

INSPECTION REPORT

TREFONEN CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Trefonen, Oswestry

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123507

Headteacher: Mr J A Wray

Reporting inspector: B Matusiak-Varley
19938

Dates of inspection: 1st – 3rd November 2000

Inspection number: 224511

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior School

School category: Voluntary Controlled

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Lane
Trefonen
Oswestry
Shropshire

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Telephone number: 01691 652960

Fax number: 01691 680793

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Janet Barlow

Date of previous inspection: 27th January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|----------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
| B Matusiak-Varley 19938 | Registered inspector | English Art and design Music Religious education Foundation Stage of learning Equal opportunities | The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and achievements Leadership and management Key issues |
| M Weaver 9352 | Lay inspector | | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers |
| N Wales 22054 | Team inspector | Science Geography History Physical education Special educational needs | Quality and range of opportunities for learning |
| J Haslam 7084 | Team inspector | Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology | Teaching and learning |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small school with 152 pupils on roll aged 5-11. The children's attainment on entry is very varied but is broadly average. All pupils come from white United Kingdom heritage backgrounds. Eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. Twenty-one per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register and this is broadly average. Two pupils have statements of special educational needs. The nature of pupils' special educational needs is very varied, ranging from behavioural difficulties to moderate learning difficulties and dyslexia. The school is part of the North West Shropshire Action Zone, which has been funded to tackle rural deprivation which has been identified as a key factor for under achievement in schools of the zone. The school has a relatively high number of pupils joining the school at times other than normal admission times. Pupils are taught in mixed-age classes with the exception of one Year 6 class. Pupils are taught by five full-time teachers.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Trefonen CE Primary School provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. During the week of inspection the quality of teaching was good. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning in lessons. Standards by the end of both key stages are broadly in line with national averages in English, mathematics and science but are below national expectations in information and communication technology. There are occasions when the higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged in English and science and their achievement could be better. Historically, pupils' achievement has not been as good as it could be, but the recent measures that the headteacher, together with the local education authority, has introduced, coupled with the appointment of the new deputy headteacher, are having a positive effect on pupils' short-term gains in learning. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall with a particular strength being the pastoral care that is given to all pupils in personal development. Further rigour is now needed in ensuring that standards continue to rise from being average to being above average in English, mathematics and science. Given the pupils' average level of attainment on entry to the school, the high proportion of pupils enter the school during the year (34 per cent in Key Stage 2) and the high percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register in Year 2 and Year 6, the pupils' rate of achievement is satisfactory. The school ensures that all pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life and have access to relevant and exciting learning opportunities. The school has set challenging targets for 2001 which it is well placed to achieve. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in speaking, listening, reading and physical education are high at the end of both key stages and all pupils make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and this contributes to the good gains that pupils make in their learning.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All staff cater well for their pupils' social, emotional, physical and academic needs. Support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school, they have high self-esteem and are confident learners.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. The curriculum is enriched by many varied learning opportunities and provision for extracurricular activities is very good.
- The school has very good links with parents. Parents are pleased with the caring ethos of the school and the contribution of parents to their children's learning is very good.

- The quality and commitment of the administrative staff plays a significant part in the smooth running of the school.

What could be improved

- Pupils' attainment in handwriting and spelling at the end of both key stages is not good enough. This results in the presentation of pupils' work being inconsistent throughout the school. Pupils' investigative skills in science at the end of both key stages could be better.
- Standards in information and communication technology at the end of both key stages are below the level expected nationally.
- Higher-attaining pupils are not always provided with sufficiently challenging activities in English and science; this results in their rates of progress not always being fast enough.
- Information gained from assessments is not sufficiently well used to help pupils develop their skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects.
- Time scales for completion of identified priorities on the school development plan are not sufficiently rigorous.
- The co-ordinators are at a very early stage of checking standards in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There were four key issues identified in the previous report in 1997 and these have been addressed although there is still some work to do in curriculum planning. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Provision for the Foundation Stage of learning has improved and all children are attaining the early learning goals in all areas of learning, with the exception of physical development where they attain high standards. The school has ensured that curriculum responsibilities are equitably distributed but, with the recent appointment of the deputy headteacher, the school has had to redistribute subject allocation to co-ordinators and they are at the early stages of development in raising standards in their subjects. The school has made satisfactory progress in developing its schemes of work, but further emphasis is needed in ensuring that the schemes are matched to the needs and interest levels of all pupils, and that they clearly define further opportunities for pupils to extend their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills in all subjects. Communication with parents has improved. Overall, average standards have been maintained since the last inspection with the exception of information and communication technology, handwriting and spelling at the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 2, standards are not as high in geography, music as they were at the time of the last inspection. Standards in speaking and listening and reading have improved and are now above national averages. The school has rightfully maintained its strong emphasis on valuing pupils as individuals. The school has maintained its good quality of teaching and its effect on learning is most apparent in the high standards pupils attain in speaking and listening and reading at the end of both key stages.

STANDARDS

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

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

| Key | |
|--------------------|---|
| well above average | A |
| above average | B |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---|---|--------------------|---|
| Mathematics | D | C | E | E | average | C |
| Science | D | C | B | E | below average | D |
| | | | | | well below average | E |

The chart shows that standards in English in comparison with national averages have improved from being in line to being above average, this is also the case with pupils' attainment in science. However, in mathematics, pupils attained very low standards, both in comparison with national averages and in comparison with similar schools. In comparison with similar schools, standards in English were below average and in science they were well below average. Based upon the 2000 test results, standards are not high enough, but these results, must be treated with caution because the groups of pupils were small so that statistics may not be reliable. The group of pupils who took the test had a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, and there was a high level of pupil turnover in that particular year group. It must be remembered that the group of pupils who took the test in Year 6 had been subjected to a less than successful job share arrangement and prolonged illness of a teacher has affected the continuity of their learning. Several parents refused to let their children sit the tests because they were fundamentally opposed to their children being tested. These circumstances had an adverse effect on pupils' attainment and scores. Inspection findings show that by the end of the Foundation Stage, all pupils achieve the early learning goals and make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment. They exceed the expected levels in physical development and make good gains in relation to their prior attainment. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are high in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with national averages; in comparison with similar schools, standards in reading are well above average, in writing they are above average and in mathematics they are in line. Inspection findings show that, based upon this year's group of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, standards are broadly in line in English, mathematics and science, with good achievement found in speaking and listening and reading. Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected of pupils nationally. In all foundation subjects, with the exception of physical education, standards are broadly in line with national expectations. In physical education, standards are above expectations at the end of both key stages and the very good provision made for extracurricular activities in athletics, cross country events, inter-school football and netball matches contribute to the pupils' good achievements in these activities. Standards in singing are high at the end of both key stages and instrumentalists who take lessons from peripatetic staff achieve well in relation to prior attainment.

Average-attaining pupils in both key stages make sound gains in learning and pupils with special educational needs achieve well. Higher-attaining pupils could be making better progress; this is because their rates of learning are inconsistent due to low teacher expectations, and data from assessments is not fully used to target pupils' learning. However, in mathematics, higher-attaining pupils are achieving well because the school has recently introduced setting of pupils in ability groups. Inspection findings show that the school is committed to raising standards and the present system adopted in mathematics is having a positive effect on pupils' progress. Standards could be improved in spelling, handwriting, investigative skills in science and information and communication technology but, overall, pupils are achieving as well as they can and are well prepared for secondary school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect | Comment |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Attitudes to the school | Very good. The pupils enjoy school and concentrate on their work. They are keen to improve and appreciate the good learning opportunities that the school provides for them. |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms | Very good. The pupils have a clear understanding of the school's rules and behave well because teachers explain the impact of their actions on others. Pupils are friendly and courteous to each other and visitors. |
| Personal development and | Good. The pupils take full advantage of the many opportunities offered to |

| | |
|---------------|---|
| relationships | them. Relationships are very good. |
| Attendance | Good. Attendance rates are better than usually found, pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly. |

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good. In eight per cent of lessons seen the teaching was very good. Sixty-nine per cent of teaching was good. Seventeen per cent of teaching was satisfactory and six per cent was unsatisfactory. These lessons were taken by a supply teacher. The headteacher sets high expectations of teaching and provides a very good example to his staff in the effective methods he uses to raise pupils' achievement. Very good teaching was seen in mathematics, art and design and physical education. Two unsatisfactory lessons were seen in Key Stage 2; this was due to pupils being very boisterous in lessons and not paying attention in physical education and personal, social, and health education, because the level of expectation placed upon them was too low. The quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy is generally good. The teachers' firm grasp of the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and effective leadership of the co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy are having a positive effect on raising standards. The good quality teaching supports the good learning seen during the week of inspection and is beginning to impact positively on the rates of the pupils' progress. Lessons are generally interesting and lively and well planned to meet pupils' needs but higher-attaining pupils could be challenged further. Drama and role-play are used successfully to extend pupils' learning in literacy and personal, social and health education. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and support staff contribute well to ensure pupils' good rates of progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| The quality and range of the curriculum | Satisfactory. Broad but insufficiently balanced in information and communication technology. The school is addressing this issue through its involvement in the Education Action Zone. Good learning opportunities are provided for pupils and provision for extracurricular activities is very good. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs | Good. The support for pupils is well planned and as a result pupils achieve well. |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good. The school provides many opportunities for the pupils to develop confidence and take responsibility. The use of local artists and participation in arts activities contributes very well to pupils' spiritual development. The firm moral framework provided by the school is well understood by all the pupils. Very good opportunities are provided for pupils' social development and pupils have a good understanding of their own culture and the beliefs and practices of a multicultural society. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils | Good. Very good pastoral care is provided for the pupils and their personal welfare is promoted satisfactorily. Pupils are valued for their uniqueness and an effective start has been made on tracking their rates of progress in an attempt to further raise standards. |
| Partnership with parents | Good. The school has built a strong partnership with parents and consults them about the learning opportunities that are provided for the pupils. Parents receive good quality information on what their children learn in school in the core subjects, but information on their achievements in the foundation subjects could be improved. |

The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to grow in self-esteem and in confidence. Their good work, effort and very good behaviour are rewarded by the use of realistic praise. The atmosphere of

the school is lively and secure. Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and feelings and to contribute to the community. The excellent arrangements made for pupils to work with a local artist in Bwyltai Woods contributes to pupils' growing awareness of the true meaning of citizenship as they are taught to respect the countryside. The wide-ranging extracurricular activities are popular with the pupils and impact very positively on their personal and social development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect | Comment |
|--|---|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Satisfactory. The headteacher is a very good classroom practitioner and provides a good example to his staff. He is ably supported by his newly appointed deputy headteacher but, as yet, the sound educational direction of the school is not as rigorously developed as the good pastoral care that pupils receive. The school development plan's time frames for review are too long and lack a sense of urgency; this results in priorities not being completed as fast as they might be. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities | Satisfactory. The hard-working governors provide sound support for the school and play a full part in the school's development planning. There are, however, several omissions in the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents which need to be rectified. Governors are fully involved in monitoring the finances of the school. |
| The school's evaluation of its performance | Satisfactory. The school has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses and all staff work hard to bring about improvement. An effective start has been made at monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching. |
| The strategic use of resources | Satisfactory. The school's financial planning is effective and supports its priorities for development. Grants are well used to improve provision for pupils' learning, and support staff are well deployed and make a good contribution to ensuring that pupils have good access to the curriculum. The school provides satisfactory value for money. |

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most | What parents would like to see improved |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff including the headteacher are approachable. • Children are valued and are treated as individuals. • The small-school ethos is conducive to pupils' learning. • Children attain good standards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework is not set regularly. |

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views, but inspection findings show that there are occasions when higher-attaining pupils could be challenged further and homework arrangements could be improved.

