

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104377

Headteacher: Mrs Catherine Williams

Reporting inspector: Mrs Julie Moore

Dates of inspection: 6th – 9th November 2000

Inspection number: 224042

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: 3 – 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Telford Gardens
Merry Hill
Wolverhampton

Postcode: WV3 7LE

Telephone number: 01902 556368

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs R. Watkins

Date of previous inspection: 10th June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|---------------------------|----------------------|---|--|
| Julie Moore 8710 | Registered inspector | Art and design, physical education | Characteristics of the school; pupils' results and achievements; quality of teaching. |
| Rosemary Last 9411 | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; how well the school cares for its pupils; partnership with parents and carers. |
| Trudy Cotton 3751 | Team inspector | English, history, English as an additional language. | |
| George Logan 11810 | Team inspector | Mathematics; information and communications technology; equal opportunities. | Curricular opportunities. |
| Lillian Simmons 8073 | Team inspector | Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage; geography; music. | |
| Elizabeth Walker 28686 | Team inspector | Science; design and technology; special educational needs. | Leadership and management. |

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Michael's Catholic school is situated in a residential area on the outskirts of Wolverhampton. It is a voluntary aided school with 100 boys and 126 girls. There are 55 pupils in the Foundation Stage¹ and this includes 40 children who attend the nursery on a part-time basis. Almost all the pupils speak English at home. About 19 per cent of the pupils have special educational needs, including three with statements and this is average. The proportion of pupils known to be entitled to free school meals is below average. When the children start school their attainment is about average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school which is very effective. Since the last inspection everyone has worked extremely hard to improve the school and they have been successful. Standards are improving all round because of good teaching. The children get a very good start in the nursery and reception classes. They make good progress throughout the school so that when they leave, aged 11, standards are above average. The very good leadership of the headteacher, her senior managers and the governors are significant factors in the school's success. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- There is a strong team spirit and the school is very well led and managed.
- Standards are good in English, mathematics and science for the 11-year-olds: reading standards are very good across the entire school.
- The quality of teaching has improved significantly and is now good: there are many strengths in the teaching.
- The pupils have very positive attitudes towards school: they try hard and they care about each other.

What could be improved

- Pupils' own personal and imaginative writing.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was previously inspected four years ago. Excellent progress has been made in tackling all the key issues and the school no longer has the serious weaknesses identified in the HMI visit three years ago. Standards and teaching have improved significantly and there is a full and varied curriculum in place. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught and they have suitable work that is at the right level for them. The five key issues required the school to:

- improve the quality of teaching to secure pupils' understanding and develop their skills;
- establish procedures to ensure effective monitoring of curriculum provision and teaching;
- improve curriculum guidance to inform planning;
- clearly identify short-term learning objectives and assess how well pupils achieve them;
- use assessment information to inform future planning.

Last time the school was inspected standards were unsatisfactory in many subjects and the teaching was unsatisfactory in almost half the lessons observed. This inspection found satisfactory or good standards, and much of the teaching was of good or better quality. Great strides have been made in planning and delivering a secure curriculum. The best use is made of the information gathered about how well the school and its pupils are doing, and this guides the way forward. The headteacher and subject managers monitor and evaluate the school's work very effectively. All of this means that the school is moving forward confidently, and at a good pace.

¹ Pupils in the nursery and reception classes.

STANDARDS

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

| Performance in: | compared with | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | all schools | | | similar schools |
| | 1998 | 1999 | 2000 | 2000 |
| English | D | B | B | D |
| mathematics | C | D | B | C |
| science | C | B | B | C |

| Key | |
|--------------------|---|
| well above average | A |
| above average | B |
| average | C |
| below average | D |
| well below average | E |

Trends over the last few years show that standards are increasing steadily at broadly the same rate as most other schools in the country. In the most recent tests the seven-year-olds achieved well above average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. The 11-year-olds achieved above average standards in the main subjects when compared to all schools nationally. This year (2000) significantly more 11 year-old-pupils reached the higher levels in English and science. The findings of the inspection agree with test results, and standards are good. Reading is a particular strength and standards are very good all round. Good progress is made across the board. However, a very small number of younger less capable readers find it difficult to find information in books. Standards in writing are good but they could be better. When compared to similar schools² standards at St Michael's are below average in English and average in mathematics and science. The school's targets in English and mathematics are challenging, and they were significantly exceeded in this year's tests. There are good standards in information and communication technology (ICT) for the seven-year-olds, and in art for the 11-year-olds. Standards in the other subjects are satisfactory, which is a considerable improvement since the last inspection.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. Pupils are eager to learn and to do well. They concentrate hard and always try to do their best. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Good. The school is an orderly place and the pupils behave well. No pupils have been excluded from school. |
| Personal development and relationships | Very good. Pupils are keen to help each other and they like and respect the staff. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Pupils are punctual and the lessons start on time. |

The pupils work hard. They are good at supporting each other and they are courteous and polite. Teachers expect the pupils to have high standards in the way they behave and relate to one another, and the pupils rise to the challenge. School is enjoyed and the pupils are happy to be there.

² Schools with the same proportion of pupils who are known to be entitled to free school meals.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils: | aged up to 5 years ³ | aged 5-7 years | aged 7-11 years |
|----------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Lessons seen overall | Very good | Good | Good |

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

The teaching observed was good overall with almost 25 per cent being of very good or better quality. 61 per cent was good, 14 per cent was satisfactory and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. At the last inspection over half the teaching was unsatisfactory. This very good improvement has been brought about through good training. Teachers are clear about their subjects and they know how to teach them. Lessons are very well planned, and there are good systems that pick up any weaknesses to be tackled. The very best teaching is in the nursery where almost 75 per cent of teaching is very good. The other stronger teaching is in Years 5 and 6, where 50 per cent is very good or excellent. Much of the remaining teaching in the school is good. Another big improvement is in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. This group of pupils is now very well taught. They make good progress because there are improved systems for finding out what the pupils know. Teachers then use this knowledge to plan the next work for them successfully.

The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and this makes for effective learning. Work is pitched at the right levels for the pupils, lessons are interesting and challenging and the pupils' progress is accelerated. Standards are getting better all the time. Reading standards are very good because reading is taught in a structured way and the pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise their reading with an adult. Learning is good because pupils are given many ways to find out the meaning of words and phrases, helping them to become fluent readers. There are good improvements in the pupils' capability to work out numbers quickly in their head. Most pupils have a range of ways that they arrive at the answers to questions, making their learning successful.

The minor weaknesses are mostly focused around the use of time. When this happens in mathematics the learning points are not reinforced as well as they might be because time runs out. Just occasionally, in physical education lessons, the pupils do not have enough opportunities to evaluate their movements or to talk about how to improve. When this happens they do not always achieve their best standard.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Good. There is a broad curriculum, with a strong focus on the basic skills. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. Pupils have good support, which helps them to progress. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good provision for the pupils' spiritual development. Moral and social development are good, and the provision for cultural development is satisfactory. |

³ Nursery and reception pupils.

| | |
|--|--|
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Very good. The school is a safe and secure environment in which its pupils thrive. |
|--|--|

There are good links with the parents, many of whom cannot praise the school enough for the support it gives to their children. The school works hard to encourage and support parents, so that they can support their child's learning effectively.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Very good. There is a strong team spirit and this has contributed significantly to the school's success. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Very good. Governors are committed and hard working. They ensure that the school is well managed and effective. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Excellent. The school analyses all its results and takes positive action to support learning. Governors and senior managers apply the principles of best value very well. |
| The strategic use of resources | Very good. The school makes the best use of all its financial resources to make sure that it gets the best value for the money it spends. |

The school is well staffed. There are limitations to the accommodation, especially for the large numbers of pupils in the detached classrooms. The school library is cramped and there are not enough good quality books. The headteacher, her senior team and the governors, work together effectively to improve standards and quality. The school's finances and all its other resources are used properly for the education of its pupils. Governors make sure that the school gets the best value for the money it spends.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour is good, as is the teaching. • The school is very approachable. • The school's expectation that children will work hard. • Strong leadership and management. • The support for pupils with special needs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are not enough activities after school. |

