatively small numbers of pupils in each year group. The percentage of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is below two per cent. This figure is very low, but is not an accurate indicator of socio-economic circumstances because the local education authority does not supply a hot meals service and the school believes that many parents do not claim their entitlement. The school experiences a high level of pupil mobility, so the pupils in an age group can alter significantly as they move through the school. Since the last inspection, half of the teaching staff has changed. Changes include the appointment of a new headteacher in April 2001. Currently the post of deputy headteacher is vacant and a member of staff is filling the post on a temporary basis.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a rapidly improving school. The leadership exercised by the headteacher and governors is very good and the management of the school has a clear focus on improvement. The school has developed an effective programme for analysing and evaluating what does and does not work well. It is successfully using this information to improve the quality of provision and raise standards. The school's strategies for ensuring educational inclusion and equality of opportunity are very good. Teaching and learning are now consistently good and standards at the age of 11 are average or better, and rising. At the time of the last inspection, the school was identified as having serious weaknesses. These no longer exist and the strengths of the school far outweigh the areas for development. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Very good leadership and management by the headteacher and governors are effective in supporting teamwork and promoting improving standards.
- The vast majority of teaching is good or better, so pupils learn effectively.
- Pupils' attitudes towards school and their learning are both very good.
- The pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good and relationships are strong.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology throughout the school.
- The monitoring and evaluation of subjects other than English, mathematics and science so that provision and standards can be improved further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved well since it was last inspected in February 2000 and was identified as having serious weaknesses. Improvement since April 2001, when the current headteacher took over the management of the school, has been very good. Practically all of the key issues for action identified by the last inspection have been addressed successfully. The leadership and management of the school have been improved and are now strengths, although monitoring in some subjects requires further development. One consequence of the very effective management has been the significant improvement in the quality of teaching throughout the school, which is now very good for children under five and good in the rest of the school. This recent development has been effective in raising standards, especially for older pupils. Procedures for making, recording and using assessments and for managing behaviour have been developed well. All pupils now have equality of access to the curriculum and the school's accommodation has been considerably enhanced. However, standards in information and communication technology are still too low across the school and remain a key issue in this inspection. The school is well placed to manage its own improvement further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	D	D	E
mathematics	A	B	D	E
science	D	D	C	D

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

Hallow School is smaller than most other primary schools and the number of pupils in each year group is comparatively low. This means that the results of one or two pupils who do particularly well or badly can move results to either above or below national averages. This needs to be borne in mind when interpreting the school's results for a single year. Patterns of results over a period of two or more years provide a more accurate picture of standards overall.

The combined evidence over the last three years indicates that standards for 11 year olds are below the national average and have improved at a much slower rate than schools nationally. The standards

for 11 year olds in 2001 measured by national tests were below the national average in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. When compared to schools that have a low proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, standards were well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. However, as the take-up of free school meals may be influenced by the local education authority's policy of not supplying a hot meals service, these comparisons need to be viewed with caution.

Inspection evidence shows that standards for older pupils in the school are rising in the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science as a result of determined and concerted effort by the leadership and management of the school. Standards for 11 year olds are now around average in English and above average in mathematics and science. Although targets set for English and mathematics are very demanding, they should be met in 2003 if improvement continues at the same pace as is currently the case. Standards of work in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory for 11 year olds because the distribution of computers around the school inhibits progress. No judgements could be made about attainment in design and technology, music and art and design because insufficient evidence was collected. In geography, history and physical education standards are typical of those expected for 11 year olds.

The performance of pupils aged seven in national assessments in 2001 was well above average in reading and writing and very high in mathematics, being in the top five per cent of schools nationally. In teacher assessments in science, attainment was also very high. Pupils who are currently in Year 2 are performing above nationally expected levels in all three core subjects. The difference in comparative attainment at Hallow, with seven year old pupils performing better for their age than the 11 year olds, is of long standing. It is beginning to be eroded by the recent improvements that have taken place in the quality of teaching for older pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very good. They enjoy coming to school and respond positively in lessons. They are well motivated, keen to learn and want to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good both in lessons and around school. They are polite, well mannered and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Personal and social development are both good. Relationships throughout the school are good.
Attendance	Attendance is excellent and punctuality is very good.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development are major strengths of the school and contribute significantly to the pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Good	Good

Teaching and learning are good overall and literacy and numeracy skills are taught well. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen. In 35 per cent of lessons teaching was very good and in three per cent teaching was excellent. Teaching was judged to be very good for children under five and good in the rest of the school. Overall, the teaching of mathematics was very good and in English teaching was good. The quality of learning matches closely the quality of teaching observed, with all pupils, including those who have been identified as having special educational needs, making at least good progress.

The best teaching is characterised by planning which includes very clear objectives for what pupils are intended to learn that are shared with the class and activities that meet the needs of all pupils. In these lessons, teachers have high expectations and the effectiveness of their direct teaching and skilful questioning move all pupils on at a good rate in their learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and behaviour is well managed. The quality of teachers' marking is consistently very good and helps pupils understand what they do well and what they need to do to improve. The school meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, well. Where teaching was not quite so effective, teachers' subject knowledge was less secure, activities did not build so well on learning and the pace for lessons set by teachers was less challenging.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a broad curriculum, with all pupils receiving their full entitlement. The curriculum is enriched by very strong community links, particularly with schools abroad.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for these pupils. There is an early identification of need and effective programmes of support are planned to match individual requirements.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school promotes personal development well. International links that the school are developing are enriching the cultural provision to an unusual extent. Staff and pupils worked together to create school rules and an effective behaviour policy. Pupils enjoy routine tasks and carry them out responsibly. The school makes very good provision for social, moral and cultural development. Opportunities for promoting spiritual development are good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school that takes effective steps to ensure the pupils' well-being and safety. Procedures for assessment are good and the

	school is adept at using the information it gathers to plan for future developments.
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The school has, correctly, focused on improving provision in English, mathematics and science and a substantial proportion of curriculum time is allocated to them. This has limited opportunities for development in some other subjects and provision does not reach the high standards in evidence in the core subjects. Teachers know their pupils well and assess their progress very thoroughly.

Links with parents are good. Parents are satisfied with the effectiveness of the school and appreciate the recent improvements that have taken place in the quality of provision and the school's ethos. They now feel very welcome in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong and effective leadership, and a clear sense of purpose that creates a strong sense of teamwork among staff, pupils, governors and parents. Together, these have led to recent but marked improvement in many areas. Coordination in some subjects is not as effective as it is in English, mathematics and science.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. Governors are particularly well informed about and fully involved in the management of the school. They provide very strong and active support for the headteacher and staff. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has developed good systems for gathering and analysing information about how well it is doing in English, mathematics and science and has an accurate view of its strengths and the areas where it needs to improve. Evaluation in most other subjects is not so well developed.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of the resources available to it in order to achieve its plans for development.

The school is very well led by the headteacher and governors. The school's response to the concerns raised in the last inspection has led to considerable improvements being made. Staff and governors have developed a clear focus on improving what the school does. Developments have been of such a high quality that areas that were serious weaknesses at the time of the previous inspection are now strengths. The school applies the principles of best value to all areas of school life. Learning resources are adequate. The good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum and the very good accommodation are factors that contribute to the school's success.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the strong leadership of the headteacher• pupils like coming to school• the approachability of the staff• the good quality of the teaching• the high expectations of work and behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the range of out-of-school activities

The school has the support and confidence of parents. The findings of the inspection team confirm the positive views of parents. The team disagrees with parents regarding their views on the range of activities outside lessons and believes that, given the limited number of staff, the range of such activities is impressive.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school was inspected halfway through the spring term when pupils had been in their present classes for almost half of the school year. Most of the pupils had had the time to become very settled in their classes and with their teachers. Work that had been completed during the current academic year was available for examination. However, the curriculum framework that has been adopted by the school comprises half term units, often with some subjects, such as history and geography, alternating in emphasis. This resulted in the amount of work in specific subjects available for scrutiny from each class being dependant upon which topic cycle was being followed. This, and the way that the school's timetable was organised, led to insufficient information being collected in some subjects to enable the team to make a secure judgement about teaching, learning and standards. Judgements are based on the analysis of the school's performance data, scrutiny of pupils' work, both in their books and on display, observation of forty lessons, discussions with pupils and hearing them read, and discussions with staff and governors. Hallow School is smaller than most other primary schools and the number of pupils in each year group is comparatively low. This means that the standards achieved by one or two pupils who do particularly well or badly can influence the overall performance of a year group and so the attainment profile is likely to change from one year group to the next. This also needs to be borne in mind when interpreting the school's data, and the analysis of results from a single year needs to be treated with some caution.
2. Although the progress made by pupils as they move through the school is good overall, there are variations in the relative standards attained by different year groups, often reflecting the attainment of the small number of pupils in each cohort when they entered the school. The children in Reception make very good progress and the current pupils will exceed standards expected of five year olds by the end of the school year. Good progress is maintained throughout the school. This has moved the current Year 2 pupils on from levels of attainment that were judged to be typical for their age group at the end of Reception to above average levels by the time they are seven. The good progress in the juniors is the result of recent improvements in the quality of teaching. However, pupils are still catching up from a history of underachievement that was created during the period following the previous inspection when teaching in the juniors was weak as a result of staffing instability and ineffective monitoring and evaluation procedures. Their overall attainment now is typical for their age group and rising.
3. Assessments carried out by the school in the first few weeks of the year indicate that overall the achievements of children under five in the school are broadly typical for this age group of children. Inspection findings confirm this picture, although there is a group of children who are well above this level. During their time in school, children make very good progress and by the time that they enter Year 1 most children will have achieved the nationally expected standards in all areas of the curriculum and be ready to meet the challenges of the National Curriculum. The very good rate of learning is attributable to the very good teaching that pupils

- receive in the Reception class.
4. The national arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment are based on a scale with eight levels. The target for seven year olds is Level 2 of the scale; higher attaining pupils should reach Level 3. The target for eleven year olds is Level 4, with higher attaining pupils reaching Level 5 or 6. The proportion of pupils reaching each level can be compared to figures for schools nationally. They are also compared to that of schools in a similar context – that is schools with a similar proportion of pupils who take free school meals. However, as the take up of free school meals at Hallow may be influenced by the local education authority's policy of not supplying a hot meals service, this comparison needs to be viewed with caution.
 5. When the performance of the school's seven year old pupils in 2001 is compared with that of schools nationally, standards in reading and writing are well above average. In both reading and writing, the proportion of pupils who attain Level 2 or above is very high, whilst the numbers who reach the higher Level 3 is well above average in reading and very high in writing. Performance in mathematics in the same year was very high, being in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The proportion of pupils who attain Level 2 or above is very high as are the numbers reaching Level 3. In science, where teachers assess attainment, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was very high. When the school's results are compared with schools in a similar context results in mathematics remain very high, writing remains well above average whilst reading falls comparatively to above average. Although results have fluctuated a little during the last five years, with a particular dip in 1999, overall the trend of improvement at the school has been at a faster rate than the national average.
 6. Inspection findings confirm these high standards at the end of the infants. Standards in mathematics are judged to be well above that expected, whilst standards in English and science are above the expected levels. These are improvements since the last inspection when standards were judged to be average in all three subjects. The inspection findings are not quite as positive as the results of national assessments in 2001, but do not constitute a significant change in standards because cohorts are small and variations from year to year can be expected. The school's records suggest that, overall, the current cohort is unlikely to do as well in national assessments as the cohort of 2001 because of lower prior attainment when they entered the school. In the report of the previous inspection, the attainment of this same group of pupils was judged to be at the expected level at the end of their time in the Reception class. Their current above average standards of work reflect the overall good progress that they have made in the intervening period, reflecting the good teaching that they benefit from during their time in the infants.
 7. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are now all above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when they were judged to be average. Pupils listen carefully when teachers are talking, answer questions well and are able to use discussion effectively in groups. In Year 2, almost all pupils can read simple texts accurately. They have developed a love of books and speak with understanding about authors and illustrators. Many use information on the cover to help them select a book that they are likely to enjoy. Older infant pupils structure longer pieces of writing, write in sentences and use the commonest forms of punctuation. In mathematics, pupils have developed a good understanding of number and use it to solve problems mentally. They use mathematical

language confidently and can explain what they are doing in detail. In science pupils cover and are knowledgeable about the appropriate range of content and have developed the skills that enable them to carry out scientific investigations effectively.

