

INSPECTION REPORT

GIG MILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Stourbridge

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103822

Headteacher: Mr P Raybould

Reporting inspector: Mr C Kessell
20695

Dates of inspection: 9th – 12th October 2000

Inspection number: 224107

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Broadway Norton Stourbridge West Midlands
Postcode:	DY8 3HL
Telephone number:	01384 818600
Fax number:	01384 818601
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Schubert
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Names of team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr C Kessell Registered inspector OIN 20695	Information and communication technology	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Mrs J Moorhouse Lay inspector OIN 19697		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs N Bee Team inspector OIN 18709	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Art English	Equal opportunities Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language
Mr A Bond Team inspector OIN 17263	Mathematics Physical education	How well pupils are taught
Mrs J Clayphan Team inspector OIN 20230	Geography History	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Mr E B Gill Team inspector OIN 08577	Design and technology Science	
Mrs S Brown Team inspector OIN 01189		Provision for pupils with special educational needs
Mrs P Shannon Team inspector OIN 19765	Music Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

The University of Birmingham
Schools Inspection Unit
School of Education
Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2TT

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
THE WORK OF THE LANGUAGE UNIT	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 526 pupils and is much bigger than other primary schools. There is nursery provision for 60 part-time pupils. The school serves an area of private and council housing. The ethnic background of the majority of pupils is white United Kingdom heritage although there is a very small number of pupils from white European backgrounds and other ethnic groups. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is above average. The percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals and pupils identified as having special educational needs are below the national average. Attainment of the children when they start the school is average. The school also has a language unit for pupils with expressive language disorders.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that provides a safe and caring environment for pupils and staff. The staff know the pupils well. The quality of teaching is good overall and pupils learn effectively. Standards are good at the end of Key Stage 2 and higher attaining pupils do well. There is a commitment amongst the staff and governors to continue improving standards. The school is well managed, effective in what it does and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Teaching is consistently good and pupils learn well.
- The headteacher, deputy head and senior management team provide good leadership.
- The early years provision is good, as is the provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The school has developed a good partnership with parents.
- The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very positive.
- The language unit offers good provision.

What could be improved

- The range of work for pupils of differing ability, particularly in science.
- Assessment procedures in those subjects without them.
- The use of reading records, particularly in Key Stage 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved well since it was last inspected in June 1996. All of the positive features identified at the previous inspection have been maintained and the key issues have been addressed successfully. Information and communication technology has improved significantly and the pupils are provided with opportunities to experience investigative and experimental science. The marking of pupils' work is thorough and some good examples of setting pupils' individual targets were observed during the inspection. The curriculum is well monitored and the school uses information from test results very effectively. There have been improvements in the school's multicultural provision.

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
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	B	B	D
Mathematics	A	A	B	C
Science	A	A	B	D

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Results of the 1999 national tests indicated that English, mathematics and science were above the national average. However, when compared to similar schools standards are below average in English and science and average in mathematics. The results of the 2000 national tests show comparable standards although national comparisons were not available at the time of the inspection. In 1999, the percentage of pupils who achieved the higher level 5 in English, mathematics and science was well above the national average. This is also likely to be repeated in the 2000 results. Although the school's overall improvement is broadly in line with the national trend there are differences in standards between the year groups because of their different characteristics. For example, the number of pupils with special educational needs can vary quite significantly. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are still above average and that pupils' progress through the school is often good. The targets set by the school in English and mathematics for 2001 have been well thought through and are appropriately challenging.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning and show an enjoyment in what is being taught.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in the classroom and playground is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils undertake responsibilities reliably and efficiently. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Teaching was judged to be good overall and nearly one fifth of lessons were very good, particularly in the nursery and reception classes and in Years 5 and 6. Although 2% of lessons were unsatisfactory, this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers' planning is good and lesson objectives are shared with the pupils. There are high expectations of what pupils can achieve and lessons are lively and interesting. Explanations and introductions are clear and pupils have a good understanding of what they are expected to learn in a lesson. Classroom management is consistently good. Literacy and numeracy lessons are always well organised. Because of the good teaching, pupils learn effectively and always make at least satisfactory progress. Progress is good in the Foundation Stage and towards the end of Key Stage 2.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and provides equal opportunities for all pupils to make progress in all subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The academic performance and personal development of these pupils are carefully monitored through a regular review of their needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language are appropriately assessed and monitored from the time they enter school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. Spiritual and cultural development are sound.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Gig Mill Primary School takes good care of its pupils.

The school works very well with its parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school has a very positive ethos, where both pupils and staff are happy. The headteacher provides good leadership and is very well supported by the deputy head and the rest of the senior management team. There are good monitoring procedures.

How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors know the school well and many visit regularly. They are a very supportive group and fulfil their statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes very good use of data and assessment information. This is well managed by the deputy headteacher.
The strategic use of resources	The school has a good balance of teachers who are well supported by the non-teaching staff. The accommodation is extensive and is set in delightful grounds but the condition of the building and internal decoration is poor in places. There is a rolling programme for development. Most subject areas are well resourced. Staff, time and accommodation are used well by the school. The school looks to achieve good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well managed and organised. • Extra-curricular activities. • Children are happy. • The nursery gives pupils a good start. • The staff respond quickly to problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The condition of the toilets.

The above views are taken from the pre-inspection meeting that was attended by 32 parents and the 270 responses to the parents' questionnaires. Evidence from inspection supports the parents' positive views. The toilets are being replaced.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1 Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are average. This is confirmed by the school's baseline assessment and inspection findings. The pupils get a good start in the nursery and reception classes. The combination of good quality teaching and the children's own enthusiasm for learning ensures that the pupils make consistently good progress through this stage of their learning. The pupils make very good progress with their personal, social and emotional development. The children have very positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. Behaviour is very good and the children work well in pairs, small groups and independently. Relationships with each other and the adults in their classes are very good. Again, because of the good teaching the children make good progress in developing their communication, language and literacy skills. By the time they reach Year 1, most children will exceed the standards expected nationally. Speaking and listening are consistently promoted and the children are always expected to explain what they are doing. Many of the children have a good range of vocabulary and even the youngest children in the nursery select books and attempt to read them to one another. Reception children read simple words and attempt to write their names in pencil and crayon and on the computer. The children's mathematical development is good. Reception children have developed a very good understanding of basic addition and subtraction and can count confidently to ten. Many of the more able children count well beyond this. The majority of children are in line to reach standards that are above those expected nationally, by the time they reach Year 1. Because of the children's enthusiasm for learning and the quality experiences offered by the nursery and reception classes the children's knowledge and understanding of the world develop well. Visitors are frequently invited to work with the pupils and good opportunities are provided to develop the children's cultural understanding. Nursery children look at other countries around the world while in the reception classes they learn about their senses and have an understanding of simple chronology. All of the children use the computer confidently, working with the keyboard and mouse. The children's physical development progresses well and most children will exceed the expected levels at the end of the reception year. The safe outdoor play area behind the nursery is used to good effect, providing good opportunities to work with a range of equipment. The majority of children move with confidence and develop a sound awareness of their bodies. Scissors, paint brushes and pencils are used with appropriate control. The children do well in their creative development and most pupils will exceed the standards expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. They sing songs enthusiastically and express their own ideas through well-organised role-play sessions. Good quality artwork is produced using a variety of techniques.

2 National test results for 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 show that attainment was below the national average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools standards were well below average. National test results for the same year at Key Stage 2 show that attainment in English, mathematics and science were above the national average although when compared to similar schools standards in English and science were below average. Standards in mathematics were broadly in line with the average for similar schools. Although there were no national comparisons at the time of the inspection, results for 2000 show an improvement at Key Stage 1 and comparable results at Key Stage 2. In 1999 at Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils who achieved the higher level 5 was well above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Not only have these levels been maintained in 2000 but the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 at Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and

mathematics has also improved significantly. The school's improvement is broadly in line with the national trend.

3 The school's test results do indicate that there are significant differences between some of the year groups. For example, the Key Stage 1 national test results for 1999 relate to a year group that has a larger percentage of pupils with special educational needs than the school average and also a higher proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The Year 6 in 1999 had increased in size by about 15% during the four years from Key Stage 1 whilst the Year 6 in 2000 hardly increased in size at all as it moved through the school. Inspection evidence indicates that the school monitors the progress and performance of its pupils very rigorously to ensure that pupils are challenged effectively and provided with opportunities to fulfil their individual potential. The school operates a register of gifted and talented pupils who are provided with extra support in English, mathematics and science. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls at Key Stage 1, but the performance of girls in Key Stage 2 is better than that of the boys, in line with the national picture. The school is not complacent and as part of the teaching and learning element of the school improvement plan, there will be a focus on how different groups of pupils learn.

4 In Key Stage 2 attainment is currently above average in English, mathematics and science. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above average in English and average in mathematics and science. In religious education standards are in line with those expected by the locally agreed syllabus by the end of both key stages. In the foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology and physical education standards are average. Standards in music are average at Key Stage 1 but above average at the end of Key Stage 2.

5 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' speaking and listening skills are average overall, although pupils listen very well to each other and their teachers. Reading is above average and most pupils read with confidence, fluency and good expression. Pupils are able to use different strategies to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words and can talk about the different characters in a story. Standards in writing are above average, with pupils presenting their work well and producing accurate sentences that include punctuation. They use dictionaries and wordbooks to extend their vocabulary. The more able pupils are reaching standards that are above those expected nationally in mathematics but overall standards are average, with pupils developing a good knowledge of addition and subtraction facts with numbers up to ten. Pupils' understanding of place value is more limited. In science pupils study the effects of exercise, recording their results in bar graphs and are able to recognise the risk associated with the storage of medicines.

6 At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils still listen effectively but there is little evidence of pupils questioning the ideas and opinions of others. Standards in reading are average. Pupils have a sound understanding of what they are reading and are able to predict what might happen next in a piece of writing and give reasons for their answers. However, even the higher attaining pupils have difficulty in reading unfamiliar and more complex words and their strategies for understanding these words are limited. Standards in writing are good with pupils writing for a good range of purposes and different audiences. The majority of pupils are capable mathematicians. Their mathematical language is well developed. More able pupils have a good understanding of place value. Pupils have a good scientific vocabulary in relation to habitats and food webs. They understand photosynthesis and have developed good investigative skills.

7 Pupils' achievement is good overall but there are a number of inconsistencies. Progress in mathematics and science is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage

2. Progress in English is good across both key stages. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology, geography, history, physical education and religious education across both key stages. Pupils' progress in art is good overall and often very good at Key Stage 1. Progress in music is good across both key stages. Although progress in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall through the school, some pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching, particularly in terms of subject knowledge and lesson organisation. Although progress is good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 2, it is uneven and accelerates in Years 5 and 6.

8 Pupils with special educational needs attain standards that are below average levels with some attaining standards that are well below average, particularly those pupils having statements of special educational needs. They are well supported by class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator. Progress is good across both key stages because of the good provision made within classes and when pupils are withdrawn. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9 As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' attitudes to school are good. Ninety-five per cent of parents replying to the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that their child likes school. In the majority of situations pupils' interest and involvement in activities is good and most pupils demonstrate a positive attitude to learning and enjoyment in what is being taught. Pupils are capable of careful presentation of their work. In mathematics, science and design and technology pupils handle and share resources carefully and sensibly, and they work together co-operatively in information and communication technology. There are a small number of pupils who are not attentive or motivated by learning experiences.