The inspection team support parents' positive views. A number of parents consider that there are weaknesses in the extra-curricular activities but the inspectors do not support this view. There are good opportunities for the pupils to go on residential visits, there are a range of other visits and visitors to school, and there are sport and interest activities such as football, netball and chess. Inspectors found that the school operates an "Open Door" policy. The headteacher and her staff are always available to sort out problems or difficulties as they arise.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection and standards are now above average for the seven and eleven-year-olds in the main subjects of English, mathematics and science. At the previous inspection standards were unsatisfactory in many subjects; now there are no unsatisfactory standards in the school. Reading standards are very good indeed, and the only significant weakness is in writing where standards are good but they could be even higher. This year the school has exceeded its challenging targets for the 11-year-olds by a considerable margin in English and mathematics.
2. In the most recent tests (2000) the seven-year-olds achieved well above average standards in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. The 11-year-olds achieved above average standards in English, mathematics and science when compared to all schools in the country. More significantly, there was a greater number of 11-year-old pupils reaching the higher levels in English and science this year. This is good, as the school has been targeting the higher attaining pupils to make sure that they work at the right levels and do not mark time in their learning. These gains in their attainment show that the strategies are working effectively. In mathematics very good progress has been made since last year (1999) with overall standards improving from below average to above average. Standards during the inspection reflected test results in the main subjects.
3. Over the last few years the school has improved standards in English, mathematics and science at about the same rate as most of the other schools in the country. From an all round low in 1998 attainment for the 11-year-olds has increased significantly in these subjects and is now above average. This improvement is due to better teaching throughout the school. There is a different trend for the seven-year-olds. Attainment in reading and mathematics has remained above average for the last three years. Writing has dipped this current year and it is average. This is because the pupils have had limited time to write at length or to practise their writing skills in a planned way.
4. When standards are compared to those in similar schools results are average in mathematics and science and below average in English. Writing is the weaker aspect of English and the school has already identified this and is tackling it.
5. The school is now much better at assessing what the pupils know and understand. Pupils are given challenging work, which is at the right levels for them. The literacy and the numeracy strategies have had a significant impact on boosting standards because the teaching is clearly focused. Pupils with special educational needs get extra support that helps them to achieve their best standard. Their targets are appropriate for them and their individual plans are tightly focused so that their targets are reached. There have been substantial improvements in the provision for pupils with special needs, which was unsatisfactory last time. Good teaching and accurate assessments, as well as good leadership, have moved this aspect of the school's work forward at a considerable pace. Pupils now make good progress all round. Another group of pupils who are especially gifted in mathematics work with older pupils and this challenges their thinking and extends their learning effectively.
6. When they start school many of the youngest children's attainment is about average. However, there are some wide variations, especially in their personal and social development and in their speaking, which are below the expected levels. The children get a very good beginning to their school life, making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals⁴ so that when they leave the reception class their standards are average or better.

⁴ The curriculum for the three to five year olds in the nursery and reception classes.

7. Throughout the rest of the school the pupils' speak clearly and they listen attentively. Reading is very secure with high standards all round. However a number of the less capable readers still have difficulty finding information. Handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar are good. Writing standards are good but there is less opportunity for the pupils to write at length in an original and personal way, and this holds them back. The pupils have a good grounding in number. Their understanding is good, they are adept at mental mathematics and they use their number skills very well in other subjects. In science most pupils can organise their investigations and record their findings systematically.
8. A key factor in improving attainment is the effective collection and analysis of data about standards across the whole school. This allows the progress or lack of progress of pupils in the different year groups to be tracked accurately. Where the rate of progress slows down this is quickly identified and support systems are put in place so that learning becomes productive again. All of this was missing at the last inspection. Its introduction has been a key factor in boosting standards for all pupils working at each ability level.
9. Standards in the other subjects, and for the youngest pupils are detailed later in the report (Part D). The main strengths are in art and design at Key Stage 2, where standards are good, and in physical education (PE) and information communication technology (ICT) at Key Stage 1, where standards are also good. Excellent progress has been made in ICT, which had many weaknesses last time. Attainment was unsatisfactory as was the curriculum, and there were considerable gaps. An appropriate curriculum is now in place, teachers have had extra training and the subject has a high profile in the school. Unsatisfactory standards at the last inspection in design technology, information technology, history, geography and art have been improved very successfully, and standards are now at least satisfactory or better.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The attitudes of the children are very good, as they were at the last inspection. Parents appreciate the values and standards the school promotes and most pupils are eager to come to school, arriving in good time. Their positive attitude towards work impacts favourably on their performance in lessons. Pupils, including the youngest ones, are keen to learn. For example, those seen in an ICT lesson in Key Stage 1 were enthusiastic and eager to experiment using their newly acquired skills. The orderly atmosphere helps to create a positive climate for learning throughout the school.
11. Standards of behaviour are good, although there are occasional lapses in the lunch hour. There is a small number of pupils whose behaviour can be challenging, but the careful management of their behaviour enables them to take part meaningfully in lessons without disturbing others. A high standard of behaviour is expected and pupils respond to this positively. Pupils are courteous towards staff, visitors and to each other. Relationships between pupils are very good. They are prepared to support each other in their learning, for example in the literacy hour when reading a shared text or seeking information from a reference book. Older pupils have a caring attitude to younger ones and they play happily together at lunch times.
12. Relationships are very good with the adults providing good role models. There is respect for the feelings of others and a sense of concern for each other. Pupils take care of their resources and the local environment, such as ensuring there is no litter. The consistently warm and harmonious relationships help to create a climate where bullying and racist behaviour does not flourish. During the inspection, no oppressive behaviour was seen. Since the previous inspection there have been no permanent or temporary exclusions. This demonstrates the school's evident commitment to educational inclusion.
13. The personal development of the children is very good. Pupils are fully involved in their learning and they concentrate well so that they make good progress. Specific jobs are done on a regular basis and pupils enjoy their responsibilities, as in the day-to-day running of the library and

helping to clear up in the dining room at lunch-time. Pupils' acceptance of personal responsibility is the result of the strong influence and encouragement of staff. Educational visits, including residential ones, provide good opportunities for pupils to develop personally and socially. Pupils with special educational needs are well behaved and make good progress. Parents believe the school is helping their child to become more mature and responsible and the inspectors' findings support this. Some parents and pupils would like more extra-curricular activities, but inspectors feel that there is a suitably broad range of activities.

14. Attendance is satisfactory and pupils are happy to come to school. Lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. There has been an excellent improvement in the quality of teaching. For example, over half the teaching observed in the previous inspection was unsatisfactory. This time around there was no unsatisfactory teaching. 21 per cent of the lessons observed were very good or excellent, 61 per cent good and 14 per cent satisfactory. The strongest teaching is the nursery and reception classes, followed by Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and, as a result, they are enabled to learn successfully.
16. Learning is much more effective than it was because of the good teaching. Lessons are carefully planned to make sure that learning moves forward. In an excellent example in a Year 5 art lesson the teacher involved all the pupils in developing a diptych. They put forward their ideas and suggestions, such as depicting the story around a large cylinder so that everyone could interpret the message in the pictures. Their knowledge of perspective came across in their discussions, as they drew on work in history that was linked to the Bayeux tapestry. Throughout the lesson the pupils were successfully applying their previous knowledge to help them in planning their new task. Throughout the school teachers are good at drawing on pupils' past learning and making good use of this in lessons. There are many good quality learning experiences for all the pupils at St Michael's.
17. Improving the quality of teaching was a key issue last time the school was inspected. Throughout the report there were many examples of weak teaching. Standards were low and there were significant weaknesses in the teachers' planning. Many things needed improving if the quality of teaching was to get better. First of all the planning was tackled so that all the teachers were using the same systems to plan their pupils' work. This has been a long process and it is still evolving because of changes to the curriculum. The pupils' work is planned in the right order and at the right levels, so their learning becomes secure and they make good progress in lessons and over longer periods of time as well. The overall quality of planning is now good and it provides a secure basis for all of the teaching.
18. Some of the strongest teaching in the school is in the Foundation Stage. Work is carefully planned so that the pupils' all round development is thoroughly covered and they make the best possible progress. All the adults work closely together as a team, activities are well prepared and the pupils' progress is accurately monitored. This allows staff to have instant information about the areas where pupils need extra help, enabling them to plan the most suitable activities to enhance learning all round. Parents are fully involved in all aspects of their children's education, and the close partnership benefits all concerned.
19. Literacy and numeracy skills are well taught so that learning is effective. Pupils learn in groups of different ability. This means that teachers can focus on providing work that is at the right levels for the pupils and this helps their learning to be effective. Lessons get off to a brisk start, which captures the pupils' attention straight away. Teachers are effective at finding out how much the pupils have remembered from the last lesson. No time is wasted as the pupils are quick to answer, and this readily leads into new learning. The literacy and numeracy strategies have given staff confidence. They know the subjects well, and they move the pupils' learning forward in a structured way so that standards continue to rise. At the end of lessons teachers structure their questions for individual pupils, helping them to remember the main points of the lesson or to consolidate their understanding. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from this

approach because the teachers ask them questions that are directly linked to their understanding. All the time learning is progressing very well and standards are improving all round. They could be even better in writing if pupils were given a wider range of topics to write about, and teachers made sure that the pupils used and practised their literacy skills effectively.