8. When the performance of the school's eleven year old pupils in 2001 is compared with that of schools nationally, standards in English and mathematics are below average and those in science are broadly average. Although the school achieved above average results at the higher Level 5 in English the figures for Level 4 were low, being well below the national average. In science the opposite was true with very high numbers for Level 4, too few of whom moved on to Level 5, figures for which were below the national average. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils who reached Level 4 was below the national average, whilst the numbers that reached Level 5 were broadly average. When the school's results are compared with those of schools in a similar context, results in English and mathematics are well below average and those in science are below average. Furthermore, the figures suggest that the cohort of 2001 did not make the progress in the juniors that they should have done. Over the last five years, the test results of eleven year olds in the school have varied from year to year and within subjects. Overall, since 1997 there has been a trend of static results at a time when nationally figures have been improving. Although the results in science have improved since the last inspection, those in English and mathematics have not. The previous inspection highlighted this issue and it is clear that not enough had been done to reverse this trend by the time that the 2001 tests were taken.
9. The inspections findings indicate that now provision and standards have improved significantly for older pupils. Standards in English are around that expected of pupils who are eleven, in science they are above that expected and in mathematics, they are well above expected levels. The recent improvements in standards are the result of very effective leadership and management of the subjects. Comprehensive programmes of monitoring and evaluation introduced by the headteacher have highlighted areas that required development. Rigorous action has been taken which has been successful in improving the quality of provision, particularly that of teaching. Teaching is now good overall in all three subjects, pupils are making good progress and standards are rising.
10. Standards in speaking and listening and reading are above that expected of eleven year olds. Pupils are confident speakers, using an extensive and mature vocabulary and often make sustained contributions to discussions during lessons. They enjoy reading and discuss books with enthusiasm. They use skills of inference and prediction with maturity when discussing characters and plots. Many use their reading effectively when conducting research as part of their work. Standards in speaking and listening and reading have improved since the last inspection. Standards in writing are typical of those expected of eleven year olds. Pupils are able to apply the skills that they acquire in literacy lessons in extended pieces of writing and in their writing in other subjects such as history and geography. In mathematics, pupils use a range of strategies for solving problems and have a good understanding of number that they can extend to work in statistics, the interpretation of data and fractions. By the time they are eleven, pupils have good subject knowledge in science and have built on previously acquired skills to enable them to confidently plan, carry out and record investigations for themselves.

11. Inspection findings indicate that standards in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory. This is because both the time lag between the teaching input and pupils working on computers and the lack of teacher intervention during pupils' work inhibits progress. No judgements can be made about attainment in design and technology, music and art and design because insufficient evidence was collected. In all other National Curriculum subjects, standards are in line with those expected for seven and eleven year olds. No judgements were made about standards in religious education as this subject was not inspected in this Church Aided school. A separate inspection of this aspect of the school's work has been undertaken and the inspection report is available from the school.
12. The overall good quality of teaching results in pupils making good progress throughout the school. The very positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour also have a positive impact on the rate of progress. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation their targets, thanks to the effective support that they receive from teachers and support staff. Taking into account variations between cohorts because of the small numbers of pupils in each, there is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. The standards that pupils achieve are generally good in Reception and in the infants. However, although the inspection evidence indicates that the teaching of older pupils has improved significantly during the last twelve months, this follows a decline in quality after the previous inspection. In the juniors, especially in English, the history of weak teaching has led to a backlog of underachievement that has still to be overcome despite these recent improvements in the quality of teaching and the rate of progress. In addition, the school has focused, wisely, on improving the quality of provision and raising standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, and attainment in other subjects is lagging behind. Although the staff and governors have proposed a timetable that identifies each subject in turn for focused development, the school needs now to prioritise the improvement of the curriculum for the foundation subjects so that attainment can be raised further.
13. The school makes good use of group and individual pupil targets in its approach to raising attainment. This success is based upon teachers having an accurate picture of the attainment of pupils and a firm understanding of what detailed action needs to be taken to improve performance. Detailed analysis of the pupil level data that the school is creating for this purpose also enables staff to predict attainment at the end of the school year. The statutory targets for year groups that have been set are considerably higher than the current predictions of performance. They reflect the aspirations of the determined leadership and management of the school and are realistic and achievable, although very challenging.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils come into school in the morning with eagerness and enthusiasm because they enjoy the lessons and other planned activities. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about much of the work that they do. Their very positive attitudes to school are demonstrated by their concentration in lessons, keenness to answer questions, and, particularly with the younger pupils, their reluctance to leave the classroom at the end of the day. Pupils take a pride in showing their work in books and on display. They enjoy explaining their work, and are not shy to "have a go" when faced with a challenge. These very positive attitudes begin in the Reception Class

and continue throughout the school for all pupils, regardless of age, attainment level or special educational need. Pupils appreciate and eagerly take part in the range of extracurricular activities that the school provides. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire stated that their children enjoyed coming to school.

15. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is typically very good, enabling them to benefit from the learning opportunities provided. The very good behaviour present in more than half the lessons observed was often directly linked to the teachers' effective classroom management skills. Although in a very small number of lessons pupils got excited and a little noisy, their teacher was able to control the situation promptly and effectively. Around the school pupils move very sensibly and behave well in potentially difficult areas, such as cloakroom spaces and doors onto the play areas. They enter and leave assemblies in a very orderly fashion. Pupils are polite and courteous to visitors, and open and friendly in lunchtime conversation. Behaviour at lunch and playtimes is satisfactory, and pupils respond immediately to a teacher presence. Pupils take a pride in the school and are very appreciative of the recent improvements. There have been two pupils excluded on a short term basis on a number of occasions during the past year. This was in response to extreme incidents and both were successfully reinstated with appropriate support. Parents believe that there has been a marked improvement in behaviour since the last inspection, and the vast majority feel it is good, particularly in lessons. The overall good behaviour of pupils in and around the school is an improvement since the previous inspection when behaviour management was a key issue for development.
16. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils willingly take on responsibility across the school and many opportunities are provided for them to be involved in routine but important tasks. Pupils deliver and return registers to the office and prepare the hall for assembly, including setting up the overhead projector and screen and organising the music. They assist in clearing the hall at the end of lunchtime. A recently established School Council has a representative from each class and is able to influence decisions about the school. The School Council consults pupils regarding recommendations that it is proposing and this enables all to participate and exercise personal initiative. Pupils help those less fortunate than themselves by regularly fund raising for charities. They respond well to the school's planned programme of opportunities to discuss issues surrounding their own welfare, for example, when Year 1 pupils were involved in writing class rules. Pupils' confidence grows as they go through the school and take on more responsibility for their work.
17. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good, and teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and academic progress. Pupils work and play together well and have a growing understanding of the feelings and values of others. Pupils feel confident that adults in school will deal with any bullying incidents in an appropriate way. Pupils agree that everyone is treated fairly and equally by teachers, which establishes a good model for pupils to follow. Although never disobedient, pupils do not always respond to midday supervisors as eagerly as they do toward teachers and other support staff.
18. Attendance in school is very high compared to other schools, and the level of unauthorised absence is low. Measures are in place to encourage this to continue.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The school has six full-time teachers, including the headteacher. There are five classes in the school, all of which cater for mixed age groups of children. In the infants there are two classes, one of which contains twenty-seven pupils aged six and seven. A class of younger pupils caters for eleven Year 1 pupils and nineteen children who will be five by the end of the academic year. These nineteen younger children are in the Foundation Stage. There are three junior classes, each of which has mixed age groups. The older pupils are divided into single age groups for English and mathematics.
20. During the inspection, forty lessons were observed. All class teachers and the headteacher were observed teaching. The teaching observed was judged to be good overall, ranging from satisfactory to excellent. Teaching was judged to be very good or better in fifteen lessons, good in nineteen lessons and satisfactory in the remaining six lessons. Very good teaching was observed in each of the three stages of education, with one excellent lesson at the end of the infants. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. An examination of teachers' planning, together with a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion with pupils, indicates that over a longer period of time teaching has also been consistently of a good quality.
21. In over half of the lessons seen, teaching was judged to be good. In these lessons, teaching was characterised by high expectations and very good planning which matched activities to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This good teaching included effective direct teaching using a wide range of strategies to motivate pupils, very good use of questioning to check what pupils knew and understood and sharing with pupils what they should be learning during their work. In these lessons, there were good relationships between pupils and staff and teachers valued the contributions of pupils. This not only raised pupils' self-esteem but also their self-confidence, so they were willing to tackle difficult work. In the thirty per cent of lessons where teaching was very good or better, the pace was more challenging and the summing up at the end of the lesson was used not only to check gains in skills, knowledge and understanding but also to introduce new learning by preparing pupils for the next lesson. In lessons where teaching was judged to be satisfactory, there were some common weaknesses. Teacher subject knowledge was less secure, activities did not always build on previous learning and the pace of lessons was less challenging.
22. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage was very good in the lessons observed. All children now attend school full time and sixteen out of the nineteen children have done so since they started school in the autumn term. This contributed significantly to the very good quality of teaching and learning observed because the teachers and support staff knew the pupils well and could plan activities for them that were very challenging at an individual level. The teacher's expectations are high and activities are planned to build on what children already know, so that they learn at a quick rate. Teaching strategies use higher attaining and older pupils effectively to support learning in Reception, whether it be by sharing reading books with pupils from Year 2, or by younger children working with the Year 1 pupils in all or parts of lessons. This raises the children's expectations of themselves and encourages

them to strive harder in their work. The teacher provides children with a wide range of opportunities to develop their language skills. The teacher uses assessment very well and systematically monitor the progress of the children so that the strengths and weaknesses in their learning are identified as they move through the Foundation Stage. The teacher's planning can then be adjusted to ensure that effective learning takes place. The curriculum that is planned is very good overall in the six areas of learning, and contributes effectively to the progress children make in working towards achieving the early learning goals. Relationships are always very good and children grow in confidence during their time in the class.

23. The quality of teaching and learning in the infants is good overall. However, there is some variability between subjects, with teaching in English, mathematics and science being generally of a higher quality than that in other subjects. When teaching is at its best, lessons are well planned, a good range of strategies motivates pupils, time is used effectively and pupils are given good support to advance their skills. In these lessons, the pace of work set by the teacher is consistently challenging and pupils rise to the challenge. In the excellent mathematics lesson in Year 2, activities were closely matched to pupils' needs and learning built upon previously acquired skills, knowledge and understanding. In the mental and oral introduction to the lesson, pupils of all abilities could not contain their enjoyment and enthusiasm for learning and competed to respond to excellent questioning. The quality of teaching is matched by the quality of learning and the progress made. Where teaching was only satisfactory, in information and communication technology, the teacher did not have access to the resources that would have enabled her to improve the rate of learning and pupils did not have the range of skills or experiences which are expected for pupils of this age.
24. The quality of teaching and learning in the juniors is good overall. Very good teaching was observed in a number of subjects. English, mathematics and science are taught consistently well and some very good teaching was observed in art and design and dance. Lessons are planned in very great detail and effective strategies guide pupils to make important gains in their learning. For example, in a challenging Year 6 mathematics lesson pupils estimated and measured angles before using their skills to construct angles. In this activity, and in many others, pupils used the very effective strategy of discussing their answers with their 'learning partners'. Pupils are paired and they readily discuss ideas together and help each other with solutions to problems. Teachers also use the summing up at the end of lessons effectively. Pupils are encouraged to share what they have learnt and explain if they still do not understand a particular piece of work. Pupils are confident in this approach and it provides the teachers with useful information about the understanding of individual pupils that helps them make specific plans for progress in the future.
25. The teaching observed in both English and mathematics lessons was very good overall. Eighteen lessons were observed where these important aspects of pupils' development were being taught. In eight out of every nine lessons, teaching was good or better, with seven lessons being very good and one being excellent. The school's programme for monitoring teaching is making an effective contribution to improvements in the quality of teaching, especially for older pupils, and through this to the raising of standards in the two subjects at the end of Year 6. The school is making good use of the national guidance for teaching

literacy and numeracy skills. In English, the concentration on basic skills is contributing to improvements in spelling and punctuation. Learning that has taken place in shared writing sessions is often followed up in the extended writing that takes place weekly in each class. This consolidates the learning that has taken place and enables pupils to use the skills that they have learned. In mathematics, teaching and learning of mental skills has contributed to a deeper understanding of number and improved progress.