10 Pupils' behaviour in the classroom and playground is good. During the school day pupils move around the school in a sensible and orderly way. However, in unsupervised situations during lunchtime, less than satisfactory behaviour was observed in corridors and other parts of the school. Pupils are aware of the consequences of misconduct, although inspectors found an inconsistent approach to sanctions across the school. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting were happy about behaviour and agreed that any isolated incidents of bullying were dealt with quickly and effectively. Good behaviour is appropriately rewarded through individual awards and by house points. During the inspection no incidents of unkind behaviour between pupils were observed. There have been no exclusions in the last school year.

11 Opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in the life of the school have improved since the time of the last inspection. There are a number of useful opportunities for pupils' personal development by showing initiative and taking responsibility both in the classroom and around the school. Pupils have a rota of designated jobs within their classrooms and all Year 6 pupils have monitorial roles and take responsibility around the school. This includes putting out chairs for assembly and monitoring the use of computers during lunchtimes. Pupils handle these responsibilities reliably and efficiently and they make a positive contribution to their personal development. A significantly large majority of parents replying to the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school helps their child to become mature and responsible.

12 Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to learning and behaviour is good because they are well integrated into classes and participate fully in the learning opportunities. Those pupils with behavioural difficulties are supported appropriately to promote their personal development well.

13 Relationships at the school are very good and pupils show respect for the feelings and values of others. Pupils form good relationships with each other, with teachers and with other adults. Throughout the inspection examples were seen of pupils working together collaboratively and of their respect for each other and their teachers. Pupils celebrate each other's successes, both those of individuals and of teams.

14 Attendance at the school is satisfactory. There are no persistent or unauthorised absences. However, the small numbers of pupils taking holidays in term time have an effect on attendance figures.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15 The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is judged to be good. Of the lessons observed during the inspection period, 19% were very good, 54% good and 26% satisfactory. Two per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage and in literacy and numeracy.

16 The small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching was the result of teachers' weak subject knowledge and ineffective behaviour management strategies in just two lessons. Teaching and learning are particularly strong in Years 5 and 6 where there is a high percentage of very good lessons. In these lessons accelerated progress is made by pupils in their learning.

17 The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. The percentage of lessons judged to be unsatisfactory has declined and the good and very good teaching has increased. The school has an increased awareness of the need to target a range of strategies for improving the quality of teaching and learning through school development planning. Monitoring systems have been introduced. Senior staff observe lessons and report their findings to teachers, highlighting strengths and weaknesses in their work. The ensuing discussion identifies focussed areas for improvement. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies over the last three years has also given teachers a good framework for planning and more precise direction in the delivery of lessons. All these factors have made a contribution to the improvement in the quality of teaching and this in turn has had a favourable impact on the way in which pupils make progress.

18 Teachers' planning is good. Lesson objectives are identified clearly and shared with pupils at the start of each lesson. A logical pattern is followed, increasing the level of challenge so that pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding as the lesson unfolds. This was shown clearly in a Year 6 science lesson about food chains. Here the teacher prepared a good range of matched tasks which extended pupils of each attainment level and ensured all made very good progress. However, this is not always the case. In a minority of lessons teachers do not vary tasks to suit pupils' attainment levels. This was observed for example in a Year 3 religious education lesson. The tasks set were too difficult for lower attaining pupils and they became frustrated and restless. Pupils with more advanced writing skills and greater understanding soon finished the task and became bored. The grouping of pupils according to ability for English and mathematics has enabled teachers to plan work more effectively for the appropriate levels of attainment. This system is working well in Key Stage 2 and is helping to extend pupils' learning more rapidly.

19 Teachers generally have high expectations of their pupils. They pose challenging questions to encourage pupils to reason. This approach is often used to good effect in mental mathematics sessions. In one excellent Year 5 lesson, the teacher made learning fun. During the opening mental session questions were posed, such as, "How did you work

it out?" and "What will happen next?" The activity enhanced pupils' thinking skills and helped to deepen their understanding.

20 Most teachers have a lively approach. They stimulate pupils' interest and give clear descriptions and explanations. They make clear to pupils what they are expected to learn in the lesson. This is a very good feature of teaching in the school. Teachers reinforce the important words within the subject vocabulary so that pupils learn accurate terms, as in a Year 2 information and communication technology lesson. Pupils learnt the new language of 'insert', 'drag' and 'maximise', applying them in their work.

21 Teachers generally manage pupils well in lessons. They have a good discipline framework, ensuring that pupils behave well and settle to tasks quickly. They usually move around the classroom or hall monitoring pupils' work and making suggestions on how work can be improved. This was shown in a Year 3 physical education lesson. Challenging tasks were set for pairs of pupils on the mat and the teacher moved quickly between the pupils, making suggestions as to how movements could be refined. When pupils were instructed to stop by the teacher and sit beside the mats, the instruction was followed quickly.

22 Lessons usually move along at a brisk pace and pupils listen and concentrate well. Levels of learning are good and pupils gain knowledge and depth of understanding within the time allotted for the lesson. There are times, however, when teachers spend too long on the lesson introduction. This leaves insufficient time for pupils to consolidate their new learning and only a comparatively small amount of work is completed before the lesson ends.

23 Learning support assistants are deployed effectively, especially in Key Stage 1. In a Year 1 religious education lesson two assistants worked well with small groups of pupils encouraging them to use their spoken language skills whilst discussing what they valued most in life and why we should be grateful to God.

24 Resources are generally used appropriately, especially in mathematics investigation lessons. This helps pupils to see relationships and build concepts. The marking of pupils' work is undertaken thoroughly by teachers. There are some very good examples of well targeted marking in Year 6. In this year group teachers write detailed and pertinent comments about completed work in pupils' exercise books. They also give pupils a clear indication of where errors were made and what might improve the quality of work. Pupils receive homework regularly to reinforce work undertaken in lessons. In Key Stage 2 it is particularly effective in enhancing the skills and the levels of understanding gained by pupils in school.

25 Work for pupils with special educational needs is different from that of other pupils, where appropriate, and is clearly targeted by all teachers to meet their needs. Individual education plans are drawn up by the special needs co-ordinator, in conjunction with class teacher discussion for pupils on Stage 2 and above, on the school's special needs register. Class teachers are responsible for the plans for Stage 1 pupils, but are guided by the co-ordinator. These plans are used throughout the school by teachers and support staff to help pupils learn. They are well written with clear and specific targets for learning, which result in a well-constructed learning programme being devised. This is delivered by class teachers and well-informed learning support assistants, and by the special needs co-ordinator who gives support both within classes and withdrawal situations. Additional support provided by outside agencies when necessary, contributes effectively to pupils learning. The teaching for the pupils who have English as an additional language is good.

26 The school is making appropriate provision for talented and gifted pupils. The setting system for English and mathematics in Key Stage 2, the planned homework given to pupils and the good range of extra-curricular activities cater well for these pupils, enabling them to reach their potential.

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

27 The previous report found the curriculum to be broad and balanced, however, information technology did not meet statutory requirements. The curriculum now does meet statutory requirements. It remains broad and balanced and the school is further developing the programme for information and communication technology. The curriculum provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to make progress in all subjects.

28 The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good and well linked to the Early Learning Goals for children in the nursery and reception classes. Planning in all of these classes is good. The quality of planning in Key Stages 1 and 2 has been maintained and some aspects have been improved recently. Schemes of work are being modified and updated to meet the latest government requirements. Co-ordinators take responsibility for half termly planning in their subjects. Clear learning objectives are identified which ensure that learning is continuous and that there is steady progress in acquiring new skills. A very recent development has been the introduction of assessment to determine how successfully topics have been taught and learnt, so that future planning can be modified if necessary. The practice of completing this part of the plans has not yet become standard. Teachers follow the good practice of making weekly plans in close consultation with colleagues in parallel classes. Challenging work is planned for pupils of different abilities in many lessons, for example literacy. However this is not done consistently in all subjects at present.

29 There are effective strategies in place to teach literacy and numeracy skills. Although literacy and numeracy are firmly embedded into the specific subject areas of English and mathematics, links with other subjects are only loosely structured. There is no overall plan for consolidating literacy and numeracy skills in subjects such as science, geography, history, religious education and physical education. Opportunities to reinforce basic skills do occur but they are random and do not lead to progressive learning. Similarly, the development of information technology skills in subject areas tend to be unstructured and they are not planned to dovetail with the information and communication technology programmes.

30 The range of extra-curricular activities remains good. There is a variety of activities available for pupils in Key Stage 1, and older pupils have a wide choice of sporting and music clubs as well as a computer club. A homework club becomes active after Christmas; parents run a regular Friday club which offers three activities each term for pupils in both key stages; and a French club which uses the school premises, welcomes pupils as members. The school ensures that each class goes on a history or geography expedition each year and very often both, and the oldest pupils take part in an activities week. All these activities give pupils valuable educational and social experiences.

31 Provision for the pupils' personal, social, health and emotional education is good. The scheme of work is comprehensive. It includes attention to raising pupils' awareness of the dangers of drug misuse and provides sex education for the older pupils. The school makes good use of circle time both to promote awareness of others, of their feelings and problems, and also to enable pupils to express opinions and be involved in decision making.

32 The school has established a good range of links with the local community. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visitors to the school, such as members of the police, fire and ambulance service. Past pupils who are now parents give talks about their careers, local supermarkets contribute to school activities and local clubs and groups use the school. Two local sponsors provide the school with running and football kit. There are also links with local churches and religious groups.

33 Another strong feature is the good relations the school maintains with other educational establishments. The early years co-ordinator is part of the local education authority's Foundation Stage working party. There are visits between the local playgroups, and children are welcomed into the nursery for visits before attending regularly. Nursery nurse students come into school and secondary school students have work experience throughout the school. Pupils exchange e-mails with pupils in neighbouring schools. The school choirs meet other choirs and the local secondary school arranges an annual musical evening for local primary schools. There are meetings between primary and secondary curriculum co-ordinators, and the special educational needs co-ordinator regularly meets fellow co-ordinators in other schools. The secondary special educational needs co-ordinator visits the school to meet Year 6 pupils. The head and deputy headteachers meet colleagues regularly. Dudley College of Technology arranges an annual 'skills day' for Year 5 pupils and helps those in Year 6 make something special. Last year they built picnic seats and this year they are making large plant containers for the playground. These links contribute well to the all-round development of the pupils.

34 There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are given as many opportunities as other pupils to be involved in all areas of the curriculum, particularly in developing their basic skills, knowledge and understanding in English and mathematics. This may be by individual or group withdrawal, and also support in class when pupils are completing tasks set by teachers matched to targets in their individual education plans. These targets are regularly reviewed as a result of good monitoring by the class teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Classes for different ability groups in literacy and mathematics and some ability grouping in other subjects contribute effectively to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Basic English language and literacy skills are soundly promoted in classes. Teachers demonstrate that pupils with English as an additional language have good access to the curriculum.

35 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the previous inspection. Collective worship complies fully with legal requirements and provision is made if pupils need to withdraw from acts of worship. Pupils are given opportunities to say a prayer or sing a hymn in each assembly and some assemblies provide moments for quiet reflection. Assembly themes are planned and provide regular opportunities for pupils to reflect on particular aspects of life such as being special, sharing, friendship, fairness and to consider the impact individuals and countries can make to world issues such as famine, wars, droughts. Weekly class-based assemblies continue the theme of the week and pupils can discuss issues in more depth. Older pupils are given the opportunity to write or select poems and prayers that have particular meaning for them. Assemblies in both key stages provide opportunities for staff and children to value the out of school achievements of pupils in sports, dance and swimming and to celebrate any charities undertaken. Nursery and reception children have opportunities to develop a growing sense of themselves as unique individuals through planned topics on 'sharing', 'belonging' and 'my family'. Occasionally, assembly sessions and class lessons provide the pupils with opportunities to experience moments of awe and wonder about the world around them. For example during a mime session on sharing, when there was absolute silence; in a science lesson when pupils looked for living creatures in the school grounds; and in a music lesson when pupils spontaneously clapped with pleasure over the silence created when an instrument 'went to

sleep'. The religious education curriculum also contributes to pupils' spiritual development appropriately.