Inspectors agree that there is a confusing picture as to when homework is given out because, at present, it is at the teacher's discretion. Inspectors judge that a more structured approach is needed and the school has recognised the need to be more stringent in its approach to homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils enter the school with very varied levels of attainment though, overall, attainment on entry is broadly in line with what is expected nationally. Throughout the Foundation Stage of learning, pupils generally make sound progress, with the exception of physical development where pupils achieve well and make good progress. By the end of the Foundation Stage pupils achieve the early learning goals in communication language and literacy, mathematical development, creative development, personal and social development and knowledge and understanding of the world, but exceed the early learning goals in physical education.
2. The national tests in 2000 show that in comparison with all schools by the end of Key Stage 1, standards are well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and in comparison with similar schools are well above average in reading, above average in writing and in line in mathematics. By the end of Key Stage 2 in comparison with all schools, standards are above national averages in English and science, but are well below in mathematics. In comparison with similar school, standards are below average in English and well below in mathematics and science. These results must be treated with caution because of the small group of pupils who took the test at the end of both key stages. There are further contributory factors to standards being too low in comparison with similar schools by the end of Key Stage 2 based upon test results. The pupils in that particular group had not received stability in teaching and were taught by a variety of teachers including a less than satisfactory arrangement of a job share. There had been a long-term sickness of a member of staff and, furthermore, a significant number of pupils joined the school during the Key Stage 2 period. The majority of those who entered at times other than the normal admission date, were below average attaining pupils, several of whom were on the special educational needs register due to emotional and behavioural problems and learning difficulties. Several parents took their children away on holidays during the times when tests were administered and this depressed the scores. Trends over time indicate that, by the end of Key Stage 1, the performance of pupils in reading was close to the national average, in writing it was above the national average and in mathematics it was close to the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2, in English, mathematics and science, the performance of pupils was close to the national average and the trend in the school's National Curriculum average points for all core subjects was broadly in line with the national trend. Analysis of results shows that there was a lack of pupils attaining the higher levels in Key Stage 2 English, but that overall standards have been gradually improving year upon year with the exception of mathematics when standards were low but, the school has rightly addressed this issue by teaching pupils in ability groups.
3. Inspection findings show a slightly different picture from the national test results. By the end of both key stages in English, science and mathematics, standards are in line with the national averages, with standards in speaking and listening and reading being high. Standards in writing are average overall, but in both key stages there are weaknesses in handwriting and spelling and these affect pupils' presentation skills, which are not consistently neat throughout the school. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because they are well supported both in and out of the classroom and their individual education plans are well used to target their learning. In English, pupils speak clearly and have a rich vocabulary. They express

their opinions confidently, they are competent readers and enjoy reading for pleasure and information. They write for a variety of purposes and use good examples of creative vocabulary in their imaginative writing. Generally they use punctuation accurately. Standards in mathematics are in line with national averages by the end of both key stages and pupils achieve well, they are quick with numbers and are good at finding different ways of solving mathematical problems. Standards in science are in line with national averages by the end of both key stages and pupils with special educational needs achieve standards in science which are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Pupils are making sound gains in understanding how to plan and carry out investigations and they achieve well in understanding the principles of observation, prediction, fair testing and making hypotheses. At present, there are inconsistencies in the achievement of higher-attaining pupils in both key stages, especially in English and science. Standards in information and communication technology are below those expected of pupils at the end of both key stages and pupils' achievements are not high enough. This is because teachers have not had sufficient training, planning is at the very early stages of development and insufficient opportunities are identified to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. This results in unsatisfactory achievement overall, and all pupils, regardless of their ability, are not being sufficiently challenged. This is being addressed by the introduction of a new scheme of work and the school's partnership with the Education Action Zone which has a focus on information and communication technology. Pupils broadly attain the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education but there are inconsistencies in pupils' acquisition of subject specific skills, such as the meaning of ritual, comparison of worship practices and understanding the true meaning of belonging to a community.

4. In all other subjects, art and design, history, geography, music and religious education, standards are in line with national averages with the exception of history at the end of Key Stage 2 and physical education at the end of both key stages, where standards are above those expected of pupils at this age and pupils' attainment is good. This is because in history there is an appropriate emphasis placed in Year 6 on the teaching of subject specific skills, such as chronology and interpreting historical evidence using a variety of resources, and in physical education teachers also place appropriate emphasis on the teaching of skills. Pupils who are instrumentalists achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because they are taught well by the peripatetic staff. Standards in singing are good and pupils who attend extracurricular activities in physical education make good gains in the development of team games and cross-country running skills. Pupils of all ability levels make sound progress over time in relation to their prior attainment, but the above average attaining pupils are inconsistently challenged in English, science and other foundation subjects because insufficient use is made of the data to inform subsequent planning of challenging tasks for these pupils which would further extend their learning. Furthermore the school does not have a policy to raise staff awareness as to how these pupils can be identified and how best to meet their needs. The school has met its targets for English and has just missed achieving them in mathematics. However, this year more rigorous targets have been set and the school is well placed to achieve them as the new deputy headteacher, together with the headteacher and local education authority, has set up rigorous systems of monitoring and evaluation to raise standards. The good quality of teaching and the stability of a hard-working team of teachers are contributing to the continuous raising of standards. Further work needs to be undertaken to use data from assessments to inform planning and to clearly identify opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology in all other subjects.
5. Since the previous inspection, the school has raised its targets for 2002 in English and mathematics, and a new deputy headteacher has been appointed to further develop curriculum planning and to ensure that standards are regularly monitored. Sound standards have been maintained in all subjects with the exception of English at Key Stage 2, information and

communication technology, history Key Stage 1, geography and music. In physical education pupils have maintained high standards. Standards in the Foundation Stage of learning have been appropriately raised in all areas of learning when previously they were judged as being too low.

6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Those with a statement of special educational need benefit from the help they receive from support staff both in class and when they are withdrawn for individual help. Pupils benefit from the additional literacy support they are given and this enables them to gain full access to curriculum opportunities. All pupils participate in a full range of activities in which they are appropriately monitored and guided. In classes, the good quality of teaching, together with the well-managed intervention of the support staff, enables the pupils to progress well. As a result there are occasions when pupils are taken off the register of special educational needs and in the end of key stage assessment tests attain standards that are appropriate for their age. There are occasions when lesson planning indicates an inadequate planning of tasks appropriate to pupils' needs. However, a good example of matching tasks to pupils' needs is seen in mathematics. On these occasions older and higher-attaining pupils are well challenged and expectations are high. As a result they make good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The pupils have very good attitudes to school and establish constructive relationships with one another and with staff and other adults. The pupils demonstrate a keen desire to learn. They work hard, take pride in their work and are keen to show what they have achieved. Their behaviour and personal development are good overall.
8. Most children enter the reception class with a sense of eagerness and curiosity. They conform readily to the routines of the timetable and enjoy their work and play. They demonstrate a high level of personal security and readily join in class activities with older pupils in Year 1 with whom they share the classroom. In role-play, the children develop their imagination well, such as how a ticket office functions and show confidence in assuming the roles of ticket collector and customer. Throughout the school, pupils are interested in the subjects presented to them in lessons, such as in a mixed Year 3/4 group where they readily described music in poetic language. The pupils show an enthusiasm for practical activities such as cross-country running and physical education and enjoy the wide range of after-school activities which the staff provide.
9. Most pupils behave very well in class and throughout the school. They are courteous and trustworthy, polite and helpful to visitors. Many show confidence in talking with visitors about their work, their feelings about how well they are doing at school and in asking questions. There is little evidence of bullying, partially due to the school's approach where pupils are encouraged to talk openly about their feelings; when concerns are raised they are dealt with in a mature manner by the pupils in conjunction with the teachers. Pupils demonstrate a high level of maturity for their ages. They respond well to the small number of pupils with behavioural concerns, such as those excluded from another school, some older pupils extending friendship and supportiveness to them. Pupils with special educational needs integrate very well with other pupils, developing their intellectual, personal and social skills well. The level of attendance is good and pupils are punctual in arriving at school, enabling lessons to start on time.
10. The pupils show respect for one another's feelings and listen attentively to what each others have to say. When given responsibility, they rise to the occasion very well and readily show their willingness to fulfil a range of tasks, such as operating the overhead projector and music centre in assemblies. A number of pupils act as library and classroom monitors and others carry

out jobs for the school secretary. They are keen to take their own initiatives and have planned and organised a wide range of fundraising activities for charitable causes such as a Blue Peter Appeal and for supporting the education of a school girl in Indonesia. Good peer support by pupils further demonstrates their positive attitudes toward one another where, for example, pupils in Year 2 accompany the reception class children into the dining hall and sit with them during lunch.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The overall quality of teaching in the lessons observed during the inspection was good. It was good overall for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Teaching in 94 per cent of lessons was satisfactory or better. In 69 per cent of lessons it was good and in 8 per cent it was very good. Seventeen per cent was satisfactory and six per cent unsatisfactory teaching was seen in personal, social and health education and physical education in Key Stage 2. No lessons were seen in which teaching was judged to be poor or very poor.
12. Examples of good teaching were seen in each key stage of the school and all teachers at the school were observed teaching good lessons. Overall, the skills of literacy and numeracy are effectively taught. Very good teaching was seen in numeracy in the higher-attaining set in Key Stage 2. This very good teaching was characterised by the teacher's very good subject knowledge, use of time and resources and very good relationships. This resulted in pupils making good gains in their learning because the tasks were well matched to the pupils' needs and the examples given on the chance of probability matched pupils' interest levels. In a very good art and design lesson in Key Stage 2, the teacher used a good range of resources such as posters of the work by Andy Goldsworthy and, by asking very good questions, deepened the pupils' knowledge of the use of colour and texture used by the artist to create an effect that was artistically pleasing to the eye. Time was used very effectively and enabled all pupils to make good gains in their learning because they were encouraged to move on quickly through a good range of activities.
13. Throughout the school, teachers generally have good subject knowledge, although their knowledge in information and communication technology is variable. They give clear explanations to their pupils and regularly check their pupils' understanding. For example in literacy and numeracy lessons, teachers ask pupils to explain their thinking processes; this enables teachers to pinpoint areas of pupils' misunderstanding and further explanations are given so that pupils fully understand what is expected of them. This was seen in literacy in Year 6 when the teacher taught the pupils the difference between mid shots, long shots and close ups when preparing a film script for an extract of Roald Dahl's story 'James and the Giant Peach'. These clear explanations contributed to the good gains that pupils made in their learning because pupils were clear about what was expected of them.
14. Teachers' expectations of both the level of academic work and behaviour are satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and good for the pupils in the Foundation Stage. Teachers' expectations of higher-attaining pupils are inconsistent and at times they are too low. This results in these pupils spending too long consolidating their learning rather than being pushed into more challenging activities. In a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson, the lesson started with a 'brainstorming' session on doubling and halving numbers where pupils had to volunteer numbers between 10 and 100. Pupils had to identify the strategies that they were applying to calculate the numbers. The teacher recorded the examples on the board and reinforced the strategies that can be used in this lesson. There were high expectations and the pupils rose to the challenge. They showed that they had experienced similar challenges previously and were able to identify the rules used to the mathematics inspector. In an unsatisfactory physical education lesson in Key Stage 2, pupils were not sufficiently challenged and their behaviour was not checked. Too much time was spent on managing behaviour, and not enough was learned in the lesson.
15. All teachers set clear learning objectives and are competent in teaching the basic skills, however, at present, they do not always identify opportunities for pupils to develop what they have learned in literacy and numeracy lessons in other subjects of the curriculum. This results in missed

opportunities for pupils to both consolidate and extend what they have learned. On occasions in English and science, pupils who are higher attainers are not sufficiently challenged because information from assessments is not fully used to match tasks to pupils' needs. For example, in science insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use their research skills to develop their skills of independent learning. There is an over reliance on worksheets and this prevents pupils from recording in a variety of ways and limits their learning opportunities for writing and their rates of progress. Pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by the hardworking classroom assistants and this results in their making good progress because tasks are very clearly explained to them. Teachers mark work regularly but the quality of marking is inconsistent. For example, pupils' spelling mistakes are not always used as teaching points and untidy handwriting and occasional unsatisfactory presentation of work are accepted and marked as correct with insufficient pointers for improvement. This results in pupils not making sufficient gains in improving their spelling and handwriting skills. In the lower stage of Key Stage 2, pupils' written work is presented with inconsistent use of pencil and pen and results in untidy presentation.

