

INSPECTION REPORT

SHIRELAND HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Smethwick, West Midlands

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103967

Headteacher: Mr C B Grove

Reporting inspector: David Penney
23039

Dates of inspection: 13th – 17th November 2000

Inspection number: 224900

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Edith Road Smethwick West Midlands
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr G McKenzie

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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Michael Romano 8989	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils pastorally? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed? (supporting)
Teresa Manzi 23056	Team inspector	English as an additional language Special educational needs English Art	How well is the school led and managed?
Peter Thrussell 31029	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Science Geography History Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Sharon Brown 1189	Team inspector	Foundation stage Design and technology Music	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well does the school care for its pupils academically?
Hanne Lambley 21640	Team inspector	Foundation stage (supporting)	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Shireland Hall Primary School is a community school with an attached nursery unit serving a socially deprived area of Sandwell in the West Midlands. It has 344 boys and girls on roll and is larger than average. Attainment on entry to the nursery is well below the standards expected nationally, with particular deprivation socially and linguistically. On entry to compulsory education, pupils' attainment is well below average, overall, particularly in the English language. More than 80 per cent of pupils are of Asian or black ethnic backgrounds and over two-thirds have English as an additional language, which is very high. In addition, three pupils are from travelling families who have now settled permanently. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is above average, although the percentage with statements is about average at 1.2 per cent. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is very high. The school population is a mobile one, with about a sixth of the pupils in each of Year 5 and 6 having moved in or out of the school during Key Stage 2.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, giving good value for money. Standards are rising by the end of Key Stage 2 and, in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, compare generally favourably with schools in similar contexts. Pupils make good progress throughout the school and achieve standards that are good in relation to their prior attainment as a result of good teaching. The leadership and management of the headteacher and deputy headteacher are good. The school's aims are reflected well in its work and there is a shared determination to improve standards and provision further and the capacity to succeed.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good in all key stages, with teachers' planning and use of support staff being particularly good.
- The curriculum offered is good, overall, and helps pupils to develop in personal as well as academic ways. It is especially good in the foundation stage. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and results in pupils having very good attitudes to school and developing very well as people. Social inclusion is a strong feature of the school.
- There is a very good, caring ethos with all staff acting as very good role models and committed to further improvement. Relationships are very strong throughout the school.
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance and good behaviour are very good.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good and give a firm steer to the work of the school.
- The plans the school has for further development are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are not high enough.
- Planned developments in information and communication technology have not taken place.
- Assessment procedures are not in place in all subjects and so teachers do not have enough information to ensure that all pupils make the progress they could and should.
- The role of the subject co-ordinator is not developed well enough.
- The governing body is not able to hold the school to account fully enough for the provision it makes and the standards it attains.
- The school's budget deficit is hindering planned developments.
- Levels of attendance are too low and there is too much unauthorised absence.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in March 1998, the school has made good progress. Many aspects of the key issues arising from that inspection have been addressed well. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are stronger. The school development plan is a good tool for improvement and the role of subject co-ordinators has been defined more clearly, although further developments are necessary. The procedures of the governing body are more systematic and now await further development to become suitably rigorous. Planned developments in information and communication technology have not been implemented due to circumstances outside the school's control. Pupils' standards have risen steadily and there have been many improvements in planning and provision throughout the school, especially in the foundation stage and for pupils with special educational needs. The quality of teaching has improved significantly.

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	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	E	D	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	E	E	C	
Science	E	E	E	D	

Although standards in the school were below the national average in English and well below in mathematics and science, in comparison with similar schools they are well above average in English, close to the average in mathematics and below average in science. Pupils enter the school at the age of three with levels of attainment that are well below those expected, particularly in language and personal and social skills. They make good progress, overall, throughout the school and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Inspection findings are that, by the age of five, children's standards are well below average, overall. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are attaining results that are broadly in line with those expected nationally in English, mathematics, art, design and technology, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education. However, attainment in science and information and communication technology is below the level expected nationally. Trends in school improvement match those to be found nationally; although the school failed to meet its target in 2000 for mathematics, it exceeded its English target. Targets for 2001 have been set at a realistically challenging level.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are, generally, enthusiastic learners.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good in and around the school. A small number of pupils are inattentive in some classes and chatter when the teacher is instructing the class.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school; the high level of mutual respect between adults and pupils is a strength of the school. Pupils develop well as responsible citizens.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory and below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

More than 95 per cent of lessons are taught at least satisfactorily. Teaching is good in just over 41 per cent of lessons and a further 21 per cent of lessons are taught very well. In just over one per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching is excellent. Less than five per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory. The teaching of English, including literacy, and of mathematics, including numeracy, is good, overall, in all key stages. The needs of all pupils are met well, overall, because teachers plan their work very well and have a clear idea of what is to be learned by each pupil. Relationships are very good and support staff and time are used very well, generally. In some classes and lessons, pupils' behaviour is not managed well enough and the pace of the lesson is inadequate to sustain pupils' attention. Pupils' learning is not good enough in information and control technology because of resource deficiencies and in the area of science to do with enquiry because of the lack of opportunities for independent experimentation. Learning in all other subjects is satisfactory, overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets the needs of the pupils well. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good. Provision for information and communication technology has not developed as swiftly as planned. The range of extra-curricular provision is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Additional support is carefully targeted and, as a result, pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Well-organised and effective. These pupils make very good progress, overall, in learning English, which enables them to benefit from all aspects of the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good, overall. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is sound. For moral and social development, it is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The pastoral care of pupils is very good. There are sound assessment procedures that are used effectively to identify strengths and weaknesses in provision but they do not inform teachers' planning well enough.

Parents are generally pleased with the education and care their children receive from the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. There is a good partnership that is providing a firm direction to the school's work and a shared commitment to continuing to raise standards while maintaining the very good ethos and caring atmosphere.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory, overall. Governors support the school well and are beginning to develop a sound sense of their roles and responsibilities. They do not yet check the school's progress fully enough.
The school's evaluation of its performance	A satisfactory start has been made to evaluating many aspects of the school's performance. Subject co-ordinators are insufficiently involved in the process.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the financial, physical and human resources available to the school. The school pays satisfactory attention to the principles of best value. Aspects of resources and accommodation are unsatisfactory, particularly for information and communication technology and art. There are good numbers of experienced teachers and support staff.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems. • Teaching is good. • The school has high expectations of their children. • Behaviour is good. • Their children like school. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with the positive comments expressed above, but judges that the amount of homework is sufficient for pupils of this age and that the range and amount of extra-curricular activities are good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter school at the age of three with levels of attainment that are, overall, well below the national average, with particular and significant weaknesses in language, personal and social development. This is confirmed by both the school's early assessment information and inspection findings.
2. The youngest children make very good progress with their personal, social and emotional development. On entry to the nursery, they have very poor social skills, but, by the time they leave the reception classes, the majority of children have achieved the expected standards for this area of development. They make considerable progress in developing their communication language and literacy skills. In spite of this, by the age of five, very few children reach the expected standards. The majority have a limited vocabulary and limited understanding of English. Although very few children achieve the expected levels in mathematics by the age of five, they make good progress in their mathematical development. Many children have limited mathematical language when describing a process. A significant proportion count to ten, but fewer recognise numbers and match one to one. A few higher attainers have above average skills by the time they leave the reception classes.
3. Children enter the nursery with a very limited knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The good range of experiences provided throughout the foundation stage extends their knowledge and understanding and leads to good gains in learning. By the age of five, their basic skills in the use of the computer are limited. Although they make good progress in physical development in relation to their prior attainment, by the age of five standards are well below the expected level for children of this age, with many still lacking co-ordination and control and lacking awareness of space. Skills in the creative area of development remain well below average by the time they are five. Skills in the use of percussion instruments, singing and role-play are not well developed. Many children do not listen carefully and observational skills are limited.
4. National Curriculum test results for 2000 at the end of Key Stage 1 show that the pupils' attainment was well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared to similar schools, results in reading and writing were average and mathematics was well above average. The National Curriculum test results for 2000 for Key Stage 2 show that attainment in English was below the national average and, in mathematics and science, was well below average. When compared to similar schools, standards in English were well above average. They were average in mathematics and well below average in science.
5. Although these standards are not high enough at either key stage and results do fluctuate, trends over time indicate a steady improvement. The school's test results for 2000 show significant improvement in reading, a steady improvement in writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and good improvement in English, with steady improvement in mathematics and science at Key Stage 2. By the end of Key Stage 2, the school's trend of improvement is broadly in line with the national trend.
6. There are few significant differences in the performance of boys and girls at Key Stage 1, although, at the higher level 3, girls' writing is better than that of boys. At the end of Key Stage 2, girls outperform boys significantly in English, but the reverse is true in mathematics, with boys significantly outperforming girls. Boys perform marginally better than girls in science. However, there is no pattern to the comparative performance of boys and girls over time and no significant difference in gender performance was observed in any subject during the inspection.
7. The school did not achieve its target for the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 in mathematics but exceeded it in English. Nevertheless, evidence from inspection indicates that the school is not complacent about standards and is working hard to improve them against a background of socio-economic and educational disadvantage. In difficult circumstances, the pupils in the

school learn effectively and often make good progress. The pupils' limited language skills have a major, adverse effect on their learning in other areas of the curriculum.

8. Inspection findings are that attainment is currently below average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1, with speaking and listening remaining well below average. In English and mathematics, standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 2, but are below average in science, particularly in the investigative aspect of the subject. These improvements have been effected as a result of improved teaching, planning and assessment procedures; these are fully detailed in other sections of this report. In religious education, standards are in line with those expected of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of both key stages. In art and design, design and technology, history, geography and physical education, standards are close to those expected nationally at the end of both key stages. They are below expected levels in music at Key Stage 1 but are in line with them at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in information and communication technology are below the nationally expected levels at the end of both key stages.
9. By the time they are seven, pupils' speaking skills are well below average. Their limited command of English affects their ability to engage well in conversation. Although most pupils listen attentively, a significant proportion do not engage readily in discussion or respond to questions. Reading standards are below average. Many pupils do not read fluently. Although most pupils enjoy books, their reading is affected by a limited vocabulary. The quality of written work is variable. Although the higher-attaining pupils write independently and are able to organise their writing, there are weaknesses in spelling and punctuation in a significant majority of pupils' work. Handwriting is often not joined. The pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding are below average, overall. The standards achieved are adversely affected by the paucity of language that many pupils experience, which slows their speed of reasoning and recall of basic number facts. When working with written calculations in purely numerical form, pupils achieve standards that are broadly in line with the national average. Pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of seeds and plant growth, materials and electricity, but lack the expected levels of ability to investigate or experiment without very close adult support.
10. By the age of eleven, pupils listen carefully to each other and their teachers and have a much more extensive vocabulary. They are able to engage readily in discussions and debate. Reading standards are in line with the national average; higher-attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. Pupils have developed a good range of strategies to help them establish the meanings of words they do not understand or cannot read. They use dictionaries generally confidently and make good use of their research skills. Pupils present work neatly in a cursive style. Most pupils express their opinions clearly using a good range of vocabulary. In mathematics, the good progress results in standards that are broadly in line with the national average for many pupils. However, weaknesses in some pupils' facility with English continue to result in a higher proportion of pupils than is to be expected, nationally, failing to achieve average standards. Some pupils, however, are working at levels that are above average. They have a secure recall of basic number facts and standards of recorded arithmetic are generally at or about the levels expected of their age. However, the speed of their recall of basic number facts is too slow. Pupils' scientific knowledge is still below average by the time they are eleven. They have a satisfactory grasp of the differences between simple and parallel circuits and a secure knowledge of the parts of the human body and their functions, but their skills of enquiry are below the levels expected.
11. Pupils' achievements in the school are often good and, given the low starting point of many pupils, learning is effective. Although pupils' progress is at least satisfactory, overall, in all subjects except information and communication technology, where it is unsatisfactory, there are some inconsistencies. It is good in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 and accelerates in Year 6, particularly in English and mathematics. During numeracy lessons, pupils are set according to prior attainment and provided with appropriate work. This enables pupils of different abilities to learn effectively. Additional time is provided for extended writing and strategies, such as additional literacy support, have a positive impact on improving standards. The targets set for the end of key stage tests in 2001 are realistic but challenging.
12. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 because they are well supported; however, there are still weaknesses in aspects of their written and oral English. They make very good progress in Key Stage 2 as their language

