

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST. MARGARET'S CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VC)
JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Whitnash

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125667

Headteacher: Mr A Jones

Reporting inspector: Mr N Sherman
16493

Date of inspection: 9th – 12th October 2000

Inspection number: 224119

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Coppice Road Whitnash Leamington Spa Warwickshire
Postcode:	CV31 2JF
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Roy Evans
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr Neville Sherman	Registered inspector 16493	mathematics; physical education	The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What could the school do to improve further?
Mr Clive Parsons	Team Inspector 04126	science; information and communication technology; design and technology	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Mrs Candy Kalms	Lay inspector 09275		Pupils' attitudes and values. How well does the school care for its pupils or students? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs Cynthia Thumwood	Team Inspector 27301	equal opportunities; religious education; art; music; English as an additional language	
Mr Colin Le Good	Team Inspector 22242	English; history; geography; special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Margaret's Church of England is a voluntary controlled junior school that is larger than average and situated in the town of Whitnash in Warwickshire. The school was formerly deemed a middle school but reverted to its current status in 1996 following re-organisation of education in the local education authority. Most of the pupils come from the immediate locality, although a number come from outside the immediate catchment area. The school caters for pupils between the ages of seven and eleven. There are 302 pupils on roll with similar numbers of boys and girls. Pupils from non-European backgrounds total around 20% of the school roll. Sixty-one pupils have English as an additional language. This figure is above the average. Few pupils leave the school at times other than the normal one for admissions and transfer to secondary education, although a higher than average number join at different points of the school year. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is average. The number of pupils who have special educational needs is above average as is the number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs. Pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is a very effective school and has some very strong features. Standards are well above average in mathematics and science and above average in English. Teaching is good overall with some very good and excellent teaching evident. The quality of teaching has a strong impact on pupils' learning. The pupils have very good attitudes to the school, their work, each other, and relationships at the school are very strong. The curriculum is good and complemented further by a very good range of day trips and extra-curricular activities. Leadership and management by the headteacher is very good and he is ably supported by all staff, who strive hard to ensure that pupils achieve to the best of their ability. The school gives very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are well above average in mathematics and science.
- Standards are above the national average in English and above expectations in the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
- Teaching is good overall, and this is a significant feature of the school.
- There is a high degree of racial harmony.
- The pupils' behaviour is very good throughout the school and relationships at all levels are very good.
- The personal development of pupils is very good.
- Provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Assemblies are very well used to promote a strong sense of community.
- There are strong links with the local community that have a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- Procedures to assess the rate of the pupils' academic and personal progress are very good.
- The school is very effectively led and managed.
- The school makes excellent use of its resources.

What could be improved

- The 'critical friend' role of the Governing Body.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1996. Since then, it has made very good progress. The school has ably managed the transition from its middle school status to that of being a junior school. Effective action has been taken on the main issues that were identified. Good improvement has been made in raising the standards that pupils reach in information and communication technology (ICT). The school has developed a new and well-equipped ICT suite that is having a positive impact on pupils' learning. Good gains have been made in ensuring that pupils have clear and frequent opportunities to develop their personal initiative. The school now organises pupils in various groups according to

their level of ability – particularly in mathematics, and in the upper part of the school, for literacy and science. This has led to an improvement in teaching and in the standards attained by pupils with higher ability. There is also closer monitoring of the work of the school particularly in the way the school uses end of key stage National Curriculum tests to plan for future improvements. Given the strong team spirit that is very much evident in the school, it is well placed to build on its many strengths and continue to improve.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

The results of the 2000 end of key stage National Curriculum tests indicate that pupils reached standards in English and mathematics that were above the national average. In science, standards were well above the national average. When compared with similar schools, based on the number of pupils entitled to claim free school meals, pupils reached well above average standards in English, mathematics and science. In science, the results placed the school in the top five per cent of similar schools in the country. The rising trend in standards by the school is broadly in line with the national trend. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English are above the national average and, in mathematics and science, well above the average. The results closely correspond to the challenging targets set by the school. The pupils enter the school with above average levels of ability, and they continue to make good progress in literacy and numeracy where good links are made with other subjects in further promoting pupils' skills. Standards in ICT are in line with expectations. Standards in religious education are above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in physical education are above expectations. Standards in art, design technology, history, geography, and music are in line with expectations.

Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning aided by the good support many of them receive in class. Pupils with a high level of need are very well integrated into many lessons and they too make good gains in both their academic and social development. Teachers are mindful to ensure that pupils with higher attainment undertake work that extends their capabilities and they make good gains in their learning. Pupils with English as an additional language also make good gains in their learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils of all ages and abilities have very positive attitudes to the school, work hard and concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good. Pupils demonstrate the normal social courtesies to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults are very good. These help to create a warm and purposeful atmosphere that allows pupils to demonstrate high levels of initiative and take

	responsibility for aspects of their learning.
Attendance	Attendance rates are very good and are well above the national average.

Most pupils are enthusiastic learners and enjoy many of the activities they are asked to do. They relate very well to one another, and behaviour in and around the school is very good. Attendance rates are very high.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was excellent in 3% of lessons, very good in 26% of lessons, good in a further 39% and satisfactory in 29% of lessons. There is a small percentage of unsatisfactory teaching amounting to 3% of lessons. The quality of teaching in the upper years is particularly effective in the teaching of English, mathematics and science where teachers with a particular interest or expertise in the subject often teach it. The teaching of religious education, ICT, design and technology and physical education is good. In all classes, teachers ensure that pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are developed. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have their needs effectively met. Pupils with higher ability are sufficiently challenged. Overall, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and the level of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen greatly. While the teaching of ICT is effective, particularly when pupils are taught in the school's newly created information technology suite, there is scope to ensure that the skills pupils learn in these sessions are developed in everyday lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. A very good range of extra-curricular activities enhances the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils who have learning or behavioural difficulties are identified at an early stage and are given good support towards meeting their individual targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language are given good support both in class and in small withdrawal groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good and a strong feature of the school. There is a high degree of racial harmony in the school and all pupils are taught to demonstrate tolerance for one another.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for the pupils. It effectively caters for their individual needs and all staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the pupils as individuals.

The school works hard and is successful in developing strong relationships with parents. Parents give the school good support by, for example, supporting their children in the homework that they are expected to complete.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides strong leadership based on a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and where improvements could still be made. He is ably supported by the deputy headteacher and all staff, who are deeply committed to the school's continued development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The Governing Body is fully supportive of the school and plays an active role in its day-to-day life and work. However, its role in being a 'critical friend' to the school is under-developed.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and some subject co-ordinators regularly monitor teaching. In addition, effective use is made of the end of key stage National Curriculum tests to make improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school effectively ensures that all monies are carefully spent and that it achieves best value for money. Very effective use is made of the expertise and interests of the teaching staff. The school gives very good value for money.

The leadership and management of the headteacher and staff are highly effective. The governors give the school good support but could enhance this by adopting the role of critical friend more consistently. Financial systems are very secure and excellent use is made of the staff's teaching strengths to support pupils' learning.

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 community 'feel' of the school. • The progress that their children make. • The leadership and management of the school. • The quality of the teaching. • The care and support their children receive. • The strong relationships at all levels. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality and range of information in pupils' end of year reports.