16. Homework is set by teachers and supports pupils' learning, but there are inconsistencies in the regularity with which it is given. The overall good quality of teaching contributes to the good short-term gains that pupils make in their learning. However, over time pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This is because the monitoring of teaching has only recently been introduced and the appointment of the deputy headteacher has ensured that there is now a strong team of staff, which will move the school forward. Pupils in both key stages acquire new skills and increase their understanding because teachers generally challenge them effectively. They sustain concentration and think and learn for themselves because they are clear as to what is expected of them.
17. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage of learning is good overall and is often very good and this contributes to the very good attitudes to learning that pupils develop from a very early age. The planning adheres to the requirements of the Foundation Stage of learning and all the early learning goals are appropriately catered for. Relationships are very good and a secure learning environment is provided from within which all pupils learn effectively.
18. Overall, the teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils with statements of educational need are well provided for and make good progress. Support staff know the needs of these children well and keep careful records, which supplement the target statements. Class teachers and support staff work together, effectively developing in these pupils academic and social skills and enabling them to grow in independence.
19. Because class teachers know their pupils well, they are able to provide appropriately matched work for pupils without statements who are on the special educational needs register, and therefore these pupils make similar progress to the other pupils in their class. The individual educational plans of these pupils are sufficiently useful working documents.
20. During the last inspection, the overall standard of teaching was good and the school has maintained that level. However, there have been disruptions to the stability of staff with long-term sickness and less than satisfactory arrangements for job sharing. This has had a negative effect on the continuity of pupils' learning. At the time of that inspection, approximately ten per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory; this has now reduced to six per cent. A key issue to improve the opportunities for under fives has been addressed.

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

21. The key issue in the last inspection report to review curriculum planning so that there is a consistent approach throughout the school and to complete the schemes of work still has to be achieved. Throughout the school, the curriculum is broadly based and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. However, there is a weakness in information and communication technology. Statutory requirements are not fully met in this subject, as the school is not adequately covering all the strands of the National Curriculum programmes of study. Too little time is given to the teaching of the subject and the teachers' skills are not sufficiently well developed to ensure that all pupils make satisfactory progress. A computer suite has recently been established in the school but, at the present time, this is not fully operational to provide support for the majority of subjects of the National Curriculum, although plans are in place to develop its usage. In this respect the school has regressed since the previous inspection.
22. The school places great emphasis on the enrichment of the curriculum in subjects such as the use of the environment, art and design, music and physical education. The headteacher has put a good deal of thought, effort and enthusiasm into the development of the curriculum and the staff have stimulated the interest of pupils well and enabled them to achieve success. There is now, however, an urgent need to put similar efforts into the development of writing (including handwriting), spelling, information and communication technology and further opportunities for independent learning activities in science. Though the school's results at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national averages, they are not as high as they should be in comparison with those of similar schools. This is because, as yet, the school has not fully developed its schemes of work to identify opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology in other subjects of the curriculum and higher-attaining pupils are inconsistently challenged. The school has appropriately implemented the literacy and numeracy hour and has recently adopted a setting strategy in mathematics, in the later years of Key Stage 2. There is evidence from lesson observations that this is having a beneficial effect on the standards attained by the pupils. Schemes of work at present are either being developed or reviewed in most curriculum areas and the completion of this task will further ensure systematic progress from year to year in the pupils' learning and provide support and guidance to the teachers to further aid them in their planning.
23. With respect to the previous inspection report, the school has reviewed the responsibilities of teachers to establish a more balanced workload and has reviewed curriculum planning to try to ensure that it has a more consistent approach through the school. In these areas the school has made satisfactory progress. Medium-term planning is satisfactory, and the defining of lesson objectives and the relating of planning to National Curriculum programmes of study is generally consistent through out the school. However, subject leaders do not have sufficient impact on the developments of their subject through monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and standards in their subjects.
24. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enhances the pupils' access to the wider curriculum. There is a strong commitment to providing for the needs of these pupils. On occasions the pupils are withdrawn for individual help but the majority of support is within classes. Good links are maintained with the schools to which the pupils' transfer and their special educational needs discussed prior to arrival. During the inspection there was very little evidence of the use of computers in classrooms for the benefit of these pupils. The curriculum is socially inclusive and generally ensures equality of opportunity and access for all pupils, but there are occasions when higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged.
25. The provision of extracurricular activities is very good. There are clubs for soccer, cross-country running, netball, ball skills, recorders and art. These are well supported by staff and a

- majority of pupils. The school makes very good provision for educational visits and visitors to the school and these enhance the curricular provision. The very good range of extracurricular activities gives pupils the opportunity to mix with pupils from other classes and to compete in sporting activities with other schools. This they do with good levels of success.
26. The provision for pupils' personal social and health education is satisfactory. There are policies in place for sex education and drugs education. Drugs education is taught through interactive drama workshops. This contributes well to pupils' personal development. The school has been very successful in establishing good quality links with the local community and further afield. There are close ties with the local church and clergy are regular visitors to the school. The pupils visit amenities in the local area, such as Bwlytai Woods, and a range of visitors come to talk to and work with the pupils. The school sponsors and communicates regularly with a young girl in Indonesia and this contributes positively to pupils' emerging skills of citizenship and to their cultural development. There are good links with local secondary schools in order to prepare the pupils for the next stage of education.
27. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and insights into values and beliefs. For example pupils are taught to respect and care for the environment. The visit of a local sculptor and the subsequent work undertaken at Bwlytai Woods by the pupils demonstrates their natural ability to wonder at the splendour of the environment and encourage other people to use it. In history, pupils have good opportunity for spiritual development. Pupils learn about the determination of spirit that Florence Nightingale, Mary Seacole and Charles Darwin exhibited in staying true to their principles. In art and design, pupils learn that artists needed inspiration to create a piece of art and that Picasso had a unique way of representing objectives that he saw. Acts of collective worship contribute significantly to pupils' spiritual development. Pupils appreciate moments of stillness and silence so that they can reflect in prayer in order to develop self-knowledge and listen to their inner voice.
28. The school makes very good provision for pupils to distinguish right from wrong. All teachers reason with their pupils and encourage them to develop principles of justice, fairness, truth and personal responsibility. Throughout the curriculum, pupils are encouraged to express how their actions impact on others and why rules are important in communities. Pupils are given very good explanations in acts of collective worship that envy, greed, and jealousy are human characteristics which must be worked upon and that recognising them in our actions towards others is an essential part of moral development. Teachers provide very effective role models for their pupils. They take every opportunity to help their pupils to distinguish right from wrong, especially in the lessons relating to personal social and health education.
29. Provision for social development is very good. The 'buddy' system adopted for reading where older pupils read to younger pupils contributes very well to pupils' social development. Throughout the curriculum plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to work in groups. Pupils take part in a very good range of extracurricular activities and through sport they are encouraged to learn about rules relating to team games and the importance of competitive spirit. In drama, pupils take on roles and collaboratively discuss characterisation and motives. Pupils are encouraged to take on responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community. During playtimes older pupils look after the younger ones and there is a genuine family atmosphere established. During lunchtimes pupils eagerly help one another get spellings and tables right, when the school secretary asks them for answers whilst waiting in the dinner queue.

30. Good provision is made for pupils' cultural development. Pupils appreciate their own cultural traditions through learning about Christian festivals and good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about the multicultural nature of our society by visiting a school in West Bromwich to develop a partnership between schools which have pupils of different backgrounds. However, at present, the multicultural aspects of literature, dance and art are at the early stages of development.
31. Overall, the provision for special educational needs is good. There is a strong commitment to providing for the needs of these pupils. On occasions, pupils are withdrawn for individual help but the majority of the support is within classes. Good links are maintained with the schools to which pupils transfer and their special educational needs are discussed prior to arrival. There is a need to develop the use of information and communication technology for the benefit of pupils with special educational needs. During the inspection there was very little evidence of the use of computers in classrooms for the benefit of these pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The school cares well for its pupils and provides very good pastoral care and support, satisfactorily promoting their personal welfare. Parents are pleased with the way in which the school provides a secure and caring environment. There is a very good induction process through which children go whether they join the school in the reception class or at a later stage. As a result the greater majority of pupils make a confident start to their education. The school provides very well for the social inclusion of its pupils; it provides care and support for the few pupils who have been excluded from other schools and the pupils progress well through the school, being appropriately prepared to make the transfer to secondary education.
33. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' academic progress are satisfactory whilst the procedures for checking pupils' personal development are very good. Adults throughout the school know the pupils and their families well and provide appropriate help and encouragement. Teachers are aware of how well each pupil is performing through their own informal monitoring but they do not use the assessment information available sufficiently to provide work that is always matched to pupils' individual needs. As a result, the monitoring systems are not fully effective, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils, where they are not appropriately challenged to enable them to reach their potential. There is widespread use of praise, though this is too often given inappropriately and encourages a lower expectation in the pupils' quality of work. Procedures for pupils with special educational needs, however, are good. Staff use the pupils' individual educational plans effectively and provide work that is appropriately matched to pupils' abilities; as a result the pupils make good progress.
34. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory and include statutory and optional national assessment tests and reading tests. In mathematics, pupils keep a diary in which they assess their own progress. There is a regular testing of pupils' attainment at the end of each mathematics module and through these tests the progress and attainment of pupils is tracked. Teachers make regular written observations of pupils' work in the four attainment targets. In science, end of unit assessments are carried out. Targets are set for the pupils in literacy and numeracy. Scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that marking is very inconsistent and does not always inform pupils of what they need to do in order to improve.
35. The school and governors take care to ensure the health and safety of the pupils. Regular checks are undertaken by a named governor and procedures are in place for recording and resolving the concerns raised. Procedures for monitoring and improving pupils' attendance are satisfactory. Parents are aware of the need to request time for holidays taken in the school term

and make their written requests to the school. However, the school is insufficiently attentive, to ensure that class registers are correctly completed where the legal allowance for holidays is exceeded and registers do not record pupils' unauthorised absence.

36. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour are good. The ethos of the school strongly encourages pupils to be in partnership with the staff in ensuring that standards of behaviour and self-discipline are good. All staff in the school share this common philosophy in their dealings with pupils and act as good role models. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour. As a result of the school's philosophy, the school is a very orderly, supportive and happy community within which each pupil feels valued.
37. The procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The headteacher as the designated person responsible for the welfare of pupils has received appropriate training. Information has been passed on to teaching staff during staff meetings, but non-teaching staff and midday supervisors have yet to be informed of the procedures to be followed and given guidance where appropriate. Sex education is taught satisfactorily through the science curriculum and pupils in Years 5 and 6 receive further teaching from the school nurse appropriate to their age and sex. The school has maintained its good provision since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The partnership with parents is good. The parents value the school very highly and are mostly pleased with their children's maturity, happiness and the progress they make in their learning. The parents believe that the school is well led and that the quality of teaching is good. Twelve per cent of parents returning questionnaires, however, are concerned that their children do not make the progress they are capable of. The inspection findings confirm this perception in that the educational provision, whilst being satisfactory overall, does not always provide sufficient challenge for the higher-attaining pupils. The greater proportion of parents report that they are satisfied with the amount of homework which the school provides, but a significant number of parents believe that insufficient work is set for their children as a regular routine. The school delegates the setting of homework to individual teachers and whilst most pupils receive reading and times tables each week, the school does not clarify to parents what homework is expected.
39. The school works very effectively with the parents and maintains good communication with them overall. The information in the regular newsletters is good and helps to maintain parents' interest and support for the activities being provided. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed about the progress their children make. Since the last inspection, the school has modified the way in which it communicates with parents through the pupils' end of year report. The reports are now more centred on the individual pupil and this is an improvement. The reports also give some indicators for improvement and this is good. The perception of 13 per cent of parents responding to the questionnaire, however, is supported by inspection findings in that parents are not sufficiently well informed about the actual progress their children are making. Overall, the reports give parents an awareness of the level to which their children are working in English, mathematics and science and the amount of effort they put in. Other subjects of the curriculum are not reported on consistently, mainly informing the type of work covered and the children's response. In these subjects the information on the skills that pupils are developing and what they have achieved is unsatisfactory.
40. The prospectus is good overall and communicates necessary information well, supporting the partnership the school seeks to have with parents in the education of their children. It covers the majority of what is required to be reported and is a useful report on the work of the school, giving good information about curriculum matters and other aspects of importance. The

prospectus omits, however, information about pupils' absence rates and a summary of the National SATs tests. The prospectus is presently being updated and is to include the missing information. The governors' annual report is generally informative but again omits several essential items of information. Eighteen per cent of pupils' parents completing the questionnaire reported that the school provides insufficient activities outside of classes. Inspection findings do not support this perception and established that the school provides a rich and wide range of out-of-class activities for pupils who are well supported and provide significant interest and stimulation to them.

41. The school welcomes the involvement of parents and regularly receives support from several of them in supporting children in their classes, particularly with listening to children read and involving themselves in a range of other needful activities. In this their contribution is valued by the school and is beneficial to the pupils' learning.
42. The school provides good opportunities for parents of pupils with a special educational need to maintain links with the school and to follow their children's education and progress. They are involved in the drawing up of statements and individual plans are shared each term with parents. The targets are discussed and parents are encouraged to help their children at home. Those who do so make a valuable contribution to the progress their children make. There are two opportunities during the year when parents can attend evenings to discuss their children's progress with teachers. Teachers are willing to meet parents informally on other occasions. Good links are maintained with support agencies and specialist services maintained by the local authority. Since the previous inspection, partnership with parents has improved, but further information is needed in pupils' reports on their attainment in foundation subjects.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides sound educational direction for the school with strength in the pastoral care that the school offers its pupils, in relation to their personal development. The headteacher is effectively supported by a newly appointed deputy headteacher who is already making a significant contribution to the quality of teaching, pupils' analysis of performance and curriculum development.
44. The school has explicit aims and values, which are evident in all of its practice and each child is valued for his or her uniqueness. There has been an effective evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning, both by the local education authority and the headteacher, and staff are aware of the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching. Data gathered from the monitoring of teaching has been used to set performance targets for teachers. The staff work well as a team. There is a shared commitment to improvement and all teachers are keen to move the school forward in raising standards. The subject co-ordinators are working hard at developing schemes of work and aligning them with Curriculum 2000 requirements. The present time scales on the school development plan are not rigorous enough and this contributes to a lack of urgency. Further rigour is needed to ensure that schemes of work are finished in a shorter length of time in order to move the school forward in achieving its aims in raising standards. The role of the co-ordinators is at an early stage of development and, at present, there is insufficient time allocated for co-ordinators to monitor standards in their subjects. This is an area that has been recognised by the governors as a need to be addressed.
45. The school has sound systems in place to analyse its performance data and to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Appropriate priorities are identified with action plans to follow them up. Roles and responsibilities of staff are clear and the school monitors progress towards its goals effectively, but a further sense of urgency is needed in order to execute and finish tasks

identified. The professional development of staff is appropriately planned and is informed by the appraisal process and the priorities in the school development plan. The governors set targets for the headteacher and review the progress made towards reaching these. The governing body provides sound support for the school's work. Governors are aware of the recent requirements for performance management and have access to the relevant information relating to standards throughout the school and the value added that the school provides. Governors' committees have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and generally statutory requirements are met. However, some information is missing from their annual report, such as the address of the clerk to governors, information on the next election of parent governors, progress of implementation of the last inspection action plan and steps taken to provide disabled pupils being less favourably treated. Governors also have not ensured that the full requirement of the National Curriculum information and communication technology programme of study has been covered. The school prospectus does not identify pupils' absence rates and a summary of the national assessment tests. This information is available from the school but has not been included in the official documentation because the prospectus is being rewritten.

46. There is an induction policy that provides suitable support when new staff are appointed and a staff handbook. There is an appraisal policy and the process appropriately identifies teachers' training needs. It has a positive influence on the confidence and expertise of staff and on the subsequent progress of the pupils. Staff development is appropriately linked to national initiatives and to the priorities identified in the school development plan. The school receives very good support from the administrative staff, lunchtime supervisors and cleaning staff.
47. The finance committee ensures that the school's priorities are supported by careful financial planning and cost effectiveness of spending is monitored as to its impact on pupils' learning. Governors are aware of which resources pupils enjoy, such as the recent purchase of good quality literature to support the teaching in the literacy hour. Grants are used appropriately and the school uses the principles of best practice in targeting expenditure and reviews the effectiveness of spending in relation to improvements in standards.
48. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator is well informed and keeps good records. All members of staff are aware of procedures for identifying, assessing and providing for these pupils and parents know who their main points of contact are in the school. Teaching and support staff work closely with the school's special educational needs co-ordinator. Good administrative systems have been established and are efficiently carried out. The special educational needs register is well kept and teachers are all aware of the relevant educational plans for their class. However, the co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to adequately monitor the quality of teaching and learning. The governing body has a good overview of the work done by the school with these pupils and one governor gives of her time freely to support pupils in Key Stage 1.
49. Overall, the accommodation is satisfactory though there are weaknesses. Space is very limited in the two outside classrooms where the number of pupils in each class is well over 30. This makes it very difficult for teachers to develop skills that require pupils to stand up and move around to get materials and equipment. Staff room and office accommodation is shared and is inadequate. The school secretary has to work in very cramped conditions. There are occasions when privacy is required but it is not available. Whilst this does not directly impact on the standards that pupils attain it is, nevertheless, an area that needs consideration. There is a hall that is used for physical education but this is of an inadequate size for large classes. However, the school is well kept and cared for both internally and externally. There is a recently developed computer suite that is well used as a teaching area for subjects other than information

and communication technology. The playground is of an adequate size with markings and benches that promote both social and physical development. This contributes to the pupils' very good attitudes and enjoyment of learning overall. There are some deficiencies in the accommodation that impact on progress and quality of learning. These include shortness of space in the hall for physical education and the small size of the outdoor classrooms.

50. There are a sufficient number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers to teach the National Curriculum. Some teachers have only been appointed within the last year and are only beginning to develop their curricular responsibilities. There is a satisfactory number of support staff, who have a positive influence on the progress that pupils make because of their good work with the pupils. Staff development is appropriately linked to national initiatives and to the priorities identified in the school development plan. The school receives very good support from the administrative staff, lunchtime supervisors and cleaning staff and school administration is good. The school has an appropriate stock of resources that are used effectively.
51. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its sound leadership and management.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Raise standards in handwriting, spelling and information and communication technology at the end of both key stages by:-

- implementing a rigorous whole-school policy for the teaching of handwriting, spelling and information and communication technology;
 - ensuring that teachers' marking provides opportunities for pupils to learn from their mistakes and that mis-spelt spellings are used as teaching points;
 - developing a whole school policy as to when it is appropriate for pupils to write in ink especially in Key Stage 2;
 - providing further professional development opportunities for teachers to improve their knowledge of information and communication technology.
- (Paragraphs 2, 3, 13, 15, 21, 34, 77, 78, 79, 80, 112, 118)

Ensure that higher-attaining pupils are sufficiently challenged in English and science by:-

- using data from assessments to match tasks to their needs;
 - providing further extension activities such as independent research and investigative work to increase their rates of progress;
 - using higher levels of the programmes of study when planning their work;
- (Paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 15, 53, 98)

Ensure that all teachers' planning clearly identifies opportunities for pupils to develop their skills for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology by:-

- planning tasks which extend rather than consolidate what pupils know, understand and can do;
 - ensuring that information gained from assessments is rigorously used to support the teaching of basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology;
- (Paragraphs 15, 21, 33, 95, 98)

Ensure that priorities identified on the school development plan are supported by shorter time scales for completion and that progress towards targets identified is regularly monitored by the headteacher, co-ordinators and governing body.

(Paragraphs 113, 123)

Ensure that co-ordinators have further opportunities to monitor standards in their subjects.

(Paragraphs 44, 53, 106, 119)

Minor issues

- ◇ Develop a policy for further challenging higher-attaining pupils;
- ◇ Provide further opportunities for pupils to use extended writing in foundation subjects.
- ◇ Limit the use of work sheets so that pupils can further develop their skills in writing.
- ◇ Ensure that the whole-school policy for marking pupils' work is consistently applied throughout the school.
- ◇ Ensure that there is consistency throughout the school in the use of sketchbooks in art and design.
- ◇ Provide further information for parents on their children's progress in foundation subjects.
- ◇ Ensure that subject-specific skills of religious education do not get subsumed in the curriculum for personal, social and health education.
- ◇ Improve the quality of the accommodation with specific reference to the office, as and when funds allow.
- ◇ Ensure that governors fulfil statutory requirements in reporting on all aspects in the school prospectus and the annual report to parents.
- ◇ Provide further opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge of life in a multicultural society with the already established good links that the school has with a multi-ethnic school in West Bromwich.
(Paragraphs 15, 39, 45, 49, 131, 133, 134)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

52. The school is in the very early stages of its involvement in the Education Zone initiative so it is not possible to comment on the impact of its involvement in the learning opportunities that will arise for the pupils. Scrutiny of the Action Plan suggests that the proposals for developing information and communication technology will have a significant effect on improving teachers' knowledge and subsequently pupils' learning. This in turn will minimise the effects of rural deprivation of schools, which contribute to below average standards over the last three years in relation to the local education authority average.