36 Since the previous inspection the good quality of provision for pupils' moral development has been maintained. The general view of parents is that the school provides a happy moral environment and teachers provide positive attitudes and values. They feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. The school has a 'positive behaviour policy' with rewards for academic achievement and good behaviour. The school places strong emphasis on teaching moral values that rewards behaviour as well as academic and personal achievements. From nursery onwards pupils wear special badges and younger children receive verbal praise stickers while older pupils have a house points system. There is also a system for rewarding whole class behaviour and ongoing personal efforts are rewarded by a 'letter of achievement' sent to parents. Pupils from an early age are encouraged to consider what is right and wrong and the personal and social curriculum provides further opportunities to discuss important social and moral issues. Teachers in Key Stage 1 share stories with moral themes such as behaving at home and at school, rules and friendship. In Key Stage 2 themes are built into the curriculum to ensure pupils reflect on increasingly complex concepts such as poverty, fairness, tolerance and commitment to a belief or religion. The parents feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. The school provides good opportunities for personal initiatives and independent learning. The deputy headteacher leads a school council to which pupils from each class are elected. Pupils have opportunities to raise issues that are important to them and to contribute to whole school decisions. Over the last year the issues raised included fear of bullying behaviour, lack of adequate outdoor play provision, rewards and sanctions. Older pupils are encouraged to take some personal responsibility and pupils in Year 6 chose jobs through the school. There are also opportunities for pupils to extend their research skills. Pupils are allowed to stay in at break times to work in the libraries and computer suites and have access to the Internet. Older pupils also have personal targets to achieve.

37 The school's provision for social development is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Parents feel that the school promotes this aspect well. The school motto 'together we care' reflects the climate of the school. The social provision for the younger children is very good. Children are helped to settle in and form effective social interactions as soon as they join the nursery. Considerable attention is paid to helping children in the nursery and reception classes to further develop their social skills by sharing, taking turns and playing together. Throughout the school there are also strategies to support new or isolated pupils who are identified as soon as possible and given additional support. The behaviour policy encourages good behaviour and children are asked to consider the impact of their behaviour on others. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to work together and form effective relationships, through planned trips and the many extra out of school activities. Events include end-of-year drama productions, music trips, and after-school opportunities to join computer, chess and drama clubs, a boys' choir and a girls' choir. There is also extensive after-school sports provision. The school works hard to include both girls and boys in such provision and encourages pupils to develop their unique talents. In music pupils have the opportunity to co-operate and perform with other schools and in physical education sessions, sports and games, pupils have many opportunities to compete and develop a sense of team spirit. The annual residential trip for Year 6 pupils provides many opportunities for them to co-operate and to face new challenges in a different social setting away from home. In lessons pupils are encouraged to share resources and collaborate, particularly in practical sessions in art, science, design and technology. The school annually fundraises and pupils can make suggestions for future fundraising events. This year's main charity is for National Children's Homes and last term some pupils raised money to for an Indian village with which they had a link.

38 The provision for cultural development is satisfactory as it was at the time of the last inspection. There have however been improvements since the previous inspection. Efforts have been made to increase the planned cultural provision and the breadth of provision has improved in music, art, religious education, history and geography. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the contribution of European and non-European cultures through the curriculum provision planned. In music, pupils use a range of musical instruments, learn about a number of composers and experience a wide range of music from around the world. In art, pupils are exposed to a wide range of artists such as Monet, Klee and Cézanne. Pupils are encouraged to develop their own creative skills through art, music and design and technology lessons. There are some opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 2 to learn about a range of countries and cultures through planned projects in geography. In history, pupils learn about famous people from the past and there has been a 'Victorian day' in Year 2 and a 'Tudor day' in Year 4. The opportunity to appreciate a range of cultures is well developed in religious education where pupils learn about a range of different faiths. There have been some improvements in multicultural provision since the time of the last inspection. Nursery and reception teachers provide stories, toys and resources in the role-play areas that include a range of cultures. The school has also purchased a broader range of reading, fiction and information books, which has begun to raise more awareness of the major cultures present in contemporary Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39 The school's procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are good, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting felt the school to be a caring environment where staff know the children well and respond quickly to problems. There is a named child protection officer and the school's policy is in line with local procedures. Teaching, non-teaching and lunchtime staff are aware of personnel and procedures involved. All staff have received basic first-aid training and two members of staff are qualified first aiders. All necessary procedures are in place to deal with minor incidents and accidents. There are comprehensive and detailed policies for sex, health and drugs education. Arrangements and procedures for the conduct of educational visits are rigorous and comply with local authority guidelines. The governing body has a health and safety committee and members participate in the termly audit of the school. The school has adopted the local authority health and safety policy. The school provides a safe environment for pupils and staff. Sensible security precautions are in place.

40 During the inspection inspectors saw no incidents of bullying or harassment and none were reported. An incident mentioned at the parents' meeting had been promptly and appropriately handled by the class teacher. Inspectors judge that the school's ethos is such as to ensure that pupils would be confident to report bullying and the school's consistent response would be effective in eliminating it. The procedures for promoting good behaviour are satisfactory. Good behaviour is suitably rewarded with praise and house points. However, sanctions for poor behaviour are occasionally inappropriate when, for example, pupils are given lines. In some classes pupils have been fully involved with the drawing up of sanctions but this good practice was found to be inconsistent between year groups.

41 Supervision during lunchtime is satisfactorily organised through a rota drawn up by the senior supervisor. Lunchtime staff meet with the deputy headteacher twice each term to discuss issues and concerns and to be updated on school policies and procedures. Pupils treat midday supervisors with politeness and courtesy. Procedures for monitoring and promoting regular attendance are good. Absence, and any reason for it, is carefully monitored by the headteacher. There are no persistent late arrivals. Parents are made aware of their responsibilities through the school brochure.

42 Throughout the school very good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and for the use of assessment information in planning work to match the needs of all pupils. The school has developed its assessment and recording procedures to good effect. The records are consistent, well maintained and inform all areas of pupils' development while they are in school. They are regularly monitored and senior managers are able to identify where teaching and resources need to be directed in order to support and improve the quality of learning for each individual. Pupils' targets are shared with senior managers and other teachers in order that progress can be measured at various times during the academic year. National tests and teacher assessments are used together to measure progress against pupils' targets. During the inspection, inspectors saw examples of good practice in the use of assessment in English, mathematics and science. However, the use of assessment in other subjects is underdeveloped. The system is well managed by the co-ordinator.

43 The academic performance and personal development of pupils with special educational needs are carefully monitored through the regular review of their needs. Information from individual education plans is shared appropriately with support staff.

44 Pupils with English as an additional language are appropriately assessed and monitored from when they enter the school. The school's good monitoring procedures ensure that progress is tracked regularly. External specialists are used when required. There is good support available to enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, to be well supported.

45 Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good through the use of the individual record folder. The profile is comprehensive and includes details of pupils' individual needs. There is no evidence of parental involvement in this process but comments on personal progress are included in the end-of-year report.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46 The school's partnership with parents is very good. The headteacher emphasises the value he puts on the relationship with parents and the inspection team judge that this relationship has improved and strengthened since the last inspection. The school has gained the support of a significant majority of parents. Ninety per cent of parents replying to the questionnaire agreed that the school works closely with parents. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting found a consistent attitude amongst staff in respect of their handling and responses to concerns and problems. Staff make themselves available to parents on a day-to-day basis and there are sufficient opportunities for listening to the concerns and suggestions of parents. The contribution of parents to pupils' learning at school and home is satisfactory. A number of parents and other adults help in the school frequently and on educational visits. A home-school association is well supported and runs successful fundraising events, which make good profits. These have helped to provide resources for the school and enhance the environment.

47 Three parents' evenings are held during the school year, the meeting in the summer term taking place after parents have received their child's annual report. Reports to parents evaluate academic progress well and contain useful information on personal and social development. Curriculum and topic-related information is distributed to parents on a termly basis. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting were well informed about what is happening in the school and satisfied with the education their children are receiving. A significant number of parents replying to the pre-inspection questionnaire indicate satisfaction on being kept informed of pupils' progress.

48 Eighty per cent of parents replying to the pre-inspection questionnaire express satisfaction with the amount of work their child has to do at home. The majority of parents agree that they know what homework to expect on which day. The homework policy is clearly written and homework is set in accordance with its guidelines and information displayed in classrooms related to the days on which homework is set and deadlines for completion. There is a well written and professionally presented school brochure. Letters to parents are good in relation to content and presentation as are the regular newsletters.

49 There is a good partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs, who are encouraged from the beginning to be fully involved with the education of their children. Parents are fully involved in the review process, establishing and revising review targets. This is appreciated by parents, the majority of whom are well satisfied with provision.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50 At the previous inspection leadership was described as 'strong, positive and effective'. This has been maintained by the current headteacher who has been a key appointment since the previous inspection. At the pre-inspection meeting with parents his positive impact on the school since his arrival and the improvement since the previous inspection were continually emphasised. The headteacher is well supported by the deputy head who is also a new appointment. They work well together and their different leadership styles complement each other well. They are both very calm and approachable. In turn, they are well supported by the two key stage co-ordinators, who with the headteacher and deputy make up an effective senior management team. The school has a very positive atmosphere and both pupils and staff are very happy. Teaching and non-teaching staff support each other well and it comes as no surprise that when the school was reassessed it continued to meet the standards set by Investors in People.

51 There is a strong sense of purpose in the school and the staff work well as a team. Much of this is encouraged through the good lines of communication with regular whole staff meetings, year group and key stage meetings. This can occasionally break down and during the inspection there were some examples of inconsistency between year groups, for example in behaviour management. However, considering the size of the school and the large sprawling site that has to be managed, communication is good. One notable feature is the termly meetings that the senior management team hold with each year group. This is used to discuss a range of issues but in general to monitor the progress and development of each pupil. This process guarantees that every pupil in the school is discussed by senior staff and class teachers at least once a term. This is good and effective practice. It also enables the school to target resources where they will be most effective. For example, the current Year 4 pupils receive extra adult support because of the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. During the last academic year extra resources were provided for Year 6 because of concerns about their progress. The school has collected a good range of data to monitor pupils' progress. This analysis is very well managed by the deputy headteacher who can provide quality information on every cohort of pupils in the school. This is contributing significantly in the school's quest to raise standards, although this information has only been in place for about twelve months and is yet to make an overall impact. However, this information is being used to provide realistic and challenging targets for the school in English and mathematics.

52 The school has good procedures for monitoring teaching and the curriculum. Teachers' weekly planning is monitored by the headteacher and deputy, whilst subject co-ordinators monitor the termly planning. Teaching is monitored through a subject focus identified in the school improvement plan. This process also includes a work scrutiny and

recommendations for improvement. The school improvement plan is a sound document that focuses on improving standards and is 'user friendly'. It is produced during the summer term following senior management team meetings and input from staff through key stage meetings. The final plan is shared with staff and governors during the autumn term. The current curriculum focus is on literacy and teaching and learning, the second aspect linking well with a project being undertaken by the local education authority. As part of this process staff will pair up to observe each other teach. The school improvement plan also includes other areas for development such as the school environment and staff development. Costs are clearly identified as are success criteria. The governors do not participate in the formation of the plan but do monitor its progress at all of their meetings. Although the current improvement plan focuses on just one year, a timetable is in place to ensure regular subject and documentation audits and there is a rolling programme for building development. Also included as part of the plan are individual management plans for the different subjects written by the subject co-ordinators. These enable all staff to have a clear view on how all subjects will develop. The leadership of many subjects is good.