There are justifiably high levels of parental satisfaction. The inspection findings fully support the positive views parents have of the school. Reports to parents comply with requirements and evaluate clearly what pupils have achieved during the course of an academic year. Inspection findings do not, therefore, support parents' views on this issue.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The pupils begin their education at the school with above average levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science; however, there is some evidence to suggest that pupils' attainment in spelling is not as strong as other features of their learning when they first enter the school.
2. In the National Curriculum tests of summer 2000 for Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in English was above the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher level, Level 5, was also above average. When the results are compared with similar schools, standards were above average at both the expected and higher levels. The school reached standards in English higher than the targets that it set for itself to attain. Over a four-year period, the school has achieved standards in English above the national average. On average, the results over this time show that pupils leave the school nearly two terms ahead of other pupils nationally in respect of their attainment in English.
3. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English and in literacy are above average. Although pupils enter the school with generally good levels of attainment in English, they make good gains in their understanding of English and apply their skills well both in the subject itself and in other areas of the curriculum. Pupils read avidly and have a good understanding of the nature of reading. They are able to skim and scan information, and their awareness of the works of famous authors is good. In writing, pupils fully appreciate the importance of drafting in the writing process. Their handwriting is well formed and many pupils present their work neatly and accurately, appreciating the impact and importance that good presentation has on the reader. At present, standards in spelling are being raised and the school, on seeing this as a specific need, has introduced a well-planned programme for raising pupils' attainment in this area.
4. Results of the National Curriculum tests of summer 2000 for Key Stage 2 in mathematics indicated that standards were above the national average at both the expected and higher levels. At the higher level, standards were noticeably higher than those achieved the previous year. When the results are compared with similar schools, standards were above average. For the most recent tests, the school reached the targets that it set. Historically, over a four-year period, standards in mathematics have been above the national average. The findings of the inspection are that the current Year 6 pupils are on course to reach well above average standards. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, coupled with the teaching of all pupils for mathematics according to their level of ability, is proving to have a strong impact on the rate of pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of number, coupled with very good mental arithmetic skills, their awareness of shape, space and units of measure being equally strong. Higher-attaining Year 6 pupils, for example, are able to explain and use the formula of 'pi' in calculating the area of a circle. The pupils' ability to explore mathematical problems of an open-ended nature is also strong.
5. Results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests in science for Key Stage 2 indicated that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was well above average. The number of pupils who reached the higher level was equally very high with two-thirds of all pupils reaching Level 5. When compared with similar schools, standards were well above average. Historically, the results over the past four years show that on average, pupils leave the school nearly one year ahead of pupils of a similar age. The findings of the inspection are that pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to attain standards that are well above the national average. Pupils have a very good scientific knowledge and their understanding of and ability to undertake scientific investigations are equally good. As they move through the year groups, pupils make good gains in their learning, and progress is good.
6. In ICT, standards are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the school's last inspection when standards were below national expectations. Since then the school has put into place an ICT suite with a good range of equipment. This is effectively used at many different points of the day and is proving to have a strong impact on the rate of the pupils' learning. Pupils are able to

incorporate graphics into their work. In religious education, pupils reach standards above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have a good knowledge of the stories of the Old and New Testaments and explain, for example, meanings inherent within the parables of Jesus.

7. Standards in art, design and technology, geography, history, and music are in line with expectations and pupils make at least satisfactory progress in each of these subjects. Standards in physical education are above national expectations. The very good range of extra-curricular sporting activities, in which many pupils participate, contributes greatly to the high attainment in this subject.
8. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory and sometimes good gains in their learning in most subjects. Pupils benefit from the early identification of their learning needs by both teachers and support staff. They receive good support in lessons, and in some subjects, such as mathematics, are often taught in smaller groups which results in good progress being made. Pupils with English as an additional language also receive good support in many lessons. They too make gains in their learning comparable to other pupils in the school. Pupils with higher attainment make good gains in their learning, aided, particularly in the upper part of the school, by the high percentage of good and very good teaching and in the grouping arrangements where they are taught according to their ability. There is no significant difference in attainment between the boys and girls.
9. Overall, the school has raised standards since its last inspection – particularly in the subjects of English, mathematics and science. It has successfully embraced the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy and, at the same time, raised standards in ICT to a satisfactory level from what was previously a very low base.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils enjoy coming to school and the vast majority of them have very good attitudes to learning. They behave very well in lessons and around the school; their personal development and relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. These are strengths of the school and it is the combination of these factors that ensures a positive learning experience for all pupils.
11. The pupils enjoy school and respond well to the variety of opportunities offered. This has a positive impact on learning. The large majority are keen to learn and have very good attitudes to their lessons. They are well motivated, work hard and are interested. Particularly noteworthy is the manner in which pupils in Year 6 showed interest and listened politely when elderly citizens spoke about their experience of the war. Most pupils listen attentively to their teachers, are keen to ask and answer questions and contribute to discussions. For example, pupils in Year 6 were very interested in a video of *Macbeth* and keen to respond to the subsequent questioning. There were a number of lessons where Year 6 pupils showed excellent attitudes and responded very well to the good teaching; however, there was also a small minority of lessons in the lower part of the school where some pupils were less attentive and found it difficult to remain on task.
12. The pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Sometimes the behaviour in lessons by pupils in Year 6 is excellent. This has a positive effect on the quality of life in the school and the learning that takes place. Pupils behave well in the dining hall and playground. Pupils are clear about the standards of behaviour expected and respond well to the expectations implicit in the school's ethos. There are very few occasions when pupils display inappropriate behaviour in lessons. Harassment and bullying in the school are rare. Around the school, pupils are friendly and polite to each other and to adults including visitors. Parents who responded to the questionnaire and attended the meeting all agreed that behaviour in the school is good. There have been no exclusions in the school.
13. Very good relationships have been established in the school, both among pupils and between pupils and staff. This is an important contributory factor to the learning that takes place in lessons. The pupils listen to and respect each other's views and opinions. For example, Year 3 behaved similarly when listening to the story of the Good Samaritan, and Year 6 showed great respect when learning about the importance of the Sabbath to Jewish people. Racial harmony in the school is very good. Pupils settle to work quickly and are able to work unsupervised independently, in pairs and small

groups. In many lessons, pupils show they can co-operate, work well in pairs, and share ideas. They share resources and equipment sensibly and without fuss.