53. At present, there has not been any evidence available to suggest that improvements are at hand to minimise the difficulties of developing leadership and management skills in this small school. However, the school has recognised that further challenge is needed for able pupils to excel in their learning and the improvements in information and communication technology provision would contribute significantly in enabling the school to achieve its aims.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

| | |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed | 36 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 8 |

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 0% | 8% | 69% | 17% | 6% | 0% | 0% |

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

Information about the school's pupils

| | |
|--|---------|
| Pupils on the school's roll | YR – Y6 |
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils) | 152 |
| Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals | 11 |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| | | |
|---|--|---------|
| Special educational needs | | YR – Y6 |
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs | | 2 |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | | 32 |

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

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Pupil mobility in the last school year | No of pupils |
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 24 |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving | 3 |

Attendance

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|---------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| | % | | % |
| School data | 4.1 | School data | 0.1 |
| 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 1

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2000 | | | 16 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|----------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 94 [100] | 94 [89] | 100 [89] |
| | National | 84 [82] | 82 [83] | 88 [87] |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|----------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 15 | 16 | 16 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School | 94 [89] | 100 [88] | 100 [89] |
| | National | 84 [82] | 88 [86] | 88 [87] |

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

| | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | 2000 | | 11 | 20 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 15 | 12 | 17 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 75 [78] | 60 [67] | 85 [89] |
| | National | 75 [70] | 72 [69] | 85 [78] |

| Teachers' Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|--------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above | Boys | | | |
| | Girls | | | |
| | Total | 16 | 13 | 15 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School | 80 [81] | 65 [74] | 75 [78] |

| | | | | |
|--|----------|---------|---------|---------|
| | National | 70 [68] | 72 [69] | 79 [78] |
|--|----------|---------|---------|---------|

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

Ethnic background of pupils

| | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 |
| Indian | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 |
| White | 152 |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0 |

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 5 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 25.8 |
| Average class size | 30.4 |

Education support staff: YR – Y6

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week | 41 |

Exclusions in the last school year

| | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – African heritage | 0 | 0 |
| Black – other | 0 | 0 |
| Indian | 0 | 0 |
| Pakistani | 0 | 0 |
| Bangladeshi | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 0 | 0 |
| White | 1 | 0 |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0 | 0 |

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

Financial information

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Financial year | 2000 |
|----------------|------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total income | 258 398 |
| Total expenditure | 250 170 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1 731 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 17 365 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 25 593 |

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

152

Number of questionnaires returned

57

Percentage of responses in each category

| | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school. | 60 | 36 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| My child is making good progress in school. | 28 | 53 | 12 | 0 | 7 |
| Behaviour in the school is good. | 44 | 53 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. | 21 | 58 | 14 | 7 | 0 |
| The teaching is good. | 44 | 47 | 4 | 0 | 5 |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on. | 28 | 58 | 8 | 4 | 2 |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 79 | 16 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best. | 42 | 54 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| The school works closely with parents. | 40 | 51 | 7 | 0 | 2 |
| The school is well led and managed. | 53 | 44 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. | 53 | 40 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. | 44 | 37 | 18 | 0 | 1 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. Children enter the Foundation Stage of learning in the term in which they are five. Attainment on entry varies from year to year and ranges from being below that which is expected of children of this age to being broadly average. The trends in children's attainment on entry show that children have slightly underdeveloped social and communication skills. This year attainment on entry is average.
55. Children who are under five are taught with the reception class and Year 1 pupils. All children make sound gains in their learning and by the end of the Foundation Stage achieve the early learning goals in personal and social education, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. Children in the Foundation Stage develop positive attitudes to learning and are confident in their undertakings. They concentrate well and have a natural curiosity for learning, which is quickly acted upon by the teacher. Children are encouraged to explore ideas, for example when painting they know that by adding too much water the paper gets very wet. This safe exploration teaches them to be careful not to add too much water to the paint.
57. Children are happy and confident because the class teacher provides a secure learning environment in which children can experiment safely and thus grow in confidence. All children make very good relationships with one another. They are well looked after by the older children in the playground and they develop a clear understanding of turn taking and working together.
58. Children know the difference between right and wrong and in acts of collective worship they sit reverently listening to the headteacher and when asked, eagerly answer questions. Children's behaviour is very good. They are polite, they respect one another and they are developing appropriate skills of independence. The quality of teaching is good and contributes to the good progress that these young children make. The teacher explains things clearly and provides good opportunities for children to develop their emotions. Children feel valued and secure because of the purposeful manner in which any fears they may have are openly discussed. The teacher knows how to ensure that children are taught in a safe learning environment. For example, she stresses how important 'comfort blankets' can be, shares memories of how her favourite teddy bear brought her joy when she was a little girl, and how difficult it can be to be the youngest child in a family. This enables all children to identify their feelings and is a contributory factor to the very good attitudes that children develop to learning.

Communication language and literacy

59. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children are able to make themselves clearly understood and have an appropriate vocabulary to describe their feelings because the teacher takes every opportunity available to enable children to express themselves. When going on nature walks, children are encouraged to talk about the changing colours of autumn, describe the actions of 'Titch' a character studied in the text of the literacy hour, and perform nursery rhymes in front of the whole school. This enables them to gain confidence in speaking. Children make sound

gains in their learning when they link sounds to letters and this is encouraged by the use of the listening station. When reciting 'nonsense nursery rhymes' children can identify similar sounds in 'Humpty Dumpty sat on a ball, Humpty Dumpty ran to the hall', and squeal with laughter when they can make up rhyming words. The teacher provides opportunities for children to write both formally and informally and during structured play sessions children have a go at writing simple words and experiment with sounds and words.

60. Children have sound skills in retelling stories, they can identify the main characters of a story and understand the difference between words and letters. They can sequence events in order and they are happy to ask questions if there is something that they are unsure about. Most children can make recognisable letters but several of them do not hold their pencils correctly and this restricts natural pencil flow. The quality of teaching is good and the literacy hour is taught well. Clear explanations are given and many opportunities are provided for the children to talk about their experiences. Basic skills are taught correctly and the teacher models correct letter formation and appropriate reading skills. This contributes to the sound gains made in learning.

Mathematical development

61. Children are confident in their use of number from 1 to 10 and many can count up to 50 and beyond but can recognise securely numbers up to 10. They achieve the early learning goals in mathematical development and make sound gains in relation to their prior attainment. They can use the vocabulary of more or less, bigger and smaller, they can recognise shapes such as circle, square and triangle and they know which straws are longer and shorter when involved on measuring activities. They can identify coins such as 1p, 2p, 5p, 20p, 50p and £1 and know how to add 2p and 5p. They understand the language of add, take away and add on. They form their numbers correctly and are developing their mathematical ideas appropriately when solving simple problems such as matching the appropriate number of counters to a number card. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher is competent in teaching basic skills and shows good knowledge in planning early mathematical experiences. The needs of all the children are met because tasks set are structured appropriately to their needs. The teacher uses methods, which enable all children to learn effectively and there is an appropriate balance between learning through play and learning through formal tasks.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Children are confident investigators and use their senses when exploring a full range of materials. They can sort materials and objects by shape and texture and can group objects, which are made of wood and plastic. They know that a magnet can attract things and they know that when chocolate is heated it alters its form. They know that waterproof fabric is appropriate for raincoats and when constructing models they can choose appropriate materials that are fit for the purpose. For example they use glue and paper clips to hold cards together and if this does not work they know that by using a staple the join will become secure.
63. They know the main functions of a keyboard and they know how to use a tape recorder. They can identify similarities and differences and they know that babies grow into toddlers. They interview their parents and grandparents about the kinds of toys they played with when they were at school, and they compare how life in school has changed. They understand the concept of yesterday, today and tomorrow. They know where they live and can adequately describe their journey to school. All children make good gains in acquiring the stepping stones identified in the Foundation Stage curriculum and achieve the early learning goals. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher sets clear objectives, communicates them to the children and shows good knowledge and understanding in teaching the content of the early learning goals. Children are

encouraged to think for themselves and to do their best. Good use is made of visual charts to help children develop their concept of time; this results in their making appropriate distinctions between the concept of yesterday, last week, tomorrow and next week.

Creative development

64. All children achieve the early learning goals and make sound gains in learning due to the good quality of teaching. Children can mix paints and know which colours to use when painting bright fireworks. They know how to apply paint by using different methods such as finger painting, sponge painting, and using a variety of brushes. Children can explain which colours they like using and when discussing their plans for firework pictures one child remarked 'I am going to use the colours of a volcano exploding'. Children can sing, tap a rhythm, repeat a musical pattern and can sing a full range of simple songs and nursery rhymes from memory. They enjoy role play and happily play in the home corner, moving in and out of fictitious contexts. They sing 'Love is something if you give it away you end up getting more' from memory accompanying the song with appropriate actions.
65. Children are given plenty of opportunities to work in a full range of media and take part in the well-prepared activities. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher constantly challenges the children to try just a little harder and because they feel secure they always have a go and are keen to improve the quality of their work. This is because of the very good relationships that exist in the classroom. Children exceed the early learning goals and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment because the teaching of physical skills is good.

Physical development

66. All children have a good awareness of space. In the hall they move confidently, being careful not to bump into one another and they can hop, skip, balance appropriately and co-ordinate their movements well. They know about the importance of eating healthy food and they have good ball throwing and catching skills. They use equipment safely, they know how to put benches away and take turns when using the large apparatus. Children are developing good skills of game playing, they work well with partners and understand the need for rules. They can think of different ways of moving on the apparatus such as crawling, sliding and walking backwards. Children are well co-ordinated and by the end of the Foundation Stage they exceed the early learning goals because skills of physical development are effectively taught.
67. Children are taught to think for themselves and explain why they choose particular ways of working. This aids their language development and enables the teacher to intervene appropriately in moving them on to the next step of learning. The relationships between the teacher and children are very good and all children, regardless of their ability, are encouraged to do their best.
68. The quality of teaching is good. The teacher recognises that children learn at different rates, and very encouraging comments are made to children in order to give them the confidence to try new things. For example the teacher gives particular support to children who have difficulty in carrying out a series of instructions. She shows them what to do and in copying her they master the skill quickly and effectively. Support staff are involved effectively in intervening in children's work and this contributes to the good rates of progress that these children make.
69. Clear boundaries are set for behaviour, children are encouraged to develop self-discipline and this has a positive effect on their rates of learning. Support staff and indoor and outdoor resources are appropriately used and, since the last inspection, provision has improved, which results in all children attaining the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, personal social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, and exceeding the early learning goals in physical development.

70. The quality of teaching in all areas of learning is good. Even though the youngest children are taught in a mixed age class, the teacher plans the activities that are best suited to their needs and incorporates the skills needed for ensuring the full coverage of the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The teacher uses effective methods relating to the teaching of basic skills and builds well on what children have previously learned. This results in sound gains being made in learning with good gains made in physical development because skills are effectively taught. The curriculum is good. It is well planned and helps teachers identify good opportunities for learning because it sets clear objectives for learning with an appropriate emphasis placed upon ensuring that opportunities for learning through play are not missed. The teaching of phonics and basic skills is appropriately introduced and appropriate steps are taken to build upon what children already know so that children experience success in their learning.