53 The school governing body is a very supportive group and, as at the time of the previous inspection, is 'committed to the success of the school'. Governors are well informed about the school and have a good understanding about the standards the pupils achieve and the community that the school serves. Governors visit the school regularly and a number of them have sat in on lessons to develop a greater awareness of the curriculum. It has always been important to the governors to maintain single-age classes and to try to keep class numbers down. They have effectively achieved this aim. The school budget is put together by the headteacher, who is well supported by a local education authority bursar. This is then put to the governors' finance committee before being agreed by the full governing body. Spending priorities are well linked to the school improvement plan, particularly in terms of developing the accommodation. The school does its best to achieve good value for money, but the principles of best value are underdeveloped. The governing body meets its statutory requirements.

54 The well-informed special needs co-ordinator carries out her responsibilities most effectively, providing good leadership and advice for teachers. She maintains an accurate register and ensures that all individual education plans are up-to-date, appropriately detailed and regularly reviewed, in most cases on a termly basis. All staff are kept well informed of pupils' targets. Pupils' needs are well met as a result of this good management. The nominated special needs governor is interested, knowledgeable, and meets regularly with the co-ordinator to discuss developments in this area.

55 The school has a good balance of teachers who are suitably trained and qualified to meet the needs of pupils and ensure that the curriculum is delivered effectively to all pupils. The numbers and qualifications of non-teaching staff are good and this enables the work of teachers to be effectively supported. There is very good provision for special educational needs and the co-ordinator works alongside other teachers to the benefit of pupils. The number of job shares in the school is considered to have a beneficial effect on pupils' learning as a result of joint planning and attendance at parents' meetings, and the division of subject expertise.

56 The school considers the professional development of all staff members important, recognising that training benefits both the individual and school alike. There is a conscious attempt to balance individual and whole school needs in arrangements for staff development, which is reflected in the assessor's report for the Investors in People initiative. There are good arrangements in place for the support of newly qualified teachers and recently appointed members of staff.

57 The accommodation is extensive and has a number of features that impact on delivery of the curriculum: the two halls which can be used for physical education and large group work in mathematics and science; the grounds for science, geography and games; the information and communication technology suite; and the swimming pool. The school has done much to enhance its outside features through the use of benches, seats, a wild garden, an amphitheatre and paved areas, where children may sit and talk. The school has responded to criticisms about its provision for pupils with physical disabilities. Security of the site has been fully attended to and vandalism reduced. The site manager and his staff ensure that the building is kept very clean and free from litter. Despite these efforts the overall condition of the fabric of the building and internal decoration remains an area of concern. The school is sensitive to this issue and there is a rolling programme for repainting and carpeting areas. The toilets, much criticised by parents, are being replaced.

58 Inequalities in resourcing some curriculum areas reported in the previous inspection have been addressed. The school has allocated funds to resources, particularly literacy, and most subjects are now well resourced. The library stock has improved and provision for multicultural education has been improved. The school makes good use of its site as a curriculum resource. The curriculum is enhanced by a number of visits, including residential trips and visitors to school.

59 The school is effective and has improved well since the previous inspection. With the above average standards in English, mathematics and science, the good teaching, the pupils' positive attitudes and the good leadership and management, the school continues to provide good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60 In addition to the good work already being undertaken, to further improve the standards achieved and the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- 1. Extend the good practice seen in literacy and numeracy to ensure that activities provided for pupils are appropriate for all ranges of ability, particularly in science;** (Paragraphs 7, 18, 28, 101, 126)

- 2. Produce assessment procedures for those subjects that do not have them to ensure pupils' progress can be monitored effectively;** (Paragraphs 42, 118, 123, 140)

- 3. Ensure that pupils' reading records are used effectively to identify clearly any difficulties that pupils may have.** (Paragraph 83)

In addition to the above issues, the following less important matter should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Further develop the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.** (Paragraphs 29, 78, 81 and 93)

THE WORK OF THE LANGUAGE UNIT

61 The language unit is a strength of the school. This unit, centrally funded by the local education authority, caters for 12 pupils up to the end of Key Stage 1, who have a range of expressive language disorders. Pupils spend two days each week in the unit and the remaining three days in their local mainstream school. None of the pupils in the unit is currently attending Gig Mill School, but the headteacher and governing body are responsible for ensuring the quality of teaching and the health and safety of the pupils. Time spent in the unit is devoted to addressing the specific needs of the pupils, developing basic language and literacy skills and the acquisition of mathematical concepts. The accommodation consists of two attractive classrooms and toilet facilities. It provides a bright and attractive learning environment. A variety of good quality learning resources contribute effectively to pupils' learning.

62 Good documentation underpins the work in the unit. Individual education plans are of very good quality, with small, measurable targets, linked closely to the long-term targets set out in the pupils' statements. Day-to-day assessment effectively informs future teaching and planning. Pupils are carefully monitored through their individual education plans, which are regularly reviewed and targets adjusted as required. The unit receives good support from external agencies.

63 Standards of attainment of pupils in the language unit are below national expectations for pupils of their age because of their expressive language difficulties. However, the progress made by pupils is good. This is due to the sensitive and good quality support they receive from the teacher and the speech and language therapists, who provide one-to-one and small group help in language and literacy and mathematics. Pupils make very good progress in many aspects of learning, not directly linked to the National Curriculum, but identified in their individual education plans, for example, overcoming language difficulties, the ability to listen and look carefully and follow instructions. These high standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The good support pupils receive in the language unit together with the support from their families means that many pupils are able to return to their schools on a full-time basis after three or four terms.

64 Pupils are happy in the language unit and respond positively to activities presented to them. They show an interest in their work, which is maintained by the good teaching. Skilled adult intervention keeps pupils on task and helps them improve their concentration. They listen well to instructions and respond confidently because they are given good support to encourage speaking skills. Relationships between pupils and with the adults who help them are good. Behaviour is good. Pupils readily accept the help given and respond well to the positive encouragement. The good progress in learning leads to increased self-esteem.

65 The quality of teaching is good. A characteristic of the teaching is the very good knowledge the unit staff has of the strengths and weaknesses of the pupils. As a result pupils are given tasks which are well matched to their differing abilities. The good working relationships between the teacher and speech and language therapists are a strength of the provision, and have a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievement. In a literacy lesson, for example, following the introduction based on forming questions and responses correctly, the teacher then introduced a game. This was reinforced by the speech therapist as she supported pupils in a group, helping them to construct and extend sentences. The teacher and speech therapists monitor individual pupils' progress when they are not leading the session. Teaching is brisk and the adults employ a variety of methods to maintain pupils' interest. The management of pupils is good. Instructions are clear and praise is used effectively to encourage and develop confidence and self-esteem. High expectations and

effective use of resources are features of the good teaching. All adults in the unit provide good support for these pupils. The unit gives good value for money.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	111
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	45

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	18	54	26	2	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)	30	496
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	113

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	38	40	78

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	24	31
	Girls	35	34	36
	Total	64	58	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (81)	74 (88)	86 (89)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	32	29
	Girls	35	38	35
	Total	60	70	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (84)	90 (92)	82 (78)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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
	1999	40	36	76

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	27	32
	Girls	30	27	30
	Total	58	54	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (73)	71 (74)	82 (79)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	31
	Girls	31	27	29
	Total	58	55	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	76 (80)	72 (78)	79 (81)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	2
White	
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	28
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.9
Average class size	24.6

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	240

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

Number of pupils per FTE adult	15
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	976211
Total expenditure	952751
Expenditure per pupil	1704
Balance brought forward from previous year	36239
Balance carried forward to next year	59699

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	526
Number of questionnaires returned	270

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	61	34	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	49	44	4	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	54	2	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	54	12	1	7
The teaching is good.	51	42	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	47	12	4	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	26	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	42	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	38	51	5	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	55	39	2	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	46	48	2	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	46	13	2	11

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

66 Since the last inspection the school has responded positively to the new provision for children in the Foundation Stage and has maintained its high level of provision. All adults who work with these young children have worked hard to implement the new early learning goals. The children enter the nursery at three years old and at the time of the inspection there were 30 part timers on roll. In the reception classes there were 28 children attending full time. An effective induction programme, which results in the children settling into nursery life quickly and happily, has been successfully achieved. Parents are pleased with how quickly children settle into the nursery. They are happy with the provision their children receive.

67 Over recent years, observations from adults who work in the nursery and data from baseline assessments on entry to the reception class indicate that attainment on entry to the school is average. This year the majority of children are in line to exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Foundation Stage. A few children in the Foundation Stage have been identified as having special educational needs. There are no children with English as an additional language. Progress is good for all children in all areas of learning. Personal and social skills and communication, language and literacy skills are well promoted in all areas of learning and this enables a few pupils to make very good progress, in particular in the development of basic reading and writing skills. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

68 The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is closely linked to the early learning goals for children of this age. Planning in both classes is good. Profiles are developed on entry to the nursery, which broadly indicate what each child can do. Day to day assessments add useful information to these profiles and this information is used to determine the next step of learning. These profiles are sent to the reception class and are further developed. Links between the nursery and the reception class are very good.

69 Good learning resources promote all areas of learning inside and outside the classroom. The nursery has its own secure outside play area in which facilities are good and are well used. There are grassed areas as well as playground surfaces for the children to develop skills when using wheeled vehicles and small apparatus. The children confidently use climbing equipment inside the nursery and they use the hall once each week in the main school to develop physical skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

70 Teaching is consistently very good and this area is promoted well in everything the children take part in, which results in very good progress. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 they should reach standards that are higher than the levels expected for children of this age. The children show very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. Most demonstrate very good listening skills as they take part in the activities offered to them. Behaviour is very good and the children demonstrate very good relationships with the adults who work with them and with each other. Most concentrate well as they work in pairs and small groups and begin to develop the skills necessary to work independently. All children select activities with confidence and tidy away well at the end of the sessions.

Communication, language and literacy

71 The quality of teaching of communication, language and literacy skills is very good in the nursery and the reception classes. By the time they reach Year 1 most children will attain standards above what is expected nationally. Adults who work with children in the Foundation Stage consistently promote the development of speaking and listening skills and this is a strength. For example, the children are consistently expected to explain what they are doing. Progress is very good. The majority of children use a very good range of vocabulary and many are able to recall information confidently. For example, in the nursery one child who was listening to music said, "This music is African. Africa is a very hot country". All children enjoy listening to stories and enjoy looking at books. Children have the opportunity to look at books about people from different cultures and this area promotes their cultural development well. Most understand the purpose of books and handle them carefully. The youngest children in the nursery were observed selecting books and attempting to read them to each other. In the nursery the children begin to recognise some initial letter sounds. Many identify familiar words and begin to follow text as an adult reads. As they get older they build on these skills and in the reception classes many children read simple extracts from books with increasing accuracy. They learn the names and sounds of letters and identify common words. All children attempt to write their names, in pencil and crayon, and on the computer. They record their ideas and experiences through drawing and writing at a basic level. In the reception classes they begin to write simple sentences, build on their knowledge of sounds and systematically develop their handwriting.