20. There are many strengths in the teaching. A main one is the high expectations that the teachers have for their pupils, who rise to the challenges set for them. In one example, with a higher attaining group in Year 5, the teacher skilfully extended and developed the pupils' use of adjectives, similes, metaphors and alliteration when writing a poem. Feelings, moods and atmosphere were created successfully by the excellent use of evocative language. This allowed the pupils to explore new ideas and use new skills such as "alliteration" in their own work very successfully. Standards were well above average in this lesson.
21. In a very small minority of lessons there was an inefficient use of time, resulting in not enough time for the teacher to reinforce all the main points of the lesson satisfactorily. Just occasionally, in physical education lessons, pupils did not have enough time to evaluate their movements or to talk about how they could improve their performance. When this happened they did not always reach their best standard and learning slowed though never below a satisfactory level.
22. The school is doing everything it can to improve the standards pupils achieve. Teaching is very focussed on enabling pupils to do well, and the teachers use many strategies to reinforce and extend learning. In the main subjects the pupils work alongside others who have the same abilities. This gives a much sharper edge to the teaching and pupils are moved forwards quite quickly as their standards improve. Teachers now have a much better understanding of what their pupils know, understand and can do, and this helps them to pitch work at the right levels. The best use is made of all the information about the pupils, and this is used to set individual targets for them so that they know what standard they are aiming for. There is a consistent approach to homework throughout the school. Parents work closely with the school so that their children can do better. All of this has a positive impact on raising standards, which are continuing to rise year on year.
23. The support staff are highly effective indeed. Throughout the school they work closely with the pupils, guiding and supporting them in all aspects of their learning. This holds good for those staff supporting pupils with special educational needs.

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

24. Overall, the school provides a broad, well-balanced and relevant curriculum for its pupils. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection when aspects of the curriculum were found to be weak. The curriculum planned for children in the Foundation Stage is good and it is firmly based on all the areas of learning recommended for young children. It prepares them well for the National Curriculum and the next stage of learning. At key stages 1 and 2 the school provides a good curriculum that meets National Curriculum requirements. Religious education is taught in accordance with diocesan guidelines. Appropriate provision is made for pupils' personal, social and health education including sex education and drug awareness. The school prepares pupils for the next stage of their education successfully.
25. The school has adopted appropriate strategies for teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. The literacy strategy is securely established with very good lessons in both key stages being testament to its effectiveness. The numeracy strategy was introduced at the beginning of the last school year and has been implemented effectively. This is having a very positive impact upon standards.
26. There are policy documents in place for all statutory subjects. They are up to date and are a secure base for guiding the teachers' planning. The school has adopted the national

documentation for personal and social education, and has modified it where necessary to provide a secure structure to support pupils' learning. Planning is good and provides a sound framework for the good quality teaching observed. Subject documentation, an issue at the previous inspection, has improved significantly. Previously there was no effective guidance to support teachers. The introduction of good guidance means that teachers now know what has to be covered and when, a significant improvement all round.

27. The amount of teaching time allocated to subjects is generally appropriate with three-quarters of the time available being spent on English, mathematics, science and religious education. This has been a deliberate decision by this church school, with the intention of raising standards in these subjects. However, this creates some pressure on the remaining subjects, as there is less time for them to be taught. It is not evident that there has been any adverse effect on the quality of learning so far, and pupils have made good progress in most subjects to date.
28. Overall, the pupils have good equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum. The school takes appropriate account of pupils' ages, attainment, gender, ethnicity and needs in planning a suitable curriculum for its pupils. Good arrangements are in place to ensure that pupils with special educational needs have full access to all activities. The provision made for these pupils is of a good standard and the Code of Practice⁵ is being fully implemented. Pupils on the special needs register have been set appropriate targets in their individual education plans and the in-school support for these pupils is good.
29. The programme for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. There is a range of activities during school time and these include sporting activities as well as chess and computer clubs. Residential visits and other outside visits, as well as visitors to school, provide additional activities that enhance the basic curriculum. Some parents felt that there were not enough out of school activities and the inspectors do not agree with them.
30. The school has satisfactory links with the community and neighbouring schools and good links with partner institutions. Pre-school links and on-going links with the comprehensive school are satisfactory.
31. The school provides well for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Religious education makes an effective contribution to each element and sufficient opportunities are allowed for quiet thought. The prayer tables created in classrooms and the school hall provide a focus for reflection. The development of the spiritual dimension is very good and is firmly embedded in the caring ethos of the school. Pupils' writing in books about faith show awareness of Jesus as a special friend, knowledge of the joyful, sorrowful and glorious mysteries, gifts from God and thanks for blessings. Classroom prayers before lunch and the end of the school day are recited with reverence, which contributes to the calm and happy atmosphere. Staff have a clear commitment to, and understanding of, the concept of spirituality and they develop it effectively across the curriculum, in literature, music, art and science. The recent Environmental Road Show mounted at the school included living native and exotic wildlife, which evoked a response of awe and wonder. This is seen as pupils observe the beauty of nature in the environmental area and pond in the school grounds.
32. Moral issues are promoted very well in assemblies and classroom discussions. In all classrooms school and class rules are displayed and all pupils, including the youngest, are led to understand the difference between right and wrong. Adults provide very good role models and lead by example in promoting respect for others and fairness. Relationships are very good and this helps pupils to develop a good framework on which to build moral values.
33. Provision for social development is good. Adults encourage pupils to co-operate and help each other in lessons and around the school. The school fosters a sense of belonging to the church and the community and this is made explicit in displays in the school hall. A wide programme of

⁵ Regulations relating to the assessment of pupils with special educational needs.

school visits and especially the residential visits undertaken by Years 5 and 6 reinforce the social behaviour successfully taught by the school.

34. The previous inspection reported that although pupils' cultural development was satisfactory, limited attention was given to developing the pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultural traditions in the West Midlands and in Britain. This issue has been satisfactorily addressed. Pupils learn about their own culture through literature, poetry, history, art and music, but also study other faiths and festivals such as Diwali and cultural traditions such as Rangoli patterns in the Hindu faith. Displays of work by Year 6 pupils illustrate good knowledge and understanding of the major world religions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school gives a high priority to promoting the care of all of its pupils, as it did at the time of the last inspection. All staff are well aware of child protection issues and they implement the policy effectively. There are very good procedures for health and safety. For example, all reasonable precautions have been taken to keep the building site secure during the erection of the extension, regular fire practices take place and are clearly recorded, whilst risk assessments are consistently undertaken and the results acted upon. The governing body continues to review safety and security on a regular basis and consider ways of providing a safer environment. All pupils are competently supervised at work and at play and they are well cared for.
36. Pupils, parents and carers are often reminded of the importance of regular attendance. The system for recording attendance is clearly understood by all teachers and the procedures are carried out efficiently. Measures are in place for promoting good attendance and they are effective in relation to most families. Attendance and punctuality are carefully monitored and appropriate measures taken when necessary.
37. Procedures for monitoring behaviour are good with teaching and non-teaching staff working together, ensuring a consistent approach in dealing with inappropriate behaviour. This is very effective and is having a positive impact on learning. Pupils have a clear understanding of the school's expectations of good behaviour. Anti-bullying strategies work very well and no bullying or racist behaviour was observed during the inspection.
38. The school provides very valuable support and guidance, which helps pupils to make responsible choices. The staff know the pupils and their families well and use this knowledge very effectively. They continue to provide a supportive and caring environment for the children. Parents are well satisfied with the help their children receive and are particularly appreciative of support given by the school at times of family crisis.
39. In June 1996, when the school was last inspected, three issues relating to the assessment of academic progress and its use were raised as key development points for the school. Excellent progress has been made in making improvements to the systems for assessing progress and attainment.
40. Very good systems are now in place to enable the school to track the progress which pupils are making and this information is used well to inform the planning of future work. The constant monitoring and assessment throughout the school supports academic progress well. Teachers and support staff check on pupils' progress through observations, questioning and regular tests. Pupils are aware of what they have done well and of what they could do better. Learning objectives are now clearly identified and teachers record in detail what individual pupils have covered, and what they know and understand in all subjects. Teachers use all this information successfully to set targets for each individual and to identify pupils with special educational needs. Very good procedures are in place for the thorough monitoring and recording of any child with special educational needs and parents and carers are involved appropriately.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The strengths at the last inspection have been maintained. The school welcomes parents and

visits to the school are encouraged. The head teacher is willing to see parents whenever possible. Parents believe that all members of staff in the school are easily approachable and this positive climate contributes to pupils' learning at both home and school. The school is seen as a happy place where their children enjoy learning and the inspectors support this view.