14. Pupils grow in confidence and gain a sense of positive self-esteem in response to both the ethos and the wide variety of opportunities in the school. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility both in the classroom and around the school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are actively involved in the routines of the school, for example, running the book club at lunchtime, clearing and tidying the dining hall at the end of lunchtime and showing visitors around the school. They respond well and carry out their roles conscientiously. Many pupils take full advantage of the wide range of clubs offered, and take part in a number of sporting competitions. Pupils show their care for others through their involvement in a range of fund raising activities for charity, supporting a pupil in Uganda, as well as entertaining elderly senior citizens and residents at the local hospice.
15. Levels of attendance are good, being above the national average. There are only a few instances of unauthorised absence. A few pupils take holidays during term time. The majority of pupils arrive punctually for school. The good attendance rates contribute to the learning that takes place.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching is good and contributes significantly to the high standards that pupils reach and to their enjoyment of school. During the inspection, teaching was excellent in 3% of lessons, very good in 26%, good in a further 39% of lessons, and satisfactory in 29%. Unsatisfactory teaching amounted to 3% of lessons. Teaching has improved overall since the last inspection. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching has declined and, at the same time, the amount of very good teaching has increased. There are strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics, science, design and technology and physical education across the school.
17. Despite the strong teaching overall, there is some variation. In the main, while there is some good and very good teaching in both Year 3 and Year 4, there is a greater ratio of high quality teaching in Years 5 and 6. The quality of teaching in Year 6, for example, is consistently good or better. The grouping of pupils in this year group, where they are often taught according to their levels of ability, coupled with being taught by teachers who have a strong expertise in the subject, has a strong impact on the rate of their learning. All teachers are hard-working and willing to try new approaches to ensure that the pupils' learning is effective. Planning to ensure consistency across classes and year groups is effective and lesson plans focus sharply on what is to be taught. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is highly effective. All teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy and, where possible, ensure that the pupils' skills in these areas are developed and refined through other subjects. Reading is strongly encouraged, with effective use of the bright, attractive and well-organised library. In mathematics, regular tests of number facts, consistent use of homework and opportunities to explore and investigate mathematical problems form part of most lessons.
18. A key feature of many lessons is the expectations teachers have of the pupils and the challenge they offer them. At an elementary level, in all classes, all staff insist on pupils presenting their work neatly and to the best of their ability. Pupils respond well to these expectations and they understand what is expected of them. Teachers effectively build on the pupils' strong attitudes to learning and set pupils high, but attainable targets. In one excellent Year 6 mathematics lesson on fractions, higher-attaining pupils were given the task of exploring cards with a series of quite complicated mixed numbers which they had to group in order of equivalence. From this, they themselves had to construct their own cards that their classmates were going to use at a later date. Pupils were thoroughly stimulated, worked with high levels of interest and further developed their knowledge and understanding of number. In many other lessons seen, teachers explained clearly what pupils were expected to do and they were left in no doubt of what was generally required of them. Teachers remind the pupils of the need to work quickly, yet not at the expense of accuracy and lessons proceed often at a very brisk pace. Many lessons conclude with effective recapping sessions where teachers gather pupils together to explore the depth of their learning. The information gathered is often then effectively used as a basis for starting the next lesson and in planning the next steps in pupils' learning.
19. Teachers have very good strategies for managing pupils' behaviour and there are very few incidents where time is lost owing to the need to explain to pupils the importance of concentrating fully. In

addition, the teachers have a strong and purposeful rapport with pupils and many pupils are mindful of the need to listen with courtesy if one of their classmates has, for example, been asked to explain their thinking to the rest of the class. Good opportunities are provided through the school assemblies for pupils to explain what they have achieved during lessons and this further cements the strong and purposeful work ethic very much evident in the school. All teachers make effective use of resources to support teaching. The information technology suite, for example, is timetabled for all pupils to have regular teaching of particular skills. The school effectively ensures that pupils are given regular scope to develop these skills when using the suite.

20. Teachers are conscientious in their response to pupils' work. Often this consists of one-to-one dialogue in lessons and pupils take heed of what teachers say in their subsequent efforts; however, in mathematics, some opportunities are lost in teachers' written comments to say how pupils might improve.
21. There has been an improvement in the provision for pupils with English as an additional language since the last inspection. The deployment of the teacher, funded by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) is now very well targeted at the areas of greatest need, and the monitoring and assessment systems have been improved. This results in work provided for pupils that is more closely matched to their needs. The quality of teaching and support is very good. The teacher has a good knowledge and understanding of the pupils' language and learning needs and uses these well when providing support. Support is sensitive and well-targeted, so pupils make good progress. Class teachers effectively introduce pupils to new specialist vocabulary, for example in mathematics and science.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is always satisfactory and often it is good. Work throughout all lessons observed was appropriately differentiated. Where a historical theme - the dilemma of Henry VIII and his failure to produce a male heir - was discussed, the special needs assistant supporting two pupils with special educational needs played the role of major characters one at a time. She encouraged the two pupils to take on another role and identify feelings and possible lines of action that might be taken. The pupils responded with understanding and interest - one with a good degree of enthusiasm.

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

23. A wide range of good quality opportunities to learn is provided for the pupils. The school has tackled the weaknesses in ICT identified in the previous report and provision is now good. Good use is starting to be made of the resources produced nationally by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to provide an effective framework for the curriculum. All the required elements of a broad and balanced curriculum are included and statutory requirements are met. Good use is made of external resources, such as intensive control technology activities, to provide necessary experiences that the school itself cannot yet provide. There is a good balance between improving the pupils' knowledge and understanding and developing their skills. Much of their science work, for example, is carried out in a practical and investigative way, and design and technology emphasises the complete design, make and evaluate cycle. Good emphasis is placed on using and developing important skills throughout the curriculum. There are many opportunities provided for numerical work in science and language-based work in religious education. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is good and that for numeracy is very good. Good use is made of the recently established computer suite to develop specific ICT skills and to support learning in other aspects of the curriculum, including history, literacy and mathematics.
24. There is equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language have full access to a broad and balanced curriculum that is well planned to meet their particular level of need. For all pupils, learning outcomes are more clearly defined in the teachers' planning than at the time of the previous inspection. This means that teachers are now generally good at planning to meet the varied needs of pupils in their class, although this could sometimes be improved. Successful approaches include varying the complexity of the task set as well as the degree of support and guidance provided. The teachers' individual expertise is well used in specialist teaching by the same teacher to different groups, especially in Year 6. The setting arrangements, particularly with older classes, help the teachers to provide an

appropriate and better focused challenge for pupils. More generally the high level of joint planning across year groups results in a uniformity of experience for all pupils.

25. There is an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, including a good variety of sporting opportunities such as football, cross-country and hockey. Instrumental lessons are arranged, although the number of pupils learning brass and strings is not high at the moment. Trips and visits, such as the residential trip to Yorkshire, do much to enhance the pupils' experiences and cultural development. Good use is made of museums and the local environment, including churches and historical buildings. The local community makes a very good contribution to the life of the school, with many visitors including parents, medical professionals and religious figures. Good links exist with other local schools and these do much to smooth transition between them.
26. Provision for the pupils' personal development continues to be very good. The school is developing its personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme in line with the new requirements. A strong moral ethos is evident throughout the life of the school, with PSHE and religious education reinforcing this well. This helps the pupils to develop a clear sense of right and wrong and encourages respect and tolerance for other pupils. Assemblies do much to engender a sense of community, both within the school and further afield and make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. Greater emphasis could be placed on encouraging the pupils to develop more personal reflection through their music and art. The pupils are presented with many opportunities to take responsibility, such as monitoring jobs in their classrooms and other duties around the school. They are encouraged to develop independence as well as initiative.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

27. The school has maintained the high levels of support and guidance identified in the previous inspection report. It achieves its aim to provide a happy, secure learning environment and this contributes greatly towards pupil learning.
28. Good arrangements are in place to deal with any child protection situations that may occur. Staff know the headteacher is the designated person and are clear about the school's procedures. Informal training regularly takes place but there has been no recent formal training for all staff. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils. Regular checks of the site, premises and equipment take place, although formal risk assessments are not in place. Appropriate action is taken when needed but records are not systematically kept. Staff are made aware of pupils in the school with medical conditions, and notes are made of any head injuries that occur. Day-to-day first aid procedures for dealing with minor accidents and injuries are satisfactory, and plans to increase the number of staff qualified in first aid will ensure a qualified first aider is always available. The school receives good support from outside agencies to complement the care it provides. The police liaison officer and road and rail safety officers regularly talk to pupils about dangers from strangers and road and rail safety.
29. Very good systems are in place to monitor and support the pupils' personal development and to keep track of any concerns. They provide a secure foundation for pupils to learn. Pupils are well supported through the caring ethos of the school and the good relationships in the school. Staff are aware of the needs of the pupils in their classes and any concerns are discussed at weekly staff meetings. Pupils' achievements and good work are regularly recognised and rewarded in assemblies; the 'good work' notice board is regularly changed.
30. Very good measures are in place to monitor and promote good behaviour. The behaviour policy emphasises a positive whole-school approach towards behaviour management based on rewarding good behaviour. It provides good guidance for staff and includes a suitable framework of rewards and sanctions. The school has high expectations on standards of behaviour. Teachers consistently use rewards to promote good behaviour and sanctions are applied on the rare occasions when it becomes necessary. Good systems are in place for staff to record and monitor incidents of inappropriate behaviour. Any bullying is effectively dealt with, but such incidents are rare.
31. Good procedures are in place to monitor and improve attendance. Registers are checked each week and unexplained absences followed up with a system of letters.