26. Over the period since the start of the current academic year teaching in the school is judged to be consistently good in English, mathematics and science. This judgement is based on an examination of the teachers' planning records, together with a close scrutiny of the pupils' books and discussion with pupils in addition to the lessons observed. The school has a broad curriculum framework that shows how the nationally prescribed programmes of work will be delivered. This broad plan is supported by detailed teachers' plans. In English, mathematics and science, teachers analyse pupils' past learning and achievements in school and national testing before using this information to plan for further progress. The move towards individual and group targets in these subject areas rather than whole class targets is successful in giving a sharper focus to teaching and learning.
27. Since the last inspection, a high priority has been given to planning opportunities for pupils to use their skills, knowledge and understanding to investigate and explore in science and mathematics prior to recording their findings and explaining the strategies they used. This approach was particularly successful in a Year 2 science activity when pupils investigated vibration, and in a Year 3 mathematics activity when using 'rounding' numbers to add and subtract numbers such as 11 and 19. The consistently good teaching in English, mathematics and science is not matched by teaching in other subjects, which is typically satisfactory in quality. This is especially true in practical subjects such as design and technology and art and design where skills development is not so evident term on term and year on year.
28. The quality of learning matches closely the quality of teaching observed in each of the three stages with all pupils making at least good progress including those who have been identified as having special educational needs. The provision for these pupils is good and individuals are provided with a good level of support. When pupils talk about the work, they display a good level of understanding of what they have done. For example in science, Year 2 pupils explain that vibrations cause sound, and Year 6 pupils predict why results are less reliable as elastic bands lose their elasticity. The most effective learning occurred where teachers had the highest expectations and activities were both challenging and enjoyable. Work in the pupils' books shows that during the current school year they have made good progress in many subjects and that the rate of progress has accelerated in the junior classes from what it was in the past.
29. Overall, these judgements show considerable improvements over those reported after the last inspection, with many more lessons observed where the quality of teaching was judged very good or better. The improvement in teaching is the result of the school's recent very clear focus on improving teaching and learning in order to raise standards. Improving the effectiveness of teaching has been the top priority of the school and the inspection findings indicate that actions taken have met with considerable success, particularly in the core

subjects of English, mathematics and science. This supports the parents' views that teaching has improved, particularly recently and particularly in the juniors.

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

30. The quality and range of the curriculum provided for all pupils is good. National Curriculum requirements are fully met, including religious education and collective worship. There are now clear guidelines for all subjects which identify what pupils are to be taught each year and each half term. The use of national guidance in all subject areas when constructing this guidance ensures coverage of all requirements. The curriculum, which is both broad and balanced, is now planned consistently well with all pupils receiving their full entitlement. Pupils have access to the required range of curriculum experiences, and with the exception of information and communication technology, skills, knowledge and understanding are taught in a systematic and progressive way.
31. The learning opportunities provided for children in the Foundation Stage are very good, giving children a very good start to their school life and preparing them well for the demands of the National Curriculum. The needs of all children are being met through a range of first-hand experiences that challenge them appropriately. Activities are exciting and varied and follow the recommendations for children in their early years at school.
32. National strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy have been given due emphasis and are implemented effectively. Since the last inspection, the school has correctly focused its efforts on improving provision and raising attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This appropriate and necessary emphasis on the time and energy allocated for developments in the core subjects has limited the opportunities for the consistent development of skills in other areas, which are once again part of statutory National Curriculum requirements. Although provision is satisfactory in these areas, it does not reach the good standards in evidence in the core subjects. The school now needs to extend the programme for monitoring and evaluation into non-core subjects, in order to check that gaps in coverage do not occur which prevent pupils from building on skills, knowledge and understanding in a systematic and regular way.
33. Teachers' medium and short term planning has improved since the last inspection. Teachers have clear targets for each learning activity, and these are appropriate for each group of pupils. This thoroughness in planning is often further strengthened because teachers use the information gained about learning that has just taken place in order to amend the planning for the next activity. Teachers' planning takes good account of pupils with special educational needs whose individual education plans clearly provide for gains in skills, understanding and knowledge in a range of subjects, including mathematics. Work is planned effectively for higher attaining pupils and advanced skills are taught well. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory and in discussions the oldest pupils believe the amount is right and that they get good feedback from teachers on the quality of the work they have done at home.
34. Arrangements for promoting personal and social education are good. Teaching and non-teaching assistants respond to any inappropriate behaviour consistently well and positive

strategies are used effectively to ensure that any distractions are kept to a minimum. Pupils are given opportunities to share their experiences, views and opinions in groups during 'circle time'. Health education, which includes sex education and the raising of awareness about the use and misuse of drugs, is very good, linked as it is to the programmes of study for science.

35. The aims of the school give the highest priority to providing equal opportunities for all and a policy statement is in place which values all abilities and backgrounds. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with activities planned and matched to their needs. The needs of pupils are identified early and there is a good programme of support available. All pupils enjoy the same access to the curriculum and the school ensures that similar opportunities are available to all pupils. Since the last inspection, the use of teaching assistants and visiting specialists has been modified so that, when they are supporting groups, pupils do not lose their entitlement to the full range of curricular opportunities provided. For example, a range of instrumental work is planned outside the school day, and additional support in literacy is arranged during the literacy lessons.
36. There are very strong community links and opportunities are sought to extend and enrich the quality of the curriculum through use of the community. Pupils are taken out to investigate the locality, making well-planned visits to churches, theatres and museums. There are strong links with other schools within the 'cluster' which leads to the organisation of joint projects for occasions such as Science Week. Residential experiences with pupils from other schools provide valuable personal, social and academic learning experiences for older pupils. Of particular note is the excellent use of European funding to network with teachers and pupils in Spain and Italy with plans for pupil-exchange.
37. Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of learning. There are very good links with the local playgroup. Children from the group have taken part in sports' days and have been involved in a school production. Arrangements are made for children and parents to visit before pupils start school, and parents are also given the choice as to whether they wish their children to be involved part-time or full-time during the autumn term. There are very good links to effect a smooth transition to secondary education. There are opportunities for teachers to exchange and discuss records and information about pupils who are transferring and for the pupils themselves to make visits to the secondary school to experience and familiarise themselves with routines before they officially transfer. This smoothes transfer, especially for those pupils with special educational needs.
38. The provision of out-of-school activities during the period of the inspection was good and included sports, a range of musical and art activities, drama and stamp clubs. The activities were scheduled to take place at lunchtime and after school to enable as many pupils as possible to participate. Committed teachers and other volunteers give generously of their time for a school of this size. In discussion, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were enthusiastic about the wide range of activities offered by the school and enjoyed the competitive nature of some, such as the art competition.
39. Pupils benefit from a good range of visitors including the 'animal man', members of the local community and church representatives. Citizenship is promoted through a wide range of curricular and non-curricular activities. The recent introduction of personal, social and health

education and the use of strategies such as circle time encourages pupils not only to reflect on their own actions, but also on the effects of their actions on others. Pupils are encouraged to make decisions and choices and use their initiative. They discuss and debate issues such as children's rights and how to improve their local environment. Representatives from each class were elected and then met together to form a School Council where they discuss issues and then make recommendations to the headteacher.

40. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and has improved since the last inspection. Moral, social and cultural development are now very good, and spiritual development is good.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, with some planned opportunities for pupils to reflect on their experiences during daily acts of worship as when considering 'forgiveness' during a whole school assembly. Pupils are often challenged to reflect on their activities as when pupils in Class 5 spoke of their visit to the Anne Frank Exhibition with sensitivity and empathy or when a child in the reception class burst out with: 'It's happened again' when investigating pattern in odd and even numbers. The school has close links with the church and clergy of different denominations. Planning indicates that provision in religious education plays a sensitive part in raising an understanding and awareness of a child's place in a multi-faith society and that pupils are given experience of beliefs and festivals other than their own. Pupils consider and reflect on issues that are significant to human experiences such as love, caring and suffering. Opportunities are provided for all members of the school community to contribute to the 'Prayer Tree', with prayers chosen for sharing during collective worship.
42. Provision for pupils' moral development is now very good. It has improved significantly since the last inspection and a commitment to developing very good consistent strategies to make pupils more responsible for their own standards of behaviour has been effective. There is now a whole school approach to behaviour management, based on praise and reward with pupils involved in setting class rules. Behaviour within the classroom was consistently very good with isolated incidents of inappropriate behaviour responded to promptly and positively. The 'traffic light' system for recording behaviour was well understood by pupils and teachers and consistently provided opportunities for pupils to reflect on their actions. During the period of the inspection, the behaviour outside the classroom was good and free from oppressive behaviour and there were no incidents of bullying. Pupils are reminded regularly of the need to show respect, be well mannered, helpful, caring and polite by all members of the school community. The programme of personal, social and health education, school assemblies and circle time all contribute to this very good provision.
43. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Relationships are good and are a strength of the school. They contribute significantly to the very good behaviour observed during lessons. Inspection findings agree with parents' views that the teaching and non-teaching staff set very good examples of personal and social skills, especially in promoting teamwork. Pupils enjoy the company of each other and from an early age share and value the contributions and feelings of others. Pupils with particular learning needs or disabilities are fully included in all activities and pupils respond positively to them. Pupils have a good understanding of how to relate to others in society and how to become good citizens. Studies

of past societies in Ancient Greece and Ancient Egypt, have enabled pupils to consider aspects such as ‘democracy and the role of women in society’ and pupils have experienced ‘elections’ in their family groups as well as when setting up the School Council. Class 5 has visited the Council Hall and discussed the role of councillors.

44. They have observed the local vicar carrying out a simulation of a wedding, and experienced visits by the fire, police and health services. Pupils have planned ‘table top’ sales and ‘bring and buy’ events to respond to the needs of animals and other children. They are generous when adopting charities to respond to the needs of others. In all classes, pupils work independently and are given responsibilities by teachers. Pupils are involved in their own learning in many different ways. They are invited to include their own comments on school reports and they are made aware of their individual and group targets for learning. Pupils are encouraged and allowed to use their initiative, as when a group of older pupils chose to use their own methods to record an investigation on ‘forces’ or when a seven year old pupil chose his own way to solve a subtraction problem. For the oldest pupils, residential experience with other pupils from the ‘cluster-group’ of schools contributes significantly to the provision for social development.
45. Provision for pupils’ cultural development is very good. In addition to the experiences linked to citizenship there is a very good awareness of pupils’ own culture and there are strong links with the church and the community. Pupils participate in community festivals of dance and flowers, and celebrate the festivals of Christmas, Easter and May-time. Visits out-of-school are well planned such as the visit to the Anne Frank Exhibition and the theatre to see *James and the Giant Peach*. Visitors are welcomed to enhance learning and include members of the Scripture Union, the puppet theatre, the ‘animal man’ and grandparents to share wartime experiences. Legacies are introduced through a study of past societies and civilisations and myths and legends are experienced in literacy lessons. International networking with teachers and pupils in Spain and Italy provide exciting opportunities for the development of European understanding. Pupils in Year 2 are excited and proud to demonstrate their conversational French.
46. There is greater opportunity to develop knowledge and understanding of the experiences, beliefs and cultures of others than at the time of the last inspection. Evidence substantiates parents’ views that the school successfully makes pupils aware of other countries and cultures and helps to compensate for the mono-ethnic community served by the school. Pupils have considered the prayers of different faiths and through visitors to the school have a greater understanding of Jewish, Sikh and Moslem traditions. Pupils have compared festivals and have celebrated the Hindu and Sikh Festival of Light – Divali. The ‘Indian Week’ enabled pupils to explore traditions including the richness of textiles and technique of batik, food, culture, dress and worship. Pupils have experienced Japanese artists, emulated the style of Ito Jakuchia in Class 4 and the cubism of Picasso in Class 5. Pupils in Class 4 have been taught origami by a Japanese visitor. All these experiences help to promote a greater understanding of the multi-faith and multi-cultural society in which pupils will live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. The school works well with parents and other partners to safeguard the welfare of pupils. Pupils are well known by their teachers and by the headteacher. Governors take their responsibilities for health and safety seriously and monitor the quality of the accommodation and any risks the buildings and site may present. Child protection procedures comply with local agreements and the designated staff member has received recent training and has experience in dealing with cases in previous schools. Staff are aware of possible indicators and note any concerns for discussion with the designated staff member.
48. The programme for personal, social and health education includes an element on protective behaviour and has a positive impact on pupils' awareness about themselves and about healthy and safe living. Pupils are well supervised throughout the school day and when they arrive and leave school at the end of sessions.
49. The school promotes attendance effectively. Attendance is very high. Even so, the school seeks further improvements. The head teacher works closely with the education welfare officer to follow up the occasional problem, and plans to monitor the level of holidays taken in term time over the current year. A small amount of lateness occurs but pupils are made well aware that this is not acceptable.
50. An agreed behaviour policy has been introduced and is used consistently across the school. This fosters good behaviour very well. The school rules, developed and agreed by the pupils, are prominently displayed. Teachers' attitudes and responses provide a good example and pupils are regularly praised and rewarded for examples of good behaviour. Pupils spoke with enthusiasm about the way that good behaviour and positive attitudes are rewarded. The school policy is clear about oppressive behaviour and that this is not accepted. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was observed during the inspection but, should they arise, there are good arrangements for dealing with and resolving incidents quickly
51. At the time of the last inspection, assessment procedures were unsatisfactory and were not used consistently to give a sharp focus to teaching and learning. Now, procedures are good, with statutory requirements being met fully in both teacher assessment and statutory testing at the ages of seven and eleven. Achievements and areas of concern are recorded when children start school in the Reception Class and good records are maintained which track the progress of each pupil as they move through the school. Gains made in skills, knowledge and understanding are assessed and recorded at the end of each unit of work in every subject. The recording system is simple to complete and easy to read. These procedures enable the school to check what pupils understand and can do. This information is then analysed to plan for the next stages of learning for each of the attainment groups. Staff use the information well to plan work according to the needs of groups of pupils and to meet particular individual needs. For example, this strategy is helping to plan challenging and appropriate activities for the higher attaining pupils.
52. Procedures for assessing the needs of the pupils with special educational needs are good and individual educational plans detail what experiences are likely to enable pupils to make good progress. The school has responded well to individual pupils who have specific problems and has taken a flexible and sympathetic approach.

