

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. EDMUND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103440

Headteacher: Mrs K Weber

Reporting inspector: Mr N Sherman
16493

Dates of inspection: 18th September – 21st September 2000

Inspection number: 224559

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Rev Father P Howell

Date of previous inspection: November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mr N Sherman 16493	Registered inspector	Art Physical education Special educational needs	What sort of a school is it The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What could the school do to improve further
Mr R Miller 9619	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and values How well does the school care for its pupils or students How well does the school work in partnership with parents
Mrs M Forsman 8263	Team inspector	Science Information technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Mrs C Deloughry 10911	Team inspector	English Music Design and technology Equal Opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils
Mr P Isherwood 20301	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History The foundation Stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. Edmund's Roman Catholic Primary School is of average size and is situated close to the city centre of Birmingham on the Springhill estate. It is a voluntary aided school and caters for pupils between the ages of three and eleven. There are 199 pupils on roll with another 26 full – time pupils who attend the school's nursery. There are a number of pupils from non-European backgrounds that total around 47% of the school's roll. This figure is above the average. A number of pupils join or leave the school at times other than the normal one for admissions and transfer to secondary education. The socio-economic circumstances of the area are well below average. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above average and the number of pupils who have special educational needs is also above average. A significant number of pupils on the register of special educational needs have language difficulties. Children enter full time education with poor speaking and listening and social skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very caring school which is largely effective in its work, but there are some aspects which need to be improved to ensure that all pupils achieve to the best of their ability. Pupils enter school with well below average levels of attainment, but make good progress in mathematics and science so that they attain average standards in these subjects by the time they leave school. Pupils make satisfactory progress in English, but standards remain below average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are satisfactory although currently marred by the unsatisfactory behaviour of some pupils in Year 2 and 5. Teaching is satisfactory, but there is some variation in the quality of teaching across the school. The curriculum that is planned for pupils is satisfactory overall although greater opportunities could be provided to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills through subjects other than English. The school is seeking further ways to develop links with parents to support their children's learning. The school is suitably managed and careful analysis is made of pupils' end of key stage National Curriculum tests to identify ways to plan improvements. The monitoring of teaching could have a sharper focus, particularly in English. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is successful in promoting its Catholic ethos and a strong racial harmony is present.
- Pupils make good progress in mathematics and science.
- Children get a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes.
- The school successfully promotes pupils' social, moral and cultural development.
- The school has a good range of assessment procedures and makes good use of the information it gains to plan pupils' learning
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- There is a good range of extra-curricular activities in Key Stage 2.
- Procedures to monitor and improve the rate of pupils' attendance in the school are excellent.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, and in particular those in speaking and listening, handwriting and the presentation of pupils' written work.
- The quality of teaching and the behaviour of some pupils in the Year 2 and Year 5 classes.
- The quality of teaching in design and technology and music in both key stages.
- The use to which the school's information technology equipment is put.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since its last inspection in 1996. Firm and decisive action has been taken on many of the key issues highlighted in the last report. Of note is the strong improvement made in the level of pupils' attendance at the school. From being well below the average in 1996, attendance rates are now very close to the national average. Standards in information technology, which were below those expected for seven and 11 year-olds, are now in line with national expectations. Lesson plans are now more finely tuned to ensure that the planning of learning for all pupils in each of the classes is closely matched to their needs. Good progress has been made in improving the procedures for assessing the exact rate of pupils' progress in many classes. The information from this is used well to plan learning and to assess where, if appropriate, pupils with special educational needs need additional support. However, there is still some unsatisfactory teaching evident and standards in English which were reported as average in 1996, have fallen and are now below average. While the school has made some improvements in developing pupils' personal initiative, there is still further scope to extend this. Given the strong team work evident in the school, it is well placed to build on its strengths and continue to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	D	E	B	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	D	D	C	A	
science	C	D	C	A	

The results of the 1999 end of key stage National Curriculum tests indicate that pupils attained standards in mathematics and science that were in line with the national average. When compared to similar schools (based on the number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals) pupils attained well above average standards in these subjects. In English, pupils attained well below average standards when compared to schools nationally, but above average standards when compared to similar schools. Over four years, the trend for the school's results in mathematics and science shows improvement at a faster rate than the national picture, but the results in English have not increased in line with the national trend. However, the results of the tests for the year ended 1999/2000 are not as strong as those seen in previous years. This does not indicate a drop in standards but reflects the below average attainment of the pupils concerned and the high number of pupils in the cohort who have special educational needs. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English are below the national average. In mathematics and science, they are in line with national averages. The results are also a close match with the school's own targets for English and mathematics. Moreover, from a very low point of attainment when the pupils enter the school, they make satisfactory progress in literacy, and good progress in numeracy and science. However, standards in speaking and listening are poor and standards in how pupils present their work could be higher. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations. Standards in art, geography, history, and physical education are as expected for 11 year-olds. Standards in design and technology and music are below national expectations.

At Key Stage 1, standards in English are below the national average. In mathematics and science, they are in line with the national average. Pupils make good progress in these three subjects. In information technology, standards are in line with expectations. In art, geography, history, and physical education, standards are as expected for seven year olds. In design and technology and music they are below expectations.

By the time children leave the foundation stage and enter Year 1, they attain standards that are below expectations in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. In their personal and social education, standards are in line with expectations and children make good gains in this aspect of their learning. However, considering the very low levels of attainment, pupils make good progress in both the nursery and the reception classes.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils talk warmly of the school and enjoy their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory overall. However, the behaviour of some pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 5 classes is unsatisfactory and slows down their learning and progress.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory overall. Relationships in the school are good. However, opportunities for pupils to develop their initiative are too few.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates at the school have improved greatly since the school's previous inspection.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

During the inspection, the quality of teaching was satisfactory in 29% of lessons, good in 42% and very good in 19% and unsatisfactory in 10%. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. There is some variation in the quality of teaching across the school. For example, in Years 2 and 5, the teachers have only just been deployed into these year groups and, at present, find the behaviour of some pupils somewhat challenging. At present, the teaching is stronger in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. Consequently, pupils were often seen to be making good progress in these classes. Overall, the quality of teaching is around the same as that noted in the school's last inspection. The teaching of literacy in both key stages is satisfactory while that for numeracy and science in Key Stage 2 is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Children under five have a well planned curriculum that reflects their particular needs. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs have their needs identified early. Their learning targets are very precise and all staff support and guide their learning well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Although few in number, the school is well aware of their particular needs and provide good support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There are particular strengths in the manner in which the school plans provision to enhance pupils' moral development and clear opportunities are provided for pupils to ponder on issues of a moral nature.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. All staff have a good understanding of the needs of pupils and the school's aim of providing a warm and secure learning environment is fully achieved. The 'Breakfast Club', where all pupils are welcome to purchase a small breakfast at the start of the day, is a clear example of this.

The school is aware of the need to involve parents more fully in supporting their children's learning. While some progress has been made in this regard, for example, in promoting the use of homework more rigorously, there is greater scope to involve parents more actively in their children's educational progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher gives a clear lead to the educational direction of the school. The deputy headteacher and senior management team support her well. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning needs to have a sharper focus on the teaching and the standards pupils attain in English.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors give the school appropriate support and fulfil all their legal responsibilities. However, their role as a 'critical friend' to the school could be further extended.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school keeps a very careful watching brief on the rate of all pupils' progress. Teaching is monitored by both the senior management team and subject co-ordinators.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Learning support assistants are generally effectively deployed and additional monies given to the school to support pupils in their learning, such as those for special educational needs and staff training, are carefully spent. Although great care is taken to ensure that the school gets best value for the money that is spent, ways to measure the impact that spending decisions are having on the standards pupils attain, are at an early stage of development.
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources	There are an appropriate number of qualified teaching staff for the number of pupils on roll. The number of support staff is high, they are highly valued and, in the main, effectively used. Resources are satisfactory with plans in place to improve the range of information technology equipment to support pupils' learning by the building of a specific information technology suite.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way the school promotes the Catholic ethos of the school; • The strong relationships between teachers and the pupils. • The ways in which the school helps the pupils to feel secure. • The strong but fair sense of discipline and order. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The way in which the school supports and extends pupils with higher ability. • A significant number of parents believe that the amount of homework is insufficient. • The range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 1. • Some parents would like to see the range of musical experiences offered to pupils extended.