32. Assessment and its use are deeply embedded in the systems and procedures of the school, and very effective work has been carried out in this area by senior management since the school's initial inspection. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' academic performance in English, mathematics, science and ICT are very good. A system for monitoring other subjects is currently being piloted. Effective analysis of the information gained from assessment procedures, that include tests for pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, is used to track pupil progress. Progress of all pupils is tracked by senior management twice a year, and pupils are grouped into sets for mathematics on the basis of these tests, which is effective in targeting work and raising standards. Sets are flexible, and pupils can be moved when necessary to improve progress for all pupils. Literacy sets exist in Year 6 and a literacy extension group in Year 4. Target setting for individual pupils and groups of pupils is firmly established for the core subjects, and targets are challenging and usually exceeded. Good use of assessment ensures that pupils receive effective extra support for English as an additional language and special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

33. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the school and what it provides. They expressed no significant concerns. Almost without exception parents who returned questionnaires or attended the pre-inspection meeting considered teaching good, the school well led, behaviour good, and felt the school encourages its pupils to become mature and responsible. They were happy with progress and felt the school expected children to work hard. The inspection team supports the positive views parents have of the school.
34. The school has successfully established very good links with its parents. The involvement of parents and the contribution they make to the life of the school and to their children's learning is good. The school seeks to involve parents in decisions and recently consulted them about the setting arrangements in Year 6. A number of parents make a valuable contribution towards school life and pupils' learning, for example two parents regularly accompany swimming, while there are others who help in classrooms and around the school. The Parent Teacher Friends Association is very supportive and organises a range of social and fund-raising events. Most recently this enabled the school to purchase a stage. All classes are set regular homework and pupils are encouraged to take reading books home regularly. Homework diaries, used by many parents, provide a good link to support pupils' learning at home and provide an effective means of communication between the teacher and parents.
35. The quality of information provided by the school, particularly about progress, is good. This enables parents to become involved in their children's learning and to have an understanding of the school's work.
36. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about school matters, key dates and forthcoming events. The prospectus provides useful information on school routines and procedures; the governor's annual report to parents, currently in draft, briefly reviews the work of the school. Both omit some details of which the school is aware. All year groups provide parents with information on the curriculum and topic work to be covered during the term, although there is some variation in the detail contained. A meeting has been held to explain the National Literacy Strategy. An open evening in the summer term offers parents a good opportunity to see the work of the school. Parents are kept informed about their children's progress through two formal consultation meetings each year. They are offered an opportunity to discuss annual reports but the time available is limited by the end of term. Annual written reports are good, providing detailed information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses but do not provide information on how they can improve.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

37. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher is very good, and this has a positive impact on the standards that pupils achieve. Since the last inspection, the school has moved from being a middle school to its present status. This transition has been managed very well. The headteacher has a clear understanding of the school's strengths and of the areas in which further improvements can be made. In addition, he effectively combines his leadership responsibilities with his teaching commitments. He is ably supported in the management of the school by the deputy headteacher and all staff, who have a shared vision of the school's continued development. This is

rooted in ensuring that a positive ethos permeates the school and that all pupils, regardless of their ability, achieve success.

38. The school's systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning have improved greatly since the last inspection. These effectively assist in measuring pupils' progress. Teaching is regularly monitored by the headteacher, and co-ordinators are given some non-teaching time to monitor teaching in their subjects of responsibility. In addition, detailed and close evaluations of end of key stage National Curriculum tests and other assessment data are copiously undertaken to highlight where improvements could be made. From such work, challenging targets for improvement are set. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
39. The school has made very good progress since its last inspection. Firm action has been taken on the issues highlighted for improvement and, as a result, standards have been raised in mathematics, science and ICT. The development of the new ICT suite has impacted greatly on the standards and progress pupils make in this area of their learning. The school has also managed to raise the standards of higher-attaining pupils in English, mathematics and science. The quality of teaching has improved. At the last inspection, 10% of teaching was unsatisfactory. This level has been greatly reduced while at the same time, the level of good and very good teaching has been raised.
40. The quality of strategic planning is good. Underpinning this is the quality of the school development plan that provides a clear structure and direction to the school's continued development. Action points are clear and realistic, and the success criteria are successfully linked to measuring improvements in standards. The Governing Body is fully involved in this development and they play full and active role in the school's life and work; however, at present, their role in terms of being a 'critical friend' to the school is under-developed.
41. There is a very positive ethos and high achievement in the school. Pupils of all ages demonstrate good attitudes to their work and learning, and relationships at all levels are very strong. Another strength in the leadership and management of the school is the way in which parents and the wider community are encouraged to take a full and active part in school life. Parents speak warmly and appreciatively of the work of the staff whom they say are hard-working and approachable.
42. The school makes excellent use of its resources, which has a strong impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Of particular note is the use made of the expertise and interest of the teaching staff in the teaching of certain subjects. The deputy headteacher, for example, is highly qualified in mathematics and she teaches two of the three Year 6 groups for mathematics. Equally effective use is made of the teaching space in the school. The two practical areas, for example, are frequently used for art, design technology and food technology. They provide useful additional space for support teaching for pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language. The newly created ICT suite is timetabled for use by all classes at many different times of the day – including lunchtimes. The library is equally well and frequently used and this has a strong impact on pupils' level of interest in fiction and in the development of their literacy skills generally. No time is lost in the day-to-day management of pupils around the school, which is smooth and unobtrusive, particularly when they are taught in different groups and by different teachers. Good use is made of the additional grants given to the school to support developments. The principles of best value are applied when purchasing materials and teaching resources, and the funds are judiciously spent.
43. The school is well staffed with suitably qualified teachers who between them have a wide range of subject expertise. Staff training needs, including those of support staff, are suitably planned and support the work of the school. A suitable number of support staff work with pupils with special educational needs. These staff works closely with class teachers and make a positive contribution to pupil learning. Induction procedures for new staff are effective. The deputy headteacher effectively acts as mentor for any newly qualified staff.
44. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory. Whilst accommodation in the main building is good and provides a positive learning environment, four classes are housed in small mobile classrooms. The school has worked hard to ensure that internally they provide a stimulating learning environment. However, the new school extension that is planned to be built will further improve the quality of accommodation. Displays of pupils' work around the school, particularly the 'good work' display in the

foyer, enable pupils' achievements to be recognised. The outside area is spacious. It includes two large playground areas, a separate patio area for Year 6 and a large grassed area.