Mathematical development

72 Teaching is good and the children make good progress due to the consistent development of basic mathematical skills and vocabulary in many of the activities offered to them. For example, in the nursery children complete number jigsaws and begin to learn how to count objects with increasing accuracy. Most begin to develop some understanding of two-dimensional shapes such as squares and circles. In the reception classes they develop a very good understanding of basic addition and subtraction as they work out 'one more than' and 'one less than'. They count apples on trees using numbers up to 10. More able pupils skilfully use numbers over ten. The children confidently record their results and learn how to write numbers correctly. Speaking and listening skills are very well promoted in this area of learning. The majority are in line to reach standards, which are above those expected nationally.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73 Teaching is good and the children are eager to learn. This promotes good progress. There are good opportunities to promote the children's cultural development. Visitors are frequently invited in to work with the children, for example a visitor to the nursery made chapatis with the children. Adults take advantage of all opportunities to develop understanding in this area of learning, which results with most children reaching standards, which are higher than those expected nationally. In the nursery the children learn basic information about other countries. For example, they listen to music from different countries and begin to name other countries. A few know where we live and that different countries have different climates. The children talk about people who have lived a long time, such as their grandparents. They plant bulbs and talk very knowledgeably about what plants need in order to grow. The children understand that we, as humans also need food and water to survive. All children have many opportunities to watch seeds and plants grow. By the time they leave the reception class most children begin to understand that certain factors are necessary in order to live. They learn about their senses and begin to understand how important it is to be able to hear and see. 'Birthday time lines', developed in each reception class, enhance the children's understanding of chronology. Children in both classes listen carefully and learn and sing simple songs and rhymes. They confidently select materials and

equipment to make models from recycled materials and develop skills needed to cut, stick and thread materials together. The youngest children, in the nursery, enthusiastically use simple computer programs, which teach and reinforce many basic literacy and numeracy skills. In the reception classes children develop a good knowledge of the keyboard and move the cursor confidently around the screen. Lower ability children work on the computer with extra adult support.

Physical development

74 Teaching is good overall and most children exceed the expected levels by the end of the reception classes. Progress is good and this is due to the many daily opportunities for safe outdoor play in a well developed area at the back of the nursery. The children use the good range of equipment including wheeled vehicles and climbing apparatus with enthusiasm and enjoyment. They develop sound body awareness and the majority move with confidence and listen well to instructions because good teaching promotes listening skills in all activities. The children handle scissors, paint brushes and pencils with reasonable control. All children use materials such as plasticine or clay. In the nursery, after listening to a story, the children enthusiastically talk about the 'Runaway Chapatis' they make from clay.

Creative development

75 Good teaching and support are enabling most of the children to exceed the standards expected nationally by the time they enter Year 1. Progress is good as the children sing songs with great enjoyment. All children have opportunities to express their own ideas and communicate their feelings through well-organised role-play sessions in the classrooms. For example in the reception classes they play in 'Granny's Café'. Careful artwork is created using a good variety of techniques such as collage, printing, painting and drawing. In the nursery the children carefully make collage faces on paper plates and in reception they print using three-dimensional shapes to make two-dimensional images. The adults who work in the nursery and the reception class value all artwork. Good quality displays enhance the learning environment, such as the portraits of 'all kinds of people' which reflect the multicultural nature of our society.

ENGLISH

76 The results of the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that standards in English were above the national average by the end of Key Stage 2. The percentage of pupils that achieved the higher level 5 in English was well above the national average. Standards were below average when compared with similar schools. Test results for the same year at the end of Key Stage 1, show standards to be below the national average in reading and writing. When compared with similar schools they were well below average. However, this particular cohort of pupils has a larger than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs.

77 The national test results for 2000 results indicate an improvement at Key Stage 1 and comparable results at Key Stage 2; however, there were no national comparisons at the time of the inspection. Inspection findings indicate that standards vary in different year groups but currently, by the end of both key stages, attainment is above the national average. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1 reading and writing are above the national average. Reading is average at the end of Key Stage 2 but writing is above the national average. Speaking and listening skills are in line with the national average at the end of both key stages.

78 Listening skills are above average in both key stages because most pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning and consistently respond well to lessons. Speaking skills are generally well promoted although some teachers can miss opportunities to extend pupils' clarity when speaking. In Years 5 and 6, there is little evidence of pupils questioning the ideas and opinions of others in class discussions. Adults who work with them do not encourage pupils to ask questions to develop their ideas. These minor weaknesses in the teaching of speaking skills have an impact on attainment over time. A good example of speaking skills being well promoted was seen in a Year 2 class where the teacher, who provided a good model of clear speech herself, encouraged pupils to speak clearly when they asked questions.

79 Standards in reading are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils read and discuss a good variety of texts. Most read with confidence, fluency and good expression; however, less able readers do not read with appropriate expression. Pupils can identify different characters' feelings in the texts that they read. For example, one pupil in Year 2 noted that the lady in the story was sad because she did not have enough money to live. Most identify the title and author of the books they read. Many pupils confidently use different strategies to decipher words that they have difficulty reading. Less able pupils identify the characters they like best in the stories they read. Attainment in reading varies within Key Stage 2. By the end of the key stage the present Year 6 pupils will reach standards that are in line with the national average. Most pupils demonstrate sound understanding of the text and confidently talk about what might happen next giving reasons for their answers. Less able pupils sometimes have difficulty understanding some words they read. Reading records vary in quality and do not consistently show what pupils need to do in order to develop strategies for working out unknown words. Many pupils of all abilities have difficulty reading unfamiliar and more complex words such as 'gingham'. This affects the attainment of all pupils.

80 Standards in writing are above the national average by the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a good idea of how to write and punctuate a sentence. They use dictionaries and wordbooks with confidence and spell familiar words independently. Most pupils develop a neatly formed cursive script although a few less able pupils do not join their letters. Work is usually well presented. By the age of eleven pupils write for a wide range of purposes and audiences such as descriptive writing, poetry, letters, diary extracts and writing imaginatively. A good example was noted in Year 6 as they wrote descriptive poems entitled *The Meander and the Waterfall* after going on a river walk during a geography trip.

81 In Key Stage 1 pupils listen well as they explore different texts to gain information and understanding. Pupils identify basic punctuation needed to write sentences correctly. The youngest pupils show confidence when attempting to write independently. For example, pupils in Year 1 were seen developing all literacy skills as they completed activities after discussing *The Bear Hunt*. However, there is no overall plan for the development of literacy skills in other subjects. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils show a good understanding of the texts they read. Many use initial sounds and blends to help them to work out unknown words. Most pupils have a good idea of the difference between fiction and non-fiction books.

82 In Key Stage 2 pupils generally talk with more confidence and listen and respond carefully to questions directed at them. A few pupils are confused about the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. A small proportion of pupils in all ability groups have developed limited reading strategies to help them to decipher unknown words. Pupils write for a wide range of different purposes; for example in Year 6 they learn about the differences between biographical and non-biographical writing and distinguish between fact

and fiction in texts. Younger pupils in the key stage build on previous experiences and develop a good understanding of writing instructions. Words aimed to improve the standards in spelling are learnt in both key stages.

83 The quality of teaching in the literacy hour is good. It is very good in 20% of lessons. There has been an improvement in teaching in English since the previous inspection. In the best lessons teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge and have worked hard to implement the guidance and materials of the National Literacy Strategy into their teaching. This promotes pupils' very good attitudes to learning which are evident in both key stages. The pupils are placed into ability sets at Key Stage 2, and in both key stages all teachers and support staff develop very good relationships with the pupils they teach for English. Support staff are used well and activities are very well matched to the pupils' needs; for example, in the Year 6 lower ability class, support staff worked with small groups as the pupils completed work on developing their autobiographies. Some challenging behaviour was well managed. Pupils enthusiastically take part in the activities they are offered, sustaining concentration and generally working well together. Teachers manage their classes well, have high expectations regarding behaviour and their questioning is challenging. Pupils respond positively to this and demonstrate very good listening skills, settle quickly and show high standards of behaviour. Marking is always supportive and the best examples show the pupils what they need to do in order to improve. Resources such as wordbanks and dictionaries are used well in lessons. Sound day-to-day assessments on individual pupils are kept; however teachers' reading records do not identify clearly what pupils are having difficulty with, in particular sounding out unknown words. This was an issue during the previous inspection, which has not been fully addressed. Pupils learn effectively, and despite some areas of teaching that require development, progress is good for most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

84 The subject is satisfactorily led and the two co-ordinators are aware of the need to develop specific guidelines for teachers to plan more systematically for the development of speaking skills including planned drama activities. Planning is monitored for coverage of the National Curriculum and the procedures for tracking the progress of individual pupils are very good throughout the school. Classes have begun to develop English targets for pupils. Teachers evaluate their lessons and, in the best instances, comments on planning forms indicate that this valuable information is used to inform future teaching and planning. Resources for teaching the literacy hour are good. All classes regularly visit the library areas, which are well located in areas around the school. These areas are suitably stocked with a wide selection of books. Reading tests are completed and this information is used to develop ability groups for English in Key Stage 2. Word processing skills are effectively developed in all year groups. Well presented examples of 'best' writing in the school show that pupils develop good skills in drafting and re-drafting work as they move through the school. Displays in classrooms celebrate the work of the pupils and reinforce literacy skills taught.

MATHEMATICS

85 At the end of Key Stage 2 the oldest pupils in the school reach above average standards in mathematics. The vast majority of pupils are in line to attain at least the national expectations. Only a small percentage of pupils are below the national standard and many are in line to achieve the higher level 5. The National Curriculum tests for 1999 and 2000 support inspection judgements. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils in the Year 2 classes are in line to attain average national standards. The National Curriculum test results for 1999 were well below average, but the 2000 results were much improved and are expected to be closer to the national average level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1.

Compared with similar schools, results in Key Stage 2 are broadly the same but in Key Stage 1 they are below. There is however, a general trend of improvement in standards, largely in line with the national picture.

86 In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in their learning. The most significant progress is made in Years 5 and 6, where the most effective teaching takes place. In Key Stage 1 pupils make sound progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language generally make good progress through the school.

87 The highest attaining pupils in Year 6 have a very good understanding of the place value of numbers and undertake multiplication of two and three digit numbers successfully. They use alternative systems of multiplication by the use of doubling techniques. Calculators are used effectively to check their own answers. In class mental mathematics sessions pupils refer to square numbers and square roots when formulating answers. Average attainers are capable mathematicians. They are familiar with fractions and convert mixed numbers to improper fractions, using division methods, based on their knowledge of multiplication tables. Their mathematical language is well developed, and includes terms such as 'denominator' and 'numerator'. The lower attaining pupils can multiply two digit numbers by a one digit number, partitioning the larger number into two parts. They have a good recall of early multiplication tables but find it difficult to divide by 7 and 8.

88 At Key Stage 1 the higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are working at levels above the nationally expected standard. By feeling shapes, placed behind their backs, so that they cannot be seen, they identify three-dimensional shapes such as cubes, cuboids, cylinders, triangular prisms and pyramids with a square base. They also recognise shapes from written descriptions. Average attaining pupils have a good understanding of addition and subtraction facts when working with numbers up to 10. They are beginning to know number bonds to 20. However, many pupils working at this level find it difficult to subtract 7 from 37 using place value cards. They are unsure of the tens' value. Lower attaining pupils can sequence numbers to 20. They know the names of regular two-dimensional shapes and recall the number of sides of pentagons and hexagons.

89 The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards have largely been maintained. Assessment procedures, which were not in place during the previous inspection, are now well developed and are proving to be a useful tool in informing planning. The system of planning has been refined and has a sharp focus on learning objectives. In addition the quality of teaching, the level of resources and the management of the subject have all shown improvement.

90 The quality of teaching is consistently good in Key Stage 2 with 80% of lessons judged to be good or better. In Years 5 and 6 standards are high. All teaching is judged to be good and 44% is very good or excellent. The quality of pupils' learning is enhanced by the impact of this high quality teaching. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is judged to be sound overall. All teaching is at least satisfactory and there are a significant number of good lessons.