Inspectors support the parents' positive views of the school. The Catholic ethos of the school is actively and rigorously promoted and relationships between pupils and staff are generally good. The school works extremely hard to enable pupils who find the school's expectations in terms of behaviour more difficult to accept, to become members of the school community. Inspectors do not fully support parents' views in respect of what they would like to see improved in the school. Teachers are aware of the small number of pupils in the school who have higher ability and, in the main, modify their teaching to ensure they have work that challenges them. The amount of homework is satisfactory. While there is a good range of extra curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 2, the school is exploring how these could be widened to include pupils in Key Stage 1. The school is currently developing ways to increase staff confidence in the teaching of music to compensate for the lack of specialist teaching that was in place in the year prior to the inspection.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The children start full time education with well below average levels of attainment, particularly in their understanding and use of language and literacy and in aspects of their personal and social education. The children make good gains in their learning in the Foundation Stage. Children in the nursery are well integrated in the day-to-day routines of their new classroom learning environment. This success is sufficiently extended in the reception class to which most of the children transfer. By the time pupils enter Year 1, they attain appropriate standards in their personal, social and emotional development. However, although they make good gains in their understanding, the children do not attain the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in other areas of their learning and their attainment in speaking and listening is still poor by the time they enter Key Stage 1.
2. In the National Curriculum tests of summer 1999 for Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in reading and writing was well below the average. The number of pupils attaining at the higher level was above average in writing yet below the average in reading. Teacher assessments of the pupils' speaking and listening skills indicated well below average attainment. When compared with similar schools, the overall performance of pupils was average. The results over the last four years show attainment in reading being close to the national average but in writing, below the average. Results from the 2000 tests show an improvement in writing but the school's scores in reading are below those of the preceding year. Standards in mathematics are better than reading and writing. In 1999, the number of pupils who attained the expected level was well above average at both the expected and higher levels. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average. However, results from the 2000 tests indicate a fall in attainment. Over a four year time line, standards in mathematics have been above the national average.
3. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English are below the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards in speaking and listening are well below average. While the school has worked hard to embrace the principles and guidelines for the teaching of the National Literacy Strategy, this still represents a fall in standards since the school's last inspection. In reading, while pupils enjoy stories, they do not always listen effectively to what is read to them. Some pupils are not fluent in their reading and need support to gain meaning from words and phrases they are unfamiliar with. Standards in writing are below average. Pupils do understand the need for full stops and capital letters in their work and for the most part use these appropriately. However, their skill in writing using imaginative words, phrases and ideas is limited. Standards in spelling are average although those in handwriting are below those expected for seven year olds. Presentation of work is often too rushed. Considering the low level of attainment in English many pupils demonstrate when they first enter the school, they make reasonable progress in most aspects of English, but in speaking and listening it could be greater.
4. In mathematics, at the end of Key Stage 1, the inspection findings are that standards are average. Pupils make appropriate gains in their learning as they move through the classes in their understanding and use of number and mathematical ideas. They undertake simple addition and subtraction problems and understand what is meant by units, tens and hundreds. Pupils' attainment in understanding shape and space is average, but their ability to handle data and present it in simple charts and tables could be better.
5. Evaluation of teacher assessments for science in summer of 1999 indicates standards below the national average. The findings of the inspection are that standards in science are average.

While pupils are gaining an appropriate understanding of undertaking simple investigations, they do not make enough progress in terms of extending their grasp of scientific vocabulary. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations and have improved since the school's last inspection when they were judged to be below expectations. Pupils are able to use the features of a simple word-processor but their understanding of how to use a compact disc to explore topics or themes is weak. Progress is satisfactory.

6. In art, geography, history, and physical education, standards are at the levels expected for seven year olds. Pupils make appropriate gains in their learning in each of these subjects. However, standards in design and technology and music are below those expected for seven year olds. In increasing the time for English and mathematics over the past two years, the school has reduced the time for other subjects. Consequently, pupils have not had sufficient breadth of learning experiences and this has adversely impacted on their attainment and overall progress in design and technology. In music, pupils' learning is currently hampered by the identified need by the school to raise staff confidence in teaching music following a period where the majority of this was done by a visiting specialist.
7. In the National Curriculum tests of summer 1999 for Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in English was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining at the higher level was very low. In comparison to similar schools, standards were above average. While the school sets challenging targets for English, the results of the 2000 tests indicated that pupils attained below those set by the school. The results from recent tests point to boys attaining at a lower level than the girls in reading. The school is aware of this and is monitoring boys' progress carefully across the key stage. Additional reading materials, for example, have been added to the boys' reading diet as a means of promoting stronger interest in reading generally.
8. The findings of the inspection are that standards in English and in literacy are below average. Teachers work hard to develop pupils' English skills but standards in speaking and listening remain well below average. The pupils general paucity of spoken language impacts significantly on the depth and quality of the vocabulary that they use in their written work. While they are quite secure in their use and understanding of the various forms of punctuation, pupils' writing does not sufficiently demonstrate that they are able to write extended pieces of work or use vocabulary to develop excitement or a sense of atmosphere. Standards in reading are below average. Pupils have a weak understanding of the works of famous authors and too many pupils still do not read with suitable fluency or expression. Standards in spelling are satisfactory although in handwriting and presentation, as in Key Stage 1, standards are not high enough. As they move through each of the classes, pupils make satisfactory gains in their understanding of the technical features of language although progress in the development of their speaking and listening skills is still too slow.
9. Results of the National Curriculum tests of summer 1999 for Key Stage 2 in mathematics indicated that standards were in line with the national average at the expected level. At the higher level, standards were well below average. Evidence from the tests indicates that the girls, as in English, attain at a higher level. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average. For the most recent tests, the school set ambitious targets for pupils to attain. The school predicted eight out of ten pupils to attain at the expected level. However, just less than six out of ten pupils actually achieved this. Over a four year period, standards in mathematics have been below the average. The findings of the inspection are that standards are average. The effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a strong impact on the rate of pupils' progress in using and understanding number. However, their ability to explore mathematical problems of an open-ended nature is relatively weak. Considering the low levels of attainment pupils have when they enter the school, pupils make good progress in their understanding of mathematics.

10. Results of the end of key stage 1999 National Curriculum tests in science for Key Stage 2 indicated that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was average. The number of pupils who attained at the higher level was close to the average. When compared to similar schools, standards were well above average. Early indications are that the results for the 2000 tests are comparable to those of the previous year. The findings of the inspection are that standards are in line with the national average. However, the depth of pupils' scientific thinking and the manner in which they write up their investigation work could be at a higher standard. However, across all aspects of the National Curriculum for science, pupils make good progress.
11. In information technology, standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils are able to use computers to support their learning in various subjects. They understand how to import pictures into their work and how to manipulate the text and appearance of their work to make it more visibly pleasing. Pupils make secure gains in their learning as they move through each of the classes in their understanding of how information technology can be used to support their general learning. However, in the main, it is not used well enough across the curriculum.
12. Standards in art, geography, history, and physical education are in line with expectations and pupils make satisfactory progress in each of these subjects. However, as in Key Stage 1, standards in design and technology and music are below those expected for 11 year-olds.
13. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning in most subjects. Pupils benefit from the early identification of their learning needs by both teachers and support staff which are translated into effective learning goals that closely match pupils' level of need. These include, for example, targets such as, 'Improve the use of basic punctuation'. This then translates into specific goals such as 'Demarcate five sentences using full stops and capital letters correctly.' The school works hard to ensure that the pupils with targets to improve their overall behaviour are given effective support. Pupils with English as an additional language also receive good support in many lessons as they learn to write and speak in English. They too make satisfactory gains in their learning. The school has few pupils with higher ability. However, those pupils that have are clearly identified by teachers and given suitably challenging work during the course of lessons.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes are generally satisfactory towards to their learning and they show enthusiasm for attending school. Ninety seven per cent of parents who responded to the survey agree that their children enjoy coming to school. Lessons normally start promptly and where they are stimulating, pupils respond positively and this impacts strongly on learning. There is in most lessons, an air of purpose and pupils show a willingness to learn. Most pupils listen to their teachers carefully, try their hardest and persevere with their set tasks. There are a number of pupils, however, in Years 2 and 5, who have difficulty in maintaining concentration for any length of time and are a disruptive influence on the rest of the class. There is a high degree of racial harmony.
15. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall both in and around the school. There is some unsatisfactory behaviour in Years 2 and 5, amongst a small number of pupils who do not always realise the impact their inappropriate behaviour has on others. Parents feel that the school encourages their children to be polite, have good manners, work hard and give each other mutual support and tolerance. Most pupils are clear about how to behave through the clear teaching of values and good role models set by staff at the school. They understand and value others and have good relationships with their teachers and other adults in the school. There were no exclusions during the last year.

16. Whilst a good number of older pupils are keen to take responsibility and show initiative by undertaking roles such as peer mediators and answering the school telephone, this is not always the case with younger pupils, where opportunities to develop their initiative are limited. Pupils are generally polite to each other and respectful to teachers. Lunchtimes and playtimes are orderly, pleasant, social occasions, when pupils can confidently eat, play and enjoy themselves. There was no inappropriate behaviour, bullying or unkindness observed during the inspection. All members of staff teach pupils from the earliest age to be kind to each other.
17. Relationships within the school are good. Teachers value the pupils and celebrate every achievement. Pupils trust their teachers and classroom assistants and know members of staff care for them and each other. This sets a good example to pupils who in turn are caring.
18. The school's attendance rate at around 94 per cent is broadly in line with the national average. This figure is a significant improvement on that of the previous inspection. Punctuality too has improved although a small number of pupils continue to arrive late and this causes disruption to the start of the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. During the inspection, the teaching was satisfactory overall. In over six out of ten lessons, teaching was good or better with one fifth of teaching being very good. Unsatisfactory teaching totalling around one in ten lessons. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. There is variation in the quality of teaching across the school. During the inspection, the teaching was stronger in Years 3, 4 and 6 than in other year groups. Consequently, pupils were often seen to be making good progress in these classes. Unsatisfactory teaching is centred in the Year 2 and Year 5 classes. Overall, the quality of teaching is around the same as that noted in the school's last inspection.
20. There are strengths in the teaching of mathematics and science in Key Stage 2, and it is often of good quality. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory across the school with pupils being effectively taught to use punctuation appropriately and develop their understanding of adapting their writing for different reasons and purposes. The teaching of speaking and listening is a weak area. The teachers' expectations in relation to the presentation of pupils' work and in handwriting are too low. While the teaching of numeracy and information technology is satisfactory, there is too little focus on extending pupils' numeracy and information technology skills through other subjects of the curriculum. Occasionally, opportunities for pupils to use the technology as part of their literacy and numeracy sessions are not always sufficiently planned for by some teachers. Across other subjects, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and sometimes good. However, teaching of design and technology is unsatisfactory, because teachers' subject knowledge is weak and, until recently, there were insufficient guidance materials for teachers to plan pupils' learning.
21. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. The teachers have good knowledge of the children and successfully plan work that reflects their needs. In both the nursery and reception classes, very effective use is made of structured play to enhance the learning of language and literacy, numeracy or social skills. For example, in the nursery, 'St. Edmund's Hospital' is used to promote early speaking and co-operation skills. Teachers in both classes are extremely aware of the poor linguistic and social skills many children demonstrate when they enter the school. Teachers expect the children to work hard and lessons move swiftly. The good levels of support in terms of additional staff are used very effectively. They are fully involved in the planning of the children's work and while working with small groups, use questions effectively to extend pupils' learning. These often challenge pupils to explain their thinking and help to develop their speaking skills. Children are managed well and relationships between staff and children are warm yet purposeful, which ensures that they quickly settle into

their new surroundings. The quality of teaching is such that many children make good progress in the Foundation Stage.

22. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Lesson planning and assessment information is used well to plan pupils' learning. However, in some respects teaching does not build sufficiently on pupils' earlier learning. During the inspection, the teaching was good in one in four lessons. While largely satisfactory in the remainder, unsatisfactory teaching was observed in 15% of lessons. This was in the Year 2 class. Features of the unsatisfactory teaching included the weak management of pupils and low expectations of pupils that is in sharp contrast to that noted in the Foundation Stage. Consequently, reminders to pupils to listen and pay attention often interrupt the flow of learning in lessons. In the main, the expectations of pupils in how they present their work and in the quality of their handwriting are too low. Better teaching is evident when pupils' learning is made clear to them, and when the management of pupils is crisper. Balancing the shortcomings is the effectiveness of lesson planning and the use of assessment information in planning pupils' learning. As a result, pupils are given activities that effectively reflect their needs and interests.
23. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory. During the inspection teaching was very good in nearly one third of lessons and good in a further third. However, there was some unsatisfactory teaching amounting to 12% of lessons. The strengths in teaching lie in the good subject knowledge teachers have and in their ability to plan learning that fits in closely with the guidance materials for the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. Many lessons commence with an effective recap of earlier learning or with teachers sharing with pupils the conclusions about pupils' learning that they have reached from assessing their previous day's work. This helps pupils recall what they already know and serves as a benchmark for what they are to further learn during a lesson. Overall, the management of pupils is effective, despite some demonstrating challenging behaviour, and teachers have appropriate strategies for ensuring lessons move with pace and rigour. The sprinkling of humour on occasion adds to the quality of relationships with the classes. Teaching in Year 5 is sometimes unsatisfactory and is marred by weaker management of pupils. Strategies to manage the pupils' behaviour are not always effective and the pace and rigour in the quality of learning falters. One music lesson demonstrated this well. While the introduction was good, with pupils having to listen and reflect on a piece of music, in essence, the remainder of the lesson consisted of the same activities. As a result, the majority of pupils became restless and the teacher had to bring the lesson to an early conclusion.
24. Across both key stages, there is too little focus on planning to develop and refine pupils' speaking and listening skills. The potential of drama for such work is often missed. There is further scope to develop 'book areas' in classrooms to make them more attractive to support pupils' literacy development. Some good use of information technology equipment to support pupils in their endeavours was noted during the inspection. However, there were instances when the potential to use such equipment was often missed.
25. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective. Of note, is the early intervention by staff in the identification of pupils' needs as soon as they become apparent. From this, come well drafted and relevant learning plans that relate closely to individual pupils' needs and circumstances. Pupils' progress is very effectively monitored and regular evaluations as to the precise stages of their development are made. The school is, as a result, successful in reducing the level of need by some pupils. In some sessions, such as those seen in 'booster' classes, for English, the quality of teaching is often good. Stories and literature are frequently used in these sessions to provide a stimulus for the development of pupils' literacy skills. A number of pupils have English as an additional language and they too receive appropriate support and make appropriate gains in their learning. In some classes, the needs of the small number of higher attaining pupils are suitably addressed and are suitably challenged, but in other classes this is not always the case.

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

26. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school for all pupils are good in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school provides a satisfactory balanced curriculum for pupils of all ages, which fully meets statutory requirements, and which is enhanced by a good range of visits and extra-curricular activities. All subjects of the National Curriculum, and religious education, are taught regularly in both key stages. The school has satisfactorily implemented the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to secure the curriculum and the key issue in respect of developing schemes of work has been fully addressed.
26. The provision for pupils who have special educational needs is good, and the school complies fully with the recommendations of the Code of Practice. The school approaches Equal Opportunity as part of its Mission Statement and seeks to ensure all pupils have equality of access to all aspects of the curriculum.
27. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good. Emphasis is placed on developing the children's early language and mathematics skills. Planning is based around the six key areas of learning and successfully promotes the Early Learning Goals. Teaching staff have a good understanding of how young children learn, and provide a good mix of activities which promote new learning, and consolidate previous learning.
28. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils is sound and well-considered. With the exception of speaking and listening, where there are no planned materials to support teachers' planning the whole-school curriculum is supported by schemes of work for all subjects, which lead to detailed termly planning. The schemes of work are designed to build on pupils' previous learning as they move through the school. The school has taken on board the requirements of Curriculum 2000 but is still completing the necessary changes to documentation in some subjects.
29. There are adequate opportunities across the curriculum for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills but the curriculum for speaking and listening is insufficiently extended. The implementation of the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies has reduced the time allocated to art and design and technology and has had a negative impact on the quality of learning in these subjects. Although opportunities for pupils to use information technology skills in other subjects are limited, the information and communication technology curriculum has considerably improved since the last inspection. The provision to foster pupils' cultural education is good and the school actively promotes awareness of other cultures and faiths.
30. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. The school provides a range of interesting clubs for pupils, which are well managed and monitored. They include sporting, musical and craft activities and provide good opportunities for pupils to develop and extend their personal and social skills. The school has recently introduced a Breakfast Club which provides a welcoming environment before the school day begins. The statutory curriculum is effectively enhanced by a good range of educational visits, which extend pupils' learning and experience of the wider world. Pupils in the oldest year groups enjoy 5-day residential visits to Field Study Centres. The school welcomes visitors from the local community who share their experiences with the pupils, and it makes good use of the city's resources and facilities such as the Symphony Hall and the National Indoor Arena.
31. The provision for pupils' personal social and health education is good and well-structured. A programme of personal and social education is taught through religious education and includes citizenship. Visits from the Life Education Centre provide additional coverage of

topics such as Drugs and Health at appropriate levels. This area of the curriculum is also supported by the Community Police Officer.

32. The school is soundly integrated into the community that it serves, particularly the parish of St. Patrick. School events are often shared with the parish and the community. Regular opportunities are taken to provide meaningful experiences for all pupils. They are included in broad community projects such as the Lord Mayor's First Citizen Project and also in more immediate activities such as the distribution of Harvest gifts in the locality. Pupils are included in local fund-raising activities. There are occasional visits from representatives of local businesses and organisations such as journalists, councillors and artists. Effective links are maintained with the community police officer.
33. The school has well-established links with the receiving secondary schools and other schools in the Catholic cluster. This is particularly effective in the area of staff development. There is a sound partnership with Newman College, and student teachers work in the school each year.
34. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision for pupils is good, with the moral, social and cultural aspects being particular strengths.
35. Opportunities are provided, on a daily basis, for pupils' spiritual and moral development, which reflect the Catholic ethos of the school. However, there are some missed opportunities to plan for pupils' spiritual development through other subjects of the curriculum. The pupils express their emotions and views regarding such topics as, fox hunting, or child labour in foreign countries. The staff set a very good example and the pupils have drawn up a set of school rules that are displayed in each classroom. Pupils are helped to take responsibility for, and gain insight into, their own behaviour through discussions in circle time. They have a clear sense of right and wrong.
36. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to learn to care and respect one another. The older pupils act as mediators for minor playground disputes. Year 6 pupils are elected democratically as house captains and they also take responsibility for various monitorial duties around the school. Fund raising functions in aid of a wide range of charities help pupils to become aware of those less fortunate than themselves. The residential visits for Years 5 and 6 provide further opportunities for the pupils to experience living together in a different environment.
37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Frequent visits are made to places of interest and culture, including museums and concerts at the Birmingham Symphony Hall. There are many different ethnic groups represented in the school and the richness and diversity of their cultures are celebrated in many ways. For example, an African dance and music workshop and a Polish song and dance concert were held in school. The Italian club meets weekly and pupils are encouraged to use their mother tongue. Special Festival days from different world religions are recognised and celebrated at various times throughout the year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school cares for its pupils well. The procedures for child protection are effective and there are good links with outside agencies. Procedures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of pupils are effective too. Regular checks are carried out on all electrical and fire equipment. Risk assessments are made of the school premises at regular intervals and fire drills are carried out.

39. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are excellent. There is very regular and effective liaison with the educational social worker who visits the school and follows up those pupils with prolonged absences. A member of the governing body has been nominated to oversee the working of the procedures and to show how seriously they consider regular attendance to be. The school follows up unexplained absences on a day to day basis and reasons are sought. The deputy head teacher sees latecomers upon arrival at the school, and reasons for lateness are requested. These procedures now in place are a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
40. There are good procedures in place to monitor and promote good behaviour. The well written behaviour policy was the subject of wide consultation. It clearly identifies rewards and sanctions, which are well understood by pupils and parents alike. All members of staff, including mid-day supervisors, consistently apply the rules that are prominently displayed throughout the school. The policy is also very effective in eliminating oppressive conduct and individual behaviour plans ensure that the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour are strong.
41. The school has good procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and satisfactory procedures for monitoring their personal development. Pupils with particular difficulties have personal and behaviour targets, which are regularly monitored and reviewed with them, to help improve in these important areas. Overall the school provides good and effective educational and personal support and guidance for its pupils, including those with special educational needs.
42. The school has made good progress in the development and use of assessment procedures since the last inspection. In the Foundation Stage, there are very good procedures to assess individual children. Regular monitoring and recording by teachers and nursery nurses ensure that they know what the children know, understand and can do as they progress through nursery and reception. The information gathered is used well to plan future learning for the pupils.
44. In Key Stages 1 and 2, there are good procedures in place to assess pupils' learning. They are particularly good in mathematics. The assessment co-ordinator has analysed national and optional tests to highlight areas for development. Detailed analysis is used to compare the performance of different groups of pupils, for example girls and boys, different ethnic groups, special needs and pupils on free school meals. The school uses this information well to plan future learning and improve attainment. At present, the school is looking at reading books for boys after results showed a significant difference in attainment between boys and girls in English.
45. In information technology, the pupils are actively involved in their own assessment. Assessment in other subjects is usually an end of topic test or assessment. This is used to plan future learning. The school keeps a portfolio of levelled pupils' work in English, mathematics and science.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Parents view this as a good, supportive and caring school. The partnership that exists with parents is satisfactory. Whilst the school encourages parents to help in the school the take up is limited and this has been identified as an area in need of development. A number of parents do, however, come into school once a week to help with shared reading, with their own child. The contribution that parents make to their child's learning, both at home and in school is satisfactory. A significant minority of parents remain dissatisfied with the amount of work their child is expected to do at home. This is despite the wide consultation that took place with staff

and parents, prior to the implementation of the homework policy. The inspection team found that homework is issued in accordance with the policy, which conforms to government guidelines. Since the previous inspection a 'Parent Friends' Association' has been formed, with a small number of parents who administer it. The organisation raises money through fund raising events, which is put to good use for the benefit of the pupils.

47. The quality of information given to parents, by the school, has improved since the previous inspection by including curriculum details, which are issued at the beginning of each term. Reading diaries allow a useful dialogue to take place between the parents and class teacher, although this opportunity remains under developed. Regular newsletters and notice boards strategically placed around the school help to keep parents informed of events and other matters of interest. The end of year academic reports on individual pupils' progress are clearly laid out for parents and welcomed by them. There is an opportunity to discuss the contents of the report, at a meeting set aside for the purpose, with the class teacher. Teachers are always on hand, at the end of school day, to speak to parents informally. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have formal meetings with staff, which keep them up-to-date with their children's progress. These meetings give parents the opportunity to contribute to the academic and personal targets being set for the forthcoming year.
48. The nursery has established good relationships with parents. A well-considered induction for young children into the nursery and the provision of advice and guidance to the parents and carers, including home visits, ensures a smooth start to their child's early education.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The quality of leadership ensures that the aims and principles that underpin the school's aided status are successfully achieved. The headteacher was appointed to the school following its previous inspection and provides the school with a clear direction. She has led the school through various stages of development and has a secure perception of where the school could improve further and how this is to be achieved. Regular evaluations of end of key stage National Curriculum test results are a feature of the school's work and provide clear information of where some classes may require additional support in order to raise standards. The senior management team is fully involved in the management of the school. Co-ordinators undertake their work eagerly and a strong team spirit is very much evident. The head and deputy headteacher monitor the quality of teaching and opportunities are provided for co-ordinators to gain an overview of teaching and learning in the school. However, in practice, the monitoring of teaching, which has been introduced since the last inspection, needs to be far more sharply and clearly focused on the school's immediate needs which are to raise standards in English.
50. The school has made satisfactory progress since its previous inspection. Firm action has been taken on most of the key issues identified for improvement. Progress in raising the level of attendance has been very good and arrangements for monitoring and promoting attendance at the school are now excellent. Assessment procedures to measure pupils' academic progress are now good and careful note is made of their progress as they move through the school. Standards in information technology, found to be below those expected for seven and 11 year-olds in 1997, are now in line with national expectations. The planned refurbishment of part of the school to enable an information technology suite to be built offers rich potential to further extend pupils' level of attainment. Balancing these positive developments has been slower progress on improving the quality of teaching, which in some classes is, at times, unsatisfactory. The leadership of the school has not been successful in raising the quality of pupils' behaviour sufficiently in some classes. Furthermore, standards in English have fallen since the last inspection when they were judged to be in line with the national average. Standards in speaking and listening are currently poor. Finally, while some progress has been

made to develop pupils' sense of initiative and personal development, with that in the Foundation Stage being particularly effective, there is still room to extend pupils' skills in this aspect of their learning. Despite the historically high turnover of staff, there is sufficient capacity within the school to build on its strengths and make further improvements.

51. The School Development Plan contains suitable targets for improvements in relation to the identified needs of the school. Careful financial planning ensures that action points are appropriately costed. The school is extremely mindful of the need to get good value for the expenditure it incurs. While information technology resources have been improved since the last inspection, there is greater scope to use this as a means of developing links with parents by, for example, raising further the quality of information they receive. However, information technology is used effectively to plan and monitor the school budget. The Governing Body is supportive of the school and fulfils its legal responsibilities. The chair of governors is a regular visitor and has a close and intimate knowledge of the school, the pupils and their families. The headteacher values his support and advice. However, the governors' role in terms of them being a 'critical friend' to the school and holding it to account for the standards being attained, is very much in its infancy.
52. The management of arrangements for pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is very secure. Unusually for a school this size, the deputy headteacher does not have a full time teaching commitment. With the agreement of the Governing Body, his time is used to support and manage arrangements for special educational needs and staff development. He also provides cover to enable co-ordinators to undertake their managerial responsibilities. At present, given the high level of need some pupils demonstrate, his role as a non class based deputy, is effective. However, given the degree of unsatisfactory teaching in some classes, such arrangements need to be regularly reviewed and evaluated in terms of their cost-effectiveness.
53. Effective use is made of additional grants given to support specific developments. Those allocated to the school to ensure that the literacy and numeracy strategies are effectively implemented have been carefully spent. The range of 'big – books', for example, is good and provide rich stimulus for group reading. Funds for 'booster classes' for pupils requiring additional literacy support and funds for pupils with special educational needs are carefully spent. The school provides some additional support for these pupils from within its own resources to enable pupils who may be new to the school, rapid and immediate support. However, such provision is regularly reviewed in light of the pupils' progress and changing circumstances within the school. The school has significantly improved the numbers of support staff since the previous inspection. Most teaching resources are used well to support pupils in their learning. However, opportunities for using the library as a means of promoting aspects of pupils' initiative and personal development are often missed as is the use to which information technology equipment is put to in some lessons.
54. There is a sufficient number of appropriately qualified staff who bring a range of experience and interests to the school. The deputy headteacher does not have responsibility for a class but supports the teachers within their classrooms by teaching whole classes or small groups. Most of the teachers have at least one additional responsibility over and above their classroom teaching duties. Arrangements for staff training are good and suitably matched to the needs of the school. Accreditation for 'Investors in People' is forecast for October.
55. The provision of support staff and classroom assistants is very good. They are all very well qualified for the tasks they are expected to perform and co-operate well with the class teachers. They work effectively with teachers and provide good guidance to the pupils with whom they work. There are occasions when some of their time could be used more creatively as it is not always necessary, for example, for learning support assistants to accompany teachers in some physical education lessons. However, their support is of particular benefit to

the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The administrative staff, caretaker and mid-day staff all play an important role in ensuring the effective day to day running of the school.

56. Accommodation is satisfactory. The classrooms are light and airy but there is a shortage of extra spaces for special groups. The installation of new information technology equipment will place extra pressure on the library. Each classroom has a small art area, which also serves as storage space. There are separate hard and soft play areas for each key stage which is beneficial, and these have been enhanced by the addition of benches and small play houses. The school is fortunate in having a dining room and an assembly hall, which enables maximum use to be made of the hall for physical education and music.
57. The quality and quantity of resources are satisfactory and adequately meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Provision for equipment for information technology has improved since the previous inspection and is to be developed further. The introduction of tape recorders into the classrooms would make a beneficial contribution to the teaching of speaking and listening.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to further improve the quality of education in the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

1) raise standards in English, and particularly speaking and listening, by ensuring that:

- opportunities are regularly provided for pupils to develop their speaking skills through all subjects of the curriculum;
- a scheme of work is devised that highlights clearly the speaking and listening skills that are to be developed in each of the year groups;
- teachers make greater use of educational drama;
- all classrooms have appropriate tape-recording facilities;
- reading areas in classrooms are effectively organised to further extend pupils' interest and reading abilities;
- teachers' expectations of pupils' handwriting and presentation of work are suitably high;
- teachers make greater use of information technology to support pupils' learning;
- the monitoring of teaching focuses more sharply on improving standards.