45. The quality and quantity of learning resources are good. In ICT there has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection when they were judged to be inadequate. The provision of the separate computer suite has been a major factor in this as it enables all the computers to be fully timetabled. Resources in English are particularly good and are supported by a large, well-stocked library.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. In order to improve the quality of education further the headteacher and governors should:
 - Improve the 'critical friend' role of the Governing Body by being more challenging, whilst still friendly, when reviewing the work of the school. (Paragraph 40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	72
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	26	39	29	3		

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		Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		302
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		21

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs		Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		83

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	61

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	3.4	School data	0
National comparative data	5.4	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 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	41	40	81

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	34	35	40
	Girls	36	36	39
	Total	70	71	79
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	86 (80)	88 (85)	98 (96)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	34	35	39
	Girls	37	36	39
	Total	71	71	78
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	88 (80)	88 (88)	96 (98)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	–
	–
Black – other	7
Indian	49
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	–
Chinese	–
White	242
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.3
Average class size	27.5

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	139

Financial information

Financial year	1999 – 2000
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	£
Total income	501 693
Total expenditure	493 215
Expenditure per pupil	1 617
Balance brought forward from previous year	28 729
Balance carried forward to next year	37 207

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	305
Number of questionnaires returned	105

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	47	2	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	42	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	51	8	0	1
The teaching is good.	50	45	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	51	10	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	37	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	35	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	56	5	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	50	44	1	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	44	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	43	4	2	0

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

ENGLISH

47. Inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment in English by the end of the key stage is above national expectations. The end of key stage National Curriculum tests results for 2000 confirm this. On entry to the school the pupils are attaining well, and they continue to make good progress in the development of their English skills. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress. There is no difference in the standards reached between boys or girls.
48. By the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils display confidence in speaking and listening. They are often able to articulate their thinking clearly. They can use standard English when appropriate, and are beginning to understand that different circumstances often demand different modes of expression. They listen well to others, both pupils and adults, and consider and reflect upon what is said. They are beginning to appreciate the value of discussion, of exchanging ideas and considering other points of view. They often do this in a calm, reflective manner. When taking a part in a scripted dialogue, they are able to maintain a characterisation effectively. They are beginning to understand that there is a wide diversity of human motivation. In reading playscripts, they exhibit enthusiasm and commitment in this aspect of the curriculum.
49. By the end of the key stage, attainment in reading is above national expectations. Pupils enjoy books. They discuss them with interest and excitement and talk with pleasure about books they have read. They read, often with good expression and understanding, and are well able to reflect on passages they have read and the characters and plot of the book. They respond with sensitivity to a wide range of literature. By the end of the key stage, they discuss at length the motivation of Lady Macbeth, and accept that there may be different points of view of what drives her to behave in the way she does. Pupils also use non-fiction material well. They can locate books in the library on a variety of topics, and use the glossary, index and contents pages of non-fiction books effectively. Their higher order language skills are developing gradually. The school does not allocate specific pupil reading time during the week, except for the timetabled library sessions.
50. Standards in writing are often good, and progress is also good. Pupils in Year 3 enjoy exploring meaning, sound and visual aspects of words through the invention of their own calligrams. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to write effectively in a variety of different forms. They appreciate the value of drafting work and of posing a number of ideas and possibilities before committing themselves to a particular line of work. They compose a letter and lay it out correctly. They correct a piece of unpunctuated work and write creative poetry and arrange it suitably on paper. They keep records of their fiction reading and produce written reviews of many of these books. Pupils write convincingly of their experience of their first school day and often use extensive vocabulary to explore their own feelings and communicate them to others.
51. Through the school the pupils' spelling is sometimes unsatisfactory. The school recognises that this is a difficulty in terms of lifting standards to a higher level; however, the school is, at present, implementing well-constructed strategies to resolve this. Spelling specific lessons are very well focused, well-planned and effectively organised.
52. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers develop speaking and listening skills by the use of carefully posed questions, based on good knowledge of the pupils' strengths and weaknesses. They give their pupils time to think of a suitable response. They use discussion and drama effectively to develop further pupils' speaking skills. Their planning and organisation is good, and teachers have expectations of the pupils which are appropriate for their respective abilities. When challenging pupils' thinking they do so in a sympathetic and considerate manner. They use humour and a wide range of linguistic competencies to draw out and extend pupils' understanding. Teachers develop many of the pupils' writing skills by monitoring their work closely and setting appropriate targets. They check that these targets have been suitably attempted. They pose interesting tasks for the pupils to achieve, and allow them an appropriate time in which to fulfil them. They match work well to the range of abilities in the class. ICT work is incorporated well into the planning and development of pupils' English skills. It is used well in the development of pupils' understanding and skills in punctuation or in the general layout of their work.

53. The co-ordinator offers her colleagues effective support in the introduction and further development of the literacy hour. She continues to keep abreast of recent developments and modifications. She encourages the good use of a wide range of school resources, and has provided training support to the rest of the staff.
54. The resources in the school are wide-ranging and generally very accessible. The library is a very good focus. It is in a good position and is used well by all staff and pupils. It is maintained as a most attractive and orderly centre, with a good quantity of high-quality books and other resources. A learning support assistant oversees it very effectively. Classroom fiction resources are less evenly distributed. Although there is a wide range of books in some classrooms, their organisation in the school is variable and could usefully be reviewed. There are several sets of dictionaries in the school that are past their useful life. Some are as much as thirty years old. This vital school resource should be reviewed.

MATHEMATICS

55. Evaluation of the 2000 end of key stage National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments indicated that pupils' attainment in mathematics was above the national average. When compared to similar schools, standards were above average. Standards at the higher level, Level 5, were also above average. A major factor contributing to the rising attainment seen in the school over the results for 1999 is the impact the deputy headteacher, who is the co-ordinator for the subject, is having on the quality of teaching. The most recent results indicate that the school has reached the targets set for mathematics. Over the past four years, the school has improved attainment in mathematics, particularly by pupils with higher ability.
56. Inspection findings indicate that pupils reach standards that are well above the national average. This is an improvement since the school's last inspection. A major contributory factor to the raising of standards has been the decision to group pupils in all year groups according to their level of ability for the teaching of mathematics. This, along with the quality of teaching that is consistently good and, in Year 6 often very good, accounts for the continued rising standards in mathematics their pupils are currently attaining. Although pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment in mathematics, pupils of all abilities continue to make good gains in their learning across many aspects of mathematics as they move from year to year. As noted in other subjects, there is no strong difference in attainment between the boys and girls.
57. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed very good mental arithmetic skills. Teachers pay good attention to promoting this aspect of pupils' learning with many lessons commencing with brisk and purposeful tasks specifically designed to flex their mental abilities. Pupils' understanding of number is very good and older higher-attaining pupils, for example, have a very detailed knowledge and understanding of fractions and their relationship to decimals, percentages and ratio. Many are able to explain how the answer to a problem such as 47 multiplied by 26 may be arrived at in different ways using the four rules of number. Pupils' investigation skills are good, with many able to solve problems of an open-ended nature. Their knowledge of shape and space is very good. Many pupils solve problems involving area, perimeter, and higher-attaining pupils are able to use the formula of pi in calculating the area of a circle. Although attainment in this area of learning is strong, progress could be more marked if greater emphasis was placed on using the computer language of 'Logo' to support pupils' learning. All pupils have a good knowledge of how to communicate mathematical information using charts, graphs and diagrams and, at the same time, read and interpret information presented to them through such means.
58. The quality of teaching is good, with some examples of very good and excellent teaching evident. It is never less than satisfactory. The school has successfully embraced the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been effectively implemented in all classes. Staff have good subject knowledge, and effective links are made with other subjects to develop pupils' mathematical learning. The new ICT suite, for example, is often frequently and effectively used for the teaching of mathematics. In the very good and excellent teaching seen, high challenge and expectations of pupils were a key feature. In the excellent lesson seen, for example, pupils were exploring the relationship of equivalent fractions to mixed numbers. In the form of a challenge, they were asked to devise and write out a series of fraction cards involving very high numbers, so that others in the class

could use them to develop their understanding. The lesson was very well organised, had crisp pace and was highly effective in moving pupils on in their learning of number and the pattern seen between series of numbers. Practical equipment is often used to good purpose, and this proves useful to pupils, particularly to those with special educational needs, who need the support such materials give to aid their learning. Other strong features of teaching include good use of assessment information to plan learning and effective evaluations of lessons to determine what has been successful or what could be further improved in the next session. Teachers have a good knowledge of the pupils and make effective and clear assessments of their progress, using the information gained to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. As good as the quality of teaching is the quality of written marking could be enhanced by teachers giving clearer guidance to pupils on how they might improve the quality of their work.