53. Assessment information is used to set group and individual targets for pupils. Teachers refer to the targets when introducing work and use the summary at the end of lessons to check progress against them. Marking is used consistently well to remind pupils of the skills they have learned and to inform them when they have achieved their targets.
54. Procedures for monitoring standards and academic progress have improved since the last inspection and are now effective in the core subjects. The results of national and optional tests are analysed in detail to monitor the school's performance and to check the differences in attainment between year groups. The information is also used to compare patterns of results against national averages and expectations and to predict future achievement. The results of the analysis of tests are compared with the school's picture of performance gained through its own assessment, recording and curriculum monitoring procedures. The school then produces detailed accounts of what pupils can and cannot do by year groups and by gender in English, mathematics and science. This information is shared with governors and has informed decisions about where and how attainment needs to be raised. It has influenced strategic decisions, such as the one to organise the teaching of literacy and numeracy in the juniors into single age groups. Procedures for monitoring attainment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science have not yet been developed.
55. Pupils' behaviour, personal development and general welfare are effectively monitored and supported. Satisfactory pastoral arrangements are provided based on good staff knowledge of pupils. Although there is no systematic formal monitoring of all pupils, informal monitoring is carried out throughout the year, and each class teacher records any concerns about individual pupils. The school provides effective support and guidance which assist pupils' progress and their confidence. Pupils' commitment, self-esteem and enthusiasm for learning are encouraged well and successes in their work are effectively encouraged and praised.
56. The school regularly recognises and celebrates pupils' achievements and pupils respond with enthusiasm. The end of day rewarding of achievement in the infants is a highlight for pupils. Assemblies are used well to recognise and celebrate both achievement and responsible behaviour.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. Parents' views about the school have improved considerably since the last inspection and all the parental questionnaire responses indicated that they would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a problem. Overall, parents are very satisfied with the quality and effectiveness of the school and have noticed and approved of recent developments. They have particularly noticed the improvements in the leadership of the school that have followed the appointment of the present headteacher. Parents also recognise and endorse the move towards greater teamwork amongst the staff.
58. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. The relationship between school and parents begins with good induction procedures in the Reception Class. The school builds on this good start and develops effective links with parents. Many parents come into school in the morning with their children and are made welcome by the teaching staff.

Each week the school produces a lively and informative newsletter about events that have taken place or are planned. The newsletter is circulated each Friday and staff and governors try as far as possible to restrict letters home to the same day so that parents know when to expect information through the pupil post. This is much appreciated by parents. A parents' notice board in the foyer includes up to date information for parents, including the day's extracurricular activities. An appropriate home-school agreement is in place. The governors have ensured that their annual report to parents meets all statutory requirements and this is an improvement since the last inspection. In addition, the annual report to parents is both interesting and informative. The governors arrange a meeting once a term during which parents can discuss the school's provision and raise any issues that they wish.

59. The quality of information that parents receive about their children's progress is satisfactory. Each summer they receive very informative written reports that cover the standards achieved in each subject, the progress that has been made and targets for the coming year. The school organises consultation meetings in the autumn and summer terms during which parents meet their children's teachers to discuss standards of work, progress and any relevant other issues. Parents find these meetings very useful but some would wish to be better informed. In particular, parents are not told about the curriculum targets that pupils are set other than those provided in the annual written reports.
60. The school has introduced a number of strategies to involve parents more with their children's learning, which are proving effective. Of particular note are the reading diaries in the infants, where parents report fully on children's reading at home, and use the diary to raise concerns, ask questions, and make suggestions, which are responded to by teachers. Reading diaries throughout the school indicate that pupils of all ages read regularly at home, often with their parent or an older relative. Parents are encouraged to support their children with homework. Parents are keen to do so, but many feel that they would benefit from further guidance about how best to do this. The school has started to provide open afternoons for parents in school time when children can show and talk about their work to them. Parents also have the opportunity to attend evening sessions about areas of the curriculum designed to provide a fuller understanding of the approach used by the school. A number of parents help in school and some are involved in activities such as supporting after school clubs.
61. The school is well supported by the Friends of the School, a group that organises a range of social and fund raising activities. The money raised is used to support the work of the school in a variety of ways. For example, the group is paying for the modifications to the building that are required for the planned suite of computers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The school has gone through a period of change since the last inspection. There has been the equivalent of a fifty per cent turnover of teaching staff in the last two years. This has included both headteacher and deputy headteacher posts. The staffing turnover was associated with long periods of staff absence owing to illness. The instability of staffing had a damaging impact on the quality of teaching, especially in the juniors, and on leadership and management. The appointment of the current headteacher, in April 2001, heralded a new era in the life of

the school.

63. The leadership of the headteacher is of a very high quality. She provides clear and focused leadership with a strong sense of purpose that is concerned primarily with improving provision and raising standards. She has introduced management procedures and programmes that have translated these intentions into action. The direction and drive that she has brought with her to the school was commented on positively by staff, governors, parents and, significantly, by pupils. She has communicated the vision that she has for the school effectively and it is now shared by the staff and governors who actively support her in planning, implementing and monitoring actions for improvement. Staff, governors, parents and pupils have the utmost respect for a headteacher who has been instrumental in turning around a school which was judged to have serious weaknesses in leadership and management when it was last inspected. Leadership and management have improved significantly since her appointment and everyone connected with the school is determined to provide the highest quality of education and to raise standards. The serious weaknesses identified by the previous inspection no longer exist and the strengths of the school far outweigh the areas for development
64. Working together, the headteacher, staff and governors have developed a Mission Statement that sets out the long term aims of the school. The statement reflects the school's Christian values and articulates the intention to provide pupils with a challenging curriculum in order to maximize individual potential. The very good management of the school is based upon a comprehensive understanding of what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve set against these aims. Since the last inspection, and most noticeably during the last twelve months under the leadership of the current headteacher, the school has worked systematically to eradicate the most important weaknesses in provision and to improve less significant, but still important, areas. The substantial progress that has been made in such a relatively short period of time can be attributed to the high quality of management by staff and governors who are seeking to transform the Mission Statement into a reality for the pupils at the school.
65. The Mission Statement refers to meeting the needs of the individual and creating a caring community where all are valued. The school is introducing initiatives to support this aim. The most notable has been the modifications to the curriculum for personal, social and health education that have been embraced enthusiastically by staff. Good quality relationships are a strength of teaching and are a feature of the interactions of the headteacher and staff with parents and visitors. The school has successfully addressed a key issue from the previous inspection report which referred to problems regarding equality of opportunity for pupils. Staff are determined to ensure this does not arise as an issue again and check carefully to ensure that equality of opportunity is reflected in the work of the school.
66. The high staff turnover has resulted in coordination responsibilities being inequitably distributed amongst teachers, with a particularly heavy responsibility falling on the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher. Despite this workload, the headteacher and acting deputy headteacher work together well on school development. This is an improvement since the last inspection when the ineffectiveness of collaboration between the headteacher and deputy headteacher was a key issue. All staff with management responsibilities recognise that the key elements

within that role are improving provision and raising standards. The school has, correctly, focused initially upon improving provision within the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and the areas mentioned in the key issues of the previous inspection report. Effective coordination has resulted in rapid improvements in core subjects, particularly in the juniors where it was most needed. Coordination in English, mathematics, science and geography has been successful because a whole-school programme of action was developed by the staff and because the programme was adequately resourced by the headteacher and governors. Coordination in information and communication technology has not been successful because the role was not filled during a period of long term staff absence. Coordination of other subjects is not as effective as for the core subjects and geography because it was not a priority in the development of the school and so less action has been taken.

67. The shortcomings that were documented in the previous inspection report about the way that the governors of the school carried out their functions has been described by them as: “coming like a bolt out of the blue”. The report galvanized them into action and they now play an appropriate and valuable role in the management of the school. They have ensured that they are fulfilling their statutory duties and have striven to improve the quality and impact of their work with the school. The governors have reorganized the committee structure and have developed new remits that allocate considerable delegated powers to committees. Committees meet regularly and report on their work to the full governing body through minutes and an agenda item at each meeting. Governors are kept well informed about provision and developments by reports from the headteacher and coordinators, and have started to develop their own monitoring procedures. As a result, the governors have a very accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are well aware of the priority issues facing the school and are determined that they are addressed, indicated, for example, by their commitment to establishing a single age group structure for the teaching of literacy and numeracy in the juniors and the improvements to the physical fabric of the buildings that they have arranged. They are resolved that they should never again merit the criticisms of their work contained in the previous inspection report. The governors are involved with the headteacher in planning for school improvement. Their role in shaping the direction of the school is informed by their visits to school, reports they receive and attendance at courses. They have been involved in the evolution of the School Development Plan and receive a termly report of the monitoring and evaluation in progress. However, they wish for greater involvement in the future and have already started to work more closely with staff in the development of the next phase of school improvement planning. The school now has the capacity to continue to improve and to meet the challenging targets that it has set itself.
68. The need to develop the monitoring of teaching throughout the school was identified in the previous inspection report. The school has approached this issue in a rigorous and determined manner. The headteacher and governors combine the detailed analysis of data with a programme of classroom observations in order to identify areas for improvement. Once identified, action points and plans are recorded and implemented at individual teacher and whole-school level. The success of actions is evaluated, new targets identified and the cycle of improvement is started over again. A strength of this impressive programme is the meticulous approach to detail, so that deficiencies in teaching, resources and curriculum construction can be identified and acted upon. Its success is reflected by the improvement in

teaching since the previous inspection.

69. The programme for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum in English, mathematics and science has been extensively developed in the period since the last inspection. This includes detailed data analysis of national and school based assessments, reports from curriculum coordinators on the findings of their monitoring, the outcomes of the evaluation and development of teaching and the views of external evaluators, often officers of the local education authority. The programme provides a comprehensive and accurate picture of the quality of the school's provision in the three core subjects. This, along with the outcomes of the programme for monitoring teaching, is the basis for school improvement planning. The current School Development Plan is proving to be effective in improving most of the areas identified as priorities and the need to improve provision and raise standards underpins the whole of the plan. Its implementation is monitored each term, so that governors and staff can be certain that it is being implemented. Its effectiveness is evaluated, but evaluation would be improved if the success criteria were sharper and, where possible, quantifiable. Action that is needed to achieve the statutory targets for improved pupil performance is also built into the plan. These targets are both realistic and aspirational because the school has developed more detailed pupil-level data that acts as the basis for predictions. Performance Management has been built into the school improvement cycle and the targets of individual teachers reflect priorities within the School Development Plan. It is too early to judge whether Performance Management has been effective in gaining school improvement, but its introduction has been satisfactorily managed by the headteacher and governing body.
70. The budget is constructed by the headteacher and governors who work together to ensure that the School Development Plan underpins the decisions that they make about funding. Overall, they manage this well. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when ineffective financial planning for educational priorities formed part of a key issue. Currently the school budget is in deficit, but this is the result of unexpected and prolonged staff absence and not mismanagement. The school is implementing a plan to bring the budget back in balance within two years. The financial administration by the office manager is effective and efficient, so that the headteacher and governors can always be quickly informed of the current financial situation. Specific grants, for example those for special educational needs and booster groups, are targeted appropriately at classroom support. The school also benefits from a Trust Fund that has contributed substantially to the improvement in school accommodation during the last two years.
71. The governors apply the principles of best value in relation to the school's use of resources and are conscientious in seeking the best combination of cost and quality when making major spending decisions. They are acutely aware of the need to compare performance and unit costs with those of other similar schools and use this as a means of judging the effectiveness of the efforts of the school. The headteacher and governors make good use of information and communication technology in their work for the school. In particular, the governors keep in touch using e-mail and discover much information that is apposite to their role from the Internet.
72. The small number of teachers are appropriately qualified, but lack the range of subject

expertise that is possible in larger schools. Whilst staff have specialist expertise in English, science, religious education, and humanities, none have qualifications in mathematics or information and communication technology. However, all teachers engage in school-based professional development activities and most have attended courses provided by the local education authority, especially those relating to recently implemented national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Their subject knowledge now is often good, and is always sufficient to meet the demands of the curriculum. The governors have also attended recent and relevant training and have negotiated training that met their specific needs. At present the induction programme for new staff is mainly informal and the headteacher recognizes the need to document the process. The governors have almost completed a welcome booklet for new governors that is of a high quality and which should prove to be very useful in the future.