ENGLISH

71. The results of the 2000 tests show that by the end of Key Stage 1 in comparison with all school standards in reading and writing were well above national average. In comparison with similar schools standards were well above average in reading and above average in writing. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards were above national averages in comparison with all schools but below national averages in comparison with similar schools. These results were an improvement on last year's results with standards in reading being higher at the end of Key Stage 1, both in comparison with all schools and similar schools. High standards in writing have been maintained in comparison with similar schools. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards in English have improved from being in line with national averages in comparison with all schools to above average, and from well below national averages in comparison with similar schools to below average. Standards are rising with more pupils achieving the expected level year on year.
72. Inspection findings show that standards in speaking and listening are high at the end of both key stages. Standards in writing are broadly in line with national averages but there are weaknesses in spelling and in handwriting in both key stages. This is because there is a lack of a rigorously implemented spelling and handwriting policy, teachers do not sufficiently use pupils' spelling mistakes as teaching points, and accept work from pupils which is clearly not their best. Although all pupils learn their spellings, and generally do well in tests, they do not apply what they have learned in other subjects. Pupils' presentation of work is variable throughout the school, the best examples being seen in the reception class and in Year 6. Scrutiny of pupils' work reveals that there is a lack of a whole-school approach as to when pupils should write in pencil or in pen and this results in their presentation skills being untidy.

Speaking and Listening

73. By the end of both key stages pupils have good speaking and listening skills. They have a rich and varied vocabulary and use tenses appropriately. When describing what they have done over the weekend, and when asked questions about text that they have read in the literacy hour, they are able to relate their findings to passages in the text. Pupils in Year 6 are particularly good at explaining characters' motives. When discussing the aunt's relationship to James in 'James and the Giant Peach' they are able to use words such as 'irritating', 'selfish' and 'irresponsible'. Pupils listen attentively to stories. In Year 2 when reading 'The Rainbow Fish' they listened very carefully to the teacher's explanation of what it means to share with your friends.

Reading

74. By the end of both key stages pupils read well. They are enthusiastic readers of fiction and non-fiction who understand and respond to what they read. They use a full range of reading cues and in Key Stage 1 they are delighted when they can spell out an unknown word using both phonic and contextual knowledge.
75. Pupils can find information from a book, know how to use an index and contents page and can sequence events in a story. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read with obvious enjoyment and use expression appropriately.
76. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils read very well. They can identify humour and sarcasm in text, they can talk about authorial intent and know that authors use well chosen words to create meaning. They know the difference between the style of Roald Dahl and the language used in non-fiction books, and they have good research skills as evidenced by the extended writing undertaken in their history topics. They can locate appropriate information from text and higher-attaining pupils have a good understanding of subtext. Pupils can use evidence from text to back up opinions.

Writing

77. By the end of both key stages standards in writing are average. This is a different finding from the tests of 2000 where standards were high. This is because the ability profile of the current year group differs from that of the previous year. Scrutiny of work reveals that there are weaknesses in handwriting and spelling in both key stages. In Year 2 pupils write poetry well but examples of extended writing are limited. Pupils can write in sentences and their writing conveys meaning with apt and interesting vocabulary demonstrating reader awareness. Ideas generally are linked into a coherent sequence of sentences but spelling is not always accurate and letters are not always of a consistent size. Punctuation is appropriately used. In Year 6 several good examples of extended writing were seen in pupils' descriptions of work inspired by their participation in the Bwlytai Woods Project. In their story writing of the 'Highwayman', pupils demonstrate that they can use contrast as a means of getting a message over to the reader. For example one Year 6 pupil wrote 'Jay was a tall man with a white complexion and a big crooked nose'. 'James was the total opposite he was stocky, small and dark skinned'. Older pupils use paragraphs and punctuation well and their sentence construction shows a clear logical progression of ideas. Pupils use a range of different narrative techniques and their choice of story openings and endings is interesting. For example in 'The Dead of Night' one pupil wrote 'It was the end of exams and everyone at Wilsom Comprehensive School was excited because they had just finished the last exam'. His opening set a relaxed atmosphere from which a detailed plot emerged. "Is 7 o'clock OK for everyone?" Ruth asked. Everyone nodded because they knew that Ruth was not to be argued with'.
78. Pupils choose phrases using adventurous vocabulary and have a secure grasp of narrative technique but their spelling needs further attention. Not all pupils have developed a neat style of cursive script although the majority of work seen on display was neatly presented. In both key stages pupils use descriptive vocabulary well and this contributes to the sound standard seen in creative writing. A recent poetry week held in school encouraged a full range of creative writing and this had a positive effect on the choice of words that pupils used to describe setting and atmosphere in their writing.
79. Teaching was good in the lessons seen during the week of inspection and is good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge but do not always provide sufficiently challenging tasks for the higher-attaining pupils. In one lesson in Key Stage 1, pupils who had been set work were busy chatting and had written only one sentence in ten minutes; when the teacher intervened

they produced further written work. In the good lessons seen in Year 6, Year 3/4 teachers gave very good support in developing pupils' writing. However it is evident from the pupils' previous work that in most classes there are weaknesses in the teaching of writing. For example in Year 1 there are some pupils who are not forming their letters correctly. Some pupils in Year 3 who had previously learned to join their writing revert to a printed script and miss out script punctuation. In Year 6 pupils are starting to correct their work. The use of prompt sheets displayed on each table is having a positive effect on pupils' learning and developing skills of independence.

80. Teachers' marking of pupils' writing often gives no guidance on mistakes or how to improve, spelling mistakes are not used as teaching points and teachers' assessments of writing is patchy. Most teachers rely on the end of year tests to give information about attainment, but the pupils then transfer into a different class and the information gained from the tests and teacher assessments is not sufficiently well used. Teachers lack guidance on how they should be teaching handwriting and spelling and at present there is no whole school approach that ensures that the pupils build good habits. In spelling for example some teachers require the pupils to copy out corrections and learn the spellings, others simply correct the word but expect pupils to do nothing further. In some classes the pupils use wordbooks to help them with spelling, in others the pupils are just given prompts to help them write and acquire correct spellings and well-structured sentences. Teachers manage their pupils well and generally use time effectively. In a lesson with Year 6 pupils the pupils compared a film version of 'James and the Giant Peach' with the story. Pupils quickly picked out the essential difference in setting and action and because of the teacher's good questioning skills were able to explain how the use of different shots helps influence the spectator's point of view. In Year 2 when reading 'The Rainbow Fish' the teacher used equally good questions when she asked the pupils 'How do you feel when you are ignored?' but encouraged pupils to use more precise and varied language to describe their feelings, suggesting new vocabulary and valuing their contributions.
81. Pupils achieve well generally but achievement in speaking and listening and reading is slightly better than it is in writing. Pupils develop their skills in note taking, redrafting and planning appropriately but the presentation of their work is variable in both key stages.
82. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They generally listen with attention to the teachers' reading of the story and they behave very well in lessons. They listen to one another in plenary sessions and help one another in their reading especially when Year 6 read with the younger ones. This develops positive attitudes to learning.
83. The subject is well co-ordinated and a major initiative has been to improve spelling and handwriting but this is at its early stages of implementation. Appropriate targets have been set for pupils' work. The present action plan drawn up by the co-ordinator suggests that the school is well placed to improve standards further. Resources are generally satisfactory and are well used to support learning but further emphasis is needed to use information and communication technology as an integral part of learning. Since the previous inspection satisfactory standards have been maintained in Key Stage 1 but they are not as strong in Key Stage 2 as last time.

MATHEMATICS

84. Standards in the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds were well below average when compared to all schools and to similar schools. The number of pupils achieving higher levels is low. The 2000 test results for seven-year-old pupils were very high when compared with standards nationally and broadly in line when compared to similar schools. However the year group tested at the end of Key Stage 2 was small due to absence and the statistics may be

unreliable and need to be treated with caution. The four-year trend of standards in school is in keeping with the rise in national standards and this shows that improvements match the national picture. The school has rightly identified the need to raise standards in Key Stage 2 and the present system of setting is having a positive effect.

85. The inspection findings are that standards in mathematics are sound and that the expected proportion of pupils is working at higher levels. This is because the school is setting for numeracy across Key Stage 2, and the better teaching seen in lessons due to teachers' familiarisation with the numeracy strategy is having a significant impact on pupils' learning. Pupils respond well to the teaching of numeracy lessons. Pupils in Year 6 have good skills of calculation and quickly use a good range of strategies to solve number problems about probability. Lower-achieving pupils can, for example, quickly work out addition of fractions and decimals and have skills similar to those expected for their age. However, their range of knowledge of other aspects of the subject is limited. For example, they have little understanding of the use of unknowns in algebra or of triangular numbers, but they do have a sound knowledge of place value and decimals. The work of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and the majority can quickly recall the numbers that make ten. They have understood the operations of addition, subtraction and multiplication and more able pupils can count correctly to and from 200 in 2s, 3s, 5s, 10s and 20s, for example, and can also calculate mentally problems such as adding 475 to 378 using appropriate strategies and explain how they do it. They show a high level of awareness of numbers but their present level of skill is no greater than that expected for their age.
86. In both key stages pupils' learning is good overall. Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. In the last inspection progress was generally good. Today, the setting of classes at Key Stage 2 is having a good effect on the progress of all pupils. All the pupils benefit from sessions of mental number work based on the National Numeracy Strategy Framework because the oral questions challenge pupils at several different levels. The work of the pupils in both key stages shows good rates of achievement because of the good or better quality of teaching. For example higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4 progress from completing sums such as doubling numbers to 20 to the calculation of two and three digit-numbers and their work is tidy. In a lesson in Year 5 pupils learned well how to decide which information was necessary to answer mathematical problems and in a similar lesson the Year 6 pupils quickly used their greater knowledge of probability to make these decisions and answer easily with good explanations.
87. The quality of teaching is good overall and this has a positive effect on pupils' learning. At present teachers are rigorously adhering to the numeracy strategy framework and are not always using the higher levels in Key Stage 1 to challenge pupils further. This is especially the case of higher-attaining pupils. This results in them consolidating their knowledge rather than extending it and leads to rates of progress being inconsistent. However in oral work this is not the case as pupils are effectively challenged. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and give clear explanations. In the very good lessons seen in Year 6 the teacher challenged pupils in giving examples of probability, he used humour effectively to challenge pupils' thinking and maintained very positive relationships so that a secure learning environment was created within which pupils could learn effectively. In both key stages teachers have good questioning skills which enable pupils to articulate the thoughts that they have in their heads. In an art and design lesson in Key Stage 2 the teacher encouraged pupils to practise what they had learned previously in mathematics when she asked them to work out the artist's age. Time is used effectively, especially in the mental mathematics sessions and this contributes to the pupils' making good gains in their learning. In mental number sessions, teachers pay good attention to the different ages and attainment of pupils in each class. This usually provides appropriate

challenge for all pupils. In some classes, the same worksheet is given to all the children. Teachers sometimes fail to use data from assessments to help match the work correctly. For example, pupils of Year 2 could easily count in twos and thereby complete the number card game they were given. Teachers' planning often does not sufficiently account for what pupils have already learned and teachers could be using higher objectives on occasions from the numeracy strategy based upon pupils' prior attainment.

88. Learning objectives are clear, for example a lesson for the youngest pupils was planned for learning at three different levels of addition: counting on, counting two more and counting numbers to 50. The methods used are generally good. For example, the use of an overhead projector with the oldest pupils helps them focus on the significant issues they need to take into account and they are able to demonstrate their mental reasoning well, showing how they have worked things out. In a minority of lessons, the pupils lose interest when they are not sufficiently challenged but, overall, discipline is kept well. Pupils with special educational needs are offered appropriate individual support and make good progress. Teachers' marking is variable and only sometimes suggests ways to improve. There are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to use computers to support their learning.
89. Key support staff are well trained and qualified. A good system to chart the progress of pupils following the results of their National Curriculum assessments at age seven through Key Stage 2 has been established. However, this has not yet fully impacted on monitoring and target setting across the key stages. Nor is it used diagnostically to identify the needs of groups of pupils of different prior attainment. The National Numeracy Strategy is providing helpful developments such as oral number work. However, there is insufficient time for the co-ordinator or headteacher to monitor the pupils' standards or the quality of teaching. Teachers are beginning to set targets for individual pupils' improvement but this is at the early stages of development.
90. Since the last inspection the school has maintained its average standards based upon current inspection findings due to the measures that the school has put in place arising out of the recent analysis of data. Whilst test results show that standards are well below national average for similar schools, it must be remembered that statistical evidence must be treated with caution due to the small number of pupils entered for the test.