skills become greater and, by the end of the key stage, they attain standards that are similar to those of their peers. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. These pupils respond well to extra help from teacher and support staff and benefit from work that is accurately matched to their individual needs. Their English vocabulary, in particular, improves significantly.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. A very high proportion of parents say that their children like school. Almost all those responding to the questionnaire said that behaviour in the school is good. The inspection team agrees with these opinions. The high standards emanating from pupil's good attitudes and behaviour have been maintained since the last report.
14. Nearly all children enter the foundation stage with very low personal and social skills. They make good progress throughout that stage because of the great emphasis staff place on this area of development. By the age of five, they begin to share toys and to play co-operatively. They gain a measure of independence, for example, hanging up their own coats and learn to respect each other.
15. Relationships between staff and pupil are very good; teachers and support staff set an excellent example in the respect they show for pupils and each other. This is reflected in the quality of pupils' attitudes to school and their work. Most pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They come into school with real enthusiasm for their work and this is evident in lessons, which the vast majority enjoy. In the majority of lessons, pupils are keen to work when the pace and challenge are appropriate. For example, in a Year 3/4 mathematics lesson on mental aspects of data handling, pupils work quietly, answer questions politely and are keen to "get it right". In a small number of lessons, however, pupils caused disruption to others' learning through their own inattention and disinterest in the work. Sometimes, this was due to children having poor listening skills. Sometimes the children became restless when they were not sufficiently challenged by the pace or level of the work and, on other occasions, a lack of immediate control from the teacher meant that she had to "talk over" pupils' chatter and other pupils then found concentration difficult. Although there is a small minority of children with behavioural problems, most teachers maintain their interest and concentration through interesting and challenging work. There were no exclusions in the school last year.
16. Behaviour around the school and in lessons is good with a few incidents seen of inappropriate behaviour in lessons where pupils were not sufficiently challenged. Pupils generally behave sensibly with increasing maturity as they move up the school and take increasing responsibility for their own learning and the work of the school. This is exemplified by the additional voluntary homework in English and mathematics that Year 6 pupils regularly do. In most classes, pupils do jobs for teachers, including taking back registers, collecting resources, cloakroom and door monitoring. Juniors also help in the tuck shop and help the midday supervisors with Nursery children during lunch break, both of these on a rota base. Pupils are encouraged to give their views about relationships, caring and schoolwork on a regular basis in the weekly Circle Time. Pupils gain confidence from the calm, orderly learning environment, culminating in Year 6 organising their own drama production. They develop well as mature and responsible citizens and no examples of bullying, harassment or racism were observed.
17. Pupils are generally punctual on arrival in school and to lessons. Attendance levels have deteriorated since the last inspection when they were judged as good. Attendance levels for 1999/2000 were well below the national average for primary schools at 90.6 per cent. Unauthorised absence for 1999/2000 was above the national average and is much worse than at the time of the last inspection. The number of pupils taking extended holidays in term-time adversely affects attendance levels. During 1999/2000, despite the school's best efforts, 37 pupils, almost 10 per cent of the school's population, were removed for extended holidays. In 2000/01 to date, this has affected 16 pupils. This level of absenteeism has an adverse effect on the rate and extent of learning for those pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. There has been a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when 18 per cent of teaching, overall, was unsatisfactory and there were particular concerns in Key Stage 1 and what is now the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching is now good, overall, in each key stage in the school. Fewer than five per cent of lessons are unsatisfactory. By contrast, just over 41 per cent of lessons are taught well and just over a further 21 per cent are taught very well. In just over one per cent of lessons, the quality of teaching is excellent.
19. No teaching in the Foundation Stage is of less than satisfactory quality; over 77 per cent of lessons are well taught and just over a further four per cent very well taught. In the nursery class, the quality of teaching is never less than good.
20. The range of teaching quality is greatest in Key Stage 1. In this key stage, just over four per cent of lessons are not taught satisfactorily. In 38 per cent of lessons, teaching is satisfactory but, in a minority of these lessons, teachers' strengths and weaknesses are finely balanced. Twenty-five per cent of lessons in this key stage are well taught and a further 29 per cent of lessons are very well taught. Just over four per cent are of outstanding quality.
21. In Key Stage 2, nearly eight per cent of lessons are not taught well enough. In a minority of the nearly 36 per cent of lessons judged satisfactory, teachers' strengths just exceed their weaknesses. In nearly 31 per cent of lessons, teaching is good. In nearly 26 per cent of lessons in this key stage, teaching is very good; the majority of this is in the single age classes in Years 5 and 6.
22. The teaching of the Early Learning Goals in the Foundation Stage and of English, including literacy, mathematics, including aspects of numeracy, religious education, design and technology, geography (in Key Stage 2 only), history (in Key Stage 1 only) and music is good. In other subjects, science, art, information and communication technology and physical education, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Because of the school's timetabling arrangements, no teaching of geography was seen in Key Stage 1 and no history in Key Stage 2.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and of those with English as an additional language is good throughout the school. The focused help given these pupils is highly influential in enabling them to gain access to the full curriculum over time. The effect of this support is most noticeable in the Foundation Stage, especially for children with English as an additional language in the nursery class, where they make rapid gains in acquiring language and personal and social skills that prepare them very well for their future learning in the rest of the school. Good organisation and shared planning help the nursery nurses working with these children to match work closely to their needs. Added to this, the co-ordinator for special educational needs checks pupils' progress regularly and helps the teachers write new targets to take these pupils forward. These targets are clear. Teachers have copies of current targets in individual educational plans, which help them to plan future work for these pupils. As a consequence, pupils' needs and progress are assessed regularly and the level of extra help is varied, as required. For example, the few pupils from 'travelling families' are now receiving less help as they have now been settled for nearly two years.
24. Throughout the school, teachers plan their work very thoroughly. This ensures that all lessons arise securely from the medium term planning and schemes of work to form a coherent sequence that builds progressively on what pupils have already learned. In addition, teachers have a clear idea of what pupils are to learn in that particular lesson. This objective is nearly always shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson and gives them a clear understanding of the purpose of the tasks set them. Often, more usually in Key Stage 2, the teacher uses the final few minutes of the lesson to revisit the objective of the lesson and to show the pupils the extent of their new learning; this gives pupils a good idea of what has been accomplished and what remains to be done.
25. Support staff are deployed very well, often to focus on small groups of pupils with particular needs, such as those with special educational needs or those for whom English is an additional language. Because of the very high quality of relationships throughout the school and the clear focus given by the teacher, this arrangement is very effective in helping pupils to learn; they concentrate well and make good progress, overall. The progress made in the nursery class by

children with English as an additional language is particularly good and they gain much better access to the planned curriculum, because their English language needs are met well in these smaller groups, often by bi-lingual support staff.

26. Teachers use a good variety of strategies to gain and retain pupils' interest and concentration and to ensure that they meet the objectives of the lesson. For example, to overcome the deficiencies in computer hardware, some teachers plan work over a three-week span to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the computers. Lessons are generally conducted at a good pace. Teachers' expectations of pupils' application, behaviour and attention are usually good and consistently and effectively applied, which results in pupils working hard and producing good quality, accurate results. Because of the good progress made by pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 in developing their language and personal and social skills, teachers in Key Stage 2 are able to build on their colleagues' successes and to make good provision for pupils to develop their skills of independent learning. Appropriate use is made of homework throughout the school to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is inconsistently helpful. The best examples include positive comments and indicate ways in which pupils can improve their work.
27. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, as in an art lesson in Key Stage 2 or an English lesson in Key Stage 1, there are:
 - weaknesses in teachers' management of the behaviour of a small minority of pupils whose attitudes to learning are not good enough, which results in too much noise and too many pupils losing concentration and making insufficient progress;
 - a lack of challenge in the activities set, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, that fails to ensure that all pupils are making the progress that they could and should;
 - a slow pace to lessons so that pupils are inactive for too long.
28. The most effective teaching, for example in a religious education lesson in Key Stage 1, is characterised by:
 - teachers having high expectations of pupils' behaviour, standards and application that are effectively transmitted and challenge pupils to work at a lively and productive pace;
 - interesting and relevant activities that interest pupils and suit the objectives of the lesson;
 - good use of continuing assessment so that the lesson builds logically and sequentially on the results of those that have taken place previously, so that pupils' individual needs are fully met and they make very good progress.

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

29. The school provides a good, broad curriculum that promotes the pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development well. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and meets statutory requirements, including those for sex and drugs education. Information and communication technology did not meet National Curriculum requirements at the last inspection; this has improved and it now does. Further improvements are firmly planned to develop the subject more fully. Pupils in Year 6 have a short introduction to a range of modern languages. There is no structured programme for personal, health and social education, but this is promoted very well through class circle time and the highly caring ethos of the school, which responds positively to the individual needs of the pupils.
30. The school has introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. Whereas literacy skills are promoted well in other subjects, for example where written activities are planned appropriately to meet the needs of all pupils, the use of numeracy skills across subjects, while sound, remains less well developed. Other subject areas contribute effectively to pupils' developing literacy skills through the range of non-fiction big books used in the literacy hour.
31. Timetables provide two long sessions in the morning, with the intention that short slots can be fitted in for such activities as written mental and spelling tests and handwriting. However, these slots are not always identified on timetables nor, indeed, used for the intended purposes, resulting in over-long sessions where time is not used effectively and pupils lose interest and concentration. The school is organised with some classes of mixed-age pupils and topics are

satisfactorily planned on a two-year cycle to ensure that pupils cover the full schemes of work. Planning for mixed-age classes is good and learning objectives reflect what pupils need in both year groups. There are two classes housed in mobile classrooms, where the lack of a water supply restricts some activities.

32. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils of all abilities. Within literacy and numeracy, the results of annual testing are used to group pupils appropriately within classes and to plan and provide suitable activities. Very comprehensive termly, medium and short term planning is carried out in all subjects, with pupils being set appropriate learning objectives. Teachers make good use of their specialist knowledge when planning, and national guidance material is used well to support this. Well-trained learning support assistants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Additional Literacy Support in Years 3 and 4 and a booster class in Year 6 offer further support. However, in order to benefit from this good support, some Year 3 and 4 pupils have other subject lessons interrupted. The school has already recognised that this needs attention. Overall, the attention the school gives to ensuring that all pupils have equal access and opportunity is very good.
33. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in Key Stages 1 and 2 and is very good in the foundation stage where the ratio of adults to children is higher. All these pupils are fully involved in all areas of the curriculum. These pupils are sometimes withdrawn from classes for a short time for extra help. This withdrawal takes place after the whole-class discussion so that these pupils know the purpose of the lesson. They return towards the end of lesson to take part in the discussion, share their ideas and to learn from their classmates. The extra help given, usually by qualified nursery nurses, enables pupils to benefit from the good, broad curriculum offered by the school.
34. In spite of parental concerns, there is good provision for extra curricular activities, with a wide range of activities offered to pupils throughout the school, including dance, gymnastics, drama, needlecrafts, table-top games, study support and sporting activities, including football, cricket, swimming and short tennis. Pupils take part in a good range of competitive sport. Musical and choral activities take place throughout the year when pupils prepare for special occasions. A range of visits, including residential trips and visitors to the school, support the curriculum well. Links with the community are satisfactory; pupils take part in the Cape Hill Festival and the school hosts language and mother and toddler groups.
35. Very good links are maintained with other schools and colleges. The school is a member of the Sandwell Primary Association, which meets regularly. Facilities at Shireland College are used well for extra-curricular study support and drama. Year 6 pupils are given an introduction to modern languages by staff from the college. The school provides places for Nursery Nurse students and is a partnership school with two teacher-training institutions.
36. Pupils' spiritual development is soundly promoted through the school's daily assemblies, which are planned with weekly themes. These are well conducted, but opportunities to help make it a 'special occasion' are often missed when the scene is not set with music to listen to and appreciate or times for quiet reflection and prayer. Once a week, there is a celebration assembly, where a range of achievements are recognised and a music assembly, where hymns and songs are practised. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about the main religions of the world, and elements of their beliefs and celebrations. They are encouraged to reflect on and contribute from their own religious backgrounds, as they study other people's lives and beliefs. Festivals from the different faiths making up the school are celebrated. Provision in this area of the school's work has improved since the last inspection.
37. The provision for moral development is very good; this is a significant improvement since the last inspection. All staff provide very good role models and the very positive relationships built up between staff and pupils and the caring ethos of the school contribute greatly to moral development. Although there is no timetabled provision for personal, health and social education, moral issues are discussed in circle time and assemblies. School rules are displayed in classrooms and are discussed with pupils at the start of the year. Rules for living are also discussed in religious education. There is a strong system of positive rewards for good work and behaviour and general helpfulness, with stickers and certificates that are received in celebration assemblies.