73. The accommodation available to the school is now of a high quality. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection when accommodation was found to be unsatisfactory and its improvement became a key issue. Two new classrooms have been added and the building has been extensively repaired and redecorated. Much of the cost of improvements was borne by the governors who made wise use of the capital and revenue of the Trust Fund available to the school. The school is now clean, safe, secure and well decorated. The two classrooms not currently needed as class bases are used well – one for the under fives and one as a literacy and numeracy base for Year 5. The building and grounds provide a very good level of accommodation for the numbers of pupils attending the school. The learning resources available to the school are satisfactory. Some resources are in need of replacement and some units in the curriculum framework will require some further investment before they can be taught effectively. The school will meet the pupil:computer ratio target of August 2002 and has plans to reorganize the distribution and infrastructure that at present result in the provision for information and communication technology being unsatisfactory.
74. Financial planning in the school is effective. The governors are well informed of the school's priorities and are concerned to get the best value. The school is beginning to consult parents about its proposed developments and indeed many have become directly involved in improving the school site and accommodation. The recently formed School Council provides a channel for pupils to comment on the school's development and their views are taken into account by the headteacher and governors. Procedures for financial control are effective and day-to-day administration is good. Taking into account the costs associated with running the school, the attainment of most pupils on entry and when they leave the school, the progress they make, and the quality of the education provided, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. The headteacher, staff and governors should address the following key issues to further improve the quality of education provided by:
1. improving standards in information and communication technology and in the use of information and communication technology to raise standards across the curriculum by creating and implementing a plan for development that focuses particularly upon improving teaching and learning as well as covering equipment, infrastructure and software.
(see paragraphs 11, 30, 130-136,)
 2. raising standards in the foundation subjects by developing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation programme for each subject that:
 - uses the full range of strategies available, including classroom observation;
 - focuses and reports back on what works well and what needs to improve;
 - makes recommendations to senior managers and governors about what specific actions are needed to improve provision;
 - builds on the existing good practice that exists in the school.*(see paragraphs 11, 32, 66, 135, 143, 149, 153, 156)*

The school is already considering parts of these key issues in its plans for improvement.

76. Additionally, in order to address minor weaknesses, the school should include the following in their action plan
- ensure that the plans for school improvement includes criteria for successful implementation that are clear, specific and, wherever possible, quantifiable.
(see paragraph 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	14	19	6	0	0	0
Percentage	3	35	48	15	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	134
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR - Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	18

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	8	11	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (87)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (100)	100 (96)	100 (74)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	7	12	19

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	7
	Girls	9	10	12
	Total	12	13	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (80)	68 (87)	100 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	5	7
	Girls	9	10	12
	Total	13	15	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (73)	79 (87)	100 (93)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	116
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	67

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
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	£
Total income	310502
Total expenditure	325940
Expenditure per pupil	2470
Balance brought forward from previous year	6483
Balance carried forward to next year	-8955

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	134
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	30	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	57	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	57	7	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	48	6	3	0
The teaching is good.	55	40	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	46	13	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	33	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	31	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	52	13	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	35	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	43	7	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	34	40	17	6	3

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

77. Overall, the curriculum planned for children below the age of five is very good in the Reception Year. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when all areas of learning were considered to be only satisfactory. Many children make very good progress including those with special educational needs.
78. There are nineteen children in Reception, all of whom are now full time. They are in a class with eleven Year 1 pupils and are taught by a full time class teacher and a nursery nurse whose hours have been increased since the last inspection from five mornings to five mornings and three afternoons per week. In addition, there is a teaching assistant for a pupil with special educational needs.
79. Children enter the class during the early part of the autumn term. Good written information for parents and frequent planned visits for children to sample daily routines ensure that children have a smooth transition into the Reception Class. They have a staged entry to school according to age. The school works closely with parents and there are very good links with the local playgroup, the majority of whom attend the school when they are old enough.
80. During the children's first few weeks in Reception the staff collate and record information about what children know, understand and can do when they start school. This information is then communicated with parents during a Parents' Evening and any concerns are shared then and as they arise later. The assessments taken shortly after children start school indicate that overall attainment on entry is broadly typical for this age group of children. This evidence also indicates that there is a proportion of children who bring experiences with them that are above this level. Children are re-assessed at the end of the school year and the progress measured, is calculated. This evidence indicates that children make very good progress. The information gained compares the rate of improvement in skills and knowledge with that of other Worcestershire schools and is also used effectively to plan for the next stages of learning in Year 1.
81. The evidence indicates that progress accelerates during the children's time in the Reception class and that by the time they enter Year 1, most will have achieved the nationally expected standards in all areas of the curriculum. As a result of the generally very good provision most children will be ready to meet the challenges of the National Curriculum before the end of the school year. The organisation of the mixed age class enables higher attaining children to be extended beyond this. The small proportion of children who will not achieve the typical levels of attainment receive very good support and are guided step by step through the early stages of learning.
82. During the week of the inspection, although the nursery nurse was absent, support in the Reception Class was good with full-time teaching assistance, a part-time student and voluntary staff contributing well to the very good quality of learning. The teaching that was

observed was never less than good, and often very good. Where teaching was at its most effective, activities were planned which promoted learning experiences that built on previous skills, knowledge and understanding. There was a sensitive balance between direct teaching and opportunities for children to play, explore, investigate and learn from each other. The quality of learning is most effective when the adults are focused on one of the specific curricular areas, which is then later interlinked to other areas of learning.

83. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is good, with two rooms available. This enables some activities to be shared with Year 1 pupils and some to be for Reception children only, as staff decide is appropriate. Rooms are colourful and displays contribute well to the bright and welcoming learning environment. The rooms are divided into learning zones where children are encouraged to work collaboratively, play musical instruments, write, paint and look at books. Good clear notices and labels are available to identify the six areas of early learning. This helps children to appreciate the value of words and being able to read them. Learning resources are well organised and accessible to children.

Personal, social and emotional development

84. The provision for children's personal, social and emotional development provides a very good basis for the very good quality of learning which is evident for children in the Reception Class. A significant proportion of children enter the school with above average skills. They make good progress and, by the time they leave at the end of the year, their levels of achievement are very good. Children soon feel safe and secure and thrive on excellent relationships that value their contributions to learning. Most are at ease and confident with the increasing number of known adults they work with. Even the least confident are developing good relationships and are eager and enthusiastic to learn. Children learn the routines quickly. They are encouraged to develop friendships, share and work together and are developing respect for each other. They are very well behaved, know what is right and wrong, and why. Most listen to, and are sensitive to the needs of others. The quality of teaching is very good. The teacher has high expectations and plans activities so that children develop responsibility and learn not to rely on adult assistance. Instead, children are learning to concentrate and persevere with their learning and to seek help when required. They are provided with elements of choice in their learning to develop responsibility. Children enjoy their activities and develop positive attitudes which contribute to the quality of their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

85. Communication, language and literacy skills are variable on entry to the Reception class, with a significant group of children whose standards are high, but overall are typical for children of this age. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in this area is good. When teaching is at its best, adults not only plan for the development of communication skills, such as providing articles for the 's' table, but also recognise the benefit of capitalising on children's contributions. Listening and speaking skills were particularly good when exploring 'Senses'. One boy was pleased with his contribution of 'taste buds' as was the girl who described how a man could show his annoyance by 'standing with his hands on his hips'. One recognised what he called a 'chugging' sound and claimed 'must be a tractor'. Lower attaining children,

when blindfolded, recognised common sounds such as knocking on the door, and a toilet flushing. When volunteering a description of their crocodiles, the richness of their language was evident 'This red is blood, he has been attacked by a lion', 'He's been scratched by a tiger' and, 'Look he's got a pirate's hat on'. The dinosaur display, and the search for 'dinosaur bones', provide an excellent area for role-play and promoted good language development. Children with speech difficulties are only too eager to contribute and are included in all activities. Writing skills are encouraged and most children hold pencils correctly. All are aware of the need to write from left to right, and most children can write their own names. Several copied words accurately such as 'Lived in North America' in their dinosaur book. Reading skills are generally well developed with most children recognising initial letter sounds and knowing the strategies of 'left to right' and 'top to bottom'. A growing number recognise letter blends. One in three children recognised simple words in the group reading book *Noisy Farm* whilst all enjoyed talking about the pictures and predicting what might happen next. Most high attainers knew that sentences and names started with a capital letter and knew that the author's name was on the front. Early reading strategies are well developed, especially when sharing books with 'Buddies' from Year 2. Children are developing a love of books. They handle them with care and are well motivated by stories and poems. The quality of teaching and learning in reading is very good and consequently children make very good progress.

Mathematical development

86. Mathematical development is very good. Most children recognise and count to 10 with lower attaining children counting to 5. When lining up for other activities children counted confidently to 17. Teaching for the development and awareness of mathematical language is good. Singing games such as 'Five Currant Buns' help to reinforce number and make learning fun. One child was overheard to say 'Oh I get it!' and another 'Look it's happening again' when investigating number patterns. A small number were able to count backwards from 10 when singing 'Ten in a Bed'. Many children identified simple shapes such as circles, squares and triangles on the 'Shapes Man' and use mathematical language such as 'bigger and smaller' and 'heavier and lighter' correctly. Computer programs, which encourage children to sequence numbers and explore patterns to 10, reinforce learning. Children have made a 'mouse' using a cone as a base. The teacher has high expectations and activities are challenging. The quality of both teaching and learning in this area is very good.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

87. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is above average for their age. They start the Reception Class with reasonable levels of general knowledge and good teaching moves them on. Teachers build on children's natural curiosity and help them to understand the world in which they live. The school environment is used very well and opportunities are planned to promote the use of all the senses. Visitors such as the fire service and the crossing patrol lady, develop an understanding of peoples' occupations. Children are aware of famous people and what makes them famous. Children have a very good understanding of pre-recorded sounds and were able to sort them into natural sounds and 'machines' such as telephone, keyboard and photocopier. Although children use computers in some of their

work, computer skills are less well developed than they should be because of the lack of resources. Children are well absorbed in their own culture such as when celebrating Christmas and Easter and they have also developed an understanding about other cultures and beliefs through listening to stories about Diwali, Holi, and Hanukkah.

Physical development

88. A wide range of opportunities is planned for physical development. Children in the Reception Class share an appropriate range of outdoor equipment including good fixed climbing equipment, a selection of bicycles and tricycles and large wheeled toys. Planning highlights focused skill development but this is restricted to when the weather allows. Although the timetable did not allow an observation of activities in the hall, children used space safely in the playground and enjoyed a range of skipping and running games. Fine motor skills are developing through handling small objects such as glue-sticks, knives to spread jam and clicking the computer mouse. They explore different textures, manage jigsaws, and work with construction sets. Children used scissors safely. Pencils and a range of media such as crayons, playdough, pastels and paints are used well to record pictorially. Children are achieving satisfactorily in developing physical control, mobility and awareness of space.

Creative development

89. The children's creative development is generally above average for their age. Good teaching encourages children to develop a love of music. All the children enjoyed singing Nursery rhymes and songs from memory such as 'Humpty Dumpty' and 'Bob the Builder'. The majority of children can recognise a rhythm and clap it. They enjoyed joining in poems and suggested actions which eventually all joined in. Opportunities have been created for children to experience colour through the medium of paint but they have not yet experimented with mixing. Texture is explored when using different resources and children are developing a good range of skills for exploring different materials and using them to express their own ideas and feelings. Children are well motivated by these activities and they are most eager to talk about their experiences, 'Look, I have drawn the rain'.

ENGLISH

90. Inspection findings indicate that, overall, standards in English for the pupils aged seven are above those considered typical for their age group. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report, when standards were judged to be average. By the age of eleven, standards in school are typical for the age group, much as they were at the time of the school's last inspection. No significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls were noted during the inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school.
91. In the national tests for seven year olds in 2001, overall standards in reading and writing were well above average. In this age group, the proportion of pupils who attained the threshold Level 2 (100%) was very high, being in the top 5 per cent of schools. The figures for the higher Level 3 were also very high for writing and well above average for reading. When

compared to the results of similar schools, the results at Hallow for this age group are very high for Level 2 and well above average in writing and above average in reading at Level 3. Although the small number of pupils in each cohort requires caution when interpreting results, figures for the last five years suggest a trend of improvement in both reading and writing in the infants that is faster than the national trend.