91 Lessons are well planned by teachers in both key stages. A consistent approach is used, in line with that recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. Precise learning objectives are identified and shared with pupils at the start of the lesson. Pupils have a good understanding of what is expected and how it is to be achieved. There is a clear focus on the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. Tasks are generally well matched to pupils' levels of attainment. The grouping of pupils in different classes according to their ability in Key Stage 2 is particularly effective. Teachers manage classes well. This was

demonstrated particularly well in a lower set Year 4 lesson when the teacher skilfully retained pupils' interest by making tasks both practical and interesting. Praise and rewards, in the form of team points, were given to those pupils. As a result pupils concentrated and responded positively. Teachers' expectations are generally high in Key Stage 2. They set challenging tasks, particularly in mental sessions and question pupils rigorously to develop their reasoning skills.

92 Most lessons are lively and move at a brisk pace but occasionally instructions are too long and insufficient time is made available for pupils to complete the designated tasks. Classroom support is used effectively, as are resources, to enhance pupils' understanding of mathematical concepts, especially in investigative work. Teachers have a clear understanding of the levels of attainment that pupils are achieving. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly. At the end of Key Stage 2 teachers' marking is undertaken very efficiently. Comments on completed work are precise and positive. They give pupils an insight into the steps needed to improve their work. Teachers set their pupils regular homework. It is well focussed to support the mathematical topic being taught during the school week. In Key Stage 2 it is particularly well matched and challenging. A good example is the homework set for the higher attaining pupils in Year 6, which involved a detailed investigation of algebraic formulae. Homework consolidates and extends pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding, generally raising the standard in school. Pupils show positive attitudes and behave well in lessons, an outcome of good teacher management and well planned, interesting lessons. There is a good response to teachers' questions. The pupils' work is well presented because teachers insist on neat work and give reasons why this is important when calculation takes place.

93 There is a good school curriculum. It is broad and well balanced, covering all the elements of the National Numeracy Strategy. Commercial schemes are used to supplement the work within the national strategy successfully. The well developed ability group system in Key Stage 2 and the grouping of pupils by attainment level in Key Stage 1 ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good access and opportunity to the curriculum. However, there are two minor weaknesses in curriculum provision. Firstly, numeracy skills are not extended in a structured manner into other subject areas. Teachers fail to capitalise on opportunities to build further pupils' skills and knowledge. Secondly, although pupils are developing skills in information technology, there is little evidence of these skills being transferred to mathematical work.

94 Assessment procedures are good. Pupils are tracked through the school. The progress is monitored through regular testing. This is used to inform teachers' planning effectively. A very positive recent development is the setting of targets for pupils to achieve within the term. This enables pupils to understand what is required to make further progress in their work.

95 The subject is very well led and managed by the deputy headteacher. A particular strength is the detailed analysis of pupils' performance in all the various aspects of mathematics. This enables teachers to focus their teaching on identified weaknesses in pupils' understanding, such as Venn diagrams and sequencing, so rectifying misunderstandings for the following year. The co-ordinator is given additional help by the mathematics support team. The group helps to shape the direction of the subject throughout the school by identifying priorities. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored thoroughly by the senior management team and the co-ordinator. Judged by the standard observed during the inspection, the monitoring process is having a positive impact. The quantity and quality of resources are good and support pupils well, especially in investigative work and work with shape, space and measurement.

SCIENCE

96 Teacher assessment in 1999 indicated that standards in science by the end of Key Stage 1 were below the national average and well below in comparison with similar schools. The number of pupils attaining higher levels at Key Stage 1 was well below average. National tests by the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that standards are above the national average but below when compared with schools of a similar type. The trend shows a pattern of continued improvement in science over the last three years, with girls generally performing better than boys. Although there were no national comparisons available at the time of the inspection, teacher assessment and tests results in 2000 show an improvement at Key Stage 1 and comparable results at the end of Key Stage 2.

97 The previous inspection judged attainment in science to be average at both key stages. Overall, progress at both key stages was also satisfactory although the development of investigative and experimental skills was less consistent.

98 Evidence from the inspection shows that pupils' attainment at Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average and attainment at Key Stage 2 is above the national average. Differences in the performance for Key Stage 2 over the previous inspection can be explained. The implementation of investigative and experimental science has been fully integrated into the existing programme of work, monitoring of classroom practice has been introduced and weaknesses in teaching have been tackled through staff development and training.

99 At Key Stage 1 pupils in Year 1 observe and describe living and non-living things they have collected in the school grounds. They sort them into two groups and several pupils give reasons why one group are living, for example because of movement and feeding. In earlier work they describe what happens when materials are stretched and they outline the changes which occur when cooking an egg. Year 2 pupils recognise the risks and hazards with medicines, explaining the necessity for storage and reading instructions. In one class they carried out a simple test in which they predicted the risks associated with the storage of medicines. In looking at the effects of exercise they make 'before and after' comparisons for different physical activities and record their results in bar graphs.

100 At Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 3 can produce balanced diets for different groups of people and previous work shows they can measure, predict and suggest steps for fair testing when observing cars travelling down a ramp. In an investigation into mixing different materials, Year 4 pupils anticipate outcomes, record their results and offer accounts for what happened. However, they are insecure in their understanding of fair testing and how to ensure control in their experiments. Older pupils can describe the life cycle of flowering plants and provide detailed accounts involving independent research on seed dispersal and pollination. Year 6 pupils know how to construct a food chain, have good scientific vocabulary and terminology relating to habitats and food webs, with many pupils able to see the implications for ecosystems. They understand the process of photosynthesis and transpiration in plants and can use the Internet to access information on different habitats. Their previous work shows that they have a good grounding in investigative procedures, can draw conclusions from their evidence and offer explanations for them.

101 The quality of teaching and learning observed in the inspection is good overall but ranges from very good to satisfactory. Consequently pupils are attentive, responsive and acquire new information. This shows an improvement over the previous inspection where teaching was described as sound but variable. Lessons are invariably well planned with the best having clear objectives that are shared with the pupils, tasks that are organised for different ability groups and good use is made of resources. The choice of resources, their

organisation and use is much improved since the previous inspection. This engages and interests the pupils with many showing concentrated effort and a purposeful approach to their work. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge that enables them to make information relevant and understandable and use questioning which makes pupils justify their answers and explain their reasoning. The management of pupils is very effective and teachers make good use of support staff in assisting with group work or in support of those with special educational needs. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace but there are instances, particularly in group situations where there is insufficient targeting of individuals and not enough is done to provide work for different ability groups or extension activities for the more able pupils. Several teachers make good use of assessment to match progress against learning objectives. Standards of marking are good with teachers providing supportive comments alongside observations that identify new learning targets.

102 The policy and scheme of work ensure there is good coverage and balance across all aspects of the science curriculum. The approach in teaching is to develop science through enquiry and investigation. Staff development and the introduction of monitoring of classroom practice have led to improved teaching performance in science. The school has good assessment systems that enable it to provide reliable and accurate pictures of pupils' attainment and progress. The introduction of an assessment programme for investigative and experimental science monitors the all round development of scientific knowledge and understanding. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The subject is well resourced and good use is made of the school grounds. The use of information and communication technology in science is underdeveloped. The co-ordinator, who is well qualified and experienced in the leadership of science, provides strong direction and purpose, having a clear understanding of the subject's development and needs, and the capacity to carry them through.

ART AND DESIGN

103 Standards in art and design are satisfactory at the end of both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, make sound progress as they move through the school. Progress is occasionally good or very good in Key Stage 1. Judgements are based on lessons observed, discussions with teachers and pupils and scrutiny of planning and work around the school. Standards reflect those identified in the previous inspection.

104 Work around the school shows that pupils are offered a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which reflects the good and occasionally very good progress that pupils make as they acquire art and design skills. Pupils throughout the school talk impressively about the many famous artists' work they have studied. From an early age they understand how to use the work of famous artists to improve their own work. They enthusiastically and confidently develop key skills such as drawing, printing, sketching and collage. All have opportunities to work with clay and use tools safely and carefully.

105 In Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress overall but variations in the quality of teaching has an impact on attainment and progress during lessons. In good lessons learning is more effective and pupils make better progress. In Year 1 they demonstrate a sound understanding of observational drawing as they carefully draw portraits and self portraits using a variety of media such as pen, felt tips, crayons, pastels and paints. Pupils link information and communication technology skills with their artwork as they 'click and drag' and make monster shapes. Pupils develop their ideas after listening to poems and pieces of music such as Handel's *Water Music* whilst others use the work of famous artists to stimulate their own creativity. A very good example where pupils made very good progress was seen in Year 1 when pupils looked at and began to appraise the work of

Edward Malinowski and Paul Klee. They then went on to develop their own artwork. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils confidently use a variety of techniques and materials and develop artwork for example, drawings of fruits and vegetables showing a sound idea of the need for detail. They produce art and design work, which they are proud of.

106 Pupils in Key Stage 2 make sound progress. They use sketchbooks well to work on their own ideas. Pupils in Year 3 continue to develop observational drawings as they study the work of Leonardo Da Vinci. They sketch plants and wooden figures and then work on their own interpretation of Leonardo Da Vinci's work, showing a good idea of shading. Pupils are influenced by artwork from different cultures, such as in Year 4 when they looked at Aboriginal art and produce interesting artwork, reflecting the dusty dry soil of parts of Australia. In Year 5, art and design work is linked to English and history lessons. Pupils produce crayon drawings after listening to a poem called *London, Spring 1941*. They talk confidently about the work of Picasso using sketchbooks first and then produce their own 'Picasso'. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils study the work of Claude Monet and confidently paint pictures which are influenced by his work.

107 The teaching of art is sound overall and occasionally good or very good. Teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge and most teach art and design skills well. Planning for lessons is thorough and lessons are very well resourced. Teachers give clear instructions and have high expectations regarding attentive listening and behaviour. They interact well within groups and give good supportive and helpful comments to the pupils. This has an impact on pupils' responses to tasks, which are positive and enthusiastic and allows pupils to develop techniques confidently as they use a large variety of materials and tools. Day-to-day assessment in art lessons informs pupils' reports at the end of each year. All pupils are encouraged to develop their own sketchbook and these show the sound progress most pupils make as they move through the school.

108 The subject is well led, and throughout the school, art displays create an attractive visual environment and clearly demonstrate the sound progress pupils make as they move through the school. There are clear guidelines for teachers to follow which ensure the progressive teaching of skills, knowledge and understanding in art and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to now link these with the new national guidelines.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109 The previous inspection report judged standards of attainment to be sound at both key stages. It was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons being taught during the inspection so judgements are also based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays through the school, portfolio evidence, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils. These indicate that attainment in design technology across both key stages remains satisfactory.

110 Pupils in Year 1 make a 'fruit salad' to create a 'healthy meal' using flock fabric which they cut, glue and assemble on paper plates. In Year 2 pupils identify different types of puppet and draw up design plans in which they describe the materials they will need and the basic structure of their models. They understand the need for a prototype before constructing the final product, assembling and joining a range of materials. They can identify what is working well and what is not and then modify their approach, as the previous inspection noted. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 link work to their science topic on food by carrying out a survey of pupils' likes and dislikes of sandwiches which they had rated on aspects such as taste, appearance and packaging. From this evidence they design their own sandwiches which they are going to make. Year 4 pupils create Egyptian masks from cardboard and papier-mâché as part of their history work. The school has established links

with the local further education college which Year 5 pupils visit to develop their skills and use of tools in plumbing and brickwork. At the time of the inspection, staff from the college were working with Year 6 pupils on the construction of plant holders for the school grounds. This enhanced the earlier work in which they built outside tables where children could sit and talk. Year 6 pupils also undertake a mini-enterprise. In small groups they develop a design brief, organise materials and produce small goods that they sell at the summer fair. They carry out market research, work to a small budget and evaluate the success of their products and their team building skills.