59. The quality of teaching has a strong impact on pupils' interest in the subject. This is often very strong with many pupils demonstrating high levels of interest and enthusiasm. Many pupils approach their tasks eagerly and work with care over what they are asked to do. Other key features of their response to their work and the manner in which they work co-operatively in pairs on set tasks and the way in which they persevere – even if they are unsure of the correct answer. Pupils present their work neatly and this makes it easier to follow the pattern of their thinking.
60. The subject is very effectively managed and this has had a strong impact on the progress that has been made in raising standards since the school's last inspection. The co-ordinator gives an effective lead in the subject and provides her colleagues with appropriate support and guidance in the teaching of the subject, which they greatly value. Teaching is regularly monitored and from this, action points devised to improve standards further.

SCIENCE

61. Results in the 2000 Key Stage 2 tests were well above the national average and well above those achieved in similar schools. Results were above those in English and mathematics. The average level achieved has improved steadily since 1996, keeping pace with the national improvement. This is particularly creditable given the comparative difficulty of improving on an already high performance. Nevertheless, results in 2000 increased again with a much higher proportion of pupils reaching the higher Level 5. There has been some variation in the performance of boys and girls in individual years, but no significant difference when averaged over a four-year period.
62. In lessons, virtually all pupils are working at the expected level and a high proportion above it. Pupils in a Year 6 class, for example, were able to explain the function of the heart and were developing a good understanding of the terminology involved, including correctly identifying veins and arteries. Higher-attaining pupils are able to identify and control the variables involved in their experiments, as when investigating the factors that influence how quickly sugar dissolves in water. The pupils reach high levels of attainment because they are well taught and the vast majority apply themselves well to the activities provided. The teachers are clear about what they expect the pupils to learn and the activities used are well designed to achieve this. There is a good focus to their learning and consequently lessons move on at a good pace. The emphasis on a practical approach and relating activities to the pupils' interests ensures that they are involved and keen to learn. A good example of this was Year 3 pupils investigating the properties of materials so that they could design a new umbrella for their teddy. It also means that the pupils' enquiry skills develop at the same rate as their knowledge and understanding. Attainment is therefore comparable across all aspects of science. The pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, consequently make good progress throughout the key stage. There is particularly strong progress before the end of key stage National Curriculum tests because of the effective review period, where pupils have been able to revisit the key ideas and consolidate their understanding prior to the tests. Higher-attaining pupils are frequently challenged well by teachers asking the next, deeper, more challenging question, as in a Year 6 lesson on dissolving, and by requiring pupils to make predictions based on their scientific knowledge.
63. Teachers, as in Year 5 lessons investigating plant growth and a Year 4 lesson with mini-beasts, place a good emphasis on developing the language of science. There is a careful development of the correct use of words and an understanding of their meaning. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to talk about their ideas to teachers and other pupils. This helps the pupils to be accurate and

specific when communicating their ideas and gives them the confidence to do so. There is also a good use of number in many lessons, with science making a good contribution to developing the pupils' numeracy skills, often through the collection and analysis of data. There is some use of ICT, including good use of CD-ROMs and the Internet as sources of information, and spreadsheets and databases to process information. More resources are needed to enable the pupils to use sensors to monitor physical data more routinely.

64. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and is very good in nearly half the lessons. Consequently it is very good overall. The teachers have very high expectations and provide a good challenge for the pupils, who apply themselves well. The pupils work independently and co-operate well in small groups. Teachers can then work in depth with other pupils, answering questions, solving problems and removing weaknesses. Questions are also well used to determine what the pupils already know and encourage them to apply their ideas to new contexts or solve problems. Management has a positive impact on the standards and quality of learning in the subject. Progress has been good since the previous inspection and there is clear direction for its future development.

ART

65. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment in art is in line with national expectations. The school has maintained standards in the subject since its previous inspection. Pupils of all ages and abilities make satisfactory progress in the development of their art skills as they move through the school; however, the progress they make in understanding the three-dimensional aspects of art is often good.
66. By the end of Year 6, pupils use clay to produce careful, intricate models using patterns from nature, and carefully colour-mixed painted models of fruit. They carry out flower studies using tissue paper, glue and paint, and are beginning to explore the properties of a range of drawing materials such as HB, B, 2H pencils and graphite sticks. Pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of line, tone and shading and apply these skills accurately in their drawing when undertaking observations of, for example, fruit and vegetables. Their knowledge and understanding of the works of famous artists and craftspeople are good and pupils are developing the confidence and skill to apply their knowledge and understanding of the skills and techniques used by famous craftspeople in their own art work. Pupils' understanding of how ICT can be used to develop simple pieces of art is a weaker aspect of their attainment.
67. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. In Year 3, pupils draw portraits using drawing pencils and coloured pencils, and sketch an eye from close observation. They make suitably crafted Roman pots out of clay and print them to reflect their history work. In Year 4, they can make Tudor roses out of cut-out paper and draw sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh using pastels. In Year 5, pupils are aware of tessellation and use shapes to make artistic patterns in the style of Escher. Pupils are gaining a good understanding of the concept of 'tie-dye' and of how printing can be created on polystyrene or fabric.
68. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory. In the upper part of the key stage, good use is made of one of the practical areas in the school for much of the teaching. The part-time teacher undertakes much of the teaching for Year 6. She has a strong interest in the subject and plans pupils' learning well. Resources in this area are well organised, and work that pupils are asked to complete provides them with good challenge thereby ensuring that their art skills are suitably developed. Teaching ensures that most pupils are enthusiastic about the subject, although in some lessons older pupils do create too much noise and their attention wavers. Where teaching is really effective, the atmosphere is more purposeful and pupils are willing to discuss their ideas and strive to improve their work. Teaching ensures that portfolios of work and sketch-books record the progress of pupils through the school; however, the use of these varies throughout the school. Teaching could be further improved by giving pupils greater scope to select their own media and materials and thus shape the direction of their work.
69. There is a scheme of work for art, although the development of skills in each medium is not always sufficiently clear to ensure the coherent and progressive development of skills. There is a good range of resources, stored and used with due regard to health and safety, and both practical areas are well used. The part-time art co-ordinator has already given extra support and guidance to teachers whose

subject knowledge is less well developed, and she has plans to develop this further when time is made available.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

70. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection with nearly all pupils continuing to work at or above the expected level. Pupils in Year 6, for example, systematically tested a range of vegetables and soups, recording their observations of taste, texture and smell. They were then able to use this initial investigation to start to think about combinations they might use in making their own soup. Similarly pupils in Year 3 examined picture frames, considering ideas such as the materials used and how the frame stood up and recording their observations through drawings. Higher-attaining pupils related the properties of the material to its use.
71. The pupils have experience of using a wide range of materials, including textiles, food and wood, and develop a broad range of skills. Good use is made of resources outside the school to extend this experience, such as intensive courses covering aspects of control technology, to supplement the work done in school. There is a good emphasis on all aspects of the subject, including design and evaluation, as well as making. Practical tasks are well used to develop steadily and mould the pupils' ideas and experiences before they are presented with a task that draws them all together. Year 5 pupils, for example, explored the strength of different shapes and methods of strengthening them further, having used photographs of bridges as a starting point. This work would lead up to them designing and making their own bridge to achieve a set task.
72. The pupils make good progress in their design and technology sessions because they are well taught and they apply themselves to their work well. Teaching is good overall, and sometimes, as in a Year 6 lesson exploring tastes and textures, very good. The teachers' own knowledge and understanding are good and they have a clear focus on what they expect the pupils to learn. Activities are then well chosen to support this. Practical sessions are well managed and teachers are able to spend time with individual pupils, checking and discussing their ideas, because other pupils are concentrating on the task set.
73. Management has maintained the strengths of the subject since the previous inspection and there is now even greater coherence to the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

74. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment in geography is in line with national expectations. As they move through each of the classes, they make satisfactory progress. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they too make satisfactory progress.
75. By the end of the key stage, pupils are able to identify important features of the British Isles. They are developing geographical vocabulary and skills. They know where to find the British Isles on a globe. They know where the countries, main rivers and capital towns of the United Kingdom are to be found. They are developing mapping skills, and can use them in the right circumstances. Pupils show satisfactory and sometimes good attitudes and behaviour. They are happy to work co-operatively. This is particularly evident in the Year 4 groups observed. They respond well to questioning and are willing to contribute their own ideas at appropriate moments. They are often enthusiastic and keen to take part in the lesson and learn.
76. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound and often it is good. Teaching shows good preparation and appropriate planning. The class teacher's sense of humour often adds to the interest already shown by the pupils. The maintenance of a good pace and a clear explanation of the task required from the pupils are additional features of the positive aspects of the teaching. Where the time taken to introduce a lesson is sometimes too long, this reduces the time given for pupils to complete their work. This results in some pupils beginning to lose some of their natural interest and they have to be brought firmly back to focus on the work set.
77. The co-ordinator for geography is reviewing the policy this autumn. A new scheme of work is now in place. It is intended that this will assist the school in beginning to respond to the requirements of Curriculum 2000. A range of visits is well established to support learning. A local visit around

Whitnash in Year 3 helps pupils draw on their own immediate environment for geographical information. Orienteering activities have been an established part of the visit to Hams Hall in Year 4. Pupils in Year 5 take part in a river study linked with the local environment centre. In Year 6, a trip to York is taken to contrast the environment of Whitnash and the area around York. This latter is under review by the school in order to find a region with greater contrast than York.

78. The resources that are in use are in a satisfactory condition. There is an appropriate quantity. Each year group has access to a globe. There are sufficient atlases, but they are often out of date, and should be reviewed. There are wall maps available to all year groups and there is a growing range of Ordnance Survey resources. In One Year 6 lesson, the class teacher herself generated considerable quantities of high-quality materials; however, there is a wide range of old geography texts on easily accessible shelves in the centre of the school which are well beyond their useful life as geography texts.

HISTORY

79. The pupils' achievement in history through the school is often good, and their attainment by the end of the key stages is in line with national expectations. Pupils through the school make sound progress in developing their understanding of history. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good and these pupils make satisfactory progress. In Year 3, pupils are very gradually beginning to understand the complexities of chronology and the sequence of historical events. In Year 4, pupils are able to articulate sensible, thoughtful and reasoned responses to the growing dilemma of Henry VIII, as he finds himself without a male heir. They support their views and ideas with knowledge gained of the circumstances of the period from previous sessions. In Year 5, they are able to structure suitable ways of researching further into the lives of Ancient Egyptians after a stimulating and well-focused trip to the Egyptian rooms at the Black Country Museum. Pupils in Year 6 listen with interest and enthusiasm to the accounts of four pensioners' experiences of the Second World War. They asked appropriate questions based upon background knowledge already acquired. They showed interest in the artefacts brought in by the pensioners.
80. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are always satisfactory, and often better. They invariably concentrate well on the many interesting tasks set for them and they work well together, listening and contributing to discussions.
81. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory, and often it is good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good. They generate well-designed tasks and interesting activities to engage the pupils. Work is often linked to other curriculum areas, benefiting literacy, art and information technology, as well as history. Tasks are effectively planned for the needs and abilities of pupils. Explanations of what is required of the pupils are made clear. Teachers often have appropriate expectations of their pupils, and these expectations are usually well communicated. Organisation and preparation of the work is effective, and the management of the pupils and the resources available is always satisfactory and often it is better.
82. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and provides a firm lead in the subject. This commitment is well communicated to the pupils, as well as other staff, and the quality of response and the attitude of the pupils is very positive. The co-ordinator has maintained a close overview on developments in the curriculum for the subject. She has made very appropriate choice of purchases to increase the quality of resources available to the whole school. An additional and distinct contribution to the quality of these resources has been made with materials she has produced herself. She has plans to increase further the present use of web pages on specific topics in history.
83. The co-ordinator has also established good links with the Coventry Evening Telegraph and has used their information in researching World War 2 as well as inviting some of their contacts into school to talk about their experiences during the war.
84. There is a clear scheme of work, which has been updated as and when required. Visits by pupils to York, Coventry, a Tudor House at Hams Hall as well as the Black Country Museum contribute to the breadth and depth of the pupils' study.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

85. There has been a substantial improvement in provision for ICT and a corresponding improvement in the pupils' attainment. Overall, attainment is in line with the standards expected of pupils at this age. The majority of pupils are confident and competent users of ICT and some have developed their skills in some elements to be above that expected. There are examples, for instance, of pupils in Years 5 and 6 combining different sources to construct slide presentations using a commercial piece of software. Pupils in Year 3 could all log onto the network, open a paint package and start to use it to draw pictures for bonfire night invitation cards. Higher-attaining pupils were already starting to experiment with the capabilities of the software to produce some high quality artwork.
86. The bringing together of resources into a suite enables the teachers to provide a focused and challenging experience for whole-class groups of pupils. Learning is correspondingly more rapid and more secure for individual pupils. Teachers themselves are sufficiently skilled to ensure that their plans are generally well implemented and they have the confidence and expertise to solve problems as they occur. The pupils behave very well and work with interest and good levels of motivation. They enjoy their work, persevere and apply themselves. Teachers can therefore spend time with individuals and help them overcome difficulties or discuss their work in detail. Consequently pupils make good progress in individual lessons. The development of ICT is well planned so that the pupils' skills develop in a coherent and progressive way. This means that pupils also make good progress over longer periods of time.
87. There is also some good use of ICT to support learning in other subjects, including numeracy and literacy sessions timetabled in the ICT suite. Often these lessons, such as Year 6 using CD-ROM and Internet sources to research the lives of evacuees in the Second World War or Year 4 developing a database on mini-beasts, skilfully combine good progress in developing both subject and ICT skills. Many pupils are familiar with the use of ICT at home and are allowed to use computers to support their learning. Many also take advantage of the ICT suite being open at lunchtimes to carry on with their work, research hobbies and interests using the Internet or play educational games. These activities further consolidate and strengthen routine ICT skills.
88. Teaching overall is good. It is never less than satisfactory and sometimes, as in a Year 5 lesson where pupils were preparing slide presentations on their suggestions for a school building programme, it is very good. Management has had a substantial impact on improving the provision in the subject and standard of attainment reached. The effective leadership of the co-ordinator has been instrumental in raising standards. Monitoring of the quality of teaching in the subject has been undertaken and much effective support and guidance provided for teachers. Statutory requirements are now met, with good use made of external providers to meet aspects of control technology where provision within the school remains relatively weak.