SCIENCE

91. The results of the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that standards are above national averages but well below those of similar schools. From the evidence of work seen during the inspection, pupils, including those with special educational needs, attain standards at the end of each key stage that are in line with national expectations. This is a similar picture to the findings in the last inspection report.
92. The school is making efforts to promote experimental and investigative science. By the end of both key stages, pupils are making sound progress in carrying out investigations. They are being taught progressively, and pupils develop an understanding of the principles of observation, prediction, fair testing and coming to a conclusion on the basis of evidence they have gained. This is seen, for example in Key Stage 1, in work about materials and magnetism and in Key Stage 2, in work concerning light and sound. The use of structured worksheets helps the pupils to become accustomed to these principles but there are occasions, especially in Key Stage 2, when these work sheets have an inhibiting effect on the ability of pupils to develop their writing skills. The pupils develop their use of scientific vocabulary well and by the end of Key Stage 2, the great majority is fully aware of what constitutes a fair test.

93. Within the area of life processes and living things, Key Stage 1 pupils draw and label animals such as a mouse. They begin to learn about the animal's habitat, food, surroundings and enemies. In a study of the seaside they investigate creatures they find on the seashore, such as the varieties of shells. During work on the seasons of the year they investigate how the human body might be kept warm in winter. Key Stage 2 pupils study the human body and make detailed observations about the ear. This is also linked to work on sound. Much use is made of the locality to study plants and animals, especially a nearby woodland area. Within school, investigations are carried out to find what conditions are needed for a seed to grow. Their answers and work on display show that they are developing good observational skills and the school's emphasis on pupils being aware of their environment is being carried out successfully.
94. In their work on materials Key Stage 1 pupils investigate which material is best suited to keep water warm. They predict, test and come to the conclusion that it is wool. In their work on the seasons and weather they investigate which materials are best for keeping the body warm in winter. Older Key Stage 2 pupils examine materials and their properties to determine why a variety of materials are best suited to making knives, pans, and cups and saucers. They investigate which materials best reflect light and which are suitable to insulate against sound.
95. Evidence indicates that pupils have progressed well in the area of physical processes. Younger pupils predict, observe and measure which car goes furthest down a ramp and record the results on a chart. They then consider on which surface cars travel the fastest on. Work is done on pushing, pulling and twisting and predictions are made as to which items are magnetic. Older, Key Stage 2 pupils consider heating and cooling. They examine what happens to ice when it is melted and then what happens to water when it is cooled. Change is considered and whether it is reversible. Circuits are constructed and items tested to determine whether they conduct electricity. Pupils assess what they have done and what they have learned. Sound and light are studied, and investigations are carried out to find whether air makes a noise when it vibrates. Year 3 and 4 pupils investigate natural and man-made sounds, and Year 6 pupils what happens when coloured light is mixed. However, opportunities for recording findings in a variety of ways at the end of both key stages are limited.
96. The pupils are given too few opportunities to use information and communication technology in science. Though there is some evidence of the use of charts and graphs the use of mathematics is also underdeveloped. Older, Year 5 and 6 pupils are being given some opportunities to develop their extended writing skills in science but there is often an overuse of worksheets and this inhibits their progress in writing. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the lessons and make good progress, especially when support staff help them. This has a positive effect on their achievements and self-esteem.
97. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They often work effectively in small groups and during the lessons observed most pupils tried hard and concentrated well. They are able to be involved in discussion and respond well to the teacher's questions.
98. The quality of teaching is good overall. Relationships between the teachers and pupils are good and this, usually helps to maintain the classes in an orderly manner. Good use is made of resources in practical investigations. In the lessons seen clear objectives were set but there is not much evidence to show that this is the practice at times other than during an inspection. There are sound assessment procedures in place, for example end of unit tests, in addition to the end of key stage assessments. However, there is little evidence that these assessments are used to help teachers plan future work, for example to further challenge and improve the standards attained by higher-attaining pupils.

99. The subject co-ordinator has only very recently been appointed to the school. There is, at the moment, a lack of opportunity to observe other teachers and so to spread good practice. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN AND MUSIC

100. Very little teaching of art and design and music was seen during the week of inspection and judgements on standards attained are based upon scrutiny of teachers' planning, pupils' books, interviews with pupils and teachers and evidence gained from displays.
101. Standards at the end of both key stages are broadly in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Standards in singing are high and pupils who play instruments make good gains in their learning because of the good quality of teaching of the peripatetic staff. In art and design, by the end of both key stages, pupils can mix colours effectively and understand colour, pattern, tone, line, shape, form and space. They know about artists and craft-workers from different times and they benefit from working with community artists. Pupils have designed and made sculptures in Bwlytai Woods and have had good opportunities to work with professionals using a variety of media. This has had a positive effect on their very good attitudes and understanding of how the imagination can be crystallised in a painting or sculpture. By the time that pupils leave school, they know that Picasso was a reductionist, and when copying 'The Mandolin' they comment on the difficulties in drawing objects from different angles. Pupils have good understanding of the work of Paul Klee and Andy Goldsworthy and marvel at the different colour hues used in their paintings. Pupils have sound observational skills and their charcoal drawings of Victorian objects show attention to detail. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils can mix colours. They use a range of techniques for collage work, such as tearing and scrunching paper, they know how to use a paintbrush effectively to create the effect of thin and thick lines, and they have sound colouring-in skills.
102. In music, pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 can use simple graphic notation and can follow a score. They can identify the beat of a waltz and know that in Victorian times waltzes were very popular. Pupils sing well and use a full range of percussion instruments to accompany their singing. They can keep a steady beat and they make good gains in singing because of the good teaching of the music specialist.
103. Pupils in both key stages understand how texture affects mood and when singing 'Sometimes I'm Naughty' pupils place appropriate emphasis on the meaning of the words to create the desired effect. No musical composition was seen during the week of the inspection. Interviews with pupils show that pupils listen to a full range of composers and they can identify music that evokes their feelings. They particularly like 'The Conker' song and sing it with great gusto.
104. Pupils in both key stages have very positive attitudes to learning in art and design and music because the quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory.
105. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in art and design. In a very good art lesson in Year 3/4, the pupils made good gains in their learning because the teacher made very effective use of time by structuring a range of tasks and creating a sense of urgency so that pupils would finish them quickly. The teacher encouraged the pupils to be very precise in their work and modelled how to scan texts for information when looking for facts about Andy Goldsworthy. She encouraged pupils by her very good questioning skills to offer explanations based upon personal responses as to their reactions to his work 'Eclipse with Leaves'; this contributed positively to pupils' literacy skills. There is variance throughout the school relating to the use of sketchbooks. The best examples of sketchbooks with clear annotations were seen in Year 3/4 and Year 6.

106. The quality of teaching in music is good. The specialist teacher has secure subject knowledge, is very energetic and is passionate about teaching her subject. However, further emphasis needs to be placed on using opportunities to teach pupils technical vocabulary. There are no assessments in art and design and music and there is no co-ordinator for music. The school has recognised this as an area for development but in spite of this every effort is made to provide the pupils with a broad curriculum. Since the previous inspection high attainment in singing has been maintained but it is not possible to comment on other aspects because insufficient work was seen. Sound standards in art and design have also been maintained.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 2 and none in Key Stage 1. It is not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. However, some of the pupils' displayed work shows that a range of media has been used and design and technology skills have been taught. In discussions with the pupils they say they have opportunities to plan and evaluate their products. In the one lesson seen the pupils displayed sound skills in the design and construction of musical instruments and had opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination, producing quality products. They were taught about how they might improve their designs. The majority of pupils were successful and were confident when given the opportunity to discuss the skills and techniques used, the choice of material and how the finished product could be improved upon. Annotated designs were seen for models and these were clearly labelled. Pupils are aware that both the function and appearance of a product are important and that consumers sometimes buy goods for their appearance rather than the function. The scrutiny of work reveals that pupils are taught specific skills, processes and knowledge based upon consideration of the needs of consumers, for example the design of an electronic board game in Years 3 and 4.
108. There is a draft policy and scheme of work that outlines key elements of the subject and makes reference to the Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidance for the subject. The co-ordinator is new to the school. The work seen indicated that a limited range of the subject has been taught. The pupils are well aware of the safety issues in using various tools and materials and this is stressed in teaching. Pupils with special educational needs are offered extra help if needed and make good progress. The school has a good set of tools and materials to enable an appropriate range of techniques to be taught.

GEOGRAPHY

109. No lessons were observed in this subject because geography was not the focus of work this term. There was very little opportunity to scrutinise past work as most had been sent home with the pupils. Judgements on standards are based upon samples of previous work, teacher's medium-term planning and interviews with teachers and pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, are reaching appropriate standards for their age at the end of both key stages. The previous inspection report judged standards to be above national expectations. The lack of evidence available during this inspection makes it difficult to compare that judgement with current findings.
110. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are becoming familiar with their own locality. They describe the route they travel to school, the sights they see and the sounds they hear. Different types of buildings are identified and a town and a village compared and contrasted. The different types of transport by which they come to school are discussed and recorded. Plans are drawn of the classroom from a birds eye view and the seasons of the year noted and the changes to the

environment that result from this. Simple maps are drawn of their journey to school and to the local town and of the postman's route and the nearby woodland area they explore. In a study of the seaside, through photographs and pictures, pupils are asked to decide whether features are human or physical, for example sand, hotels, rocks, the sea and a jetty. The localities of Trefonen and Tobago are compared and contrasted and aspects such as clothes, temperature, climate and homes examined. Pupils know that the weather in England is not as hot as that in Tobago and that sometimes warm clothes have to be worn in winter.

111. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils complete a detailed study of rivers. This is wide ranging and includes the water cycle, major rivers in Britain and world-wide, and oceans. Ordnance Survey maps are used and pupils learn about map symbols, canals, lakes, river erosion, sea pollution and estuaries such as the Solway and Humber. There is evidence from teachers' planning that the areas of Trefonen and West Bromwich are compared and contrasted, and links have been developed with a school in the Midlands. A local study is carried out and this develops into an examination of the wider area, taking into account local towns, farms and industry. The school sponsors a girl, Ponco, who lives in a village in Indonesia. Contact is kept through regular letters and her life is compared with the pupils' in Trefonen. A study is made of her family, village, school, leisure time and the jobs available in her area. These are compared and contrasted with those in Trefonen.
112. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching or the attitudes and response of pupils in the subject. It is apparent, however, that there is a lack of emphasis on the use of information and communication technology in geography, and pupils' work in both key stages clearly demonstrates that insufficient emphasis is placed on using geography as means of developing the extended writing of pupils. Work seen on the topic on 'Rivers' from Years 3 and 4 is very thorough and detailed. In some cases there is a lack of emphasis on the quality of handwriting and presentation and the marking is not always as informative as it might be. For example it does not always suggest to pupils how they might improve in the future.
113. The subject is taught in a series of topics over a two-year cycle in Key Stage 1 and over four years in Key Stage 2. Geography is taught for one term during the year. The recently appointed co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has drawn up a new policy, development plan and curriculum plan that are of a good quality and which will provide help and support to teachers. These have been presented to the staff and are due to be presented to the governing body. There is little opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by working alongside other teachers in classrooms. She might usefully consider monitoring teachers' planning and also the written work completed by the pupils. Assessment procedures and the use of assessment to inform future work are at an early stage of development. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and contribute to the satisfactory standards that pupils attain.