(paragraphs 2, 3, 7, 8, 20, 24, 28, 50, 57, 77, 78, 83, 85)

2) improve the quality of teaching in Years 2 and 5 by ensuring that:

- pupils are managed more effectively;
- teachers' expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving are increased;
- the best practice seen in other parts of the school is identified and emulated

(paragraphs 14, 19, 22, 23, 50, 83, 91, 100, 112)

The following less important issues should be addressed by the governors as part of their action plan:

- raise standards in design and technology and music by ensuring that a staff development programme is established that addresses the shortcomings in teachers' knowledge;
- provide more opportunities for pupils to develop independent learning as they move through the school;
- develop further the 'critical friend' role of the Governing Body.

(paragraphs 6, 12, 16, 20, 51, 105, 106 – 108, 126, 129)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	19	42	29	10		

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	199
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		120

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	44

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	28

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.5	School data	1.1
National comparative data	5.9	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	14	16	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	5	14
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	22	19	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (83)	63 (83)	100 (83)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	14	11
	Girls	15	6	15
	Total	20	30	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (83)	100 (83)	87 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	17	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
	Boys	3	7	8
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	17	21	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (50)	81 (62)	92 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	5	6
	Girls	14	13	15
	Total	18	18	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	69 (46)	69 (59)	81 (54)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	45
Black – African heritage	6
Black – other	25
Indian	10
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	-
Chinese	-
White	107
Any other minority ethnic group	1

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)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.4
Average class size	28.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	178

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	26
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	'99-2000
	£
Total income	495 858
Total expenditure	491 322
Expenditure per pupil	2 184
Balance brought forward from previous year	32 058
Balance carried forward to next year	36 594

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	226
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	38	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	37	9	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	50	25	0	0
The teaching is good.	67	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	36	14	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	20	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	27	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	36	57	3	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	45	49	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	36	5	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	45	7	3	9

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by parents.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. The school has maintained the good work carried out in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. Both the nursery and reception class are well organised. There are close links between the two classes. The quality of teaching is at least good and at times very good and this has a positive effect on the children's learning.
60. Many children start in the nursery with well below average skills in speaking and listening, mathematics, physical development and personal independence. This is confirmed by initial teacher assessments. By the time the children are ready to start Year 1, children achieve well and many have attained the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development. There is particularly good teaching in the area of personal and social development. In the area of communication, language and literacy the children are well taught and they make gains in their learning, but the majority still do not reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Mathematical development is slightly better with a number of children reaching the early learning goals, although there is still a significant number who do not reach this level and overall attainment is below average. In mathematics, good teaching develops early number skills in and an understanding of shape. Teaching in the area of knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative activities is good and as a result the children achieve well with a significant minority reaching the early learning goals.
61. After a short period of attending part-time, all children attend the nursery full-time. There is provision for 26 children in the nursery. The majority of children in the reception class have attended the school nursery.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Most of the children enter the nursery with poorly developed skills in their personal and social development. They find it difficult to share and do not understand the process of taking turns. The staff work very hard to develop these skills, for example by providing 'turn taking' games. Children are encouraged to play together in the hospital play area. By the time they enter the reception class, the skilful teaching has led to children waiting for their turn and the children are learning to share.
63. Most of the children are enthusiastic about their learning. The children in the nursery class who were in their first week of full-time attendance at the time of the inspection had settled in well. In the dining hall they behaved very well. The children in reception relate well to each other in all aspects of the curriculum.
64. The adults work very well together. They provide very good role models for the children and make all the children feel special, which develops their confidence and self esteem. Children's personal development and independence skills are developed well by the adults who give them choices of activities. Classrooms are bright and stimulating and this encourages pupils to want to learn.

Communication, language and literacy

65. When they enter the nursery, many children have well below average communication and language skills. They often find it difficult to communicate with each other and with adults. The adults use conversation, dialogue and discussion to good effect to develop children's language skills. Children are regularly asked what they are doing and they are encouraged to

talk to each other when in the role-play areas such as the home corner or hospital. Teachers and nursery nurses work hard to develop language skills in the more formal sessions by regularly asking children to explain what they are doing.

66. All the children handle books well. In the nursery, books are chosen when children arrive at school. A very successful reading morning including parents is held each week. This encourages children to handle books carefully and helps them to understand that pictures and words convey meaning. By the end of the reception year nearly all the children know that words convey meaning. The higher attaining children identify letter sounds and read simple sentences.
67. In writing, the younger children become more confident in using pencils when they scribble. Skills are developed when children start to trace over letters and words. By the time they leave reception, most children write their own first name. The higher attaining children are using both lower case and capital letters.
68. The children enjoy nursery rhymes and most join in, for example, in reception when the teacher used Jack and Jill to develop the children's understanding of rhyme. The higher attaining children spotted words they already knew including 'a' and 'the'.

Mathematical development

69. The children are given many opportunities to develop their mathematical skills. In the nursery they sort items by colour and they play number games. Water is used to develop children's knowledge of capacity. The nursery teacher develops mathematical vocabulary and understanding well by asking if containers are full or empty. In reception the children start to use numbers, most count up to 10 and the highest attainers carry out simple addition and subtraction. The children have particularly good knowledge of shape. This is well developed by adults who give the children exciting and enjoyable experiences. The children really enjoy taking part in the 'feely bag' guess the shape sessions.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Many children enter the nursery with a below average understanding of the world around them. The adults in both the nursery and reception classes work hard to help the children understand more about themselves and the world about them. The children in the nursery have a small garden area and planting seeds helps them to understand that some things grow. Work on the seaside shows children that not all places are the same. In reception, the children talk about and draw their holidays. They effectively develop their computer skills. By the end of reception, many children use the mouse and in a mathematics session two children used the mouse and drag facility to build an on-screen tower using squares and a triangle shape.
71. Children are given many opportunities to develop their construction skills. They use kits to produce good recognisable models such as cars. Work with plastic gears helps to develop children's understanding of movement in the reception class.
72. Tools are handled carefully in both the nursery and reception classes, for example, when using scissors to cut out paper.

Physical development

73. The children's physical skills are below the expected level when they enter the nursery. Many have poor co-ordination and find climbing difficult. In the nursery the children are given opportunities to climb and use tricycles and other large play equipment in their enclosed play

area. The reception children have access to this area but it is limited to break times each morning. There are no facilities that allow the reception children to choose outdoor activities as part of independent choice sessions and as a result there is a lack of opportunity for them to develop their climbing and play skills. The hall is used to develop more formal physical skills.

Creative development

74. The children achieve well in most aspects of this area of learning. The teaching of skills such as how to use a paintbrush is good. In the nursery, the children mix paints and by the time they leave reception they paint recognisable paintings. They work well in clay, producing good quality thumb pots and clay faces. In the lesson on 'clay face' models there was a good link with knowledge and understanding of the world, when children talked about their facial features. Little music was seen during the inspection period but very good use was made of the 'Hello Song' in a nursery registration session.
75. While facilities are provided for children to take part in imaginative role-play, this is not always used effectively in the reception class to develop learning. The children are, for example, occasionally left to their own devices when greater intervention from adults would extend opportunities to develop language and imaginative play.

ENGLISH

76. Although most pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, attainment in English, at the end of both key stages, remains below the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. There is some evidence from the end of key stage National Curriculum tests that the girls attain higher standards than the boys. The school is aware of the boys' underachievement and is taking steps to rectify this.
77. Most of the weaknesses in the English standards stem from the pupils' poor speaking and listening skills. Many do not develop appropriate listening skills and these are not always encouraged through a good code of classroom behaviour. The Literacy Strategy has been successfully implemented in the school, but opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills during the literacy hour and throughout the day have not been sufficiently established. Pupils, in both key stages, are not provided with sufficient opportunities to participate in role play and dramatic activities to express and share their ideas and experiences frequently and at length, or to critically appraise the contributions of others. This is impacting on standards and slows down pupils' learning.
78. Many of the younger pupils have a very limited vocabulary, often using very limited sentences to answer questions. By the end of Key Stage 1, their vocabulary has extended and some progress has been made in sentence construction. However, many do not pay sufficient attention to their teachers or each other and have difficulty in verbalising their ideas. By the age of 11, pupils have become more articulate but many have not developed the breadth of vocabulary or the depth of concentration to enable them to join in discussions confidently and to express their opinions clearly.
79. The weakness in pupils' speaking skills and the limited vocabulary of many pupils seriously affects the standards in written work which are below the national average in both key stages. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to use full stops and capital letters appropriately and are able to write and spell basic words correctly, but their extended writing and use of imaginative language is very limited. The higher attaining pupils are able to sequence and reproduce stories they have heard, such as, Little Red Riding Hood, but are less competent

and practised in creating interesting ideas of their own. Insufficient attention is being paid to the teaching of handwriting. The teachers do not always set a good example in their own writing or demonstrate how letters could be formed. A significant number of pupils do not hold their pencils correctly and there is no clear policy on when they are expected to join their letters. These factors are hampering progress and affecting standards.