MUSIC

89. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment in music is in line with national expectations. Progress is generally satisfactory for their ages and abilities, although some variation was noted, largely due to the differing musical skill and expertise of the teachers.
90. In Year 6, work scrutiny indicates that pupils are able to listen to and reflect on a range of orchestral music, both modern and classical. A few pupils have the opportunity to learn woodwind and brass instruments, and a small ensemble group has recently been formed which meets after school. In these lessons, teachers display excellent knowledge and a high level of technical expertise. In lessons, pupils are making good progress in their acquisition of skills and musical knowledge. Pupils sing well in communal activities such as assemblies and there are opportunities for pupils to play their clarinets in the assemblies.
91. As they move through the key stage, pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning of music. In Year 3, pupils sing 'London's Burning' in two parts tunefully and with good diction. They repeat rhythm patterns clapped by the teacher and they knew what an orchestra is and that a conductor is someone who leads it. In Year 4, work scrutiny indicates that pupils study and have learned key facts about Gustav Holst, and woodwind and brass sections of the orchestra. In Year 5, pupils can compose their own chants using two notes and two rhythms involving crotchets and quavers. They sing and clap the

chants they make and write them down using the correct symbols. They effectively appraise each other's work.

92. During the inspection only one example of composition was observed; however, there were opportunities to listen to pieces of music mainly from classical sources in assemblies. Musical concerts are performed for parents from time to time, and many pupils take part, singing and playing instruments. The quality of teaching in music is more variable than it should be. Overall, however, it is satisfactory across the school. Teaching is better where musical knowledge and expertise are higher and staff are more confident about teaching it. The recently appointed music co-ordinator has produced a comprehensive scheme of work for music; however, the framework that is necessary for the coherent and progressive development of skills in the key areas of singing, composing, performance and appreciation of music is not yet fully in place. A few teachers require further help and support to implement the policy fully, and the co-ordinator has clear plans and the skills necessary to do this when time is made available. In lessons seen and in the extra-curricular activities seen, pupils enjoy their music and work with effort and concentration.
93. The school is satisfactorily resourced with a selection of tuned and untuned instruments, books and recorded music. It was noted in the last inspection that there are limited resources for music of other cultures, and this is still the case. Insufficient use is made in assemblies and lessons of songs and recorded and live music to reflect the multi-cultural richness of our society.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

94. By the end of the key stage, pupils attain standards above national expectations. The school places strong emphasis on developing pupils' physical abilities, and the very good range of extra curricular activities contribute significantly to the high standards pupils attain. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in many aspects of their learning as they move through the school. The school has maintained standards in the subject since the school's initial inspection.
95. In dance, by the end of the key stage, pupils are able to construct simple sequences of movement in line with a particular theme suggested by the teacher. They work at different levels using space in the hall creatively and they are able to collaborate purposefully with a friend to refine their ideas. No observation of gymnastic work was seen during the inspection and no judgement can be offered therefore in relation to pupils' attainment in this aspect. In swimming, many pupils are able to swim beyond the minimum requirement for pupils aged eleven and progress in this aspect of their physical development is good. Pupils know how to take part in team games and they have good skills in relation to passing or throwing a ball and using hockey sticks as part of small team games in hockey.
96. The quality of teaching is good, although there is some variation between classes. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and their explanations to pupils of what they are expected to do are clear. The pace of lessons is brisk and lessons often start with crisp warm-up sessions that focus pupils' attention well on what they are to learn. These are followed by purposeful and challenging tasks that enable pupils to develop their creativity, particularly in dance. In the dance lessons observed, good scope was given for pupils to form pairs or small groups to develop their work using the ideas each other to develop dance movements. Although teaching is good, greater emphasis on enabling pupils to develop their ability to evaluate the work of their classmates as a means of developing their own performance would add further to the overall teaching quality. The teaching of swimming is effective, enabling pupils to make good progress in this aspect of their physical education development.
97. The very good range of extra-curricular activities adds greatly to the quality and range of pupils' learning in physical education. These are open to many pupils and include cross country running, football and netball. The school enables pupils to take part in competitive sport in these activities and has achieved some considerable success. Participation rates are high and parents and pupils are appreciative of the amount of time staff devote to the organisation of extra-curricular activities, often during their dinner breaks. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' personal and social development as they gain a greater understanding of the need to work co-operatively as a member of a team.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

98. By the end of the key stage, pupils attain standards in religious education above the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils make good progress throughout the school, learning about religion and reflecting on the issues raised, especially those related to their own lives. This is a notable feature of religious education in the school. Standards and provision for religious education have improved considerably since the last inspection. This is largely attributable to the useful work of the whole staff in producing a religious education policy and well-planned curriculum that fully meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
99. By the end of Year 6, pupils write about the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt and the plagues suffered by them. They understand the symbols and meaning of Pesach or Passover, and write very reflectively about how children and parents would have felt in this situation. They show a good understanding of other faiths and traditions. They have a good knowledge of the stories from the Bible and are aware that the parables of Jesus often had a particular meaning. Progress in each of the year groups by pupils of all abilities is good. In Year 3, pupils understand the story of the Good Samaritan, and can empathise with the characters, seeing the situation from many different points of view. They know the stories and meaning of Advent and Christmas and can explain the five K's of Sikhism. They understand what it means in practice to belong to a group such as Christians, Jews, Sikhs and Muslims and can talk and write about a range of places of worship such as a synagogue, mosque, church or temple. In Year 4, pupils reflect sensitively on how they could be a good neighbour to an elderly or sick person, and apply the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament to their lives at home and at school. In Year 5, pupils study the gods and practices of the Egyptian religion and read the story of John the Baptist. They understand the symbolism of the baptismal candle and the meaning of the ceremony of the baptism of infants in the Anglican Church.
100. The quality of teaching observed in lessons was generally good or better. Very good use is made of religious artefacts, books and original source material, to bring the subject alive for pupils. A good range of resources, including artefacts, to support the teaching of all the major religions is available. These are accessible and used effectively. Funding has been given by local places of worship to improve this provision. Very good links exist with a range of local places of worship and religious leaders, including Methodist, Anglican, and the Sikh Temple. Teaching has a strong impact on the quality of pupils' response in lessons, which is often good. In lessons seen, pupils were calm, responsive, and extremely interested in the subject matter, listening with sustained concentration and offering sensible ideas and suggestions during the discussions. Pupils work hard in order to develop their own insights into the meaning of faith and its relevance to everyday life. They show their enjoyment of religious education lessons, of stories from different faiths, and are respectful of other religions and religious practices.
101. The subject makes an important contribution towards developing an understanding of other ways of life, both in other parts of the world, and within multi-cultural Britain. It offers pupils good opportunities to reflect on wider issues, such as the features of friendship, the need to be sorry and the concept of forgiveness. The provision for the subject is further enhanced by regular visits to the school by the local Rector, by the often exemplary assemblies and by visits to local places of worship such as the Anglican Church and the Sikh Temple. The religious education co-ordinator makes an effective contribution to the subject and its management in the school.