111 Pupils are making consistent and steady progress in design and technology at both key stages. They have opportunities to use and gain competence in a range of materials, including card, textiles, wood, and food technology. However, the use of control mechanisms is underdeveloped. The detailed scheme of work, which follows national guidelines very closely, ensures the progressive development of design and make skills, focused practical work and evaluation. Pupils can carry out product analysis and judge products as being fit for their purpose. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress with activities adapted to their needs and appropriate support provided.

112 The quality of teaching in lessons seen was satisfactory. Lessons were effectively planned with tasks appropriately geared to pupils' abilities and clear goals set before them. This ensured that pupils were purposefully engaged with their work, were often independent from the teachers but confident to ask for assistance when needed. Sometimes the use of demonstrations would have strengthened the teaching and avoided the mistakes pupils made. However, teachers did make regular interventions to assess pupils' responses and direct their work. Several pupils making errors reacted to them well and simply set about their tasks again. Teachers were secure in their knowledge, managed their classrooms in a sensitive way and used praise to good effect.

113 The co-ordinator provides very effective leadership in the subject. She oversees planning throughout the school and recognises that whilst the national guidelines have given a detailed and progressive programme which teachers can handle with confidence the school will wish to introduce units of work of its own choice and adapt the present scheme. There is no assessment system that records pupils' progress and achievement. The portfolio of pupils' work stored as photographs on the computer is a good start to providing examples of different levels of work that will support staff in making assessments of individual work. Resources for design and technology are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

114 The previous report stated that standards were satisfactory at the end of both key stages and these standards have been maintained. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to gain a wide knowledge of geography. Pupils make at least satisfactory progress across both key stages. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

115 By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound understanding of simple plans and maps. They use mathematics well in the form of tallies and graphs to illustrate traffic trends on the road outside the school. They recognise maps of Britain and St Lucia, and use very simple co-ordinates correctly. Pupils of higher ability use their literacy skills well to write commentaries about their learning.

116 In Year 3 pupils learn to read plans of the local area and to recognise features from aerial photographs. They consider the use that the local land is put to, compare it with the

centre of Stourbridge and start to make tentative suggestions as to why there are differences between them. Year 4 pupils study the recycling of materials and use skills of investigation and testing that they have learned in science to take their learning forward and to draw conclusions. Pupils in Year 5 develop their investigative skills well during their study of India, and use line graphs to illustrate discoveries they make about differences in temperature. Year 6 pupils apply knowledge gained during a trip to a river to explain geographical processes such as erosion and deposition in graphic detail. Later in the year they discuss and write about global environmental issues. Throughout Key Stage 2 there are opportunities for pupils to gain awareness of local and world news.

117 Seven lessons were observed throughout the school but due to timetable constraints, only two were in Key Stage 1. Over half of the teaching was good or very good. In these lessons teachers used their high levels of subject knowledge to plan a good range of activities that consistently challenge their pupils. They have high expectations of good behaviour and create an atmosphere where pupils can think and concentrate well. They use questions imaginatively so that pupils extend their understanding and make pertinent connections. For example in a Year 2 class, a question by the teacher about no parking rules brought the observation that it gave space for disabled people to be dropped off at the kerb. The appropriate and plentiful range of planned activities enables teachers to maintain a brisk pace to their lessons. Pupils maintain high levels of concentration and interest so that they make good gains in knowledge during each session. Pupils in every class observed made satisfactory or good progress, including pupils with special educational needs. There are good instances of literacy and numeracy being used throughout the school. However in some classes, teachers do not systematically challenge all their pupils appropriately by setting work at different levels.

118 The co-ordinator is experienced and enthusiastic. She has amended the scheme of work to suit the latest government requirements. She has not visited classes in progress, but this is planned for next term. She sees teachers' long-term plans and looks at samples of pupils' books. There is assessment of lessons recently built into the long-term plans but no assessment of pupils' attainment at present. Resources are satisfactory and the range of field trips makes a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

HISTORY

119 The previous report found standards to be satisfactory and in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. These satisfactory standards have been maintained despite the recent pressures due to the introduction of the literacy and numeracy hours. The school has ensured that pupils continue to have good opportunities to study history. All pupils make satisfactory progress including those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.

120 Pupils in Key Stage 1 start to develop a clear sense of the passage of time by building a personal time line and keeping a diary over a week. By the end of the key stage they make comparisons between their own lives and those led by Victorian children. They visit the Black Country Museum, compare houses there with their own, the shoes they are wearing with clogs and begin to understand that life was very different in the past.

121 In Key Stage 2, pupils have good opportunities to build on their knowledge through more detailed studies and through further visits. In Year 3 they learn about the waves of invaders who came to Britain, such as the Romans and the Saxons. Pupils in Year 4 learn about life in Tudor times and understand some of the reasons why Henry VIII had so many wives. Year 5 pupils study Britain since 1930 and become immersed in the lives of evacuees during the Second World War. They understand the need for rationing and, through using

different sources of evidence, discover the effect it had on everyday life. Year 6 pupils revisit the Black Country Museum in order to study canals and the development of local industries. Current Year 6 pupils are at present studying geography, but scrutiny of previous work indicates good levels of research with some pupils achieving standards that are above national expectations.

122 Four lessons were observed during the inspection, all at Key Stage 2. This is not sufficient to make a judgement about the quality of teaching throughout the school. All the lessons were at least satisfactory and some were good. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other. They speak clearly and confidently to their class. Good teaching is characterised by detailed planning which ensures a varied range of appropriate activities and a good pace to the lessons so that pupils maintain interest well and have time to complete their tasks. Careful questions challenge the pupils to extend their thinking, and high levels of good pupil management ensure that all pupils maintain good concentration. Teachers show good levels of imagination. For example in one class pupils 'met' the ghosts of Henry VIII's wives in a Tudor atmosphere of music and candle light, and were able to question them and learn from the answers. There is good use of resources. In one class pupils studied a range of sources to discover for themselves facts about rationing. In another, a suitcase of evacuees' clothes led pupils to compare their wardrobes with those of children in 1940 and to think about the differences in their lifestyles. There was evidence of satisfactory or good learning and progress in each class observed. Pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to others in their classes especially when they have tasks appropriate to their stage of learning. Teachers are starting to extend pupils' literacy skills in history and they include appropriate texts and poetry either in history lessons or in the literacy hour. In one class pupils pretended to be evacuees and wrote a first letter home recounting their experiences, but analysis of last year's work throughout the school indicates that this is an area for further development. Several samples of work were identical across classes and there was little evidence of tasks being set at different levels to suit pupils with different abilities. No example of using numeracy in history was observed in lessons.

123 The co-ordinator has been in post for a year. She is dynamic and has recently overseen the updating of the scheme of work so that it is comprehensive and meets the new curriculum requirements. She sees the teachers' plans and samples of the pupils' work, and expects to have an opportunity to visit classes in the summer term. There is no system for recording teachers' assessment of pupils' attainment at present but it is an area that the co-ordinator is considering to develop. Resources are good, there are good opportunities for pupils to extend their learning during trips and activities organised in school such as the Tudor feast day. The subject is moving forward well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124 Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. A significant number of pupils exceed these standards at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Judgements are based on lesson observations, scrutiny of pupils' work, classroom displays and school documentation and discussions with pupils and teachers. There has been a significant improvement on the previous inspection where standards were satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory at Key Stage 2. All pupils make satisfactory progress through the school, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language. In some classes progress is good.

125 Pupils in Year 1 learn how to log on and off the computers in the computer suite. Many of them are able to do this without teacher support. They use the correct mouse

button to 'drag' symbols and labels across the screen. In links with mathematics they use a computer program to make 'mouse houses' from different two-dimensional shapes. Year 2 pupils find files, retrieve work and amend text. They use computer generated block graphs and pie-charts to display information from a class traffic survey. Building on their knowledge and understanding developed in Key Stage 1, Year 3 pupils enhance text by adding graphics to their work whilst pupils in Year 5 use a database of pupil information to sort and find information. They access and interrogate the information successfully with the higher attaining pupils appreciating that questions to the database have to be 'framed' in a certain way. As part of their literacy work, pupils 'cut and paste' words, expressing commands into a recipe for making flapjacks and, in history, pupils use information and communication technology to research aspects of the Second World War. Year 6 pupils talk confidently about reviewing web-sites and what makes a good web page. They discuss the fonts that are used, the background graphics and whether there is effective page navigation. Pupils have their own 'user names' and are used to storing their work on their own file. As part of their geography work, they link pages with hyperlinks when developing their own web page on rivers. In their science work, pupils retrieve information on a pond dip and for art research information about Monet. They talk confidently about the uses of information technology out of school and relate their work in Year 5 on controlling traffic lights to this debate. Some Year 6 pupils e-mailed the school while they were away on a recent residential trip.

126 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection, when it was judged to be 'often unsatisfactory'. Much of the teaching is now good and in these lessons teachers are well organised and they have good subject knowledge. Although subject knowledge has improved since the previous inspection, through training and teachers having their own laptop computers, some staff are still not as confident as others. They are not always able to deal with the technical difficulties that can arise and this inhibits pupils' learning. Teachers who take time to think through the organisation of their lesson are more effective and pupils learn more quickly. Good teachers check the computer suite before their timetabled lesson so that they are prepared for any technical difficulties and are able to ensure that all of the resources are working appropriately. When this does not happen, time can be lost in lessons whilst teachers check whether equipment is functioning properly. The pupils are extremely enthusiastic about the subject and cannot wait to get to the computer suite; most are disappointed when they have to leave. However, if pupils are not seated carefully by class teachers, they cannot all be supported efficiently because of the cramped conditions in the computer suite. For example, when pupils seat themselves, the least confident pupils can be situated at both ends of the computer suite. This makes it very difficult for a teacher to support them. In the better lessons, higher attaining pupils are challenged more effectively often through extension activities that have been identified by the class teacher. However, this is not consistent and in some lessons pupils finish tasks quickly and are not provided with further challenges. Providing work for the range of ability that is common in most classes is underdeveloped in the school. Relationships in all of the lessons are at least good. The teachers encourage the pupils to work well together and this is always successful.

127 The whole profile of information and communication technology has been raised since the previous inspection and is now very much part of the school's culture. The pupils talk proudly about the school's own web-site and Key Stage 2 pupils take advantage of some extra time allocated to them during break and lunchtimes to continue with their class work. The subject is well managed by the subject co-ordinator, who has a good understanding of the curriculum and is able to provide good quality support and technical advice to all staff. The school has also benefited from being part of a local education authority that has taken part in a national project to develop the subject in schools.

Resources are now good. The computer suite is cramped, but provides all classes in the school with a weekly opportunity to spend quality time at the computers. In most instances there are never more than two pupils to a machine. Teaching will be easier in this area when the school purchases an LCD projector. This is planned for the spring term. The school uses the national guidelines as a scheme of work to ensure that the subject develops effectively through the school. The subject co-ordinator has also produced extra guidance notes to support this scheme and the quality of teachers' medium-term planning is good. Day-to-day assessment by the teachers is informal and is part of their normal interactions with the pupils. However, at the end of every unit of work, teachers assess the pupils and record whether they have developed their knowledge, understanding and skills. This provides a good record of pupils' progress as they move through the school but is used less effectively in influencing future curriculum planning.

128 During the inspection some good examples of information and communication technology supporting other areas of the curriculum were observed. For example, Year 2 pupils word processed instructional writing about 'having a bath' as part of their literacy work. However, other areas of the curriculum could be better supported. The school would acknowledge this area of development and is using some additional funding to provide in-service training.