80. By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils' spelling and punctuation is satisfactory but, in their creative writing, their choice of vocabulary is frequently unadventurous and the work is lacking in imaginative ideas. They write in different styles for different purposes, for example letters, play scripts and poetry. They write clear instructions on what to do in case of a fire and are able to present the opposing views regarding fox hunting and the moral arguments against child labour in foreign countries. However, the overall level of presentation is below average. Most pupils write legibly by the end of the key stage, but some are still using printed letters, or adopting a mixture of joined and printed script. Only a minority are writing neatly in ink.
81. The standards of reading at the end of both key stages fall below the national average. The pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught to read from a broad range of attractive books, which are suitably graded. They take their books home regularly and read to their parents. This is having a beneficial effect on their progress. The school is to be congratulated on the implementation of the excellent practice of parents and grandparents sharing a reading session with their children, in the classrooms, once a week. This is well attended and is a rewarding experience for both adults and pupils. The pupils are systematically being taught their letter sounds as part of the literacy strategy, but the benefits of this are being undermined by teacher errors in pronouncing the sounds and creating confusion by mixing sounds and letter names at too early a stage.
82. The pupils in Key Stage 2 recognise many words on sight and read most texts presented to them with fluency and expression. Their strategies for deciphering unknown words, however, are not sufficiently secure. Most do not readily apply their knowledge of phonics, or check for contextual clues. A majority enjoy reading and willingly take their books home each day. A significant number display their interest in reading by becoming members of the Public Library and having collections of books at home. Most pupils demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the plot of the book they are reading but find discussions about the characters, the quality of the text and comparisons with other books and authors difficult. They have learned how to locate books and information in the school library but require more practice in drawing on the texts in order to extract details and facts, thus enhancing their ability to learn independently.
83. The quality of teaching is, overall, satisfactory, but it ranged during the inspection from unsatisfactory to good and very good. The quality of teaching impacts directly on the behaviour and attitudes of the pupils and the progress they make. The good and very good lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. Here the teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and a good understanding of how pupils learn. Where the teacher is stimulating and the lessons move at a good pace the pupils pay attention and listen well, behaviour is good and sound learning takes place. In lessons where the level of expectation is low and classroom management is unsatisfactory, primarily in Year 2 and Year 5, pupils do not pay attention to the teacher and this is detrimental to their progress. Shortcomings in the teaching of speaking and listening skills occur when the teachers fail to challenge the pupils by accepting one word answers and not extending their thinking and general vocabulary. Most teachers are not placing enough emphasis on neat writing and good presentation and this low level of expectation means pupils are not taking sufficient pride in their finished product. Teachers do not have sufficient expectations of pupils in terms of their handwriting.
84. There are some examples of very good practice. The marking, especially in some classes in Key Stage 2 is very good, with the teachers not only praising the pupils but also providing

useful suggestions for improvement and setting targets for the future. This good practice is not, however, sufficiently disseminated throughout the school because the monitoring of the teaching is not focusing sharply enough on improving standards.

85. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress is good. The subject is well resourced with a good range of attractive books, but the display and reading areas in the classrooms lack appeal and effective organisation. There are, for example, no tape recording facilities for the pupils to use in order to stimulate and develop their speaking and listening skills.

MATHEMATICS

86. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are broadly in line with the national average. Given the low level of attainment when pupils enter the school, many pupils make good progress in their learning of mathematics as they move through the school. Progress continues to be good in Key Stage 2 and pupils leave the school with standards broadly in line with national average. The girls achieve better than the boys, a fact recognised and being considered by the school. Pupils do better in some areas of the curriculum than others and achieve better standards, for example, in numeracy than they do in data handling. The good quality of teaching and the positive attitudes shown by most pupils make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning. The pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive appropriate support and make good progress.
87. By the end of Key Stage 1, the pupils use mathematical language and symbols correctly, for example when using addition and subtraction signs. The majority of pupils add and subtract numbers up to and beyond 10. In mental mathematics sessions, the higher attaining pupils answer questions such as 'What is 100-100?' Most pupils understand place value up to 100, although a small minority are not yet at this stage. Average and higher attaining pupils identify odd and even numbers. The higher attaining pupils carry out simple multiplication problems. In the area of shape and space, almost all pupils identify regular two-dimensional shapes identifying characteristics such as number of sides. The higher attaining pupils show good understanding of reflective symmetry. The lower attaining pupils do not understand this concept fully. The pupils are starting to plot using simple co-ordinates and they use information from tables to answer questions, for example, on children who can/cannot ride bicycles.
88. In Key Stage 2, pupils successfully build on the knowledge acquired in Key Stage 1 and achieve to the best of their ability. They develop their mental mathematics skills well. In Year 6, pupils have recently started to compete 'against the clock' and this is a good incentive to sharpen their skills. In number work, the higher attaining pupils work well with five and six figure numbers. The lower attainers work with four and five figure numbers. Most pupils show good understanding of fractions and decimals. The pupils explain how they check their work. In a lesson on long division a Year 6 pupil explained how to check her calculation by using an inverse operation. In the area of shape, space and measures, pupils of all attainment levels show good understanding of area. The higher attaining pupils use multiplication to work out the area of both regular and irregular shapes. In work on data handling, the highest attaining pupils are starting to use terms like mean, median, mode and range. However, work in this area is not as well developed as work in other areas and the opportunities to reinforce learning are limited at present. More frequent use of information technology would offer opportunities to improve standards in this aspect of their work.
89. The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy has been satisfactorily introduced and this is having a positive effect especially in the area of mental mathematics. The school has analysed the results of national and other tests

and used a mathematics consultant to help them identify areas for improvement. The use of homework is satisfactory and helps to promote mathematical learning.

90. There is no systematic planning of the use of mathematics across the whole curriculum to give the pupils the opportunity to apply their mathematics skills in a wide variety of situations. There are occasions when mathematics is used in other subjects, for example, in science and design and technology when pupils use their measuring skills. In geography, the pupils use graphs and tables in work on climate and when they are comparing other countries with England. The use of information technology in mathematics is not yet fully developed to support pupils in their numeracy development.
91. The quality of teaching is good overall enabling pupils to make good progress. In a small number of lessons, teaching is very good but there are occasional lessons where aspects of teaching need developing. These include the management of pupils where class control is not always tight enough in the introductory parts of lessons resulting in slower progress for pupils. In addition, the use of marking to develop learning is unsatisfactory. There are few examples of teachers using comments such as, 'Can you think of another way of doing this?' or 'What would happen if?' to extend pupils' learning. However, the good quality of teaching has a very positive effect on developing pupils' mathematical skills and knowledge. All lessons are well planned. The sharing of lesson objectives with the pupils ensures they understand what they are going to learn and how well they are achieving. Children's understanding is developed well by the use of good questioning. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils are asked to explain their answers to a long division problem. Teachers ask pupils if there alternative ways of working things out, which develops learning and increases awareness of using different strategies. In most classes the teachers have good control and relate well to the pupils. There is good use of day-to-day assessment and teachers use this information well to plan pupils' future learning.
92. Most pupils respond well to the good quality of teaching but a small minority of pupils in Year 2 and Year 5 need to be reminded about their behaviour several times in lessons. In the other year groups the pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to each other. They discuss their work together, for example in Year 6 there is good mutual support when discussing problems at the start of the introductory session. The generally good attitudes and behaviour have a positive impact on learning.
93. There is good management of the subject. The co-ordinator and key teacher are committed to raising standards and they are aware of the strengths and weakness in the subject. There has been some monitoring of teaching but this is not yet being used fully to identify areas for development in individual lessons. The procedures for assessing attainment are good and are used well to develop learning in classes and groups.

SCIENCE

94. The inspection findings indicate that pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with national expectations. There is an improving trend within Key Stage 2 and a growing number of pupils are achieving above average standards by the time they leave school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress overall but progress in their understanding of the materials and life processes aspects of the curriculum is stronger than that in their learning of physical processes. However, considering the low level of attainment when pupils first enter the school, progress in Key Stage 2 is good overall.
95. Throughout both key stages pupils are gaining sound understanding and familiarity with the process of scientific investigation. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop awareness of the investigation element of the curriculum through opportunities provided by teachers for practical

activities and occasional experiments, for example, observing how a bean germinates over time. At Key Stage 2, pupils undertake increasingly challenging investigations and by the end of the key stage are able to explain what will happen to an investigation if one of the variables within a test is changed. Younger pupils in the key stage test the strength of different papers while older pupils investigate the properties of materials for conduction and insulation of heat. Sufficient attention is paid by teachers to encouraging pupils to predict the outcome of their work and make conclusions. However, although pupils understand what is meant by a fair test, they lack confidence in varying the factors involved in undertaking such investigations. The degree of teacher direction, which is occasionally too much, reduces pupils' experience of undertaking and conducting their own investigations.

96. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things. They label the main parts of the body and learn about the importance of healthy eating and taking regular exercise. They sort living things into groups by criteria such as the number of legs and recognise that living things reproduce. Pupils identify most foods and sort them into the basic groups. The oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 demonstrate a good knowledge of the human body particularly the skeleton and the circulation system. They classify living things recognising similarities and differences such as flowering and non-flowering plants. Pupils accurately describe the pollination and fertilisation of plants. They use keys based on external features to identify and group items systematically.
97. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils acquire a broad knowledge of materials and their uses. They identify the materials used in household objects such as televisions and list clearly the similarities and differences between materials such as sponge and plasticine. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are aware of the properties of a range of materials and can explain why they are suitable for specific uses. They classify materials by different criteria and know that some materials change their state. Pupils give examples of reversible and irreversible changes and they know some of the methods used to separate mixtures. Pupils become increasingly confident and correct in their use of scientific language and achieve well.
98. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical processes is weaker than in other aspects of the curriculum. Pupils know how to make circuits to light bulbs but work on light and sound is at a low level. In Key Stage 2, older pupils demonstrate a sound understanding of physical processes. From their experiments, pupils know how distance from a light source affects shadows. They use their observations of phenomena to make generalisations such as magnetic attraction. Pupils know how to create circuits and test materials for conductivity. However, their knowledge of the 'Earth in Space' is weak, particularly in relation to the effect of gravity.
99. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils to their science learning are satisfactory overall. The majority demonstrate a genuine interest in science and are keen to contribute to lessons. While attitudes to learning are good in most year groups, on occasion they are unsatisfactory in both key stages. The opportunity for learning is hampered by the lack of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for some of their own learning. Some pupils fail to listen to the teacher or each other, lack concentration and do not persevere with the task in hand. Presentation standards are at best satisfactory.
100. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. Planning is clear and some teachers often use intriguing approaches to enhance the quality of lessons. Occasionally teaching has to be directed towards the management of pupils and this slows down the rate of pupils' learning. When teaching is good, staff consider the pace and balance of lessons, share the learning objective with pupils and use questions skilfully to enable pupils to explain the course of their thinking. Teachers anticipate distractions and employ strategies that focus pupils' attention on what they are to learn. Teaching is less successful when lessons are over complex and do not have clear learning objectives. Opportunities to use information technology to support science

teaching are not, as yet, sufficiently developed. There is a lack of consistency in the approach to highlighting the importance of clear presentation and explanation of their science work. Pupils are not given a standard format to follow in recording their work or at the more basic level of dating and adding a title to their work. There is a lack of emphasis on the scientific aspects of presentation, for example, in labelling diagrams, graphs and tables. This limits pupils' ability to read and interpret data. Marking varies in quality and helpfulness. In Key Stage 1, there is an over reliance on worksheets and this restricts pupils' opportunities to write and explain their science work for themselves.

101. The co-ordinator has only recently taken responsibility for the subject but as a member of the senior management team has already been involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning. The structure of the subject is secure because of the quality of the scheme of work and the monitoring of planning. There is regular assessment of pupils' work and the detailed analysis of end of key stage National Curriculum tests performance has been undertaken by the co-ordinator. This has provided accurate information, which is being used to target weaknesses in the subject. Resources are readily accessible and clearly organised by individual science themes. They are of good quality and are centrally stored enabling ease of use and access.

ART AND DESIGN

102. By the end of both key stages, standards in art are in line with national expectations. Although the amount of time has been reduced for the teaching of the subject owing to the increased emphasis the school has given to improving standards in literacy and numeracy, standards in the subject remain at the same level as noted in the school's first inspection. The school has identified that it needs to improve the status of the subject throughout the school. Plans are in place to review the quality of educational provision and devise stronger links with other subjects. If implemented, these ideas have the potential to raise standards to a higher level.
103. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of different artistic techniques as they move through the school. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are able to mix paints to create others and apply paint in a fair and even manner. They draw quite well and from completing drawings of leaves from close observation were able to complete a similar drawing yet from memory. Pupils are taught to observe carefully and in sketches of each other's faces, were able to draw the features of a friend with a fair degree of accuracy. Pupils use recyclable materials to make simple three-dimensional models, of reasonable quality. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but it does not place sufficient emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of how other artists and famous craftspeople construct their work, or on how information technology can be used to create simple art work. Consequently, pupils' attainment in this aspect of their learning is relatively weak.
104. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall, and pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of the different techniques involved in drawing. Pupils are encouraged to use different media in their art work, such as charcoal, and they are also encouraged to use a range of different pencils and explore the effects created with different leads. However, while this practice was notable in Year 5 work, it was less evident in other parts of the key stage. Teachers in Key Stage 2 place more emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of how famous artists' work can be used as a basis for creating works of art of their own and pupils make more rapid progress in Key Stage 2. As they move through the key stage, pupils have good opportunities to study and evaluate the techniques and art work of famous artists including Marc Chagall, Van Gogh, David Hockney and Clarice Cliff. Pupils are able to incorporate the artists' techniques into their own work and, by Year 6, many pupils in Key Stage 2 have a very good appreciation of the works of renowned artists and craftspeople. Teaching in this aspect of the subject is good. Teachers encourage pupils to use sketchbooks

to undertake preparatory work but they could be used more extensively to develop their initiative. There is no evidence that pupils experience printing.

105. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject which they use effectively in planning pupils' art development. Learning support assistants are used effectively to work with small groups of pupils and they guide their learning well. However, the links with other subjects are not strong enough and opportunities are missed to develop stronger links with other subjects, notably design and technology, and mathematics. Information technology could be used to further strengthen teaching. Although there are some opportunities for pupils to visit places of artistic interest such as museums, opportunities for this, or to gain first hand experience of an artist working in the school, are few. Teachers miss some opportunities to develop pupils' initiative and personal development through their art work and there is scope for pupils to develop their own lines of enquiry over a sustained period of time. The art curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, but this could be improved by ensuring that teachers' planning more clearly identifies ways in which art could promote these aspects of pupils' development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. Attainment in design and technology is below the national expectation at the end of both key stages. Standards were judged to be satisfactory in the previous inspection. This variation is due to the fact that much time and effort has been taken up in the school to implement the numeracy and literacy strategies so that design and technology has not been given a high enough priority or sufficient status. As a result, the progress the pupils make, including those with special educational needs, is unsatisfactory.
107. The pupils in Key Stage 1 make models using construction kits, such as 'Mobilo' and 'Lego'. They are able to assemble models with movable parts and gears. They build houses from cartons and cut and stick cardboard to form pitched roofs, which they then paint and decorate. Overall, however, the quality of their design and technology work is poor and pupils are not making sufficient progress in suggesting ways to develop their work or in employing simple finishes to improve the overall quality of their efforts. In Key Stage 2, the pupils use their mathematical knowledge to measure and construct cubes and cuboids. The pupils use self-hardening clay to form coiled pots. They also construct a variety of musical instruments, using a range of waste materials, which they recycle to make shakers and percussion instruments. The range of methods adopted to assemble and join these devices is, however, simple and the designs are very basic. The main weaknesses in the subject, are due to the lack of opportunities provided for the pupils to plan and design their work before construction, to test and refine their ideas and pay attention to the quality and finish of the final product.
108. Owing to the organisation of the timetable, and the fact that the school year is only beginning, there were few opportunities during the inspection to observe the teaching of design and technology. However, examination of teachers' plans and discussions with pupils indicate that the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Shortcomings lie in the depth of teachers' subject knowledge. There are missed opportunities to extend the teaching of design and technology with other subjects such as information technology and science. Until recently the scheme of work for the subject was insufficiently detailed to enable teachers to plan work that successfully developed pupils' design and technology skills. In the one lesson seen, however, the teaching was satisfactory and most pupils showed interest in the subject, but a significant minority were inattentive and not listening.
109. There is now a good policy and scheme of work for design and technology which is to be fully implemented and provides rich potential for improvements to be made in the quality of

teaching and in the standards pupils attain. Resources for the subject are satisfactory with a good range of quality tools which are well stored and easily accessed by the pupils.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Standards of attainment at the end of both key stages are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. All the pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. The school has maintained standards in the subject since its first inspection.
111. In Key Stage 1, the younger pupils develop their mapping skills when they use simple maps and plans of the school. In Year 2, they start to identify features on maps, for example, factories and ponds. However, their ability to construct simple maps and use appropriate geographical vocabulary is limited. They know there is a difference between town and country. In work on the environment, pupils discuss things they like in the local area. However, their perception of how the environment needs to be protected and is at risk from different forms of pollution is at a low level, although they are able to make comments about the problems of traffic. In Key Stage 2, the pupils build on the work undertaken in Key Stage 1. In work on water they successfully extend their knowledge of how rivers are formed. They increase their understanding of environmental issues by considering river pollution and the problems it causes. When they study Kenya, the pupils are given sufficient opportunities to learn about life in other parts of the world and how other peoples' lives differ from their own. However, their general knowledge of places in other parts of the world is a weaker aspect of their attainment. By the end of the key stage, the pupils are able to discuss topical issues such as what is happening to the tropical rainforests and the impact that this has on the countries in question.
112. The quality of teaching in both key stages is satisfactory overall. In lessons, pupils respond well and work with enjoyment. Most of the pupils have positive attitudes to their work but a number of younger pupils call out when asked not to by the teacher. Teachers explain to the pupils what they are going to learn in the lessons and this allows them to monitor how well pupils are doing. Instructions are usually clear and this allows pupils to work effectively in their group work, as seen, for example when pupils were working on different types of buildings in exploring climate in Year 6. Occasionally, instructions to pupils are not clear, and pupils are not sure what they have to do. As a result, time is lost and the rate of learning slows. All teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject.
113. There is satisfactory management of the curriculum and of the subject in general. The subject is enhanced by use of the local areas and by a residential session. Geography is linked satisfactorily to other areas of the curriculum but this is not fully planned to take advantage of all opportunities the subject affords to develop pupils' numeracy skills. However, some work was noted on climates where the pupils used and interpreted temperature graphs. Pupils develop their literacy skills when they read and write about their own and other areas. They also develop scanning and skimming skills when finding information about Kenya. Geography makes a good contribution to the pupils' moral, social and cultural development by allowing pupils good scope to discuss and explore moral issues such as the impact deforestation is having on the environment. The use of information technology is not, at present, sufficiently developed in the subject.

HISTORY

114. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in history that are in line with national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an

additional language, make satisfactory progress. These judgements reflect the findings of the previous inspection of the school.

115. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing a satisfactory understanding of time. They are able to look at photographs of themselves as babies and compare them with how they have changed and how they appear now. They use illustrations of kitchens in the 1950's to compare and contrast how life in the home has changed over time. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of some of the important events of the past. These include, for example 'The Great Fire of London'. At present, pupils' understanding of how to discover and ask questions about the past using a range of different sources is a weaker aspect of their attainment.
116. In Key Stage 2, pupils sufficiently develop their awareness that history is divided into different periods. They have satisfactory knowledge of these. They understand, for example, that the Romans had several gods, and they are able to explain how the Roman Empire was formed. In work on the Tudors they explain what life was like for people who lived then and give some detail about the various Tudor monarchs. Evidence from pupils' work shows that they are given good opportunities to explore what life was like in Britain during and from the time of the Second World War. Balancing these strong features of the pupils' general level of attainment is their limited ability to explore events and facts from the past using a range of different historical sources such as maps, census data or compact disc software.
117. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. In the lesson observed the quality of teaching was very good. The focus of this lesson was to develop pupils' understanding of certain Ancient Greek words, and was very well linked to developing literacy skills. The teacher explained clearly what the pupils were going to learn and this allowed them to know how well they were learning. Class control was excellent and the pupils responded very well to this. The very good quality of teaching and the very positive attitudes contributed to the very good achievement in the lesson. Across both key stages, teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject and effectively plan to develop pupils' literacy skills through the subject. However, there is still further scope for pupils to use information technology to support both their literacy development and to explore, interpret and ask questions about the past. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
118. There is satisfactory management of the subject. Visits to period houses, for example, Aston Hall, have a good impact on developing pupils' historical knowledge and understanding and effectively complement pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

119. The standard of attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the national expectations. There has been considerable improvement in this subject area since the last inspection. The quality of subject management now ensures that pupils experience the breadth of the curriculum although the number of machines restricts the time pupils spend individually at the computer. The school has identified the area as a priority and is implementing considerable improvements in both hardware and accommodation to house the equipment. These indicate that the school is now well placed to make significant advances over the next year.
120. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use information technology to develop their ideas through text and pictures. For example, they use basic word processing skills to tell the story of the Great Fire of London and to add alliteration to their own stories. Pupils show that they can find things out using information technology when they research dictionary definitions on CD-ROM.

Older pupils know that information they collect, for example, about hair and eye colour can be presented in charts, graphs and lists. They know that there are a variety of information technology tools and make pictures using drawing and stamp tools. However, some pupils still need help in storing, saving or retrieving information and have slow keyboard skills. Most pupils successfully program a floor turtle to go forwards and backwards showing the ability to evaluate and modify their commands.

121. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate skills and understanding across all areas of the curriculum. The oldest pupils use slideshow and multi-media facilities to design their own adventure game. They present information in a variety of forms and make appropriate selection of font styles and sizes in undertaking word-processing work. Some have imported and edited text from outside sources. Pupils convey their ideas in a variety of ways. For instance, they present poems in appropriate fonts and layouts and use graphics tools to design gift wrapping patterns. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 show a good understanding of search techniques and explain strategies they use to find out about Anne Frank from an encyclopaedia CD ROM for example. They have also used the Internet to search for information about issues such as noise pollution. Pupils have contributed to a class database and have presented their own investigations as graphs. They explore various information technology tools and some have successfully written screen turtle programs including repeating patterns and procedures. Although all pupils have experienced the breadth of the curriculum, the high ratio of pupils to computers restricts the progress they make.
122. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their information technology skills and show their understanding by completing an end of year skills assessment themselves. Although there is some taught information technology in every class, there are limited opportunities in some classes for pupils to reinforce their learning or to use the equipment in other subjects. Consequently, pupils' learning in some classes is, at times, uneven.
123. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall. At present, the taught sessions require the class teacher to demonstrate to the whole class using one computer. Pupils' listening skills are often weak and they are easily distracted in this situation. When working directly at the computer, pupils are more focused.
124. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. Improvements have been made to raising teachers' knowledge and confidence in planning pupils' information technology learning since the school's last inspection. On occasion, the quality of teaching particularly in the control aspect of technology is good. In lessons seen, teachers using the floor turtle set high expectations to which pupils responded well. In some classes, the quantity of time allowed for pupils to develop their individual skills is limited and teachers miss opportunities to use information technology to support their teaching of literacy, numeracy or science. The use of information technology to improve pupils' understanding of graphs and charts for science is at an undemanding level. Little use is made of information technology for drafting and redrafting of written work in literacy or, in the use of spreadsheets to support pupils' numeracy skills.
125. There has been some improvement in the quantity and quality of resources but the current number of computers still restricts pupils' access. The school intends to have a complete computer suite within a year. This will improve provision greatly. The management and organisation of the subject have improved considerably and there is regular assessment of pupils' work and monitoring of all planning. The co-ordinator has provided a secure structure for the subject.

MUSIC

126. Attainment in music at the end of both key stages is below national expectations in some aspects of the curriculum. During the last three academic years, the school benefited from the expertise of two music specialists who were able to ensure that pupils made satisfactory progress in developing their musical knowledge and understanding, particularly in the performing aspects of the curriculum. This provision can not be maintained and because teachers have had little involvement in music, they have limited confidence in teaching the subject, and their subject knowledge is insecure. The co-ordinator is committed to improving teachers' confidence and achieving high standards, through in-service training and a new scheme of work, so that the subject becomes more teacher led and places less reliance on specialists. The introduction of a commercial scheme of work will help teachers to plan lessons which build on pupils' previous learning and will give good support to teachers.
127. Key Stage 1 pupils achieve satisfactory standards when singing songs, hymns and prayers, and use percussion instruments to make appropriate sounds to illustrate actions and moods in the stories they hear. They follow instructions and express their feelings about music through appropriate movement. These activities, however, are sometimes over-directed by the teacher, and this restricts pupils' creativity.
128. Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate a satisfactory awareness of a range of different kinds of music, such as blues, jazz and country and western, and describe in simple terms their response to the music they are hearing. During the inspection, older pupils successfully interpreted a variety of classical pieces in terms of different types of weather. Pupils enjoy playing percussion instruments, and follow the teachers' signals to vary the volume or pace, but their level of expertise is considerably below what is expected for their age.
129. Teaching is unsatisfactory as it does not enable pupils to attain the appropriate standards or to make the progress of which they are capable. Although some satisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection, most teachers lack confidence and this results in a low level of expectation and a lack of challenge in lessons. At times lessons are too slow and the activities are too repetitive causing pupils to lose interest, and on occasion to become inattentive and restless.
130. Music has been a strong feature of the school in the past, with musicians running workshops, and pupils participating in quality performances, such as the Ex Cathedra and Sainsbury's Choir of the Year. Visits have been made to the Birmingham Symphony Hall to hear the symphony orchestra. There are plans to work with Schidloff Quartet this term and participate in a concert at the Conservatoire.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. By the end of both key stages, pupils attain standards in line with national expectations. Although pupils were not observed across the whole physical education curriculum, evidence from observations of pupils' work and from discussions about their success in extra-curricular activities, strongly suggests that progress of pupils of all abilities is satisfactory. This is not the same judgement as that made in the school's first inspection when standards were found to be higher than national expectations and pupils' progress was good. Since the last inspection, the school has increased its focus on the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Consequently, standards have slipped in some aspects of physical education and pupils do not cover all aspects in sufficient depth. Although all pupils have regular swimming lessons at some time of the academic year, when they do, this is their only physical education activity for the week in question. The time allocated for physical education is currently being reviewed in light of new curriculum materials given to schools.

132. In the physical education lesson observed during the inspection in Key Stage 1, pupils were able to undertake simple gymnastic activities to a satisfactory standard. They carry out simple forward rolls and end their movement in a simple balancing position. They use mats and equipment well although, owing to the freshness of the academic year when being observed, they need considerable help in holding and laying out the equipment. The teaching in this lesson was good. Clear instructions were given to pupils and the teacher demonstrated his high expectations in terms of the work he expected the pupils to complete, in how they worked together and in laying out and replacing the apparatus.
133. At Key Stage 2, some weak attitudes of some older pupils to their learning spoil their overall progress. In one Year 5 lesson observed, pupils did not co-operate fully and the teacher had to work hard to keep the pupils on the various tasks they were attempting. However, pupils demonstrate the skill of dancing and creating simple sequences of movement at different levels and follow each other's movement as if observing one another in a mirror. Teaching observed in the inspection was satisfactory. However, teaching and learning is marred by the lack of maturity of some pupils in how they undertake their work and in evaluating the work of others. Teaching could be strengthened by giving greater scope for pupils to critically evaluate the work of others and examine more closely the work of their classmates as a means of improving their own efforts. Discussions with the co-ordinator indicate that many pupils attain the expected levels in swimming by the time they leave the key stage. Pupils have healthy attitudes towards team games. They play with good grace appreciating the need to play with conviction yet equal fairness.
134. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 2. The school has had some considerable success in competing against other schools and this successfully enhances the status of the subject in the school and the pupils' social skills. Sports days are regularly organised and pupils are encouraged to write about their sporting endeavours thus aiding the development of their literacy skills. The co-ordinator has only recently taken up responsibility for the management of the subject. However, he has already been instrumental in providing a more up-to-date scheme of work to assist teachers in their planning of work and in re-organising and improving the level of resources in the hall. The curriculum is suitably planned and allows for pupils to experience the learning of skills in various sports such as uni-hoc and basketball. The co-ordinator's clear vision for the subject offers potential to raise the quality of pupils' learning further and improve aspects of the pupils' personal and social development.