92. The results of the 2001 statutory tests for 11 year olds in English indicate that overall attainment was below the national average and well below that of similar schools. Attainment at the threshold Level 4+ was well below the national average and very low in comparison to similar schools. Although attainment at the higher Level 5 was better, being above the national average and just below the average for similar schools, the figures indicate that this cohort of pupils did not make the progress that they should have done during their time in the juniors. During the last three years, the results of 11 year olds at the school have been relatively static during a time when standards in English in schools nationally have been improving. This trend of comparative deterioration in standards has resulted in a gradual movement from above average in 1997 to below average in 2001. The good progress that the older pupils are making now is enabling them to catch up from a backlog of underachievement that has occurred in English since the previous inspection. This backlog was caused by weak teaching resulting from staffing instability and ineffective procedures for monitoring, evaluating and improving provision.
93. There is no significant difference between the inspection findings regarding the attainment of seven year olds and the performance data provided by national assessment results. The school's records suggest that overall the current Year 2 is unlikely to do as well as the cohort of 2001, having entered the school with lower levels of attainment. Year groups are small and variations from year to year can be expected. The inspection findings regarding standards of eleven year olds indicate a substantial improvement and do reflect a significant change in attainment. This is because the weaknesses in teaching that led to poor performance in English have been addressed with vigour by the leadership of the school and so the quality of provision, the rate of pupils' progress and pupils' attainment has improved accordingly.
94. Standards in speaking and listening are above average throughout the school and this is an improvement since the previous inspection when they were judged to be in line with national expectations. Pupils of all age groups are very good listeners both to adults and to each other. During direct teaching, pupils listen carefully so that when they move to start their work they know precisely what they must do and often what the teacher wants them to learn. They answer questions well and older pupils often make sustained contributions to discussions. Year 2 pupils listened to a tape recording of a story and were able to recount it accurately the following day, remembering and embellishing details with confidence and good humour. Year 1 pupils used speaking and listening impressively well when working as a group to decide what details of Princess Diana's life should form the focus for their adult-guided research on the Internet. By the age of seven, many pupils have developed a working vocabulary of subject specific technical terms that increases appropriately as they get older. Year 3 pupils used terms such as verb, noun and adjective whilst older pupils talked about subordinate and conditional clauses when discussing the structure of complex sentences. Older pupils discuss well, for example, when working in groups in science and geography. They are confident

speakers, exploring ideas with good attention to detail and using an extensive and mature vocabulary. Speaking and listening skills are promoted effectively by all teachers in all subjects of the curriculum.

95. By the age of seven standards in reading are above that typically expected of this age group. This is an improvement on the previous inspection report when standards were judged to be average. Almost all pupils can read simple texts accurately and with understanding. They know about authors and illustrators and know how to use the 'blurb' when selecting a book to read. They have a good sight vocabulary and work out unknown words using their knowledge of sounds and the likely meaning of the word from its context in the surrounding text. The school still places an emphasis on individual reading and pupils have reading diaries that show that they read regularly at home. This regular practice supports progress. All pupils, including lower attainers, have favourite books and spoke in an informed way about favourite authors. Higher attaining pupils read quite complex texts fluently and accurately and often self-correct any mistakes that they have made. They are also able to read silently and recall the main events that they have covered.
96. By the age of eleven standards in reading are above the national average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils become progressively more skilful readers as they move through the school. Almost all continue to read regularly at home, often to an adult. They use phrasing and intonation well and are aware of the conventional impact of common punctuation when reading aloud and this increases their fluency. Older pupils are able to infer and deduce meaning from what they have read and support their views by referring to the text. They enjoy reading and all have favourite authors, such as Roald Dahl, Anne Fine and J K Rowling. Year 6 pupils are confident using the Dewey system in the school library and are familiar with the use of the glossary, contents and index pages to find information. They are familiar with the terms fiction and non-fiction and can recount their use of books in research work to access information.
97. Standards in writing are above those typically expected by the time pupils are seven. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average. Year 2 pupils write in an appropriate variety of genres. They structure longer pieces of writing so that there is a beginning, a middle and an end. All write in sentences and the vast majority use capital letters and full stops consistently. Many have developed their punctuation skills further and make regular and appropriate use of speech, exclamation and question marks. A few use apostrophes for contractions. In their handwriting, letters are generally clearly shaped and many higher attainers are able to use joined up writing. Most can spell common words correctly and are able to use their knowledge of sounds to have a good attempt at spelling unfamiliar words, for example 'maree' for marry and 'frend' for friend. As pupils progress through Year 2, they create longer and more complex pieces of writing. For example, Year 2 pupils planned and constructed a big book of impressive quality about dinosaurs. Some examples of writing contain words that have been carefully selected for effect. In a story about *Little Red Riding Hood*, for example, many pupils used language carefully to create tension and a sense of anticipation.
98. By the age of eleven standards in writing are broadly average, so the school has maintained

the standards set at the time of the previous inspection. Across all the classes in the juniors there is a good balance between the acquisition of skills and the opportunity for pupils to apply them in their own writing. Pupils write in a broad range of genres, including narrative, poetry, drama, letters and journalistic forms. Longer pieces of writing are organised into paragraphs, often using complex sentences. Most pupils can use common forms of punctuation correctly and are aware of, and can use, spelling conventions. Some pieces of extended writing are of very impressive quality, but too much of the writing that older pupils do is short, with insufficient opportunities for them to improve on their first efforts.

99. Across the school, literacy is developed successfully through links with other subjects. In all classes, research work makes use of different sources for written work, including books in the school library and sometimes the Internet. Written work in history and geography is often used effectively as a vehicle for extended writing. A particularly good example of this was a Year 6 pupil's construction of an intricate and moving account of the Blitz on Coventry, as though he were a child actually involved in the event. Although all teachers plan for the use of information and communication technology in English, its contribution to raising standards is restricted by the limited skills of pupils.
100. The quality of teaching and learning is good in both throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was judged to be sound. However, information provided by the school and confirmed by the views of parents indicates that the quality of teaching in the juniors deteriorated significantly after the inspection leading to older pupils underachieving. This was largely the consequence of staffing instability resulting from long term staff illness and inconsistencies in the application of key whole-school policies leading to weak progress. The improvement in the quality of teaching that has taken place in the last twelve months is the result of the determined action that the school has taken to improve provision and to raise standards.
101. The headteacher is responsible for teaching the additional group. This arrangement, which also ensures smaller teaching groups, is having a beneficial effect on improving standards and the rate of pupils' progress. This commitment of time on the part of the headteacher reflects the school's determination to improve the quality of provision in English.
102. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and in the vast majority of lessons seen teaching was good or better. Teachers follow the guidance set out in the national programme for teaching literacy and apply the principles of the programme to good effect. Teachers plan very well, so that lessons have clear learning objectives that are always shared with pupils. This, and the clear and informative direct teaching of literacy, enables pupils to know what they have to do and what it is they are expected to learn. This encourages pupils to concentrate on the important aspects of activities and supports good progress. Teachers' classroom management skills and their relationships with pupils are very good. This supports good behaviour, good time on task and a good pace of work. On many occasions teachers set clear expectations about the quality and quantity of work that they want and the amount of time that is available for completion. Generally, this increases the pace of work. Resources are chosen well to match the learning objectives and older pupils have the opportunity to study long pieces of text for a period of time rather than use brief extracts. This provides

motivation, because pupils become interested and involved in the text, and it provides real insight into the genre, so that pupils understand that *The Silver Sword* is a historical novel and not a worksheet.

103. Teachers of both older and younger pupils produce carefully written responses to pupils' work. These always comment on positive features of work and always contain advice about how it can be improved. This strategy is implemented consistently in all classes and contributes to the good rate of progress throughout the school. Teachers use time at the end of the lesson to review and consolidate what has been learned, and to extend pupils' learning. Regular homework is set in all classes to reinforce and extend what is learned at school. Pupils also regularly take reading books home and for younger pupils their reading diary is used very effectively to communicate information about progress between home and school. This motivates pupils and helps parents feel more confident about helping their children.
104. When planning their work teachers take account of the needs of the different groups of pupils in their class. Where additional support is available it is used well, usually to support pupils with special educational needs. Often details of an activity are adjusted to ensure that it is challenging for the higher attainers and within the capabilities of less able pupils. Overall, these arrangements are effective. All pupils are equally well provided for and make good progress. When teaching was not quite so effective, the teacher did not make a clear link between the skills being taught and how they would benefit pupils' reading or writing. On one occasion, a teacher allowed pupils' excitement to continue for a little too long and this held back progress by restricting the quantity of work completed.
105. Attitudes to work in English are good. Pupils enjoy their lessons and work hard. They continue working at a good pace when their teacher is engaged with a group other than their own. They use resources sensibly and their behaviour in lessons is generally very good. Pupils work well together and participate actively in class and group discussions. Older pupils occasionally exhibited minor elements of off-task behaviour until reminded by their teacher what they should be doing.
106. Coordination of English is very good across the school. The coordinator has held this responsibility for a comparatively short period. She manages and leads the subject very well. She has worked with staff and governors to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. This has involved the development of a comprehensive and rigorous programme of monitoring and evaluation. She has involved governors in examining pupils' work and observing lessons so that they can better understand the analysis that the school has made. The outcomes of monitoring are fed back to the individuals concerned and, when appropriate, to the whole staff and governing body. Action is taken to eradicate any significant weaknesses that are identified and the impact of action taken is evaluated at an appropriate later date. The monitoring and evaluation programme has sometimes identified the need for very precise action on the part of individuals, for example by identifying the need to improve aspects of handwriting, and sometimes the need for whole-school initiatives, for example the development of a marking policy. The actions taken as a result of the findings of the monitoring and evaluation programme in English have been effective in improving the quality of teaching and raising standards from the low levels of recent years. Although standards

attained by the eleven year olds now are only typical for their age group this is a considerable improvement on previous years and the rate of progress has improved significantly in the last twelve months. The coordinator has also exercised very effective leadership by communicating her commitment to raising standards to both staff and governors. They, too, are very determined to improve provision in English. The inspection findings confirm that the school has made good progress recently especially in the juniors, which is a priority for development because of the comparative deterioration in provision and standards following the previous inspection.

107. In addition to the development and implementation of the programme for monitoring and evaluation, the coordinator has ensured that the school has good policies for all aspects of English that support the broad and balanced range of learning opportunities provided. All aspects of provision, including individual reading time and extended writing, are applied consistently throughout the school. Funding for booster groups has been well focused on supporting pupils who are at risk of achieving lower than average levels of attainment. Accommodation for the subject is good and supports teachers in implementing the structure of the literacy hour, for example, by providing easy transition from whole class to group and individual tasks. Resources are sufficient and are of a satisfactory quality. The resources that have been acquired recently to support teaching in the literacy hour have been particularly well chosen and support learning by promoting the interests of pupils. English has a strong focus around the school with support materials and pupils' work in literacy featuring in many displays. The subject fully meets statutory requirements.

MATHEMATICS

108. Standards in mathematics are presently well above those considered typical by the age of seven and have improved to be above those considered typical by the age of eleven. In the 2001 national tests and assessments, standards in mathematics were judged to be very high for pupils by the age of seven when compared with those nationally and with those of schools considered to be of a similar nature. When using similar comparisons for pupils at the age of eleven, standards were below the national average and well below the average for pupils in similar schools.
109. After a very good start when they first enter school, pupils make very good progress and by the age of seven all pupils are expected to reach the threshold Level 2 and a significant proportion to reach the higher Level 3. Recently the quality of teaching in mathematics has improved significantly for older pupils and good progress is now maintained in the juniors and accelerates in Years 5 and 6. By the age of eleven, pupils are using their skills, knowledge and understanding effectively. It is anticipated that a higher proportion of pupils will achieve the higher Level 5 in 2002 compared with the one in five in 2001. Pupils presently working at the lower Level 3 are receiving 'booster' activities and are in line to achieve standards that are more typical for their age. The quality of support they receive, together with work well matched to their needs, enables pupils with special educational needs to progress at a good rate.
110. By the time they are seven, most pupils understand place value of number to hundreds, tens

and units, can mentally recall table facts to 3, 4 and 5 times and begin to explore numbers over 100. Lower attaining pupils recognise and use number to 100, understand place value to tens and units and recognise patterns relating to the 2, 5 and 10 times tables. Most Year 2 pupils identify common two and three-dimensional shapes and have begun to identify properties such as corners, sides and faces. They have good mental skills and solve money problems using sound strategies such as counting on from the largest coin. They recognise odd and even numbers, and use doubles and near doubles to solve addition problems. Pupils use standard units to record time in hours, halves and quarters and measure accurately in centimetres. Pupils are accurate when interpreting information shown in simple pictograms and bar charts. Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs are in line to achieve the expected Level 2 by the age of seven. Higher attaining pupils refer to vertices when discussing shapes, round numbers to tens and hundreds, and have a very good understanding of number in excess of 100.