38. The provision for social education is very good, which is also a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Staff and pupils all contribute to make the school a caring, friendly and enthusiastic community. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for routine tasks in the classroom and there are some opportunities given to older pupils to take responsibility around the school. Within lessons, especially literacy and numeracy, pupils are expected to work independently in groups, whilst class teachers focus on a particular group. Personal and social skills are further developed through visitors to the school and the visits that pupils make, including residential visits made by older pupils. The enthusiastic support given to extra-curricular activities by pupils from all backgrounds, for example the line-dancing and Hindi pop dancing groups, makes a very good contribution to pupils' social development. Pupils are also encouraged to learn about and to contribute to charities, sometimes taking the initiative in raising funds for appeals, such as the Blue Peter and Children in Need appeals.
39. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory, as it was during the last inspection. Pupils from different backgrounds are encouraged to share their cultural differences and so increase cultural understanding. They have the opportunities, through lessons and extra-curricular activities, to take part in drama workshops, study Asian music and both Western and Asian dance. The opportunities to study and appreciate art and music from a range of cultures wider than these are unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. In the previous inspection report, systems for assessing pupils' attainment were found to be satisfactory, overall. Appropriate systems were in place for the youngest children but assessment methods for children under five were not consistently matched to the desirable outcomes or to the needs of children from different ethnicity. Assessment at both key stages varied in consistency and quality.
41. Since then, the school has made good progress in improving its provision for early assessment in the Foundation Stage. The Sandwell entry profile continues to provide information when children start school in the nursery. In addition, an early assessment system has been introduced when children enter the reception classes. Outcomes of these early assessments provide useful information, which helps teachers and adults working in the Foundation Stage to plan work that is matched to children's needs. These procedures are good.
42. There are satisfactory procedures in place for assessing pupils' academic progress in English, mathematics and science. However, although assessment opportunities for these subjects are sometimes identified within planning, this is too often superficial and does not result in work being adapted to meet specific needs. Practice remains inconsistent for these subjects.
43. Standardised tests in English are undertaken in addition to the statutory assessment tests in English, mathematics and science. Analysis of test results has been undertaken to identify strengths and weaknesses in these subjects and to set school targets as a result. Whilst considerable data has been gathered and includes gender and ethnicity analysis, too little use is made of this by subject co-ordinators to guide teachers in their planning and to monitor standards in their subjects. In addition, the process has not been sufficiently extended to include regular monitoring and rigorous evaluation of standards, including pupils' rates of progress and analysis of all performance data.
44. In addition, assessment procedures are not rigorously in place or consistently used in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. There is little in the way of portfolios of levelled work to help teachers when assessing pupils' work. The school is planning to re-introduce these in order to ensure consistency for teacher assessment. A record of achievement that will show pupils' attainment and progress across all key stages has been produced in draft form, but has yet to be put in place. The assessment policy, which now takes account of the new national guidance, has yet to be implemented. While much work has been done to address this aspect of the key issue from the last inspection, more remains to be done.
45. A start has been made on individual target setting, in addition to class targets for literacy and numeracy, but this is still in its very early stages and is not yet having an impact on standards.

46. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress as a result. They have individual education plans, which contain satisfactory targets that relate appropriately to academic, social and behavioural aims. These are regularly reviewed and updated to take account of changes in pupils' needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator has a clear overview of how pupils are achieving, having time to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning for such pupils at first hand. Various specialists, such as the educational psychologist and speech therapist, give teachers good suggestions as to ways to meet these pupils' needs. All aspects of the Code of Practice are appropriately met. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good support that enables them to make good progress.
47. The school has very good procedures for ensuring pupils' health and welfare. Pastoral care is well managed by caring, sensitive staff. Parents are very pleased with the care and support their children receive and say the school has high expectations of their academic progress and behaviour. They particularly liked the way that praise and support are used by teachers to raise pupils' self-esteem and to give them confidence in their own abilities. Pupils say they feel comfortable and confident in approaching their teacher or any other member of staff when troubled.
48. Teachers and support staff set an excellent example in their support for the pupils and the respect they show towards the pupils and one another. The school follows the guidelines of the local area child protection committee and the special needs co-ordinator, who is the designated person, has received appropriate training. She also has very good contact with the relevant statutory agencies and carries out in-service training for staff about child protection issues on a regular basis. The school has an effective health and safety policy with appropriate procedures for fire, first aid and medicines. Safety audits are regularly carried out. Bullying is discussed with pupils in circle time and assemblies and pupils say that it is rare and that they are encouraged to report any incidents to staff. They say they are confident that the staff would deal effectively with their concerns. There is a clear and effective behaviour policy with clear rules which pupils understand. They look forward to the rewards of stickers, certificates and headteacher's awards for improved behaviour, effort or attendance that are presented in assemblies.
49. The school's assertive discipline policy promotes good behaviour very effectively; there are clear sanctions for poor behaviour within it, which pupils generally respect. Staff are vigilant for bullying incidents and procedures for dealing with bullying are very good. Parents are involved at an early stage should this be needed. Racism and sexism are discussed as necessary in circle time, RE and assemblies and the school is a harmonious, orderly place where any form of discrimination is discouraged very effectively.
50. Class teachers and the headteacher monitor attendance very well with excellent support from the education welfare officer. Parents know they are expected to notify the school if their child is absent and the vast majority do this. The secretary makes a "first day of absence" call for those pupils who are not notified as absent and the education welfare officer makes home visits and talks to parents in the community regularly about the effect of absence on pupils' educational standards. Despite all the best efforts of the school and the welfare service, a number of parents continue to arrange holidays with their children in term-time. The school actively promotes good attendance through attendance awards and regular correspondence on the subject both in newsletters and individual letters home. There is a clear attendance policy, which informs teachers on registration and following up absence. Registration procedures are very good and meet requirements.
51. Provision for health and sex education within the curriculum is good. Outside agencies, including the school nurse, make a valuable contribution to the teaching of these subjects.
52. The school has improved its pastoral care provision since the last inspection. It was good at that time and is now very good, overall, with a very high standard of support and welfare provided by all staff, which gives pupils a secure, ordered place in which to learn. The support staff are used very well to support the high proportion of children and parents whose first language is not English. This is an essential part of the caring ethos of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents are generally pleased with the education and care their children receive from the school. Most parents responding to the questionnaire said that they felt comfortable approaching the school about problems or concerns and that teaching and behaviour are good. Almost all parents say that their children like school. Some parents say that they would like to see improvements in homework and in the provision of extra-curricular activities. The need for improvement in these two areas is not borne out by the inspection findings, because the amount of homework given is sufficient for pupils of this age and the range of extra-curricular activities is good.
54. The school has identified, as a continuing priority in the current school development plan, increased parental involvement through the many community initiatives it is involved in. This is an indication of the high priority given to parental support by the school.
55. The school works hard to involve and communicate with parents. Links between the two parties are good, maintaining the standard noticed at the time of the previous inspection. There are regular newsletters about many aspects of school life, which are regularly translated into the languages needed to reflect the school's broad cultural mix. The school has organised literacy, numeracy and other curriculum evenings, in addition to three formal parents' evenings each year to discuss pupils' progress. Parents are encouraged to approach the school at any time if they have concerns or need information.
56. Good quality information is available to parents. The annual pupil reports are informative and identify pupils' strengths and targets for improvement in their work or behaviour. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus are informative, but, although the prospectus has all the information legally required, the governors' report omits the details required on the provision for disabled pupils. The prospectus is also available in Urdu and Punjabi.
57. There are good relationships with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. Before the children start school, parents are invited to attend a comprehensive series of pre-school meetings. As a result of discussions with parents, observations of pupils at work and assessments, pupils' special educational needs are identified early and parents are fully involved when this happens. They attend the regular reviews of their children's progress and comment upon the progress made.
58. Induction meetings are held for parents before their children enter the nursery and all parents receive regular information on homework and about what work their child is to do next term. Encouragement is given to parents to help their children with homework or reading at home and a number of parents do this. The school has run a number of initiatives in school to assist parents' understanding of how they can help their child, particularly with reading. The Family Literacy Project, for example, has received Government funding to enable parents of nursery and infant children to work with their children to improve speaking and listening skills. Tutors from Sandwell College are also involved in teaching these skills to parents, improving the literacy and confidence of both parents and pupils. Parents had the additional benefit of obtaining accredited qualifications through this work.
59. A "Mother and Toddler" group meets twice a week on site, staffed by outside tutors. This group is intended to help mothers and pre-nursery children settle to nursery life and also meets a social need for mothers in the area. In addition, the school is used two mornings each week for "English as a second language" lessons for Asian women. This long-standing initiative has brought parents into school as voluntary helpers, as their language skills have improved. Tutors from Sandwell College and Shireland Language College work with parents and children on these and other language and numeracy projects to gain parental and pupil involvement in developing language and numeracy skills. The school has worked hard to involve parents in the school community, giving them support and training which has directly led to gains in their children's confidence and learning at home. Parents' involvement at home and in the school is satisfactory, overall.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The leadership and management of the school are good, overall. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, has responded well to issues raised in the last inspection report and has developed a good understanding of the need to introduce rigour and structure to the school's work. Together, they ensure a good, clear educational direction to the school. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection in several areas. The headteacher maintains a high level of pastoral support and the ethos of the school is very strong. There is a deeply caring atmosphere and the aims of the school, which relate to individual pupils making good progress, the achievement of high standards of academic attainment and the development of the whole person are fulfilled very well in practice.
61. A new senior management team has been established and all parts of the school, including the Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1, staff responsible for pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, are represented. Each member of the senior management team has a clear understanding of their responsibilities and has been given time to monitor the quality of teaching and provision within their area. They are well aware of the strengths and areas for development within the school and are prepared to take suitable action. For example, the senior management team has identified the need for changes to the timetable. In one class, when the pupils are withdrawn for additional literacy they are missing too much science and religious education. The school plans to remedy this next term. The results of the end of key stage tests are closely analysed and strengths and weaknesses in provision identified soundly. For example, the school has set targets for raising pupils' attainment in English next year. In order to accomplish this, extra time has been provided within the timetable for pupils to concentrate on their creative writing.
62. The senior managers, staff and governors have written a new development plan, which is a good tool for improvement. There are clear, relevant priorities, but, at times, the identified criteria for success do not make it easy to judge the effectiveness of the actions specified. In addition, in a few areas, such as special educational needs, the person responsible for delivering the improvements is also responsible for judging success. This does not provide for effective evaluation. The co-ordinators for subjects are given the responsibility for helping teachers improve standards in their subjects, but several have not been given the time or training to enable them to do this. The senior management team, however, retains the overview and is managing well, but the role of subject co-ordinators, particularly for the foundation subjects is underdeveloped. Overall, the combined efforts of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators are helping to raise the quality of both teaching and learning. There is a well-developed commitment on behalf of all staff and governors to improve the standards and provision in the school; they are now well placed to succeed.
63. Careful management of the funds currently available enables the school to employ a member of staff without a class responsibility for half of the week to manage the extra help for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for these pupils is well managed and they make good progress. Currently, all teachers have up-to-date individual education plans to help them target specific work and there is good liaison with the support services who give good suggestions to teachers.
64. The Local Education Authority has provided good support with the extensive monitoring of all teachers. Teachers have been set targets for improvement and some have been assigned a mentor. As a result, the overall quality of teaching has improved. Sound appraisal procedures are in place and regular professional interviews take place at which teachers' in-service needs are discussed and opportunities for further professional development are explored. Arrangements to induct and mentor newly qualified teachers are good.
65. Governors support the school well and mutual trust and respect exist between governors and staff. The governing body has many new members and is beginning to develop a sound view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. It meets regularly to discuss issues, has appropriate committees and is beginning to ask appropriate questions, informed fully by the information supplied by the headteacher. However, as yet, the governing body does not give sufficient direction to the school, because it does not check the school's progress sufficiently. It is unsure as to the standards expected nationally. Governors are well aware of the improvements needed and are firmly committed to becoming more actively involved and to

undertake more training. Governors are now responsible for several curriculum areas such as literacy and numeracy. The governing body monitors expenditure regularly and is taking steps, with the headteacher, to recoup moneys owing and to reduce the school's budget deficit so that planned developments can be fully and adequately financed. The deficit has occurred as a result of changes by the local education authority in the funding arrangements for the nursery class and because one member of staff was absent for a long period as a result of illness; the local education authority is content that the school has a sensible strategy for addressing this deficit.