42. The overall quality of information to parents is very good. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. There is a termly formal consultation meeting with class teachers and, in the Summer term, very detailed written reports are sent home. These informative written reports of each child's progress over the year give details relating to personal and academic development, and outline the next steps in learning. Parents are able to consult with teachers at any time through the school year and teachers make opportunities to give informal feedback to parents. A few parents are unsure about the school's provision for more able pupils, but the inspectors found that there are suitable arrangements in place to meet all pupils' needs. Recent meetings to give parents a deeper understanding of the curriculum have been poorly attended, but information leaflets such as that on the Foundation Stage are appreciated. In general, parents are very pleased with the progress their children make and the way that this is reported.
43. Letters and leaflets give general useful information such as term dates and details of school events. The school prospectus is attractive and helpful, but there are a couple of minor omissions, such as details relating to the restraint of pupils. The informative and illustrated annual report to parents by the governing body has one omission regarding the admission of handicapped pupils.
44. All parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning, which has a beneficial impact on their children's progress. Some parents are not sure about how much homework is set and when it has to be handed in. Inspectors feel that the amount of homework given to the pupils is appropriate for their age.
45. The staff welcome the dedicated band of volunteers, which includes both parents and other members of the community, who assist in the classroom and accompany school trips. This involvement is having a positive impact on standards and pupils' learning. There is an active Parent Teachers Association, which arranges successful social and fund-raising activities. The money raised goes towards providing extra resources to benefit the pupils' education.
46. The school's links with parents, carers, the parish and the Catholic community remain strong. Overwhelmingly the parents are happy with what the school offers and with their children's progress. Parents believe that the school provides a safe and caring environment in which their children can develop and the inspectors' findings support this view.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. There has been excellent progress since the last inspection in this aspect of the school's work. Very effective management systems are now firmly in place. The interim visit by HMI three years ago identified satisfactory progress and the school has continued to move forward strongly and purposefully since then.
48. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by a strong team of teaching and non-teaching staff. There is clear direction in the school and high expectations of what can be achieved. The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum is very good. The subject co-ordinators and the headteacher monitor curriculum planning and teaching is monitored in literacy, numeracy and science by the co-ordinators. Class teachers set targets for individual pupils in mathematics, English and science, and these are individually monitored every term. The entire process focuses teachers on the performance of their pupils and contributes to the overall commitment to raise standards. The headteacher has a significant presence around the school including lunchtime and breaks and this contributes to the good standards of behaviour.
49. The governors' action plan following the last report has been fully implemented and excellent

progress has been made in improving the issues identified. The governors receive regular reports on the progress of the plan, and they have linked its main points with the school development plan over succeeding years. Staff, headteacher and governors have monitored the document, which includes success criteria and costing. The joint approach means that everyone is involved and committed to improving the work of the school. There is a strong team spirit.

50. The governing body is extremely supportive of the school and its staff and fulfils all of the statutory requirements effectively. They know the school well, have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they are well informed about what is actually happening in the school. The chair and other governors visit the school regularly to keep abreast of what is happening. The governing body has a number of committees, which support the smooth running of the school. Governors understand the issues that affect the school. They undertake their responsibilities conscientiously and they assist in the school on a regular basis, maintaining links between the school and the community. They are clear about the standards the school achieves and are fully involved in setting targets for the school and its pupils. Governors know how the school performs against national standards and those of similar schools. This information helps them when they are setting targets for improvements.
51. Governors are fully involved in the budget setting process. Along with the headteacher they are committed to getting value for money and they manage the resources very successfully. An initial budget is drawn up and its priorities are identified in relation to the school development plan; the plan is then fully discussed and confirmed by the full governing body. Subject co-ordinators manage their own budgets very effectively. The standards fund is well managed by the deputy head teacher who discusses priorities with staff and the head teacher. Governors have good systems for getting the best value for the money they spend.
52. The school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff who are well trained, and this is another reason for the school's success in pushing up standards. The support staff are well-used, enhancing teaching in the classroom and providing effective support for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator for special educational needs maintains the register of pupils efficiently and plays an effective part in raising the awareness of all staff. The teachers and the assistants make a very effective team, with all the staff making a positive contribution to the learning, attainment and development of the children.
53. The school building is secure, clean and well-maintained. Since the last inspection, the school has taken care to ensure minimum disruption to pupils being taught in the hall. The central library is cramped and is not easily accessible to pupils, which limits its role. The separate building, which replaced the temporary classrooms mentioned in the previous report, accommodates two classrooms. However, space is limited especially for practical subjects, and this can curtail some activities.
54. The secure grounds are satisfactory with hard and grassed areas, but currently there is no outside play area designed for the under-fives, as the current building works to provide an extension have imposed certain restrictions on the use of the grounds. The well-maintained field is used for sports and has a football pitch; and there is an attractive well-used conservation area. However, the hard area is somewhat uneven, which causes water to collect in large puddles.
55. Since the last inspection, resources have improved overall and are now good. The ICT suite can accommodate a class and is well-used, as are resources generally. However, the central library and the classroom collections of books are unsatisfactory. A significant number of books are in poor condition and there is a lack of up-to-date titles, especially in the fiction, which inhibits recreational reading. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are generally very good. Effective use is made of visits to places of interest during the school day and of residential visits to enhance teaching, learning and personal development.
56. Standards have risen significantly since the last inspection, teaching is good and frequently very good and the school provides a quality education for its pupils. Financial and all other resources are always well targeted so that standards continue to improve. The school provides good value

for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. St Michael's school has made excellent progress since its last inspection. To drive up standards even further the governors, headteacher and staff must:
- (1) Increase the opportunities for pupils to write imaginatively and personally by:-
- giving them a wider range of topics and subjects to write about independently.
Paragraphs 4, 68, 69, 74, 77.
 - making sure that they successfully use and apply their existing writing skills in their independent work.
Paragraphs 4, 69.
58. In addition to the main issues for the governors' action plan, there are two lesser issues that should be included in the action plan.
- Make sure that the library is well stocked with suitable books.
Paragraphs 71, 73, 55.
 - Check out the less capable readers and show them how to find information about a specific topic.
Paragraphs 71, 77.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 72 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 38 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 4 | 21 | 61 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 20 | 239 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | N/A | 16 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs | Nursery | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | 1 | 51 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 1 | 3 |

| English as an additional language | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 4 |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 10 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 5 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|---------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | % | | % |
| School data | 5.3 | School data | 0.1 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 | National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2000 | 14 | 19 | 33 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| | Girls | 18 | 18 | 18 |
| | Total | 29 | 29 | 29 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 88 (95) | 88 (93) | 88 (94) |
| | National | 83 (79) | 84 (83) | 90 (96) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | 11 | 11 | 11 |
| | Girls | 18 | 18 | 18 |
| | Total | 29 | 29 | 29 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 88 (94) | 88 (93) | 88 (93) |
| | National | 84 (84) | 88 (86) | 88 (87) |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 2000 | 14 | 12 | 26 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 12 | 14 |
| | Girls | 11 | 11 | 10 |
| | Total | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 85 (80) | 89 (60) | 92 (86) |
| | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69) | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | 11 | 11 | 12 |
| | Girls | 10 | 10 | 11 |
| | Total | 21 | 21 | 23 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 81 (79) | 81 (66) | 89 (83) |
| | National | 70 (67) | 72 (69) | 79 (75) |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 2 |
| Indian | 1 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 186 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 9 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 10.1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 24:1 |
| Average class size | 25.1 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 92 |