111. By the time they are eleven, most pupils have a very good understanding of place value to more than 1000 and compare fractions and percentages confidently. Pupils multiply and divide decimals to two places, and know how to use and interpret co-ordinates. They calculate the mode, mean and median, and have a good understanding of ratio and proportion. Low attaining pupils have access to all activities experienced by others but at a level matched to their abilities. They develop sound strategies to add, multiply and subtract. They calculate perimeters and areas by using the formula 'length x breadth', compare times using the 24 hour clock; and understand lines of symmetry. All pupils experience line graphs and pie charts, and are accurate when interpreting the information they have collected and recorded. Higher attaining pupils have very good mental and oral recall, estimate and measure angles accurately and use brackets to calculate simple equations.
112. Of particular note is the emphasis placed upon the development and use of mathematical skills throughout the school. From an early age pupils are taught a range of strategies to solve problems and are expected to explain how they have reached their solutions. For example in Year 1, two thirds of the pupils explained the patterns of odd and even numbers to at least twenty. In Year 2, pupils explored missing numbers on a 100 square by investigating horizontal or vertical patterns, and were then expected to use higher order skills to check their answers by using other patterns. Higher attaining pupils have begun to develop their own strategies and used diagonal patterns on a 200 square. In Years 5 and 6 pupils have developed good strategies to estimate before calculating or constructing acute or obtuse angles. They demonstrate very good speaking and reasoning skills when challenged to explain their processes. However, little use is made of information and communication technology to raise attainment in mathematics.
113. Effective in-service training has raised the knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy and has created a better balance to the mathematics curriculum overall. The concentration on developing mental and oral skills and then using these skills has enabled pupils to work at a greater pace, giving a better rate of progress. The insistence that pupils explain the strategies they have chosen to solve their problems has contributed effectively to raising standards. Homework is used consistently to support teaching and learning in mathematics.

114. Teachers throughout the school have implemented the National Numeracy Strategy very well and there is consistency in all three stages of each lesson. Overall, the mental and oral introductions are good. Pupils are then set tasks which are well matched to their abilities and then the summing up period is used to check gains in knowledge and understanding. At its best, this part of the lesson is used to introduce new learning and to inform pupils about the next stage of learning.
115. Overall, the teaching of mathematics is very good throughout the school, with some excellent teaching of younger pupils. Pupils are well behaved in class and they have very good attitudes to learning. As a result, the quality of learning is also very good. The current very good quality of teaching of older pupils has not yet led to such high standards, despite the very good progress that is now being made. This is because many older pupils were underachieving earlier in their career because of the history of provision in the school since the previous inspection. They made slower progress than they should have done because teaching was weaker. This is now being turned round through determined action by the staff and governors.
116. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics has improved since the last inspection. This is particularly the case in the juniors, where recent developments have had a significantly positive impact on the quality of provision. There was evidence in all lessons that teachers plan effectively to challenge the differing ability groups, including those pupils with special educational needs. Teachers know their pupils very well and the use of questioning to check knowledge and understanding was of a high quality. Checks are made of pupils' achievements after units of work and this information is then used to challenge pupils to build on their previous skills, knowledge and understanding.
117. Where teaching is of the highest quality, the pace of lessons is impressive, with a range of strategies used including encouraging pupils to share their answers with their partners. This strategy involves all pupils in answering questions and also enables teaching assistants to support pupils who are less confident. The information collected from termly school tests, together with information gained by analysing previous strengths and weaknesses in national testing is used to match what is planned to the needs of groups of pupils. Marking is consistently good and is used to best effect when informing pupils of the progress they have made and what they need to do to improve their work.
118. The relationships between adults and pupils are very good and are a strength in the teaching of mathematics. Pupils respond positively when teachers value their contributions. Their self-esteem is high when caring teachers praise them for trying - 'Oh that's so close' rather than 'No, that's wrong!' Pupils enjoy their mathematics and collaborate well in their investigations. Pupils thrive on the enthusiasm of their teachers, and respond positively to their teachers' high expectations. They responded positively to challenge, and are attentive and eager to contribute to lessons and use their skills and strategies. Work in books reflects the high expectations of teachers and the effort of pupils. Pupils were consistently well behaved and any inappropriate behaviour was resolved promptly.

119. The coordination of mathematics is very good. The coordinator has analysed the results of national and school testing and the data has been used to set clear class, group and individual targets which match challenge more closely to the needs of the individual pupil and aids progress. Initiatives such as 'Springboard' and 'Booster Groups' have concentrated on raising attainment for specific groups of pupils. The school is implementing an ongoing programme for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and provision in mathematics. This includes observing specific parts of lessons, examining teachers' planning and the work of pupils and then providing feedback on what should be improved and how. The action taken as a consequence of this feedback is contributing well to improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. The numeracy governor has observed lessons and reports findings back to the governing body so that they are kept fully informed. The coordinator has responded positively to changes in staff by ensuring that the overall quality of teacher subject knowledge is maintained through the provision of good in-service training both within school and through the local education authority.

SCIENCE

120. Standards for pupils aged seven and eleven have improved significantly since the last inspection when they were judged typical for the age group. Presently, there are a greater proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels and inspection findings indicate that standards at the ages of seven and eleven are above those typically expected.
121. In 2001, standards in science for seven year olds in the school judged by teacher assessment were very high when compared with schools nationally at the typical Level 2, and above average at the higher Level 3. Comparisons with similar schools were very high at the typical level and broadly average at the higher Level 3. In the national tests for pupils aged eleven, overall standards were near the national average and below the average for similar schools. Standards at the expected Level 4 were very high when compared to schools nationally and to similar schools. However, standards at the higher Level 5 are less favourable, being below average compared to national averages and well below average when compared with similar schools. In neither infants nor juniors was there a significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
122. Pupils in Year 1 investigate the topic 'sound'. They use their good range of experiences to identify pre-recorded sounds that include the voices of other adults and pupils. Pupils have no difficulties when sorting sounds into those that are created by machines or produced naturally. This knowledge and understanding is extended in Year 2, where pupils investigate sound further by exploring activities planned to demonstrate how different kinds of sound are produced. Pupils are able to draw on their previous experiences to use terminology such as 'vibration'. Pupils make accurate observations and explain whether happenings are as they expect. Evidence from pupils' previous work indicates that pupils in the infants cover the full range of required experiences and have developed skills that enable them to carry out a range of investigations effectively. They have investigated circuits and how to make a bulb work and show a good understanding when classifying food into proteins, minerals, carbohydrates and fats.

123. In Years 3 and 4, pupils look at light sources, shadows and how to make changes by using mirrors. They can explain in scientific terms what they are doing and how mirrors can be used to reflect light, and then record their experiences in a variety of ways. By the age of eleven, pupils have built on previous skills, and carry out investigations with confidence and very good understanding. They are expected to evaluate their activities and comment on how they could improve their investigations. Pupils have experienced a good range of physical processes. They have explored the effects of gravity on motion, investigated circuits and the brightness of bulbs in series and studied the planets. Younger pupils have collaborated when devising methods to classify rocks and pupils in Years 5 and 6, have investigated different powders, observed them in solution and then predicted their origins. In all four year groups, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of fair testing with one variable. The use of a two-year cycle ensures that pupils do not repeat their experiences whilst in the same class and that all requirements of the National Curriculum are met.
124. The very good use and application of skills, knowledge and understanding has been given a high priority since the last inspection, resulting in pupils learning science by exploring and investigating, rather than being given information and being told what is going to happen. Since the last inspection, pupils have developed a variety of ways in which they record their investigations.
125. Numeracy skills are used effectively when recording in science. Charts and tables are used well in the infants and by the age of eleven pupils use and interpret line graphs and pie charts in their work in science and are encouraged to analyse their findings. Literacy skills are very well developed. Very good reading skills enable pupils to read work cards and research information, and listening and speaking skills facilitate the sharing of information allowing pupils to learn from each other. During the period of the inspection, the distribution of resources to promote information and communication technology resulted in computers being underused to support learning in science.
126. Overall, teaching is consistently good throughout the school. The best teaching is characterised by very good teacher subject knowledge, the sharing of what is to be learned with pupils and a brisk pace to lessons. Teachers make consistent use of questioning to check what pupils understand and can do. In the best lessons, support staff are used effectively and pupils are given enough time to complete the process of investigating, exploring and then recording their findings. Experiences are closely matched to prior attainment including those of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are eager to share their ideas. They collaborate very well in group activities, thrive on the opportunities given to explore and investigate and gain in confidence because teachers value their contributions.
127. Teachers know their pupils well and relationships are very good. This adds significantly to the quality of learning for all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Self-esteem and confidence is high. This is a direct result of the value which teachers place on the contributions of pupils, the very good strategy to base new learning on every day experiences and by building on what pupils already know. Assessment procedures have been introduced recently, and the information collected is used to plan activities that are challenging for

particular groups of pupils. Marking is carried out conscientiously and is used consistently well to inform pupils when they have achieved their targets and then prepare them for further challenges.

128. Curriculum planning has improved, and is now good, with activities more closely matched to the needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs. All pupils make at least good progress as they build on their skills, knowledge and understanding term on term and year on year, including those with special educational needs.
129. Coordination and management of science is very good. Science is managed enthusiastically by the subject co-ordinator, who was appointed since the last inspection. Curriculum guidelines, based on nationally produced materials, are effective in securing progression throughout the school. The coordinator monitors all stages of planning, reviews work in pupils' books, and monitors teaching and learning in lessons in order to identify, then share, what is going well and what needs to be improved. This information is used effectively to raise standards in science. He has also analysed in great detail the weaknesses in science that pupils demonstrate in national and school testing and has amended provision accordingly. The coordinator has a clear action plan for raising attainment in the future, which includes the development of technology to promote teaching and learning and the setting of individual and group targets to provide a greater focus to teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. Standards of work in information and communication technology (ICT) are below national expectations at seven and eleven. This is largely because, although there is access to two computers in each classroom, these are insufficient for all pupils to follow up the teaching in whole-class lessons. This creates a time lag between the teaching of ICT in lessons and the opportunity for pupils to work on associated activities. This time lag inhibits the rate of pupils' progress and the standards that they achieve. Overall, pupils' progress in ICT is unsatisfactory throughout the school. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement about the progress of pupils with special educational needs.
131. By the age of seven, most pupils are competent in using the mouse and are beginning to develop typing skills using the keyboard. For example, they can identify letters, use upper and lower case letters, use the space bar, and some can delete and insert text. Younger pupils used a word bank confidently to write a story, three or four lines in length, about dinosaurs. They are also aware of the different aspects of ICT, such as answer phones, mobile phones, video recorders and tape recorders. Pupils are taught an appropriate range of graphics, data handling, control and modelling skills in line with their age but too few reach the same levels of confidence and competence in these areas as they do in word processing. This is because they are provided with fewer opportunities to use what they have been taught in these aspects than they are word processing which is used in work across the curriculum, especially in English.
132. Older pupils make satisfactory progress in word processing and this reflects the strengths in the teaching of this aspect of ICT. By age eleven, they can manipulate text and pictures

effectively and save their work to disks and folders. Word processing is often used to support learning across the curriculum. However, pupils are often frustrated by their lack of keyboard skills and many pupils type with index finger only. This slows them down and so they complete less work than other pupils who are using pens and paper. Standards and progress in other aspects of ICT are lower and slower than those in word processing. On a residential educational visit, older pupils created simulated web sites, recording their adventures whilst away from home. The sites contained links between pages and were informative and colourful, but the layout and use of graphics were disappointingly poor. A class of older pupils followed some effective direct teaching by creating a simple spreadsheet that calculated the cost of items. Only four pupils were able to use a computer for this task, the rest of the class creating their work on paper. This restricted the feedback on the accuracy of formulae that those using a computer were able to experience and slowed down the rate of learning of most of the class. The curriculum for ICT offered covers all appropriate aspects of ICT but restrictions caused by the number of computers available to each class at any one time restricts attainment. The contribution of other subjects to the development of pupils' ICT capability is limited. Although teachers plan for the use of ICT across the curriculum, pupils' experiences are constrained by the restricted access to computers and the lack of feedback from teachers who are busy supervising other activities.

133. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during ICT lessons and when using ICT are good. They listen carefully and pay close attention to what the teacher is demonstrating, even when it is difficult to see because of reflections on the monitor screen. When working in pairs on the computers they stay on task well and help each other when appropriate. They treat the equipment with respect even though they receive very little teacher attention. Both boys and girls are equally confident in using computers and are given equal access to them.
134. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and, in these, teaching was satisfactory. The school has developed a good scheme of work to ensure that skills are taught in a systematic way and the lessons are managed well. Staff knowledge has improved since the last inspection and all teachers are confident in what they are required to teach. Lessons are carefully planned and the plans clearly identify what it is that the pupils will learn. Overall, the teaching of ICT skills is satisfactory. However, the quality of learning is unsatisfactory because of the time lag between the teaching of ICT and the related pupil activity that is caused by insufficient computers being available to one class simultaneously. Learning is also inhibited by the fact that when pupils are working on the computers their teacher is working with the rest of the class on another subject and cannot provide the subject specific feedback on performance that is effective in raising attainment.
135. The management of the subject has unsatisfactory features, but has improved since the last inspection. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work and has sensibly adapted it where necessary to suit the context of the school. The number of computers has risen and the school will now meet the pupil:computer ratio of 11:1 by August 2002. A framework for assessment and recording has been adopted across the school and is implemented consistently by all teachers. The system is linked to the scheme of work and is efficient and informative. Monitoring and evaluation of the quality of provision is a weakness in the management of the subject. Although the quality and quantity of equipment has

improved, little has been done specifically to improve the quality of teaching and learning in ICT. Most staff have benefited from the New Opportunities Funded ICT training, but this concentrates upon the use of ICT and not upon teaching ICT capability. However, the biggest obstacle to improvement lies in the organization of the resources for ICT. The staff and governors have realized this and plans are underway to provide a suite where computers can be clustered and networked. When completed this will enable teachers to introduce new work to the class and follow it up immediately with work on the computers. This will be the first phase of the implementation of an ICT development plan that is still in the process of construction but which will map out developments in the subject over the next three years. The embryonic plan is well thought through and has the potential to improve ICT in the school. The staff all see the need for this initiative and governors are determined to ensure that adequate funding is provided for it. At present, the document that guides the development of ICT is the School Development Plan. This has not been effective in improving provision because it does not deal with the development of ICT in sufficient detail and, crucially, does not pay sufficient attention to improving teaching and learning.

136. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' standards were below national expectations at seven and eleven and the inspectors identified weaknesses in the management of the subject, and in teaching and learning. Although there have been some improvements, progress in this key issue has been unsatisfactory and ICT provision still requires urgent attention to ensure that it improves.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

137. History and geography are taught through study units organized in a two-year cycle. These are designed to ensure that all the essential elements of the programme of study for each subject are covered at least once during each pupil's time at the school. Some study units cover one subject in depth - for example, Weather and Climate – whilst others - for example, A Local Study – cover both subjects in an integrated approach. At any one time geography and history units may be implemented in different parts of the school, limiting the amount of first-hand evidence that was available for each subject during the period of the inspection. As a result of the curriculum structure and the timetabling of the subjects, only two history lessons and one geography lesson could be seen during the inspection. Judgments are based, therefore, on an analysis of pupils' work, wall displays, teachers' planning documents and discussions with pupils and teachers. Standards in geography are typical of those found nationally at seven and eleven. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment at eleven was judged to be below that expected for that age group. Standards of attainment in history are typical at seven and eleven, and have been maintained since the previous inspection.
138. Younger pupils have a sound understanding of the concepts and knowledge of geography and history. By the age of seven, pupils have developed an appropriate geographical vocabulary. They can explain the difference between weather and climate and understand the impact of weather on their own and others' lives. Most can describe landscapes by using terms such as hills and rivers and they understand the use of simple plans and maps. Year 2 pupils draw and label simple maps of the journey of Little Red Riding Hood to her grandmother's house

and begin to use the compass points and symbols on maps to provide and use written directions. In history, pupils can compare the similarities and differences between shopping now and shopping one hundred years ago. They are able to relate some of the differences in shopping to other historical developments such as changes in transport and leisure time. Through studying these changes they are beginning to develop a sense of chronology that they can apply in other historical contexts. For example, Year 1 pupils were able to place Shakespeare, Einstein and Princess Diana in the correct chronological order and justify their decisions.

139. By the age of eleven pupils are able to plan their own geographical and historical enquiries. The skills of enquiry are developed throughout the juniors and include using and interpreting information from primary sources, books, pictures and the Internet. For example, Year 3 pupils research and write about the Iron Age and the local area. Year 6 pupils research and record their findings regarding both the geography and recent history of Coventry using a broad range of sources of evidence. During their time in the juniors pupils develop their understanding of chronology and are able to find and link information from a variety of sources, for example maps, field work and interviews during a local study of Hallow. They use a timeline with confidence. Pupils' literacy skills are further developed through work in both history and geography, particularly through extended writing in which they display a good understanding of the period and places that they are studying and exhibit an ability to put themselves in the shoes of someone in the past or in a different locality.
140. In the three lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates variability in the effectiveness of teaching and overall the quality of teaching in both history and geography is satisfactory. The introduction to lessons was generally very clear and authoritative, providing pupils with good background knowledge and a precise understanding of what they had to do. The teachers observed had sound subject knowledge and this enabled them to plan effectively and provide resources that sustained pupils' interests and supported the activity that had been planned. Teachers plan for the different needs of groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, and this supports a satisfactory rate of learning. In the lessons observed, teachers ensured that a good pace was maintained, but the frequency of incomplete or too brief records of work in some pupils' books indicates that this is not the case in all lessons.
141. Pupils' attitudes towards their work in history and geography were very good in the lessons observed. They worked with concentration on tasks and were keen to contribute to lessons by providing answers or comments. When required to, they worked well together in pairs to support and learn from one another. Behaviour in lessons was invariably very good. The positive attitudes and very good behaviour supported the quality of learning taking place in the lessons observed.
142. Visits are used well to enhance the provision in both geography and history. These include use of the local environment in Hallow and visits to more distant locations such as Coventry and Gloucester. Although information and communication technology is used occasionally in both subjects, the lack of access to suitable hardware and software restricts its value and impedes the progress that pupils could make.

143. Since the last inspection, the school has used national guidance to help staff construct a curriculum framework that supports continuity and progression in both subjects. Alongside this guidance, the coordinators have developed assessment and recording procedures that document attainment and provide the information that enables teachers to plan work that matches the needs of pupils. The geography curriculum has been enriched by the recent development of links with schools and communities abroad. This is an exciting initiative that is making an effective contribution to pupils' understanding of cultures and societies different from their own. The resources of both history and geography have been audited against the requirements of the new curriculum framework and any gaps have been identified so that deficiencies can be addressed. In history, teachers' plans are monitored, but there are no opportunities for the coordinator to observe teaching in classrooms. Although coordination overall is satisfactory, this is a weakness in the management of the subject because the school does not know precisely what are the strengths and weaknesses in history and what needs to be done to improve provision. In geography, the coordinator has been provided with the resources to monitor and evaluate provision. She has provided feedback at an individual teacher and whole-school level. The impact of the programme has been to improve the quality of provision, especially in the juniors, and successfully address the issues identified for geography in the previous inspection report. However, attainment in history and geography lags behind that of the core subjects, and a programme of more regular, comprehensive and rigorous review of practice is required to raise standards.

ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, MUSIC AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. The limited time allocated to the inspection and the organisation of the school's timetable resulted in few lessons being observed in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Evidence was collected through an analysis of pupils' work, wall displays, teachers' planning documents and discussions with pupils and teachers. Even so, there was insufficient evidence upon which to make sound judgements about attainment, progress and the quality of teaching in any of the above subjects with the exception of physical education.
145. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards for **art and design** due to only two lessons being observed during the inspection. Evidence from examples of previous work on display, planning, discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that there are some examples of pupils' work which is typical for the age group concerned. However, this evidence indicates that, overall, insufficient attention is given to skill development, and knowledge and understanding term on term and year on year. In the two lessons seen, teachers introduced pupils to a range of media. In the one lesson seen in Year 3, pupils translated designs in two-dimensions into a three dimensional mural. Their work was imaginative, of a very good quality and pupils developed very good practical skills. The teacher had very good subject knowledge and planning indicated clear learning objectives that she promoted with a very good pace. Resources were varied and readily available for pupils to make their choices. In the Year 1 lesson, pupils demonstrated good observational skills when drawing and shading portraits of themselves. Pupils used mirrors to promote very good discussions about the shapes of heads and colour for their complexions. Pupils were given the choice of pastels,

charcoal and crayons and began to develop good strategies for applying colour, particularly when 'smudging' with charcoal and pastels. Sketchbooks are used in each year but there is little evidence of direct teaching or the progression of skills. The art club enabled pupils to experience a range of techniques including collage and the mixing of colour.

146. In the one **design and technology** lesson observed a group of Year 4 and Year 5 pupils were at an early stage of their work on the topic 'Bread around the World'. They displayed a good understanding of the ways that a food product could be changed by modifying texture, colour and taste and they understood that the final product was the result of a combination of the ingredients used and the making process. A discussion about the place of bread in a balanced diet contributed towards personal, social and health education and the content of the topic extends pupils' cultural development through raising their awareness of food from other cultures. During their discussions the pupils used a wide ranging vocabulary to describe the products.
147. As part of their topic work, older pupils had investigated food during the Second World War. Their work showed that they had adapted a basic biscuit recipe to meet the needs of wartime, planned an order of work and evaluated the final product. Puppets made by the younger pupils showed that they are able to use a template and can join materials using appropriate techniques. The quality of the limited amount of work available for examination indicates attainment around the level normally found, but the lack of evidence regarding design and evaluation suggests that insufficient attention is given to development in these two areas.
148. A curriculum framework for design and technology has been produced, based on the national scheme of work. It ensures coverage and supports progression in skills, knowledge and understanding. The framework and assessment procedures are relatively recent innovations. Taken together they provide appropriate support for teachers in planning work in design and technology. These structures that support consistency in planning, implementation and assessment constitute an improvement since the previous inspection when too much was left to the discretion of individual teachers.
149. The management of the subject has improved a little, but still remains only satisfactory overall. In addition to the development of support for planning and assessment, the coordinator has conducted an audit of resources and identified any deficiencies. Resource provision for design and technology is satisfactory. However, monitoring and evaluation is a weakness in the coordination of the subject. Teachers' medium term plans are scrutinised to ensure compliance with the whole-school framework and advice and support is provided if appropriate, but there has been no scrutiny of work or lesson observations, so the school has yet to develop an informed view about what it does well and what it needs to do to improve the subject.
150. In the one **music** lesson observed during the inspection older pupils were developing their skills in music. The pupils showed that they were able to use a range of different instruments to create a mood. Many could evaluate the work of others and suggest ways that it could be improved. In school assemblies, the pupils sing enthusiastically and in tune.
151. The school has created a curriculum framework for music that makes good use of the national

scheme of work. This framework ensures coverage and continuity within the subject. A structure has been developed for assessing and recording attainment. This reflects the curriculum framework that has been developed and helps teachers plan work that matches the needs of the pupils in their care.

152. Pupils have regular timetabled music lessons and the school provides a range of extracurricular musical provision. This includes group and individual instrumental tuition on flute, brass and strings. The school also supports recorder groups and a school orchestra that is accessible to all. There is an annual programme of musical events during which pupils perform for parents and members of the community. All these activities take place almost wholly out of school hours and there are no issues regarding equality of access to the curriculum. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when equality of access to the curriculum was a key issue.
153. Resources for music are adequate and well maintained. Coordination in music has been difficult because the long term illness of the postholder has required the need of a temporary replacement. In view of the importance of raising standards in other subjects, especially in the juniors, music has not featured significantly in recent school curriculum initiatives. However, music has been allocated a high priority for development in 2003/04. The school will now need to appoint a permanent coordinator for music and implement a programme of monitoring and evaluation in order to improve the provision in the subject and to raise standards.
154. Overall standards in **physical education** are typical of those found nationally. In the gymnastic lesson in Year 2, pupils used space well, moved apparatus safely, and made good progress. Pupils were involved in evaluating the quality of movement and what could make it better. In this lesson and in the two dance lessons seen in the juniors, pupils were generally well behaved and any inappropriate behaviour was dealt with promptly. In the Class 4 dance lesson, pupils made very good progress and body shapes and limb extension were refined as the lesson developed. There was evidence of good teacher subject knowledge and planning which included activities for all pupils regardless of age and ability. Pupils enjoyed each other's company and collaborated together well when performing in groups. Although no swimming was observed, the evidence available indicates that all eleven year old pupils will be able to swim twenty five metres unaided by the time that they leave the school.
155. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to improve their performance in all aspects of physical education. There are good facilities for physical education including a spacious hall with appropriate apparatus containing levels of challenge for pupils of all ages and abilities. There are good outdoor play surfaces, including a structured play area, and a field.
156. Records indicate that teachers keep very good accounts of what pupils' know understand and can do, and use this information to plan for progress. Planning indicates that pupils experience the full range of requirements for physical education including those with special educational need. A range of sporting activities after school for both boys and girls supports physical development, including competitive games with similar sized nearby schools. Staff and volunteers give generously of their time and the skills practised contribute well to pupils' physical and personal development. A wide range of additional experiences is provided using outside sources, such as the local leisure services. The coordinator supports planning by

making suggestions as to how it could be improved and he has audited resources to ensure that there are no deficiencies. However, there have been no opportunities for him to evaluate provision and identify what the school does well and what it needs to do to improve because physical education was not amongst the school's priorities for development. This deficiency has placed a limit on the standards in physical education, which are lower than those in English, mathematics and science.