66. The governing body is developing well and meets most statutory requirements. However, there are a few minor omissions from the governors' report to parents because it is not dated, does not mention both action taken as a result of the last meeting or arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils.
67. There is an appropriate number of suitably qualified teachers who provide a wide range of expertise. During the past year, a good level of staff training has been carried out. This has been effectively targeted to the whole school priorities identified in the school development plan, particularly literacy and numeracy. All members of staff have appropriate job descriptions. The level of support staff is higher than in comparably sized schools, but this is appropriate when considering the high levels of special needs pupils and those with language needs. All the support staff are qualified nursery nurses and they are effectively integrated into the learning process through their involvement in planning with teachers and their work with parents. Most of the support staff liaise with parents well because of their knowledge of the community languages in the school's catchment area. All of them have undergone first aid training, which has reinforced their pastoral role.
68. The premises are very well maintained and cleaned to a high standard. Little evidence was seen of vandalism or graffiti.
69. Classrooms are barely adequate in terms of space, although the school makes effective use of a number of small areas alongside the open-plan classrooms for withdrawal groups of small numbers of pupils, including those with special educational needs. Accommodation in the foundation stage is spacious and there is good access to the secure outside play area for both year groups. Although accommodation is adequate, overall, there are some weaknesses in the space available in Key Stage 2. The classrooms are too small for practical resources to be stored in them. Teachers are innovative and skilful in making larger resources available for art, design and technology and science, but the lack of space does restrict the pupils in their practical work. In addition, two classes are based in outside 'temporary' accommodation, which has no readily available water supply.
70. There is no school field available for games; these currently take place in a local park, which involves a loss of curriculum time, because of travelling to and from this location. The school makes good use of the reading room and library and, since the last inspection, one of the two halls has been equipped as a gymnasium.
71. Learning resources are satisfactory, overall, with particularly good provision for history and English, especially literacy materials. The library is well stocked, with a wide range of books. However, there are also weaknesses in resources provided for some aspects of art and in information and communication technology. The school has tried for some time to address its shortage of hardware with plans to purchase a number of machines for a suite for which space has recently been allocated.
72. The previous inspection report highlighted a lack of outside play facilities for younger children, and the lack of formal recording of health and safety issues. In addition, resources for under-fives to assist imaginative play and physical development were lacking. All of these have been corrected and this represents an improvement on the accommodation and resources noted at that time.
73. A large number of imaginative and bright displays around the school serve to enhance the accommodation and provide good examples of children's work. The school is to be applauded for "sharing" children's work around the school. For example, artwork produced by pupils in Key

Stage 1 is displayed in Key Stage 2 corridors and vice versa, giving a shared pride in each other's work.

74. The school makes good use of the funding provided. The school secretary makes effective use of new technology to provide effective, financial and administrative support to the headteacher, and in conjunction with the support provided by the local education authority's finance unit. The school's finance systems and school fund were audited in April 1999. A post-audit review by them in July 2000 confirmed that all recommendations had been attended to satisfactorily.
75. The school's spending plans are well matched to the priorities of the school development plan, and governors are fully informed about budget decisions by the headteacher. All specific grants are used well. Both headteacher and the local education authority are carefully monitoring the current budget deficit, so that planned developments can be fully financed. Through their efforts to control expenditure and the expected increase in pupil numbers, the school has planned to return to a working surplus on the budget within three years.
76. The school applies the principles of best value conscientiously. Maintenance or capital projects are put out to tender as required, and proper evaluation is carried out to ensure that value for money is obtained. The governors monitor expenditure closely through the efforts of the finance committee and the headteacher. Systems for financial administration are unobtrusive, efficient and responsive.
77. There have been many improvements since the last inspection, including steadily rising standards of teaching and learning. The headteacher, key staff and governors are now working well in partnership to provide a firm steer to the school's work and many aspects of planning and provision have improved. The school development plan provides a good agenda for continuing improvement, to which all staff and governors are fully committed. Because of these factors, the school now gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. In order to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, particularly for the higher attaining pupils, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- a) Implement the planned developments in information and communication technology.
Paragraph numbers: 29, 140, 161, 171 - 177
- b) Develop assessment procedures further in those subjects where they are needed and evaluate all available assessment information rigorously to ensure that pupils make the progress they could and should;
Paragraph numbers: 42 – 44, 140, 145, 151, 155, 157, 159, 162, 166, 170, 177, 185, 189, 194
- c) Enhance the role of subject co-ordinators to include regular monitoring and rigorous evaluation of standards and provision in their subject, including the provision of challenging work to develop individual's independent learning;
Paragraph numbers: 43, 62, 105, 111, 131, 145, 149, 151, 157, 162, 170, 177, 185, 194
- d) Ensure the governing body is fully able to hold the school to account for the standards it attains and the provision it makes;
Paragraph number: 65
- e) Take all possible steps to remove the budget deficit as soon as possible.
Paragraph number: 75

In addition, other issues that should be considered by the school are:

1. Improve the quality and consistency of teachers' marking of pupils' work.
2. Improve aspects of teaching, where needed, including the use of available curriculum time.
3. Continue to use all possible means to improve pupils' overall attendance rates.
4. Improve aspects of accommodation and resources.
5. Improve the opportunities for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
6. Review the time given to music in the overall curriculum.
7. Ensure that the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements fully.

References to these matters are contained in the following paragraphs:

3, 15, 17, 26, 31, 36, 39, 50, 56, 61, 66, 69, 101, 117, 129, 138, 141, 156 – 160, 178 – 185, 189

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

79. Nearly three quarters of the school's pupils' come from homes where English is the second language. This is very high when compared with other schools across the country. At this stage, a third of pupils need extra help as they have little understanding of the English language. The help given by the school is well organised by the deputy headteacher and consequently these pupils make very good progress over their time at this school.
80. When they start school, pupils are often silent when working together. By the end of the Foundation Stage, despite making good progress, standards of attainment are well below those expected at the age of five in nearly all areas of the curriculum. The exception is in their personal and social development, where standards are below average. In Key Stage 1, pupils continue to make good progress and, as they become more proficient in English, they talk to each other more easily and frequently, but often use the wrong tenses. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment are below the national average, particularly in speaking and understanding the English language and in punctuating their writing. During Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress across the curriculum as their understanding of language improves. At the end of this key stage, standards of pupils' attainment in all subjects are in line with those of their peers. Many pupils have a good vocabulary, using phrases such as 'a puzzling end' to describe a story.
81. The advisor and the teacher from the specialist, centrally funded language service support teachers effectively. The school efficiently manages its limited funds to employ three nursery nurses; this maximises the amount of support that pupils receive. Pupils with English as an additional language are included within the whole class for the majority of lessons and therefore benefit from the good teaching available to all, but they also have the extra benefit of being withdrawn to work in small groups. This withdrawal sensibly takes place after the whole-class introduction so that these pupils know the purpose of the lesson. They return towards the end of lesson to take part in the discussion, share their ideas and to learn from their classmates. The time spent in small-group work is very effective and makes a significant contribution towards giving these pupils access to the full curriculum, because it helps them to understand and to explain their own thoughts. Work is closely matched to the targets set in the pupils' individual language plans. The nursery nurses, who usually teach these groups, have good relationships with their pupils and build their confidence by giving praise and encouragement appropriately. They also keep careful records of the progress that the pupils make which helps the teachers plan future work to match the pupils' needs.
82. Teachers throughout the school plan their lessons to include pupils with English as an additional language. The nursery nurses are fully involved in this planning and, consequently, are well aware of their role and the aims of the lesson. Three members of staff, including one teacher, speak several languages and, particularly in Key Stage 1, pupils are encouraged to use their mother tongue to explore ideas and clarify meaning. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils with English as an additional language and ensures that they are fully included in all possible aspects of the full curriculum. The good links with parents established during the pre-school visits and during the adult literacy classes run by the school, help parents assist their children to learn.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	85
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	57

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1.2	21.2	41.2	31.8	4.6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	40	304
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		152

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		108

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	234

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.6
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	28	47

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	18
	Girls	21	21	25
	Total	35	35	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (71)	74 (71)	92 (90)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	17
	Girls	21	21	22
	Total	35	35	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (66)	74 (76)	83 (83)
	National	84 (82)	88 (88)	88 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	17	21	38

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	Girls	17	10	12
	Total	27	21	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (49)	55 (63)	61 (71)
	National	75 (70)	71 (69)	84 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	11
	Girls	9	9	12
	Total	17	18	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45 (59)	47 (63)	61 (68)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	24
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	21
Indian	59
Pakistani	139
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	37
Any other minority ethnic group	20

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)	13
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.8
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	235

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	59

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	156

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.4
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	631 453
Total expenditure	672 168
Expenditure per pupil	1 977
Balance brought forward from previous year	- 4 259
Balance carried forward to next year	-44 974

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	300
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	23	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	43	4	0	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	42	0	0	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	42	19	8	6
The teaching is good.	51	40	2	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	47	11	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	32	2	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	42	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	30	47	9	0	13
The school is well led and managed.	42	49	4	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	49	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	34	19	0	6

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

83. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in the nursery and in two parallel reception classes. They are admitted to the nursery on a part-time basis after the half term following their third birthday. At the time of the inspection, there were 43 children, 36 of whom attend full-time. Those children who are four years old during the school year are offered a full-time place for two or three terms prior to their fifth birthday.
84. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they will be five. A few children join the reception year without having attended the nursery or had any pre-school experience. In the reception year there were thirty-one children under five. A further nine children were aged five.
85. Two children in the nursery are identified as having special educational needs. Another boy in a reception class has individual support to meet his special educational needs. The majority have English as an additional language.
86. On entry to the nursery, early assessment information indicates that attainment is, overall, well below average in the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage, with particular disadvantage in areas of language and personal and social development. While in the nursery, they make good progress in all of these areas except their personal and social development, where progress is very good.
87. In spite of this rapid progress, attainment on entry to the reception classes at the age of five is still well below average, overall, in all areas of learning except personal and social development, where it is below average. Children's speaking and listening skills are still well below that expected for children of this age. Many have poor knowledge of the use of books and a significant minority do not handle them correctly. Their writing skills are also well below the expected level. In mathematics, very few have the expected skills in counting and understanding shape. In this subject, as in their knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development, standards are well below those expected.
88. While in the reception classes, children make good gains in learning, but, in spite of this, by the time they enter Year 1, standards of attainment in most areas of learning, including those communication, language and literacy, are well below average. Their standards of personal and social development have now risen to below average as a result of the good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage. Few children meet or exceed the early learning goals in the other areas of learning by the time they leave the foundation stage.
89. The good provision for children with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language enables these children to participate fully and make good gains in their learning, given their prior attainment.
90. The nursery provides a calm and secure environment. Children are happy to come to school. Very good planning provides a range of stimulating and interesting activities, ensuring that the curriculum meets the needs of all children. There is a good balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities and tasks are well matched to the planned objectives for each session. All the adults are involved in the planning process and have a good awareness of what children are to learn.
91. The accommodation is spacious and organised efficiently, providing an attractive learning environment. There have been good improvements to outdoor play provision since the previous inspection with better facilities and a wider range of equipment providing daily opportunities for outdoor play.
92. Teachers and support staff in both the nursery and the reception classes work well effectively as a team, helping children to make good progress.

93. Good links are established with parents and carers with a carefully structured introduction to the nursery, ensuring a smooth transition from home to school. Opportunities for further support for parents and young children arise through the well organised 'Partners in play', providing a mother and toddler group, and also through the 'Family Literacy Project'.
94. Detailed and comprehensive records of observations of children's learning are maintained in the nursery. A colour coded record of achievement for the foundation stage is currently being trialled in the nursery and reception classes, providing effective tracking of children's progress.