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 20:1 |

| | |
|---|-------|
| Total number of education support staff | 1 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 31.30 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|------|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 10:1 |
|--------------------------------|------|

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Financial year | 1999 |
|----------------|------|

| | £ |
|--|--------|
| Total income | 436701 |
| Total expenditure | 436699 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1700 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 2464 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 2466 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 246 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 142 |

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 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 47 | 39 | 5 | 4 | 5 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 49 | 45 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 32 | 43 | 10 | 5 | 10 |
| The teaching is good. | 48 | 41 | 4 | 6 | 2 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 46 | 35 | 15 | 3 | 2 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 67 | 26 | 4 | 2 | 1 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 55 | 35 | 1 | 6 | 3 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 42 | 42 | 10 | 5 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 51 | 39 | 5 | 2 | 4 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 51 | 39 | 5 | 1 | 4 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 20 | 32 | 22 | 15 | 11 |

There is a range of sporting and other activities taking place outside school hours. These are popular and well attended. Inspectors feel that there is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities and they do not agree with the parents on this issue. There is an "Open Door" policy and parents are welcome to visit the school at any time to sort out difficulties or problems. Pupils get the right amount of homework for their age.

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

59. The high quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage has been maintained since the last inspection. Children start in the nursery on a half-time basis, transferring to the reception class in either the September or the January of the academic year in which they become five. At the time of inspection there were 20 children each morning and each afternoon in the nursery and 15 attending the reception class full-time. Good induction procedures enable parents, children and staff to get to know each other before admission and before transfer to reception class. This allows most children to start school happily and move classes with confidence.
60. There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the nursery. Most children are about average especially in the areas of communication, language and literacy and mathematics. They are below this level in their speaking skills, personal and social development, creative development and physical development. All children make good progress and by the time they start Year 1 most achieve the Early Learning Goals and a few exceed them in nearly all aspects of their learning. Many children in reception class have made a sound start on the early stages of the National Curriculum for English and mathematics by the time they leave the Foundation Stage. This good progress is due to very good teaching in all the areas of learning and a well-planned curriculum. Good assessment procedures are implemented thoroughly so that staff know what children are achieving and can match their next steps in learning to their current attainment. Parents appreciate the care given by a hardworking, dedicated team of practitioners and are kept well in touch with their children's progress. All the staff work very well as a team and are good role models.

Personal, social and emotional development.

61. Some children enter the nursery with special educational needs or under-developed personal and social skills. They all settle quickly into the well-established routines and by the time they leave the reception class they are achieving or exceeding the early learning goals in this area. This shows good achievement and reflects the high quality of teaching. All children are encouraged to behave considerately, to work hard and try their best. They respond well to the opportunities they are given and become confident that they can succeed. They learn to co-operate with others in their work and play. They take turns and share their games and toys fairly. In both classes, Foundation Stage children work happily on tasks with a good degree of independence, persevering until they are finished. Staff ensure that children are kept happily busy and this plays an important part in the very good behaviour. All adults are deeply caring and show to each other and the children high expectations of respect and courtesy. This promotes good social development in classes and in situations such as playtimes and lunchtimes. Staff listen with care to what the children have to say and are flexible in maintaining routines but using spontaneous teaching situations as they arise. Reception children took time to watch the builders at work on the adjacent site and wrote letters to the builders about the experience. Adults encourage children to become independent by gradually increasing the demands made on them and allowing them to choose and organise some of their activities themselves. They are also expected to clear things away quickly and carefully ready for the next children to use them.

Communication, language and literacy

62. As a result of the well-structured, careful teaching children make good progress in this area. They love listening to stories and sharing books with other children or adults. Staff take care in the language they use, ensuring that children understand and also introducing them to new words to expand their vocabulary. Early reading skills are carefully taught so that by the end of reception year many children are reading simple books confidently and are working within the National Curriculum. Many can spell simple words with reference to examples displayed in the

classroom. Letters and their associated sounds are carefully taught so that the children can identify a range of letters in an alphabet game. Staff work hard to promote speaking and listening through discussion, questioning and role-play. Each class has a role-play area where suitable equipment and dressing-up clothes extend and develop imaginative play. The biscuit shop in the nursery and the opticians in the reception class are very appealing to children and encourage language development through group play. Good opportunities are provided for children to write for themselves, making marks on paper which develop into letter-like shapes and then letters and words. Reception children can copy their teacher's writing very legibly and write about their drawings carefully. They show very good skills of presentation and are proud of their work in writing and number. The majority of children are on target to meet or exceed the early learning goals in this area of the curriculum.

Mathematical development

63. In the area of mathematical development very good teaching is enabling children in the nursery to achieve well in counting, matching shapes and colours and recognising written numerals. They can create repeating patterns with two colours and sort objects confidently by shape and colour. Reception children are able to use counting apparatus to make numbers up to 10 in different ways. There is a good range of mathematical toys, equipment and games to help develop children's understanding of shape, measurement, capacity, weight, time and money. Children develop appropriate mathematical language to describe comparisons in size as when reception children were digging in sand to uncover differently shaped shells and sorting them into similar kinds. The varied experiences and adult teaching and support are allowing children to be on target towards meeting the early learning goals in mathematical development.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

64. The teaching in the areas associated with knowledge and understanding of the world is very good and children benefit from a wide range of planned activities to help them understand the world and the different roles of people within it. Children make a good start on early geography skills by exploring the building, grounds and immediate locality. There is a satisfactory range of "miniature world" toys for them to re-create their environment and extend their exploration through play. There is a wide programme of visits to places of interest further afield such as farms, woodlands, the Warstones library and Bantock Park. An early sense of history is developed by learning about themselves and their families. They look carefully at photographs of themselves as babies and begin to recognise changes over time. Technological skills are fostered effectively through construction toys and regular access to the computer suite in the main school. Each Foundation Stage classroom has an up-to-date computer to practise the skills learned in the computer suite and children are confident in using programs appropriate to the age group. Visitors give children an understanding of the various roles in society as when the fire service brings a manned engine to school. The wide range of experiences enable most children to meet or exceed the appropriate learning goals in this area.

Physical development

65. The provision for physical development is satisfactory although outdoor play is limited at the moment because of building extension work. Children's fine motor skills are improved by daily planned activities using a variety of tools and implements. A group doing baking in the nursery and another group preparing sandwiches were making sound progress in stirring, mixing, spreading and cutting skills. Children draw, apply paint and glue and cut out pictures and shapes from paper. Their drawings become more mature and paintings acquire discernible form. Nursery children are very skilled when using scissors, holding them properly and cutting out accurately. The large movement skills of running, jumping, climbing and balancing are developed well by using suitable equipment, occasionally inside the nursery classroom or more frequently in the school hall. Outside activities are limited at the moment to use of appropriate wheeled toys in the school playground. The foundation stage staff are aware of the unsatisfactory provision and the need to improve facilities for physical development out of doors as soon as possible. Overall, the provision made, the good teaching and the planned curriculum are

appropriate for most children to achieve the early learning goals in physical development by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Creative development

66. Children make satisfactory progress in their creative development. Their drawings and paintings show developing skill. In singing, playing percussion instruments and moving to music they listen carefully, begin to recognise words and actions and show confidence in performing both in the classrooms and in the large hall. They play happily in the domestic and role-play areas, which allow a range of creative and imaginative play. Puppets are available to encourage shyer children to speak out loud and good quality dressing-up clothes enhance play. A range of artwork is used to create a colourful learning environment through techniques such as drawing, painting, printing, collage and modelling. Good teaching ensures that most children are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area.
67. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress towards achieving or exceeding the standards expected. The good provision and very good teaching are a strength of the school. The accommodation is satisfactory for the numbers currently on roll and resources are sufficient for the planned curriculum.