MUSIC

129 Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and above national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Although the standards of attainment in Key Stage 1 are lower than when the school was last inspected a minority of pupils do exceed national expectations. The standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 have been maintained since the previous inspection. Current planning of the curriculum is comprehensive and teaching is good throughout the school. All pupils make good progress. This includes pupils with special educational needs and those pupils for whom English is an additional language.

130 At Key Stage 1 singing is generally tuneful, expressive and enthusiastic. Most pupils join in during lessons, in choirs, during hymn practice and in assembly sessions. Pupils sing a range of songs linked to topics. In Year 1 many pupils name a range of percussion instruments, listen attentively and suggest different instruments to create the mood for autumn, such as for rustling leaves, jumping flames and different fireworks. Pupils are confident and attempt to copy simple patterns with percussion instruments. In Year 2 pupils use a range of percussion instruments, together with their voices and hands to make simple rhythms. The majority of pupils use instruments to make contrasting sounds such as loud and quiet or fast and slow. They stop and start appropriately when asked by the class teacher. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy experimenting with sounds and attempt to make two different sounds with a partner. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy music sessions, show confidence when performing and are happy to demonstrate what they can do when asked. The two extra-curricular recorder groups observed are starting to read simple notation and find the notes A, B and G accurately.

131 Pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate good control of rhythm and pitch in their singing and high standards are achieved in assemblies. The separate boys' and girls' choirs seen during the inspection week were lively with the pupils clearly enjoying their singing. They were able to sing a round in tune and able to hold a note an octave apart in the appropriate key. The Key Stage 2 recorder group demonstrate a high standard when performing in assembly. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils maintain a rhythm, are aware of each other's contributions and adjust their playing to accommodate the speed of the melody. Pupils generally demonstrate a good aural memory; for example in a Year 5 class, most pupils

repeat increasingly complex patterns in a game of 'command performance'. They listen for subtle differences and many use and understand correct musical terminology such as pitch, tempo, and timbre. They successfully analyse and compare musical features and explore how music reflects time and place. Pupils make pertinent comparisons between different music for example pupils in Year 6 are able to discriminate successfully between a range of musical styles such as blues, reggae, calypso, traditional jazz, heavy metal and pop. They listen to music tapes that play the same melody in different ways and many work out which piece of music fits into the different musical styles.

132 Most pupils make good progress across the school. This is the result of good quality class teaching, imaginative use of resources and the range and extent of tuition provided by nine specialist teachers from the local education authority visiting teacher service. On an occasion when pupils made more limited progress, there was a mismatch between the ability of the pupils and what was planned for them. Approximately seventy pupils attend extra lessons for oboe, cello, keyboard, violin, woodwind, flute, guitar, brass and singing. Pupils with specific musical talent make very good progress because they are able to apply their more formal skills developed during the specialist tuition. The school ensures the pupils have regular opportunities to perform and holds two 'music fun evenings' annually where all pupils who have a desire to perform are able to take part. As the pupils get older, valuable opportunities are provided for the choir to perform in the school and in the wider community. Pupils are also able to join the area orchestra and to perform with others from local schools. These opportunities make a valuable contribution to the pupils' personal and social development.

133 The quality of teaching in music is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2 and builds well on the good teaching in the Foundation Stage. In Key Stage 1 lessons are lively and fun with teachers using musical games that encourage pupils to extend their learning through listening, singing and playing instruments. In Key Stage 2, lessons are well planned with interesting songs and themes and there is an appropriate balance of singing and percussion work. Listening and appraising becomes more complex as pupils progress through the school. Musical expertise throughout the school is used to good effect. The school has a number of teachers with musical skill, knowledge and interest in the subject who are willing to share their expertise across the school. Lessons and extra-curricular activities are always fun but well focused. This promotes enjoyment by pupils and a desire to learn new skills. In the most successful lessons planning and resources are good, the pace brisk and pupils suitably challenged. When expectations of what pupils can do are lower teaching is less effective. Teachers consistently use appropriate musical terminology and expect the pupils from an early age to do so.

134 There have been a number of improvements since the previous inspection. The school has further improved the range and quality of music tapes and instruments from non-European countries both in classes and in assembly sessions and the planned curriculum encourages pupils to appreciate music from around the world. Therefore music makes a significant contribution to the pupils' cultural development. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has a clear vision for the direction of music. The school has recently re-introduced an Key Stage 1 choir, a Year 1 beginners' recorder group and a beginners' treble group for Years 5 and 6. The opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor standards and work alongside and support staff has recently begun and more opportunities are planned. Particularly impressive is the school's efforts over the last few years to ensure that all pupils with different musical ability have opportunities to participate in and develop an appreciation of music. This helps develop pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Music continues to be enhanced by the out-of-school opportunities including the range of specialist tuition lessons, the school clubs, the regular opportunities to perform inside and outside of school including

the local music festivals. The range of music provision and delivery therefore continues to be a strength of the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135 Pupils attain standards broadly in line with nationally expected standards at the end of both key stages. In swimming, the levels achieved by pupils in Year 6 are generally above the national average target. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make sound progress through the school. However, there are variations in the rates of progress of learning and this is very much linked to the quality of teaching and the level of teachers' understanding and expertise in the subject.

136 At the end of Key Stage 1, Year 2 pupils use the playground space sensibly in warm up activities when weaving in and out of obstacles. They improve their basic skills of passing to a partner, using their hands and feet, by regular practice. However, there are few opportunities for them to discuss ways of improving their performance and enhancing skills. They rely on teacher demonstration to develop the necessary techniques in games activities. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve above average standards in swimming. The vast majority of pupils in Year 6 can swim and many are very proficient, swimming distances beyond 200 metres. They use a variety of strokes to propel themselves through the water. In games lessons they know the reasons for warm up activities and the effect exercise has on the body. Skills gained in passing and catching are developed in competition at a higher level, by increasing speed and accuracy in mini team games. Pupils are beginning to understand the need to gain a fair advantage over an opponent by using tactics, such as running into a space or by varying the height of a pass. Pupils generally work well together and show a good team spirit.

137 The school has largely maintained its position in physical education since the previous inspection. Pupils' standards in swimming and the quality of provision for outdoor and adventurous activities have improved but the level of monitoring of teaching and learning has declined.

138 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall but it varies widely and ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. There are good standards in lessons when teachers have secure subject knowledge and expertise and maintain good levels of discipline. When these elements are lacking, pupils perform at a much lower level. In a Year 6 lesson the teacher used accurate terms to improve pupils' knowledge when explaining tactics. Activities were well structured in order to enhance pupils' levels of skill and there was a clear expectation of good behaviour during the introduction. Learning is more effective in the best lessons when teachers set challenging and imaginative activities that extend and encourage pupils and allow ample time for repeated practice of skills. During periods of inactivity they involve pupils in their own learning by discussing how improvements can be made. In less successful lessons pupils do not receive sufficient energetic activities and they become restless and lose interest when teachers' explanations become too long. Pupils enjoy physical education and their behaviour is usually good. They collaborate well in pairs and can sustain interest when the tasks are challenging. On occasions however, they become over excited and silly especially when there are weaknesses in teachers' management.

139 There is a broad, well balanced curriculum in physical education, which covers all the recommended elements of the National Curriculum. The school also provides a good range of extra-curricular activities in both key stages. A number of pupils who attend after-school clubs are reaching good standards in a number of sports and gymnastics. The school has a good reputation for competitive sport within the local area. The school commendably

encourages pupils to follow rules of fair play. All pupils dress appropriately for physical education lessons.

140 The co-ordinator of the subject has had little time to develop the subject. There are weaknesses in assessment procedures and the monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. There are long-term plans to remedy the situation and enable the co-ordinator to gain a clear picture of the quality of physical education throughout the school. There are good resources and site facilities to promote pupils' learning. These are used effectively in a range of activities to support pupils' development in the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141 Attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages and provision for religious education meets its statutory requirements. All pupils make satisfactory progress including those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Since the last inspection, the achievements of the pupils have been maintained, as has the quality of the teaching.

142 In Year 1 pupils share information about when they were babies. They discuss what it means to be part of a family. When asked, pupils in year 1 talk about people in school who look after them, such as their teachers and the dinner supervisors. As a result of their topic on harvest and giving, many pupils suggest things they are glad about and thankful for and know that sometimes people give cards as a way of saying 'thank you'. Some pupils know that a prayer is 'a way of saying thank you to God'. In one lesson observed, the pupils could make the sign 'thank you' and knew that it is a way some deaf people communicate. In Year 2, through their topic on 'praise and thanks', pupils understand that there are holy places that people can use to pray. They learn about Christian and Muslim prayers and gain factual information about holy places in different religions. Year 2 pupils consider heroes in the community and talk about why nurses, police and firefighters are special people. Most can retell the story of the Good Samaritan and know he was kind to someone who was hurt and suggest their own ideas for helping people. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have some awareness of Christianity and other world religions. They can talk a little about different celebrations such as harvest, Divali and Christmas. They have experienced a range of religious and Bible stories including Noah, Ruth, Rama and Sita, Samson and Delilah, the Good Samaritan and Joseph and his multi-coloured coat. Generally the lessons hold the pupils' interest and the children are happy to share their own ideas.

143 At the beginning of Key Stage 2, pupils understanding of major faiths is limited. As they move through the key stage they study the major faiths in more depth and are able to use religious terminology with increasing accuracy. Pupils in Year 4 explore what it means to belong to a club or church and share their personal experiences. Some pupils are able to explain why baptism is an important aspect of belonging to a Christian church. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have gained more factual knowledge of the major religions and can use religious terminology with some accuracy. The older pupils have the opportunity to consider more complex moral concepts, such as commitment to a belief or religion and discuss how they would deal with moral issues such as cruelty, fairness and justice. For example a Year 5 class shared examples of poverty in Britain and abroad and understood a little about the purpose of organized charities such as the Salvation Army. In Year 6 concepts such as the similarities and differences between religions and religious places of worship are explored with increasing depth.

144 The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Teachers give pupils opportunities to share their own experiences and to consider the needs of others. Teachers

have a sound subject knowledge. Most teaching seen was satisfactory and there was no unsatisfactory teaching. An occasion where teaching was particularly effective in Year 6 was when the teacher shared her own personal experiences about being inside a church. This set a tone and interest that made the factual information about parts of a church more interesting and relevant. Throughout the school teachers use books, photos and a range of religious objects to extend the pupils' learning but there is very little evidence of computers being used to increase pupils' knowledge. In both key stages pupils' behaviour is generally satisfactory, however some lower attaining pupils find particular religious concepts and terminology difficult to grasp and consequently do not concentrate fully. Where they are more engaged and interested, such as in a Year 3 class where pupils discussed and then dramatized the story of Moses and the flight of the slaves from Egypt, learning is more effective. There were some good examples in Key Stage 2 of teachers providing modified written work for pupils with special education needs who have writing difficulties.

145 There have been a number of improvements since the time of the previous inspection. The co-ordinator has undertaken some monitoring, she checks the teachers planning each half term and discusses issues informally with staff. She has had some opportunity to work alongside other staff but this is not a regular occurrence and further monitoring is planned. There have also been improvements in the planning and delivery of religious education. The school has worked hard to increase the study of religious diversity and has produced topic boxes with posters and religious objects for each major religion. Pupils at Key Stage 2 now study all major faiths and have an improved understanding of the values, beliefs and customs of the major religions and a curriculum link has been established in Year 5 when the pupils study India as part of their geography topic. The school has also built in an annual visit to a mosque at Key Stage 2 and is planning to broaden its range of religious visitors. The curriculum provided enables the pupils to learn about major faiths and encourages them to respect the values, customs and beliefs of various cultures. Overall, religious education at Gig Mill makes a significant contribution to the spiritual, moral and cultural development of the pupils.