Personal and social development

95. Nearly all children enter the nursery with very low skills. They make very good progress throughout the foundation stage, although skills are still below average in many cases by the age of five. By the time they leave the reception classes, the majority of children are achieving the early learning goals in this area of development. Nursery staff place great emphasis on this area of development. Children choose activities for themselves, select materials and share large toys outside. They develop good levels of self-confidence as they increase their understanding of school routines.
96. Children in the reception classes concentrate well and persevere with tasks set. They begin to share toys and learn to play co-operatively, for example in the 'Cafe' play, where they take turns and learn to share resources. They are independent, for example when going to the toilet and washing their hands. They begin to show awareness of others and concern for each other.
97. The quality of teaching of this area is good throughout the key stage, enabling children to make good gains in their learning. Children learn to respect and show consideration for each other. Good examples of how children should behave towards each other are constantly reinforced and all adults provide good role models. Children are encouraged to be independent, for example hanging up coats, collecting aprons when painting, putting away equipment and helping to tidy up. Respect for different cultures is well promoted, such as through the display of Diwali and another of Bonfire Night. Praise is used well to promote self-esteem. The good teaching ensures that children learn to work, play and co-operate well with other children. Provision for children's personal and social development is good.

Communication, language and literacy

98. In relation to their low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery, most children make good progress in acquiring skills in speaking and listening and early literacy skills. Nevertheless, by the age of five, attainment is still well below average for the majority of children. Nearly all children have very limited communication skills, at best giving one-word responses in most cases. Whilst some children begin to interact with the adults many are silent when working alongside other children. For example, three boys playing in the sand, worked side by side, shared resources without any communication.
99. The higher-attaining children in the reception classes are beginning to understand that words and pictures convey meaning in stories. They handle books carefully and with enjoyment. A small number write some initial letters in response to letter sounds. They follow a writing pattern carefully, trace with reasonable accuracy and copy under the teacher's writing. These children write their names independently. Average children write over the teacher's writing. This is very insecure and letter formation is uneven.
100. Many children have poor pencil control and are not yet at the stage of copying over writing. They are unable to follow dots to draw a circle and there is little recognition of sounds and letters. A significant majority are unable to write their name independently.
101. The quality of teaching is good in the nursery and reception classes and provision for this area of learning is good. Staff in the nursery and reception classes take every opportunity to develop children's communication skills. In the nursery, daily discussions, story sessions and songs and rhymes are used to promote speaking and listening. Children are encouraged to listen to stories, to predict what will happen and to discuss the illustrations. Teachers make good use of literacy sessions to extend speaking and listening skills and support staff make an effective

contribution to children's learning. Good use is made of 'Big Books' to encourage and interest the children, but sometimes speaking is too fast to provide a good example of clear diction for the youngest children. In both the nursery and reception classes a good range of practical activities follows structured story and discussion times. In the reception classes there is an inconsistent approach to the use of reading books, with children in one class enjoying books that they take home and share, whilst in the other class this is not the practice.

Mathematics

102. Provision for mathematical development is good in the nursery and reception classes. Children make good progress, given their low levels of attainment on entry to the nursery. However, in spite of this, few children are attaining at a level expected for their age and standards, overall, are well below those expected by the age of five. Many are hampered by the lack of a wide vocabulary and their inability to use language correctly to describe a process.
103. In the nursery, children begin to discriminate between and name different colours. They use yellow play dough and make long and short rolls. The good emphasis on mathematical language helps to extend children's own language. They begin to recognise basic shapes such as 'rectangle' and 'triangle', but many children are unable to name these. Average and above average children match similar objects. Nearly all children in the reception classes learn to count in sequence to 10, but few recognise numbers securely. A minority know 'one number before'. Higher attainers match objects one-to-one. They are familiar with number rhymes and songs and enjoy reciting these. Children in the reception classes have a growing awareness of shape. Most name 'circle' and 'triangle' correctly and higher attainers are confident when naming a range of common two-dimensional shapes.
104. Teaching is of good quality. Teachers and support staff ensure that children have many opportunities to practise their mathematical skills through a wide variety of activities. For instance, they use counting skills in 'cafe' play, discuss shape when making sandwiches, count the candles on the birthday cakes and observe shapes as they decorate their cakes. Relationships are very good and children are confident to try the activities set out for them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

105. When they enter the foundation stage, most children's knowledge and understanding of the world and their ability to express their knowledge in English is well below that which could be expected for their age. Children make good progress throughout the key stage, but, by the age of five, their knowledge and understanding of the world remain well below the levels expected in many aspects. Investigative skills are particularly underdeveloped.
106. Effective planning in this area of learning takes full account of the early learning goals and good use is made of the immediate environment to provide children with enriching experiences. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, often good with detailed planning and careful preparation and use of resources. These factors help children to make good progress.
107. A range of suitable opportunities is planned to enable the children to explore and recognise features of living things. They are beginning to become aware of seasonal change, but their sense of chronology is not developed to the expected level for their age. All children have planted spring flower bulbs in their classrooms and in large tubs in the playground. They are ready to observe their growth over the coming months, but most are unable to predict what might happen. The younger children go on nature trails in the school grounds. Through their drawings and audio recordings they begin to develop their observational skills. Although particular emphasis is placed on the development of language for reporting and the acquisition of topic-specific vocabulary, the children seldom ask questions, offer to report on their observations or initiate discussions with adults and other children.
108. They have a basic understanding of the passing of time and know of past events when they talk about birthdays and look at photographs of themselves and in the class album. They listen attentively to adults in small groups and as a class, when being given instructions or when listening to a story such as 'The night you were born'. They seldom ask questions, however, and are hesitant to use their knowledge of the world in predicting outcomes of stories and activities or to communicate their observations to adults and other children.

109. The children have a sound knowledge of different cultural and religious events, such as Halloween, Harvest Festival, Diwali, Bonfire Night and Christmas. The resulting displays on these events incorporate the children's work, such as Rangoli patterns and reflect the diversity and richness of life within the school and in the outside world well. The effective use of this resource helps children to make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of their own and others' culture and beliefs.
110. The higher attaining younger children are beginning to become familiar with the computer. They use the mouse effectively to direct what happens on the screen, such as when using a program where they have to accurately transfer food from the counter to the plate on the table. The older children use and operate the tape recorder satisfactorily for listening to stories and songs. With help, they use the arrow keys correctly to work a programmable toy, but planned opportunities for groups or individuals to investigate and explore various settings are limited.
111. Children are eager to do well and respond positively to the adults who work with them, but many lack the confidence to take the initiative when invited to explore, make observations or select tasks for themselves. Instead they rely too much on the adult to direct them towards available activities. For example, a group of children was offered the choice of decorating the birthday cake, making tall and short candles from play dough or playing with construction materials. All children needed individual guidance in selecting tasks for themselves and close supervision in carrying them out.
112. A few children become excited by incidental discoveries they make, but most lack curiosity and the skill in English to discuss their observations. This was obvious, for example, when one of the boys discovered that he could make interesting imprints in the sand tray with his hand, a colander and various toys. He insisted on demonstrating his new skill, but he and his peers were neither curious to find out how this occurred nor keen to talk about the discovery.
113. Carefully planned visits and tasks introduce children to familiar places in their locality. The older children correctly tell visitors that they live in a flat or a house. Children identify main features, and make simple models of their houses and of the playground in the road near the school. They join materials together soundly when making these models or when covering candles with glitter and attaching them to the birthday cake. Many children lack confidence and skill when manipulating small apparatus, such as scissors and glue brushes and rely on the continuous support by adults.

Physical development

114. The provision for physical development is good in the nursery. It is satisfactory in the reception classes. On entry to the nursery, the majority have very poor skills in physical co-ordination and control. In spite of the good teaching in the nursery and the good progress made by most children, by the age of five physical development remains well below average.
115. While they make good gains in learning, many lack co-ordination in activities such as skipping. They show increasing awareness of space when using the hall and improving physical control and mobility. They contrast movements such as 'creeping like a mouse' and 'plodding like an elephant', although they are hampered by limited language skills and limited knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, some thought the elephant would creep. They enjoy singing games such as 'The Farmer's in his Den', but have difficulty recalling the sequence of movements. They are confident when using the soft play area and are increasing their physical control when riding bikes and other wheeled toys. Nearly all children use scissors and hold paint brushes and crayons correctly, but not all control them well. A significant majority of children have difficulty with fine motor control. Nursery staff provide guided instruction in mark making and the use of tools that enables children to make good gains in their manipulative skills. Regular planned use of the outdoor environment allows children to make sound gains in pushing, pulling and riding.
116. Children in the reception classes are learning to line up and use the space in the hall safely. The majority have difficulty with these skills and this is further hampered by poor listening skills. Much time is lost as children are slow to change for lessons. Many are still at an early stage of development when responding to instructions to 'line up' or 'listen carefully'. Some are still

unable to stop on a given signal. Most curl and stretch satisfactorily, but, in some lessons, many lose concentration and wander about off task. They join in action songs appropriately and nearly all match actions to words with reasonable competence. The good support given to a child with special educational needs enables him to participate fully and achieve similar standards to other children. Fine motor skills develop satisfactorily.

117. Teachers in the reception classes sustain steady gains in children's learning, but outdoor play opportunities are more limited. The previous inspection identified a need for the outdoor curriculum to be developed. While this has improved, there are still some weaknesses in provision for children in the reception classes.

Creative development

118. Children enter the nursery with very low attainment. In spite of the good progress made, skills in this area of development are still well below average by the age of five.
119. In the nursery class, few children know the names of any instruments. Most find it difficult to tap their names on the drum. They produce loud and quiet sounds, most understanding these from the explanation given but there are missed opportunities to follow up these explanations to reinforce understanding of the concept and use of the correct terms. Children know and present a range of simple songs to their group, singing from memory, but most need adult support for this. They explore malleable materials, such as dough, cut and stick shapes to make a collage, print with shapes and use paint and crayons satisfactorily to create patterns and pictures. Teachers use such opportunities well to reinforce the language of colour, shape and texture as well as teaching basic skills of painting, printing, moulding, cutting and sticking. However, few children have the necessary oral skills to describe their work. In role-play, their limited experiences and poor language skills affect the quality of such play for many children initially in the nursery class. However, these skills develop well to enable more imaginative role-play such as in the 'cafe' area in the reception classes. A few children clap the rhythm pattern of their first name, in the reception year, but many are unable to relate the clap needed to the syllables in their name.
120. Good opportunities are provided in the nursery and reception classes for children to develop creativity and explore a range of painting materials as well as sand and water. Teachers plan well for a range of directed and free-choice activities for creative experiences and role-play. For example, children in the reception classes print patterns with fruit and create patterns, printing with different shapes and using two different colours, developing mathematical skills of shape and pattern through art. In the 'cafe' play, they make jam sandwiches, following instructions and extending vocabulary well, as well as reinforcing hygiene. The good support of nursery nurses and other support staff contributes well to the learning that is taking place.

ENGLISH

121. The results of the end of Key Stage 1 tests in the year 2000 show that the standard of attainment in both reading and writing is well below the national average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls, but the girls were slightly better than the boys at writing. The results of the end of Key Stage 2 tests show that the standard of attainment in English is below the national average, with the girls significantly outperforming the boys. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher levels was well below the national average at both key stages. Standards in both reading and writing in these tests are below those reported upon in the previous inspection report; however, they are broadly similar to those achieved by pupils at the end of that academic year for both key stages.
122. When compared to similar schools, however, pupils attained standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in the year 2000 that are average and in Key Stage 2 that are well above average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is above average and the higher level 5 in English at the end of Key Stage 2 is well above average.
123. Inspection evidence suggests that the pupils currently in Year 6 are likely to achieve higher standards in next year's tests. The majority of pupils are on line to attain the national average by the end of this academic year. The school's target is likely to be exceeded, as it was in 2000.

There has been an improvement in this subject since last year but the rate of improvement over time is erratic.

124. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress with English in both key stages. Pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress in Key Stage 1 and very good progress in Key Stage 2 as their understanding of the language develops more fully.
125. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment for pupils who have English as an additional language are below the national average, particularly in speaking and understanding the English language and in punctuating their writing. During Key Stage 2, these pupils make very good progress across the curriculum as their understanding of language improves. At the end of this key stage, their standards are broadly in line with the national average.
126. When pupils start the National Curriculum in Year 1, the standard of attainment in English is well below average. By the time that they reach the end of Key Stage 1, their standard of attainment is below average overall; the reasons for this improvement are explained below. Pupils find it particularly difficult to understand what is being said and to express their thoughts in English words. By the time that pupils are seven, the fluency and accuracy of their spoken English has improved, but is still well below average. Most pupils, however, listen attentively and enjoy books and reading. Their reading skills are below average, but most pupils have a reasonable understanding of the sounds of letters and use several strategies to understand the meaning of new texts. The higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression. Several pupils belong to the local library. The quality of written work is variable, but below expected levels, overall. Although the higher attaining pupils write independently, generally there are weaknesses in spelling and punctuation in a significant majority of pupils' work. Handwriting is often not joined.
127. By the end of Key Stage 2, at age eleven, pupils listen carefully to each other and to their teacher and have a much more extensive vocabulary. Pupils speak confidently in general discussions in class. Many pupils read with good expression and describe events and the main points of a story well. They express opinions about their favourite books and read a variety of materials. Pupils are able to decipher such words as 'pneumonia,' and use phrases such as 'anti-climax.' Lower attaining pupils display an enthusiasm for and a good knowledge of books. They are aware of their own difficulties and how they can improve their skills and tackle new words competently. Standards of written work are often good, with interesting starts to stories. The majority of pupils quickly change stories from being written by the third to the first person. Higher attaining pupils create a sense of atmosphere, such as fear. Work is well presented and joined handwriting is neatly formed in a developing style. Developing literacy skills make a significant contribution to the understanding of other subjects, such as religious education and geography. Overall, standards in all three aspects of English are broadly in line with those expected at the end of Key stage 2.
128. The overall quality of teaching of English throughout the school is good. The literacy strategy is understood and implemented well by all teachers. In Key Stage 1, in over half of the lessons the quality of teaching was good or better, a quarter of the lessons were very well taught; one lesson was unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2, all but one lesson were of satisfactory quality or better. A third of lessons were very well taught, with a further fifth of lessons being characterised by good quality teaching. Teachers put a great deal of emphasis on using pupils' developing literacy skills and their subject-specific vocabulary in all subjects; this is having a beneficial effect on raising standards.
129. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and, with the help of the co-ordinator for special educational needs and good support from staff who are responsible for pupils with English as an additional language, set tasks that match pupils' individual needs closely. Planning is consistently good. Lessons have clear learning objectives and these are usually met. The support staff are well informed and understand their role clearly. They help in planning lessons and make clear reports on pupils' progress during withdrawal sessions. In the well-taught lessons, teachers make good use of questioning to ensure that tasks are understood and to make on-going assessments of pupils' progress. Generally, the plenary session at end of the 'Literacy Hour ' is used well to check pupils' progress and help pupils learn from each other. Lessons are well organised and progress at a lively pace to keep pupils interested. Time is used well to ensure that most pupils complete their work. The majority of teachers manage pupils well,

ensuring that they concentrate. At the same time, they maintain good relationships and include a sense of fun when appropriate. The effectiveness of planning and lessons is evaluated well and teachers use assessment well to move pupils on to the next stage of learning. Homework is often given effectively to help pupils extend their knowledge. Weaknesses in teaching are found in a few lessons when teachers spend too long at the start of the lesson talking at pupils. They do not always use the pupils' own ideas well or help them learn from their mistakes. Pupils become restless; they are keen to get on with their own work. A few teachers do not manage pupils' behaviour well and, consequently, pupils become distracted and do not concentrate on their work.

130. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and reflects closely the needs of the pupils at this school. The policy has appropriate aims and the scheme of work provides detailed guidance for teachers and ensures continuity and progression throughout the school. The optional national tests are used well to identify the school's and pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This analysis, together with the assessments made by teachers during lessons, helps teachers plan future work that is especially relevant to the pupils at this school.
131. The English co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has had suitable training. Teachers' planning is reviewed regularly and samples of pupils' work are scrutinised, but classroom observation has not recently been carried out by the co-ordinator to check standards. However, test results have been analysed by the senior management team. The co-ordinator for this subject works part-time. She is not available to help staff for half of the week, although the deputy headteacher is available to offer support to teachers. The co-ordination of this subject is underdeveloped and the person responsible for the subject is not able to be fully aware of the standards achieved or the quality of teaching throughout the school. The school is aware that this is an area to be improved.
132. The school has good resources in classrooms for everyday use, especially for group reading. The library is easily accessible by all pupils; it is well stocked and organised. The funds given for the delivery of the 'National Literacy Strategy' have been used well in that there is a great variety of 'Big books' and many 'group readers.' Pupils are timetabled to use the library regularly and throughout the school they are able to find books that interest them. Many pupils are keen to research facts and find non-fiction books competently. Because of weaknesses in the school's provision for information and communication technology, which are fully explained in that subject section, the school makes too little use of computer programs to support or extend work in English.

MATHEMATICS

133. As measured by the national tests in the year 2000, pupils' standards at the end of both key stages were well below the national average. However, when compared with schools with similar intakes, they were well above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and were in line with the average at the end of Key Stage 2. These results are adversely affected by the comparatively small proportion of pupils achieving higher levels at the end of both key stages, but particularly at the end of Key Stage 2, where the school did not meet its end of key stage targets for the year 2000. Although, in 2000, boys performed significantly better than girls at the end of Key Stage 2, this is not a continued feature of results over time at either key stage. Some pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 who have English as an additional language occasionally struggle to understand the language and meaning in the test papers. However, these difficulties have largely been resolved by the end of Key Stage 2 because of the very good progress they have made in developing their understanding of the English language.
134. Current inspection findings are that pupils enter Key Stage 1 with standards that are well below those expected nationally. They make good progress in the key stage, including those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, and, by the time they are seven years old, pupils' standards are below the levels expected nationally. This rate of progress is better than at the time of the previous inspection. The standards achieved in this subject are affected by the paucity of language that many pupils experience, which slows their speed of reasoning and recall of basic number facts. When working with written calculations in purely numerical form, pupils achieve broadly average standards. All pupils continue to make good progress through Key Stage 2, which is better than at the time of the last inspection and the standards they reach by the age of eleven are broadly in line with

those expected nationally. This improved performance is as a result of the cumulative effect of an emphasis on the specific language to be taught within lessons and on the generally good progress made by the high proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language. However, weaknesses in some pupils' facility with English continue to result in a higher proportion of pupils than is to be expected nationally failing to achieve average standards. Some pupils, however, are working at levels that are above average. In the last inspection report, standards of attainment at the end of both key stages were judged to be in line with national averages.

135. In Year 1, pupils count in tens to a hundred but a third of pupils cannot follow this reliably on a counting square. Most pupils know that there are seven days in the week, but many pupils with English as an additional language can only say the days in their own language. The support given by the nursery nurse to this group is effective in keeping pupils on task and interested in learning and results in good progress, overall. Year 2 pupils benefit from continuing work on their language capabilities in all subjects as well as a good emphasis in mathematics lessons on the correct language to be used. They total numbers to 20 correctly, but are less secure with numbers beyond 20 unless they use visual aids. They are beginning to have a grasp of simple multiplication facts but this aspect of their work lacks conviction and is still below the level expected of pupils of this age. Higher attaining pupils have a secure understanding of place value to 100 and of patterns of odd or even numbers. A few of the highest attaining pupils add numbers including thousands accurately and work at levels above those expected nationally.
136. In Year 3, pupils build on their language capabilities well and have a more secure grasp of basic arithmetical vocabulary. They use a reasonable variety of strategies to add three digit numbers and have a secure understanding of how to gather and represent data in a frequency chart. However, they do not always set out their work neatly enough and this sometimes adversely affects the accuracy of their calculations. In addition, some drawing of two-dimensional shapes is done without using a ruler and results in a loss of precision. Year 4 pupils use the language of data handling in an appropriate way and have a secure, if slow, knowledge of simple tables, such as the 2, 3 and 5 times. They have an insecure grasp of place value for numbers containing zeros, for example writing seven thousand and eight as 78. Higher attaining pupils have a secure understanding of place value and understand that multiplication is repeated addition. They work at the levels expected of pupils of their age. Lower attaining pupils add two digit numbers correctly and subtract single digit numbers accurately. They have difficulty reading analogue time and correctly name a small range of familiar two- and three-dimensional shapes.
137. Some average attaining Year 5 pupils have extended their knowledge of number operations to include the multiplication or division of two digit numbers by numbers below ten. However, they recall basic number facts too slowly. They measure length in centimetres or millimetres, but inaccurately. Too many do not have a secure understanding of place value, although, when they copy calculations neatly, they generally find the correct answer. In Year 6, pupils have improved their language capabilities generally across their work in school and use and understand a reasonable range of mathematical language. They have a secure recall of basic number facts and standards of recorded arithmetic are generally at or about the levels expected of their age. However, the speed of their recall of basic number facts is too slow.
138. Pupils in Year 6 are taught in two different classes; the range of mathematics experience is wider in one of the classes than the other, where it is almost exclusively focused on number work with a little data handling. This inequality is a matter of concern.
139. The quality of teaching is good, overall, in both key stages; the quality of teaching is now better in Key Stage 1 than during the previous inspection. Just over a third of lessons were very well taught, with a further quarter being well taught. None of the teaching observed was unsatisfactory but, in some lessons, teachers' strengths and weaknesses were finely balanced. In these weaker lessons, the amount of challenge, especially for higher attaining pupils, was insufficient and the pace of the lesson was too slow, particularly in the initial and final sessions, when pupils' speed of recall is to be emphasised. As a result of these weaknesses, some pupils, particularly the higher attaining, made less progress than they could and should.
140. Throughout the school, teachers plan very thoroughly for their lessons. As a result, they know exactly what pupils are intended to learn and prepare appropriate resources well. They almost always share these objectives with pupils at the start of the lesson, which ensures that pupils

know what is expected of them and often, more in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1, revisit the purpose at the end of the lesson. This means that pupils realise what they have achieved and what they need to work on next to improve their standards. Relationships throughout the school are at least good and, more often, are very good. Because of this, pupils are confident to ask for further help and are prepared to work hard and willingly at the tasks set them. This helps them to make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Support staff are deployed well to teach small groups, often of pupils with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language. This more focused support is effective in raising pupils' standards because the needs of the group can be met more closely and a wider range of teaching strategies can be used. Teachers' marking of pupils' work is usually regular and accurate, although too much work is unmarked in Year 3 and some work elsewhere in the school is inaccurately marked as correct. Homework is used appropriately throughout the school to reinforce and extend what has been learned in lessons. Too little use of pupils' numeracy skills is planned into other subjects and, for reasons explained in that subject paragraph, the use of information and communication to support mathematics is not developed well enough, as yet.

141. In Key Stage 1, teachers have a sound knowledge of mathematics and manage pupils satisfactorily, overall. In some classes, for example in Years 2 and 3, the teacher often has to work hard to ensure that they are listening when she is talking; some pupils do not readily pay attention and a very small minority exhibit challenging behavioural traits. When this happens, the pace of the lesson drops, because too much of the teachers' time has to be taken in managing unsatisfactory behaviour. In addition, in this key stage, the class teaching areas are very close to each other and the noise that spills from one area to another sometimes adversely affects the concentration and progress of some pupils.
142. Pupils are managed well in Key Stage 2, particularly with older pupils, because less time has to be taken in managing their behaviour against a background of other noise and because teachers' high expectations of their application, attitudes and standards are usually more effectively transmitted. In addition, less of the teachers' time is taken with counteracting basic language deficiencies and teachers generally have a good knowledge of mathematics. In those classes in this key stage where pupils' progress is less rapid, it is because the teachers' expectations of pupils' attention and behaviour is not effectively translated into ensuring that they pay attention and work productively.
143. When teaching is of a very high quality, for example in Year 2 and the single age classes in Years 5 and 6, lessons are conducted at a very good pace, pupils work very hard at interesting and well-chosen tasks that build very well on what they have previously learned and which match very closely the needs of all pupils, because the teacher has assessed these needs very accurately. Pupils learn very quickly in these lessons.
144. In nearly all classes, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They concentrate well and cooperate well when required to do so, which makes a good contribution to their social development. They work diligently and produce work that is nearly always creditable. However, in those classes already identified above, a minority of pupils have poor attitudes to their work and do not behave well enough, often talking across the teacher or making too much noise. This disturbs the concentration and attention of others, sometimes in other classes and adversely affects the speed at which they and their classmates learn.
145. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented soundly, but there are still weaknesses in the effectiveness of the initial sessions, where pupils are to develop their speed of recall of basic number facts and their understanding of the number system and in teachers' use of the final sessions, where pupils' understanding of what they have done is probed and extended. The analysis of annual testing is becoming effective in identifying gaps in pupils' knowledge and the school's provision, but focuses too much on the results of National Curriculum tests in Year 6. The school recognises that it is now timely to extend this analysis to include annual testing in other year groups. The school has recently introduced a system for testing pupils more regularly, for example at the end of each half term's work. Because the co-ordinator is insufficiently involved in monitoring that this system is being used by all his colleagues and does not routinely receive the results of such testing for analysis, it is not clear that this has taken place in all classes and the progress that pupils may have made cannot be evaluated. This is unsatisfactory. In addition, the co-ordinator has too little understanding of the quality of teaching in the subject because he is insufficiently involved in monitoring or evaluating. This, too, is

unsatisfactory. In this aspect of the subject, insufficient development has taken place since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