ENGLISH

68. By seven years of age, pupils are achieving standards in English that are above those found nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Over the last four years results in reading in the national tests have been well above those reached by most seven-year-olds. This is because teachers successfully focus on the basic skills of reading and understand how to explore books and bring reading to life. Skills in speaking and listening are good. The pupils talk confidently, ask and answer questions and join in with discussions. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when these skills were judged to be average and opportunities for purposeful talk limited. In writing, standards are broadly above average in national tests, but there are fewer pupils gaining higher levels. There is less opportunity for older pupils to make choices about their writing and to practise writing their own stories. This is why standards are below those in similar schools.
69. By 11 years of age, standards are above average and reflect the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2000. The high standard in reading is maintained in the juniors. In each year group, pupils capable of working at higher levels continue to do so. For instance, pupils in Year 5 are excited about reading poetry, use images and language creatively and they reflect on magical words in their own class poem. Pupils are neat writers and competent spellers who use punctuation and grammar consistently in their writing. However, to raise the standard of writing further, pupils need to write at greater length and in a more original and personal way. They also need to extend the range of their writing. In all year groups work in 'creative writing books' is somewhat disappointing. There are few, longer pieces of original writing, which reflect the extent to which words and ideas are explored in the class lessons. Speaking and listening skills are good.
70. Inspection evidence indicates that in English, boys and girls achieve similar standards of work. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who do not speak English at home, make good progress. Younger pupils achieve higher levels than other seven-year-olds in similar schools; by 11 achievement is broadly the same as in similar schools.
71. Much has improved in English since the previous inspection, because of a shared commitment and a clear focus on what has to be done. The quality of teaching has improved greatly and this is supporting good progress in lessons. Work is more challenging and there are fewer worksheets. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, pupils are asked to think for themselves and to

use their drafting and editing skills to make difficult choices about relevant words for newspaper headlines. Handwriting is now neat and tidy and pupils take pride in the presentation of their work. Despite planned time for study in the school library, a number of less capable readers still have difficulty with using their research skills to find information from different sources. Some younger pupils are unsure about fiction and non-fiction books. The range and quality of resources in the library needs to be updated, so that learning is effectively supported.

72. Younger pupils achieve well with their speaking and listening skills. They gain in confidence as they talk freely about their work. For instance, explaining the story-line of their favourite story or discussing letters they have written to builders working in the school. Older pupils develop competency with the spoken word and make good progress as they begin to be more precise about their choice of vocabulary. This is evident in Year 6, when pupils learn how to ask and answer searching questions to enliven the biographies they are writing. In the main, pupils listen to the opinions of others and are keen to give their own point of view.
73. Standards in reading are high. Sharing the richness of good literature in class and in guided group work in the literacy hour is whetting pupils' appetites for reading. Teachers are encouraging pupils to read between the lines and explain why and how characters act as they do. Younger pupils achieve well: they learn to read words by sight, link letters with sounds and read simple stories. By seven, reading is accurate and fluent. Older pupils build upon this good start. They read with greater depth of understanding and make choices about the type of books and authors they enjoy reading. *Horrible Histories*, and *Goosebumps* are popular and enable pupils to 'feel part of the story'. On occasions, the choice of books on offer in class libraries is disappointing to readers, who say they are reading more exciting books at home.
74. Pupils make good progress with their handwriting and with the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Younger pupils experiment with their early writing skills and gain control over the shape and size of their writing. By seven, everyday words are spelled correctly and sentences are well constructed and make sense. In all year groups pupils write for different reasons: for instance, Year 2 pupils produce instructions for making puppets, whilst Year 5 write imaginatively about a magic box. There is evidence to show that pupils are drafting and editing their ideas to improve their work. There is less opportunity for pupils to write at length in an original and personal way and this limits their progress.
75. During lessons pupils are well behaved, work hard and are very keen to learn. Work in groups is of a good standard because of good social skills: pupils listen to each other and take turns. Older pupils show initiative and are confident to put forward their ideas in discussions knowing that others value their contribution.
76. Teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers use the literacy hour to plan challenging work in lessons and this is helping to keep standards above average. In particular, teachers' expertise with the use of children's literature is developing a deeper knowledge and rich use of English in all year groups. Lessons are managed well and work is planned to meet all pupils' needs and abilities. Marking is of a high quality and is helping to improve skills with reading and writing.
77. Management of English is good. A clear action plan has helped to raise standards and improve teaching in the subject. Careful observation of planning and use of assessment to track progress is helping to meet the pupils' learning needs more readily. Working in groups of similar abilities is working well for the more capable pupils, who are being stretched by more challenging work. However, care needs to be taken to make sure that the challenge of the texts and the level of work in lessons is appropriate for less capable and 'middle of the road readers' and writers in Year 5.

MATHEMATICS

78. Very good progress has been made in improving standards in mathematics since the last

inspection when standards were satisfactory overall. They are now good for the seven and 11-year-olds in both numeracy and other aspects of mathematics. National test results for the 11-year-olds show a good increase between 1999 and 2000, from well below average to above average. Test results for the seven-year-olds have remained consistently well above average with a slight dip to above average this year. Over the last three years standards have increased, with average results when compared to similar schools. Overall, standards are improving rapidly, with evidence of challenging opportunities and good achievements by the more-able pupils. Across the school, there are no significant variations in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress.

79. By the age of seven, pupils have a secure understanding of place value to hundreds, tens and units and can add and subtract two digit numbers. They can estimate length in appropriate units and measure accurately in centimetres. They recognise and can sort by attribute a range of two and three-dimensional shapes. By the age of eleven, pupils have a confident approach to mental calculations and can perform these briskly and generally accurately. They have a growing understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages. They can represent information in bar charts, line graphs, conversion graphs and pie charts. They undertake long multiplication and division, can identify mean, mode, median and range from a data set and understand the basic principles of probability. They are increasingly able to apply their knowledge to practical problems and there are opportunities for applying their mathematical skills in curriculum areas such as science, geography and design and technology.
80. The quality of teaching and learning are both good. Good in-service training has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching in mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, teaching ranges between satisfactory and good. In Years 3 to 6, the quality of teaching ranges from good to excellent. The strongest teaching, and the best progress, occurs in Years 5 and 6. The pace of learning accelerates as pupils move through the key stage, although it is never less than good. The school feels that the consistency of teaching performance, which is now evident, is due to the positive effect of the structure provided by the numeracy strategy. This has been effectively implemented and provides a very clear framework within which staff are able to plan their work.
81. In one of the best lessons observed, Year 5 pupils were investigating the properties of three-dimensional shapes. The high quality of management, high expectations, effective questioning, pitched appropriately at different ability groups, and meticulous management of the lesson meant that all pupils were highly motivated to learn. By the end of the lesson almost all of the objectives had been met. In a successful lesson in Year 6, the teacher, although working in cramped conditions, motivated the pupils very well, sustained a lively pace throughout and provided tasks well matched to pupils' needs. Around half can confidently convert fractions to decimals by calculator, while many were able to sequence decimal numbers up to two places. Occasionally, in other year groups, lessons do not focus sufficiently sharply on specific tasks, too many things are going on and key learning points are not drawn out with enough clarity. This was a feature of an otherwise good lesson, which involved the tallying, and recording of data from a dice-throwing activity.
82. Teachers are confident in using the numeracy strategy. Planning is generally clear and effective and follows a consistent pattern throughout the school. The plenary session is used well, providing time limits are observed earlier in the session. Groups of pupils and individuals have clear targets in mathematics and these are evident around classrooms and in exercise books. Teachers are keen to reinforce the use of correct mathematical vocabulary. Oral sessions are particularly good and are supporting the development of greatly improved mental skills and agility. Within the main activities, teachers plan for a number of group activities and in almost all lessons, tasks are matched well to individual needs, so promoting the best progress. There is some use of information and communication technology to promote learning, although this is spasmodic in some year groups and the range of software available is not extensive.
83. There has been considerable input to the mathematics curriculum and the co-ordinator provides very strong leadership for the subject. The school has well-developed structures for assessment in mathematics. As a result of effective record-keeping and the target-setting process, teachers have a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils. There is detailed analysis of national and optional test data in order to track pupils' progress and to identify areas of

weakness across the school. This is a key factor in pushing up standards.