HISTORY

114. Due to timetable arrangements it was possible to observe only a limited number of lessons during the inspection. Judgements on attainment are based upon scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' plans and interviews with teachers and pupils. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in history, including those with special educational needs, is in line with what is expected of pupils of this age, and at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are attaining high standards. This judgement indicates that standards have been maintained since the previous inspection in Key Stage 2.
115. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to use appropriate vocabulary to describe people and events in the past and a sound understanding of chronology is developing. Pupils study the

history of their school and devise questionnaires to send to their parents to gather information about their schooldays. They make a collection of memorabilia, such as photographs and ties, and compare and contrast school today with that of the past. A study is made of old toys such as hoops and tops and of items used in the home. Pupils begin to understand changes that have occurred over time through their study of electricity and oil lamps, a washing machine and a dolly tub and modern and old telephones. They learn about famous people from the past such as Guy Fawkes.

116. Scrutiny of work indicates that younger pupils in Years 3 and 4 make a detailed study of Roman times. They know about the invasion of Britain in 55BC and learn about a variety of topics such as the old city of Viroconium, Roman Provinces, baths, entertainment and numbers. They know how the soldiers travelled and something of the homes the Romans built.
117. By the end of Key Stage 2, older pupils know about life in Victorian times. They consider a range of evidence relating to the Great Exhibition, deduce information and compare the Exhibition with the Millennium Dome. They are put in the role of historical detectives, ask and answer pertinent questions and come to conclusions about the Great Exhibition. They learn to identify appropriate information from a range of sources and offer different views and opinions in a logical, confident and articulate way. This supports the judgement that they have good speaking, listening and reading skills. Pupils organise, select and remember historical information due to the appropriate interventions of the teacher. This ensures that their interpretations reflect context, evidence and intention as to why the Great Exhibition came about.
118. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory and examples of good teaching were seen in the oldest class in Key Stage 2. The skills of enquiry, deduction and the use of various forms of historical evidence are being taught and the visits made to, for example, Blists Hill Museum to illustrate the Victorian topic, make the subject come alive for the pupils. Artefacts are well used by teachers and any resources needed are prepared carefully before lessons by the teachers. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. As a result of the sound quality of teaching, the pupils are enthused and interested. They want to be involved in lessons and readily take part in discussion and answer questions. Some worksheets in Key Stage 1 limit the opportunities for pupils to develop their extended writing skills. The use of information and communication technology in history is unsatisfactory. In the work seen the quality of marking is very variable overall. There are very few occasions when suggestions are given to pupils as to how they might improve in the future.
119. There is a recently appointed co-ordinator, who plans to review the policy and scheme of work in the light of Qualification and Curriculum Authority documentation and Curriculum 2000. This review, as with geography, will consider the time allocation given to the subject as well as the content. At the moment, the co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning or any time to discuss with staff the planned review of the scheme of work or to check the quality of teachers' planning and the written work of the pupils. Assessment procedures for the subject are at an early stage of development. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

120. Standards of attainment are below those expected nationally at the end of both key stages and pupils do not achieve as well as they could in relation to their prior achievement. Although an effective start has been made in using information and communication technology as an integral part of learning, standards are below those expected nationally of 7 and 11-year-old pupils, and there is a lack of a coherent approach in the schemes of work to provide rigorous opportunities

for its use. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know the function of various keys. They know how to enter, delete and change fonts. In one lesson, pupils were asked to explore the use of numbers as part of an activity game. They tried to do this, with some degrees of success, and most made sound progress, usually when assisted by a more able pupil. The pupils are able to use the mouse to select, drag and drop. Pupils have access to computers in each class but they are not used as frequently as one would expect. There is very little work on display to celebrate pupils' achievements.

121. By Year 6, pupils have experienced elements of the required strands of the subject, but do not have sufficient opportunities to practise what they have learned in other subjects. Pupils are able to demonstrate word processing skills that are satisfactory. Most can load, save and retrieve information and interrogate a CD-ROM to seek further information. They describe how they have used particular programs to handle data and how they have used elements of control skills in adventure and simulation games. They also are aware of the uses of information and communication technology in the wider world, such as e-mail, the internet and supermarkets. Previous work includes examples of word processing, data handling and the use of art programs, but these were limited in demonstrating the full breadth of the programmes of study. There was very little evidence of information and communication technology being taught or used to support other subjects during the period of the inspection.
122. When given the opportunity, pupils show an interest in the subject and are very keen to use computers in their learning. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the computer and its uses and many describe in great detail their use at home. They also show a willingness to help each other. However, at present, the school does not make full use of the skills pupils have acquired at home and some pupils are under-challenged; this results in unsatisfactory progress especially for the higher attainers.
123. The teachers' own skills vary and several require further training to teach the whole of the programme of study effectively. While variable, the quality of teaching overall is satisfactory, for example in the Foundation Stage where the teacher successfully introduced the use of a simple word processor. No monitoring of planning, classroom practice or pupils' work takes place. The co-ordinator is therefore unaware of the standards achieved in the school. Skill progression needs to be identified and linked to ages and stages of development. Planning, which is currently unsatisfactory, should then be developed to teach pupils skills that they can then practise and use across the whole curriculum. Resources across the school are adequate with a central computer resource area and two or three computers in each classroom. At present the hardware is not fully networked but the school is in the process of overcoming this. There is a good supply of software including a CD-ROM library but it is not all in use. The scheme of work has only recently been written and has not been implemented; this results in planning overall being unsatisfactory because teachers do not have sufficient guidance on how to match tasks to pupils' needs.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. The majority of pupils make good progress and standards are high at the end of each key stage. The planning covers all elements of the programme of study and the subject is allocated sufficient time.
125. Younger pupils are adept at the basic movements of running, hopping, skipping and jumping. They show imagination when extending their movements by stretching, sliding and crawling. They move about the hall safely. The more able pupils are able to combine a hop, skip and a jump but not always in the required order. A dance lesson in Year 2 showed that pupils are

achieving well in this medium. They move freely and use their imagination when required to develop a theme or sequence. Older Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate a satisfactory level of attainment when playing games. In a mixed hockey session, pupils showed that they move well with awareness of each other and make good use of the available space. They pass the ball competently and position themselves well to receive passes. Pupils' 'dribbling' skills are good. Pupils move around the pitch well, mindful of their positions, and look for opportunities to pass the ball. They have good knowledge of the rules of games.

126. The pupils are keen on the subject, have very positive attitudes to learning and usually work hard in lessons. At times in Key Stage 2 there is some inattention and minor misbehaviour but this is quickly dealt with. Generally pupils listen well and try to follow instructions which this results in their making good gains in learning. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but there are some unsatisfactory elements. When teachers plan lessons well and have high expectations of behaviour and performance, the pupils respond accordingly. There are times when, although demonstration and observation of performance takes place, there is no subsequent evaluation designed to refine and improve levels of attainment. Consequently, as much progress as possible is not made. Games lessons that include skills practice enhance learning and improve progress. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in swimming; this is because of the high emphasis placed on ensuring that all pupils learn to swim. The school has recently achieved the active mark award from the local secondary school as recognition of the hard work that the school does in preparing pupils for secondary school.
127. The hall, although quite small for larger classes, is well equipped with appropriate apparatus. Other resources are satisfactory. The outdoor areas are spacious and are well used. Good use is made of facilities at the high school and contact with other schools is good. Extracurricular activities are very good and are well supported by parents. The school has been very successful when competing in athletics and cross-country events and inter-school netball and football matches. The range of extra curricular activities contributes positively to pupils' levels of attainment and their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils particularly enjoy cross country running and the teachers provide effective role models in helping pupils understand that through hard work and perseverance good progress can be made.
128. Since the previous inspection the school has maintained a broad and balanced physical education curriculum and standards remain high. There is good attainment in swimming, cross-country running and team games.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. Standards in religious education are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages and pupils make sound gains in their learning. Very little teaching of religious education was seen during the week of the inspection because of the constraints of the timetable, but scrutiny of previous planning and pupils' books demonstrates that by the end of Year 6 pupils can communicate their knowledge of religious rites of passages in Christianity and Judaism. Pupils understand the significance of baptism, confirmation, marriage and Bar Mitzvah. Pupils know that baptism is an invitation to Christianity and that by accepting its invitation one belongs to a larger group. They know the symbolism and significance of water, candles, godparents, and that baptism originates from the work of John the Baptist. Pupils understand that the Bar Mitzvah is comparable with confirmation and signifies the responsibilities we undertake when growing up.
130. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils know a full range of Bible stories and parables. They know about the life of Jesus and the miracles that he performed. They understand the meaning behind

the parables of the Good Samaritan and the importance of helping people in need. They know that special places, such as churches, synagogues and Gurdwaras are used for worship and that certain days of the year have particular importance to their members. They know that Jesus died on the cross, and they explore feelings related to bereavement and loss in a safe learning environment. They know that different clothes are worn for special occasions such as weddings, christenings and confirmation, and that special prayers of thanksgiving are said by the congregation.

131. The teaching of skills in personal, social and health education contributes to pupils' emerging understanding of religious concepts, skills and attitudes. For example, in Year 5 pupils were taught the importance of obeying rules in society. This concept they quickly linked to their knowledge of the Ten Commandments. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and show respect for each other and their peers. They value each other's contributions and discuss religious concepts such as beliefs in a higher power with reverence.
132. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall in both key stages but there are weaknesses relating to teachers' subject knowledge, because teachers do not sufficiently clearly define the subject specific skills relating to religious education and personal, social and health education. Whilst there is a significant overlap in these skills, teachers need to be more specific in their planning as to which subject they are referring to. The best examples of planning in religious education were seen in Year 6, where the teacher made clear reference to the subject-specific skills defined in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority schemes of work. Teachers use time effectively, give clear explanations and relate the content of what they are teaching to pupils' experiences, which contributes positively to the sound gains that pupils make in their learning. There are occasions when the higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and this results in their consolidating what they have learned rather than being challenged into making deeper connections in their learning. Teachers generally ask good questions, which enables the pupils to stay on task. In one unsatisfactory lesson in Key Stage 2, the teacher did not use sufficiently stimulating resources when asking the pupils to define reasons for adhering to rules. Insufficient opportunities were provided for pupils, especially the higher attainers, to develop their research skills using CD-ROMs and library books and pupils became restless. This had a negative effect on their short-term gains in learning.
133. The headteacher has recently taken on the co-ordination of religious education throughout the school and, as yet, has not monitored standards that pupils attain. Scrutiny of teachers' planning reveals that there are occasions when teachers confuse subject-specific skills of religious education with those of personal, social and health education. Whilst there is a degree of overlap it is necessary to ensure that teachers are familiar with the differences between the two subjects.
134. Since the previous inspection, the school has made sound progress in developing curriculum content and time allocation. However, further rigour needs to be developed in relation to monitoring standards and ensuring that the links made with a school in West Bromwich, that has a high percentage of pupils from different faiths, contribute further to pupils' knowledge of life in a multicultural society.