146. There are no National Curriculum tests for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. However, teachers' assessments indicate that pupils' overall attainment at both the expected and the higher levels in the year 2000 was below the national average. This shows a slight but insignificant drop from the previous year in those achieving the expected levels. In comparison with similar schools these results were both above average and show that standards reported at the last inspection have been broadly maintained.
147. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds, standards were well below national expectations, both for those achieving the expected and higher levels. In comparison with similar schools these results were both below average. As at the previous inspection, Key Stage 2 results, although consistently well below national averages, broadly follow the national trend. These standards are partly due to the significant numbers of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, who often find difficulty in reading and understanding questions, despite having sound subject knowledge. Further, an analysis of those joining the school during Key Stage 2 shows overall lower standards than those remaining from Key Stage 1 within the school.
148. During the inspection, standards in the small number of lessons seen and in the analysis of pupils' work from the current term are below average, overall, at the end of both key stages. This represents an improvement at the end of Key Stage 2, the reasons for which are explained below.
149. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress. Their attainment is better in the knowledge of living things, materials and physical processes. It is unsatisfactory in experimental and investigative science, mainly because teachers throughout the school frequently model experiments and investigations for the pupils too much. This leaves little scope for them to take an active part in planning and carrying out their own investigations. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language generally make satisfactory progress but, in lessons where there is language support, progress is better.
150. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 have a sound knowledge and understanding of seeds and plant growth and classify materials soundly, for example, by whether it is possible to grind them. They make simple circuits and identify correctly appliances and toys that run on either mains electricity or batteries. Higher attaining pupils understand that a circuit has to be complete to make a bulb light and that batteries have positive and negative terminals and need to be fitted correctly for things to work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a greater understanding of electricity and investigate materials that conduct electricity. They write up their investigations satisfactorily, using a given framework. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 investigate electricity further and have a satisfactory grasp of the differences between simple and parallel circuits through investigations they have made. They have a sound knowledge of the parts of the human body and their functions, knowing, for example, that the heart is a pump and that blood circulates through the body. Through investigations, they know that pulse rate increases after exercise and some can explain why this happens.
151. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory at both key stages, as it was during the last inspection, with one lesson being unsatisfactory and one very good. Lessons are well planned and have clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils and used as headings for recorded work. This was evident in a well-introduced Year 2 lesson on electrical power sources and circuits, where careful questioning and planned activities took good account of pupils' abilities and enabled them all to make good progress. In some lessons, pupils are not sufficiently settled, resulting in them not fully understanding the purpose of the lesson or the planned activities. Teachers are not always aware of what pupils have learned previously and, therefore, do not always challenge pupils sufficiently, as in Year 4 where pupils were investigating materials that conduct electricity and knew beforehand that metals were good conductors. Often, lessons involve pupils copying down information without fully understanding the content, especially those pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Although most lessons involve some investigative work, this is usually teacher-directed and provides few

opportunities for pupils to plan for themselves and so better understand the processes involved. Support staff are well used in lessons in both key stages and plan appropriate activities alongside teachers, for example in Key Stage 1 when a nursery nurse worked with groups of pupils and in Key Stage 2 when pupils received language support.

152. Pupils' work is generally well presented and shows a good use of subject vocabulary. Investigations are set out clearly with carefully drawn and labelled diagrams. Marking is consistent and often provides useful comments to aid future learning. Assessment tasks are carried out after each unit of study and are now being used to provide sound information that informs future planning for the year. The use of information and communication technology is developing in science, as in Year 6 where spreadsheets were being used to record and compare pulse rates. Within literacy there are opportunities to develop science through a range of big books on different aspects of science.
153. The coordinator leads the subject soundly; no judgement on this aspect of the subject was made in the last report. Samples of work are looked at every half term and checked against subject planning in order to monitor the progress that classes are making. The school has recently adopted Quality and Curriculum Authority materials to help ensure a balance between all aspects of science and continuity and progression year on year. An analysis of national test results has shown some weakness in knowledge and understanding of electricity, which now has a stronger focus. These measures are having positive effects on standards throughout the school. New reference materials and parts from a commercial scheme have been adopted well to increase teachers' own subject knowledge, understanding and confidence. Science topics are planned over two year cycles to ensure that all pupils, including those in mixed age classes, cover the full syllabus. Although the coordinator sees teaching informally, there is no formal monitoring of teaching in science with a view to identifying strengths and weaknesses and developing the quality of teaching and learning in the subject.

ART

154. Standards of art at the end of both key stages are in line with national expectations. Pupils' work in art is satisfactory overall but a few pupils in both key stages have produced good work. This good work includes the collages of vases in the Year 1/2 class, where tissue paper is used effectively and the perspective drawings in Year 6, where the buildings appear to retreat into the distance. These judgements match those made during the last inspection.
155. Pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress in this subject. Throughout the school, pupils show a satisfactory development of skills when using a variety of media, such as charcoal, pastels, paint and clay. There has been an improvement since the previous inspection in the way pupils use charcoal. This is clearly shown in displays throughout the school. In the hall, large and striking puppets depict the Monkey King story. The Key Stage 1 display of portraits in the style of Guiseppe Arcimboldo, made from cut-out pictures of fruit, shows the pupils' developing cutting skills and that they are in the early stages of understanding how to set out work on a page. In Key Stage 1 pupils mix their own colours and some of their portraits show good attention to detail. Several portraits produced on the computer by pupils are recognisable, for instance showing short, dark, spiky hair. Several drawings, using paisley embroidery as a stimulus, are very detailed. Year 1 pupils have carefully executed clay hanging tiles, with raised patterns. In Year 3, most pupils cut out their star shapes accurately and, by the end of the key stage, several pieces of work, such as the industrial scenes and stencilled two colour patterns, show a greatly improved understanding of composition. Sketchbooks are used inconsistently throughout the school and so it is difficult to track the progress of individual pupils in developing drawing skills and experimenting before creating the final picture. In the last inspection report, the use of sketchbooks was judged to be under-emphasised. Pupils are not encouraged fully enough to use their imagination and skills to create their own pictures. Pupils in Year 6, however, did use their initiative and a few painted and expanded only a part of Lowry's painting. They freely experiment with the watercolour technique and patiently re-create the pictures of industrial scenes painted by Lowry. Several of these pictures are well composed and show good observational skills.
156. Only three art lessons, all in Key Stage 2, were observed during the inspection. However, from this evidence and an analysis of pupils' previous work, teachers' plans and records, the overall quality of teaching throughout the school is satisfactory, as it was at the time of the previous

inspection. In one lesson observed the teacher had researched the topic well, had a good understanding of the subject, gave a good demonstration, clear directions and chose and used resources well. This was despite the fact that there is no water in this classroom. The class was well organised which enabled the teacher to spend time with each group, questioning and extending pupils' learning. Another lesson was taken at short notice due to the illness of the class teacher. Despite this, a good lesson was given because there were good relationships between the replacement teacher and pupils and the teacher was enthusiastic and prompted and encouraged the pupils to concentrate and do well. Generally teachers manage time well and good links are established with other subjects, such as geography, history and religious education. There are, however, weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, such as the printing technique and they do not always challenge their pupils to be creative. Teachers display pupils' work well and extend pupils reading and questioning skills by labelling displays carefully.

157. The curriculum co-ordinator has too little opportunity to monitor and evaluate the standards of work produced and the quality of teaching and experiences provided by the school. Management of this aspect of the subject is, therefore, unsatisfactory. A portfolio of work has been started to help give teachers ideas for lessons and to help them understand the standard of work expected for each year group. This portfolio, however, is bulky, disorganised and is without comments on the pupils' work. Consequently it is of less help to teachers than it might otherwise be. Recently the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) scheme of work has been adopted by the school, but is yet to have an effect upon raising standards. The school draws well on the cultural backgrounds of the pupils to influence the range of work attempted in the subject; this is an improvement since the last inspection. The co-ordinator has been unable to ensure that pupils use sketchbooks so that the teachers can assess the pupils' progress and identify their strengths and areas for improvement. While class teachers work hard to meet their own pupils' needs, they receive insufficient help to enable them to do so really well. Despite this, pupils are generally enthusiastic, keen to start work, pleased with the results of their efforts and remember what they have been taught. The subject has satisfactory resources, but the lack of water in two classrooms, insufficient left handed and sharp scissors and the lack of easily available fine brushes makes it difficult for some teachers to deliver the curriculum and for the pupils to produce a good standard of final work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

158. Standards are average at the end of both key stages. This represents an improvement in Key Stage 2 where standards were previously below average. Standards in Key Stage 1 have been maintained. The main weakness identified in the previous inspection was the lack of evaluation pupils made to modify their products against the design brief. This has been addressed to some extent and improved in some classes, although teachers still do not place sufficient emphasis on the evaluation stage of the design process. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily, but when recording their work a significant majority are hampered by limited literacy skills.
159. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good and this has a beneficial effect on the rates of pupils' progress and the standards attained. Pupils are encouraged to select appropriate materials and design a variety of products. Pupils in Year 1 develop sound skills in cutting, sticking and joining. They draw simple patterns for their design and, when designing a printing block for example, they identify the materials required. Year 2 pupils extend their designing skills to make a party hat. They discuss their plans and how to measure and join the card accurately. Pupils work satisfactorily together, helping to measure each other's head and using tools, such as staplers, safely and effectively to join the card strips. The small range of materials available for the task limited opportunity for selection. The good emphasis on independent use of tools and safety resulted in the majority of pupils using staples and hole punches with accuracy and confidence. Where teaching is very good, it is because the teacher ensured that pupils acquired appropriate skills and learned to select and manage a range of tools safely and competently. In addition, pupils' simple evaluation of the task establishes how effective their shape was, whether the task was easy or difficult and their response to their finished product. It did not, however, involve pupils fully enough in identifying possible ways to modify their product to improve it.
160. In Key Stage 2, there is greater emphasis placed on testing and evaluating products. For example, in a Year 3/4 lesson, pupils selected and tested a range of materials for suitability when designing and making money containers. Pupils have limited knowledge of the names of different fabrics, but the teacher worked hard to extend their vocabulary in this respect. As a

result, by the end of the lesson pupils had increased their knowledge of fabric well, using words such as 'nylon', 'needlecard', 'towelling' and understanding terms such as 'fray'. However, an overlong introduction and lengthy construction of a table to record findings left too little time for pupils to test materials properly. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good links to health and hygiene in their work on food technology. They work with an increasing range of tools and materials in Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 satisfactorily explore different types of shelters and the materials from which they are made, for example, designing and making a tent and testing it for durability. Average and higher-attaining pupils label designs carefully and provide clear, step-by-step, instructions with diagrams. Lower-attaining pupils have difficulties when recording their work.

161. Effective questioning by teachers extends pupils' ideas and enables them to explain more clearly, using an appropriate range of technical language, but a significant number of pupils have difficulty expressing their ideas accurately, because they do not have a wide vocabulary and a good understanding of English. A weakness in provision is the lack of use of information and communication technology to assist pupils with design and modification. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily in this key stage, but, when recording their work, a significant majority are hampered by limited literacy skills.
162. Pupils enjoy the subject and work with enthusiasm and a good awareness of safety. They help one another and work well in pairs when required to do so, reflecting the expectations of teachers. The adoption of the national guidelines for the subject has helped to ensure a more structured approach. At present, the subject is 'looked after' by the headteacher, in the absence of a permanent co-ordinator. Whilst he sees teachers' planning, monitoring of the teaching and learning in the subject has not yet been developed fully enough. There is no record of pupils' present standards and the skills developed, in order to ensure that planning is matched to pupils' needs. The absence of any formal assessment procedures means that teachers are not always clear about pupils' knowledge and the skills they have acquired. These omissions restrict the effectiveness of the provision and the learning taking place.