SCIENCE

84. Good progress has been made in raising standards since the last inspection. Standards are now above average in the tests for the seven and the 11-year-olds. There has been a significant improvement and a continuing upward trend in the results since the last inspection. The school continues to exceed its targets and has set challenging targets for the next two years.
85. In Key Stage 1 the pupils develop their skills and begin to organise their own investigations. They are encouraged to explore questions and find reasons why sound is louder or softer, how it moves and to use scientific terms when they give answers to the investigation. They develop their knowledge of living things, how seeds grow, why objects float and sink. The consistent use of skilful questions and offering further suggestions by the teacher enable pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding. Pupils reach above average standards by the end of Key Stage 1. They can begin to plan their own investigation and how to record their findings. This is a good feature. Pupils make good progress as they move through the key stage.
86. Teaching is good throughout the school. The scheme of work developed since the last inspection is comprehensive and detailed, providing clear guidance for teachers. Learning is focused on how the pupils conduct their own investigations, asking their own questions and sharing their results. At Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 3 continue to develop their knowledge and understanding about themselves as they recognise what is a healthy diet and how food is digested and used. They understand how and why it is important to take care of their teeth. Pupils use the skills and knowledge they have learnt previously when they made an accurate model of their own teeth. They know how many different types of teeth there are and what is their purpose. More capable pupils in Year 6 are able to use a voltmeter to measure resistance in an electrical current with a degree of understanding of how to vary the resistance in the experiment. Overall standards are good for the 11-year-olds.
87. Pupils are competent and have a clear understanding of how to set up their own investigations and to change conditions so they can test their prediction of what could happen against what does happen. Findings are recorded logically and the pupils are good at using the correct scientific vocabulary. They use diverse methods and share the knowledge and understanding they have learnt with each other. Pupils in Year 5 measure the effect insulating materials have on muffling sound. They are able to identify why some materials are more effective than others. They are beginning to learn how to measure results using sensors attached to a computer to measure and record accurately the effects of sound in their investigation. This is a good feature.
88. Teachers are well prepared for their lessons and their planned activities challenge and extend the pupils' learning effectively. Teaching is good and standards reflect the good teaching. The subject is led by a committed and enthusiastic co-ordinator who has given good support to her colleagues. This has been successful and standards have risen significantly. Teachers' planning and the standard of pupils' work is monitored and the information gathered is used to set targets for individual pupils. Assessment of pupils' work is detailed, constructively corrected and marked. Resources for teaching and learning science are good and well organised. They are used effectively in all classes and enable pupils to explore and investigate their own questions. Pupils are eager, when with guidance and support from their teachers, they complete an investigation successfully. All of this has a positive impact on pushing up standards.

ART AND DESIGN

89. Good progress has been made since the last inspection when standards and teaching were unsatisfactory and there were many weaknesses. Standards are now satisfactory for the seven-year-olds and good for the 11-year-olds. Teaching is good for the infants and very good for the juniors. All parts of the subject are fully in place and the pupils' attainment and their progress are assessed and recorded at regular intervals. The co-ordinator knows the subject well and has managed developments very effectively. This is the main reason why standards have improved as much as they have and the subject now has a strong place in the curriculum.

90. At both key stages the pupils are provided with a wide range of creative experiences. Their work is well planned for them and they experience working with a range of materials, using different techniques and different skills. There were many good examples observed, among them creating a collage from natural objects in Year 2. The pupils designed an autumn collage using natural objects, readily understanding how these could be translated into autumn designs by using different colours, shades and textures. Year 5 pupils were adept at planning and creating a textile story based on the poem *The Highwayman*. Pupils study the work of great artists and they have many opportunities to use different media when they are creating their own works of art. All of these experiences increase the pupils' skills and understanding in a planned manner so that they produce work of high quality. Their ability to sketch and plan using different materials shows that they have benefited from some good teaching.
91. The teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. One of the main strengths in the teaching is the way in which the pupils' skills are developed and they are taught how to use different techniques to improve the standard and quality of their work. Some good examples in Years 5 and 6 occurred when the teachers gave direct support to the whole class, individuals and groups. Pupils were shown how to achieve the right tone by using pastels in a particular way, or how to translate a tricky design into a piece of headgear that was the right size.
92. Pupils are always encouraged to improve the quality of their work by evaluating what they have produced. Because of this they are analytical about their own and their classmates' achievements and they know how to improve their work. All of them enjoy the subject, they behave well and they always try to do their best.
93. Resources are good and this has a positive benefit on the standards reached. The subject is very well led but the co-ordinator does not have any planned times when he can work alongside colleagues or observe what is happening elsewhere in the school. This is necessary if teaching and learning are to continue to improve.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Very good progress has been made in improving the subject since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory and there were many weaknesses. Standards are now satisfactory all round, the subject is well taught and there is a suitable curriculum in place. Pupils make very good progress in designing and constructing models, puppets and containers in a variety of materials. They respond well to the design problems which they have been given, and they are able to discuss the design and explain how they made their article. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when progress was weak. Their 'design and make' books indicate a variety of work in both key stages which is interesting and relevant to their projects in other subjects.
95. Teaching is good because planning is effective and the pupils are taught the skills they need. This is a main reason for the subject improving to the degree that it has. By the time pupils are seven they can handle tools, make joins with different materials and record their designs on paper. Pupils in Year 4 were engaged in developing their individual designs for a torch that fulfils a specific purpose. They incorporated their knowledge about circuits, which they had learnt in science, in order to make it work efficiently. This is a complex task but the series of lessons had been well planned by the teacher who used encouragement, skilful questioning techniques and had the resources required available for pupils to use. More capable pupils were able to develop their original design and introduce a switch in order that the torch worked efficiently. Some pupils had used a homework task well and introduced their own equipment in order to make their torch. The pace of the lesson was hindered because pupils needed more time to refine their ideas. This meant that they were unable to complete the task and became frustrated when the circuit would not work. At this stage the pupils were starting to recognise how they could make further progress in the next lesson.

96. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are encouraged to use tools safely. They have to consider carefully what they should be used for and ensure they are returned to their appropriate place. There is a good use of the high quality resources and materials are not wasted. Good planning indicates secure improvement in pupils' skills as they progress through Key Stage 2. This ensures they develop further skills so that they can make puppets that have joints and boxes that can hold an Easter egg. Pupils fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of differing joins and the materials they should use. Good discussions evolve about the merits or deficiencies of the materials and this increases understanding all round.
97. Teaching is good because lessons are well planned and the subject is clearly led by a new co-ordinator who is enthusiastic and supports her colleagues well. High quality training has contributed to the improved subject knowledge of all the teachers and an interesting relevant scheme of work has been put in place since the last inspection. All of this has helped the standards to rise.

GEOGRAPHY

98. Pupils in both key stages make satisfactory progress and achieve the standards expected for their age. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection when attainment at seven and 11 was found to be unsatisfactory. It is now satisfactory. The new geography co-ordinator has worked very hard to develop good schemes of work to guide teachers in their planning of the curriculum. She has taken advice from the local education authority, attended courses and organised in-service training for staff. All of this has raised the quality of teaching and improved standards.
99. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have sound knowledge of local places. Teachers make the best use of the local environment and the younger pupils learn about the school layout and the grounds before exploring the area around the school. This helps them to make accurate sketch maps of their walks. By Year 2 the pupils extend their knowledge of Great Britain and Europe through study of holiday places. Their mapping skills are developing well, and studies about islands help them to identify different types of transport which are suitable for use on an island and contrast these with those for the mainland. Pupils draw upon earlier knowledge, gained from the good teaching in Year 1, to distinguish between physical and human features, which show how the environment of the island is changing.
100. This work is developed in Key Stage 2. Teaching is good, and the teachers plan their lessons carefully and make effective use of resources to interest pupils and to support their learning. A good example is in Years 3 and 4. Here the pupils study newspaper and television accounts of what is happening in the United Kingdom so that they can develop their topic work in investigating the local area and improving the environment. Teachers are skilfully using the currently widespread flooding through unusually heavy rainfall to illustrate the effects of physical processes on people's lives.
101. By the end of the key stage pupils show secure knowledge, developing skills and sound understanding of local scale studies, contrasting Wolverhampton with the small community of Brewood. Teachers make very good use of the local area and visits farther afield. For example, a fieldwork visit deepened their understanding of differences and helped them to gather a range of evidence and form conclusions that they were able to explain and justify. Year 6 pupils speak enthusiastically about their geography studies throughout the school and recall their learning well. Their new topic of "Investigating water and rivers" is enabling pupils to gather and record a range of geographical information about the water cycle and how humans can affect their water supply. They use good resources to inform their personal research and study including video recordings and access to the Internet.
102. The subject is managed effectively and this, alongside good teamwork and a determination by all staff to raise standards, is having a beneficial and measurable effect. The co-ordinator has developed a systematic procedure to record teachers' assessment of pupils' progress and has started, alongside the head teacher, to monitor standards across the whole school. Literacy and numeracy skills are purposefully reinforced and pupils show pride in presentation. Resources

are satisfactory overall but the number and quality of reference books is insufficient and classification of the subject is not clear enough.

HISTORY

103. Standards and progress have improved since the last inspection, when they were judged to be unsatisfactory. Now, at seven and 11, the pupils achieve satisfactory standards and make steady progress with their learning. This is because guidelines in history are helping teachers to plan for the study of specific periods in time more clearly. Pupils' skills are better developed when they ask historical questions and communicate their findings. For instance, the school has moved away from using too many worksheets and so that the pupils research historical information and work independently.
104. Younger pupils learn about the passing of time. They sequence old toys in order of age and make comparisons with modern ones. They begin to use historical vocabulary such ' long ago' and relate their learning to shared experiences at home and in school. An example is when pupils learn about Remembrance Day and recall facts about family members who fought in the two World Wars.
105. Older pupils use research from historical data, such as the 1851 Census, to find out more about the lives of ordinary people in the past. They make comparisons between rich and poor and learn to sift fact from fiction. There is good coverage of both British and Ancient history, and by 11 pupils have a sound understanding of key events and dates. Pupils are using the computer in their personal study time to gather wider information about the periods of time they are studying.
106. Pupils are interested in history and motivated in lessons by the good use of resources and artefacts. For instance, in Year 4, when studying the Tudors, pupils enjoy identifying replicas of items salvaged from the Marie Rose and predicting their use.
107. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a good grasp of the subject and they use questioning well to encourage deeper investigation of documents and resources. The previous inspection found introductions to lessons too long. This is no longer the case. The subject is soundly managed with good quality guidelines helping teachers to identify clear learning objectives for their lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

108. ICT was an area of considerable weakness at the last inspection. The school has made excellent progress in tackling the issues reported four years ago. Standards have risen significantly and the quality of both teaching and management of the subject have improved considerably. ICT is on the move and fast becoming a strength in provision.
109. Standards in ICT are good for the seven-year-olds and satisfactory for the 11-year-olds. The significant input to the subject in the last year is having a very positive effect on the pupils' skills and these are now improving rapidly. This is most evident in Key Stage 1, where pupils have benefited from good access to machines and intensive teaching, and in the upper part of Key Stage 2 where staff expertise is greatest. Older pupils are becoming increasingly confident in their use of ICT.
110. In Key Stage 1, the pupils have an intensive weekly session, working in small groups so that they have good opportunities to gain practical experience on a computer. The quality of teaching, in half class groups, is good. Lessons have a lively pace. Staff have very clear guidance to support their planning and have a good grasp of what is to be taught. They provide an appropriate range of work for pupils, ensuring that they are appropriately challenged. They focus particularly on the skills which are fundamental to developing confidence in the subject, rather than solely on what is produced at the end. Year 1 pupils can input data on traffic and

vehicles, derived from one of their literacy texts, to produce a bar chart. They can open the program, click on the mouse and use the drag and drop tools independently. Year 2 pupils can use word banks, access information from a CD-ROM, word process using different fonts, point sizes and colours and use a paint program, experimenting with various functions including a spray tool and confidently undoing any errors which have occurred.

111. The improvements in provision are just beginning to have an effect on standards in Key Stage 2, as skill deficits are remedied. Progress is most evident in Years 5 and 6. In Year 5, pupils can confidently use a program to produce abstract pictures, involving moving, rotating and re-sizing images. They can use a wide range of tools independently. Year 6 pupils can use a program to organise, refine and present information. They are able to prepare the title screen for their sequence. They can alter the format of the screen, paste images, insert text and add colour and sound. At other times they have used information technology for word processing, to support their work in literacy, to produce spreadsheets detailing the costs of a residential trip and to produce graphics to enhance text. They test the opacity of different types of paper in science using a light sensor and have accessed databases to collect information. They have had opportunities to access the Internet and use e-mail, although the system was not operational during the inspection.
112. The teaching in Key Stage 2, particularly for the older pupils, is good and occasionally very good. Teachers have worked to improve their own skills and they now feel more confident. They have a clear grasp of what is expected of pupils at this age and they plan carefully, in line with the current curriculum requirements. The curriculum fully meets the expectations of the National Curriculum programmes of study. The documentation available is a detailed adaptation of the recently published national scheme. There is good provision to meet teachers' training needs.
113. The support provided by the co-ordinator is excellent. He is highly knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The credit for the rapid improvement in the subject, and in the standards now being achieved, lies largely with him. The school now has an impressive networked computer suite, as well as computers in most rooms. Available funding has been used successfully to raise the standard of pupils' attainment.

MUSIC

114. Pupils at the end of both key stages attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their musical activities. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection in spite of less time being available for the subject. Music has a secure place in the curriculum. Very good use is made of the part-time music specialist to raise standards and improvements have been made in teaching. In singing, standards in Key Stage 1 and in most of Key Stage 2, are good with melodic voices and clear articulation. The infant pupils sing a range of songs with enthusiasm, keeping the rhythm and melody appropriately. They replicate rhythm accurately when using percussion. In Key Stage 2 pupils build on their skills steadily, although pupils in Year 5, when they sing in smaller groups, sometimes lack the confidence in singing that they show in using instruments. The school has identified this weakness and is taking part in a local education authority's "Schools' vocal and choral initiative" later in this school year. The older pupils understand rhythm, tempo, pitch and dynamics. They can play both tuned and untuned instruments, understand that music can be produced in different ways and record their compositions using appropriate graphic or standard notations. At the upper end of Key Stage 2 pupils are introduced to recorder and keyboard playing during music lessons and follow simple scores competently. Pupils do well in public performance, singing and playing with enjoyment and confidence before parents and the local community. Every pupil participates in one of the three musical concerts each year.
115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school and very good when teachers have musical expertise. The co-ordinator is not a specialist but has attended courses to improve her skills. She has developed comprehensive schemes of work to guide teachers' planning and introduced a published scheme which has increased teachers' confidence in the subject and

raised standards. There is a satisfactory system of recording assessment of pupils' attainment. Resources are sufficient in quantity, good in quality, well organised and accessible. The care taken of them by pupils extends their life. Pupils are taught to listen to compositions played by various performers and this experience is enhanced by visits from professional or skilled performers. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual development and is offering increasing support to cultural development. The very good use made of the part-time music specialist includes useful in-service training as he works alongside class teachers and raises their awareness and level of skills.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. Standards are good at the end of Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2. This is better than last time when standards were satisfactory all round except in movement and dance. The staff have had training in teaching movement and dance and the resultant good teaching is the main reason that standards are now good. The subject is well managed.
117. All the pupils know about the importance of fitness and good health. They answer their teachers' questions carefully when they are asked about their pulse rate during warm-up activities. Work in science as well as PE shows that pupils have made strong links between health, fitness, exercise and diet.
118. At Key Stage 1 the pupils work hard to improve the quality of their movements, both individually and in pairs. They are able to change their movements quickly and readily by contrasting light and heavy movements to correspond to the movements of a range of different animals. The good planning focuses on developing contrasting movements, and the pupils concentrate hard in their attempts to improve as they listen to their teacher's instructions. In a Year 1 lesson the pupils were confident when giving demonstrations to the rest of the class. They evaluated their own and each others' movements and sequences, drawing attention to things that could be better. This encouraged everyone to strive to improve.
119. At Key Stage 2 pupils play small-sided team games such as basketball and crab football. They work well together in their teams, keeping to the rules and using good tactics that help them to score goals. Lessons are well organised with the teachers coaching one team whilst the other team are playing their game. This gives everyone a chance to improve their skills and use them in a short game. Teachers' planning is effective because it identifies which skills are to be taught and pupils are given time to practise. However the pupils do not always have enough opportunities to comment about how to improve their performances because of the pressures of time.
120. Teaching is good across the whole school and the pupils' progress is recorded systematically. All of this has a positive impact on standards. Standards are not as good in Key Stage 2 as they are in Key Stage 1 because the pupils have less time for their physical education when they are in Key Stage 2. This limits the amount of time available for them to hone their skills and improve the overall quality.
121. Swimming is enjoyed and many pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave school. There are a number of opportunities for the pupils to experience residential outdoor and adventurous activities, broadening their experiences satisfactorily.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. Religious education was not inspected as this is a voluntary aided church school and a separate inspection will be undertaken.