GEOGRAPHY

163. Because of the school's timetabling arrangements, geography was being taught only in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. However, from the evidence of an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, lessons observed and a discussion with the subject coordinator, pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages and attain satisfactory standards at the end of both key stages, as they did at the time of the last inspection.
164. By the age of seven, pupils begin to recognise environmental features. They point out human and physical features in the countryside and look at life on the farm. They know the countries of the United Kingdom and some can point out the position of Birmingham. By the age of eleven, pupils begin to know how to use different maps. They understand how rivers are formed and have a sound knowledge and understanding of the main features of a river.
165. In the three lessons observed, teaching, overall, was good; no judgement was possible during the previous inspection. Lesson planning is very good and relates well to medium term planning. Clear introductions, with careful questioning and good explanations of activities, mean that lessons move forward well without time being wasted. Activities take full account of pupils' literacy skills, are challenging and ensure that all can make progress. For example, in the Year 5 lesson on the water cycle, higher attaining pupils had to answer questions in their own words, whereas lower attaining pupils were given sentences to put in order. In two lessons, a language support assistant, who had planned activities alongside the class teachers, provided good support for pupils with English as an additional language. Resources are well prepared and used effectively to support learning. For example, in a lesson on maps, pupils used an enlarged A-Z map to locate their school and other local landmarks. Laminated aerial photographs were then compared with the maps, helping pupils to understand what maps actually are. Work is generally well marked with useful comments. Very good relationships, pupils' enthusiasm and very good behaviour and attitudes, all contribute positively to their learning.
166. Geography is soundly led and managed by the coordinator; no judgement was made in the previous report. Quality and Curriculum Authority materials have recently and usefully been

introduced to help ensure continuity and progress throughout the school. Pupils' work has been sampled and matched against teachers' planning to check that the syllabus is being adequately covered. Areas for development were fed back to teachers, for example the need for more investigative work. The school is aware of the need to develop the use of information and communication technology in this subject, as time and priorities permit. As in the last inspection, no assessment is made in geography; teachers know which topics have been covered in earlier years, but have no record of pupils' developing subject skills.

HISTORY

167. Because of the school's timetabling arrangements, history was being taught only in Key Stage 1 at the time of the inspection. From an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning, the two lessons observed and a discussion with the coordinator, standards at the end of both key stages are judged to be in line with those expected of pupils of their respective ages. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when standards at Key Stage 1 were judged to be unsatisfactory.
168. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of important events in history such as the gunpowder plot. They understand that, as a result of the king's life being saved, this event is remembered every year on November 5th. They put the events in the life of Guy Fawkes in satisfactory order and are beginning to get a sense of chronology. By looking at the clothes that Guy Fawkes wore, they begin to make sound comparisons between aspects of past lives and their own. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils begin to recognise different periods in history. In Years 3 and 4 they compare Roman and Celtic Britain soundly, and have a satisfactory knowledge of Roman Britain and events such as the revolt by Boudicca. In Years 5 and 6, they have a secure understanding of life in World War II and how the war affected people. They begin to understand what it would be like to be an evacuee and to live with food rationing.
169. One satisfactory and one very good lesson were observed in Key Stage 1. The lessons were well planned and carefully prepared. Pupils showed great enthusiasm in these lessons and were keen to do the activities. The very good lesson moved forward well, with a range of activities to hold pupils' interest. One pupil was dressed as Guy Fawkes and others were asked to describe how the character was different from someone today. Tasks in both lessons were securely matched to pupils' abilities so that all could make progress. All had to sequence pictures from the life of Guy Fawkes and higher attaining pupils were expected to write sentences to match the pictures. In the better lesson, pupils were well managed, stayed on task well and made good progress; in the other lesson, where pupils were unsettled and at times inattentive, progress was only satisfactory.
170. The coordinator leads the subject soundly, but has no opportunity to monitor or evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. National guidance materials have been introduced to help ensure continuity and progress throughout the school. The subject is blocked with geography, and soundly planned over a two-year cycle so that pupils in mixed age classes cover all of the topics in the scheme of work. Medium term planning is monitored regularly and matched against samples of pupils' work to check that the syllabus is being covered adequately. At present, no assessment is made when teachers have finished teaching units of history; teachers, therefore, know the aspects that have been covered, but have little indication of pupils' developing skills. Resources for history are good and are often supplemented with topic boxes from the local library service. Visits to places such as Shugborough Hall for a World War II experience add to pupils' learning experiences.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

171. Pupils' standards observed in lessons were, broadly speaking, at the levels expected for the age concerned; however, because of circumstances outside the school's control, a continuing lack of hardware has cumulatively resulted in gaps in pupils' understanding and knowledge in aspects of the subject. As a result, pupils' standards, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, at the end of both key stages are below those expected nationally, overall, and the progress they make is unsatisfactory.

172. The school has had good plans in place for some time to address this issue, which was highlighted as a key issue in the last inspection report. Much has been implemented and progress since that inspection in improving provision has been good. For example:
- National guidance has been adopted to ensure that the full National Curriculum requirements are covered over time.
 - Software has been bought to ensure that all aspects of the subject can be delivered satisfactorily.
 - Teachers' expectations of what pupils at each stage should achieve have been raised through the development of a useful document that is, potentially, also a good means of recording the progress made by each individual if it is used consistently throughout the school.
173. Nevertheless, because of delays in improving the hardware and the inadequate nature of much of the hardware currently in the school, these developments have not resulted in consistently improved standards across the full range of the subject and there are too many gaps in individuals' knowledge and understanding. The need to implement the developments planned in this subject as soon as possible is a matter of urgency. In addition, the position of some of the more modern computers does not allow easy and regular access, as they are in a different building from some classes or are out of sight of the class teacher.
174. Pupils in Year 1 understand that devices, such as a tape recorder, store information and respond to instructions. They correctly use graphic tools, such as a brush or an air gun, to draw self-portraits. In Year 2, pupils use the mouse confidently when they edit text. They use the correct keys to delete, capitalise and insert spaces and text. They give a programmable toy the correct sequence of instructions, for example, to complete a square circuit. Year 4 pupils confidently use a satisfactory range of strategies to improve the quality, accuracy and appearance of a piece of text. They change the colour and size of the font used, insert and delete text, sometimes using cutting and pasting techniques, and highlight some text. They save and print their work correctly. Some pupils send and receive email messages. Pupils in the class of mixed Year 5 and 6 pupils use a spreadsheet soundly, for example to calculate the cost of party food. They gain a satisfactory understanding of how to use a digital camera through a good demonstration and explanation by two pupils whose knowledge of this aspect of information and communication technology is above that expected for their age.
175. These standards match national expectations for their respective year groups but, because of the lack of opportunity for pupils to practise skills frequently enough and the previously unsatisfactory nature of the subject curriculum, there are many gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding and they have not all experienced all aspects of the required curriculum. In addition, there are not enough opportunities for information and communication technology to be used to extend pupils' experiences in other subjects.
176. The quality of teaching and learning is sound, overall, throughout the school. In half the lessons seen, teaching was good but, in one lesson, the teacher's strengths and weaknesses were finely balanced. Teachers plan well for the needs of the lesson and make good use of the limited resources available to them. As a result, they have developed a good range of strategies and much work takes place off-screen. For example, in a good Year 4 lesson pupils prepared to write a newspaper article by working in pairs to decide the subject matter and how they should lay it out. This was a good link to their work in English and will be completed during literacy lessons. Another example of good use being made of limited resources was in Year 2 where the teacher has ensured that pupils experience the same activities over a three-week period and, accordingly, has made good use of the support staff available to oversee one activity. Pupils respond satisfactorily, overall, to the tasks set them. They generally behave well and settle quickly, concentrating well and working well collaboratively or co-operatively. These qualities ensure that they are interested in their work, do so productively and gain knowledge reasonably swiftly. However, in some classes in Key Stage 1, a minority of pupils do not consistently pay adequate attention to their teachers and do not show good enough attitudes to work; therefore, the pace of the lesson is adversely affected while the teacher deals with their behaviour.
177. The school environment is rich in examples of information technology. Many displays are enriched by teachers' use of labelling and questions for pupils to consider. The quality of co-ordination has improved as a result of a whole-school improvement following the last inspection

report. It is now sound but the co-ordinator is not able to monitor standards and provision in the subject regularly or rigorously enough to be able fully to account for them. This aspect of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. A good system for recording pupils' developing skills is being trialled in one class in school and there is a useful portfolio of pupils' work in many strands of the subject. However, these examples are not matched to National Curriculum level descriptors and are, therefore, of less use than they might be in helping teachers to know what standards could and should be achieved. In addition, there is no secure system for tracking pupils' skills that enables teachers to plan further work that meets their developing needs accurately.

MUSIC

178. In the previous inspection, standards in music were below the nationally expected level at the end of Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, they were in line with the nationally expected level. Progress was uneven, varying from sound to unsatisfactory, depending upon the skill and expertise of the teacher. Current inspection findings reflect a similar picture with standards at the end of Key Stage 1 being below the level expected nationally. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are broadly average. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in both key stages.
179. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language take a full role in lessons and make similar progress to others in the class. The specialist teaching provided by Sandwell's Youth Music Service makes a good contribution to music. In addition, a small number of pupils in Key Stage 2 benefit from the expertise of a visiting specialist for flute tuition. These pupils achieve well as a result of the good teaching provided. Older boys, for example, are making good progress in skills, using the tabla drums, whilst girls perform various Asian dances confidently.
180. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy singing, but many do not have good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. They perform a limited range of songs, sometimes accompanying these with simple actions. Pupils lack sufficient experience of explaining sounds through the use of a range of percussion instruments. They have limited skills in the use of unpitched percussion instruments. In spite of the opportunities provided in the older classes in Key Stage 1, skills in composing and performing are weak. Few pupils know the names of instruments. Many pupils are hampered by their limited literacy skills, for example, when reading hymns in morning assemblies. A significant minority do not handle instruments with sufficient care and respect. In a Year 1/2 lesson, the teacher made good use of the tape recorder to evaluate pupils' performance. As a result, listening skills were improved and pupils had the opportunity to refine their percussion skills, which remained below average because not enough emphasis had been given to teaching and developing percussion and composition skills systematically as pupils move through the key stage. In some classes planned opportunities for listening and appraising are given to introduce pupils to a range of music; for example, in Year 2, pupils listened to La Mourisque by Susato, but there are too few such opportunities. Consequently, pupils do not have sufficient knowledge of a wide range of music.
181. There are missed opportunities for listening and appraising on assemblies. In spite of music playing, pupils are not encouraged to listen carefully and reflect on what they hear. The high noise level at times prevents pupils from listening quietly at the end of assemblies.
182. Standards of singing in Key Stage 2 are satisfactory, overall, but, in Key Stage 1, many pupils struggle to join in the words of hymns because they lack sufficient skill in reading. The oldest pupils maintain the tune, when singing, with good pitch and adequate rhythm. They attempt to sing in two parts, but with limited success. They know the value of basic musical notation, such as 'crotchet' and 'quaver' and understand signs such as 'pause' and 'treble clef'. The good subject knowledge and expertise of the specialist teacher are significant factors in the good learning that takes place
183. Pupils have limited knowledge of music from their own and other cultures because not enough attention is given to this in lessons, except where there is specialist music input. In these sessions, for example drum tuition, pupils make good gains in learning, reading drum rhythms such as 'Roopak' and 'Teental' and using the appropriate Asian musical vocabulary. Girls recall complex dance sequences well; many demonstrate fluent, graceful movements. In these

sessions, pupils make good progress, because they are well motivated and well challenged. The limited time devoted to music in the curriculum is a further constraint.

184. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Only specialist teaching was observed in Key Stage 2; this is of good quality and, as a result, in these lessons pupils learn well. However, the quality of teaching is uneven depending upon the skill and expertise of teachers, as in the previous inspection. Some teachers lack confidence in the subject and do not have sufficient skill to challenge and extend pupils' creative abilities. In the better teaching in Key Stage 1, opportunities are provided to enable pupils to compose and evaluate their performance. In a Year 1/2 lesson, pupils worked collaboratively to create music relating to 'Bonfire Night'. They were unable to create their own musical notation, but followed the teacher's symbols. They worked well together, with obvious enjoyment, improving their listening skills and evaluating their performance.
185. The adoption of a commercial scheme, together with national guidance, provides a more structured approach to teaching music. Although assessment opportunities are identified through the commercial scheme there is little evidence of the use of such assessment to inform teaching and learning. There is still no strategy for monitoring teaching and learning. The co-ordinator's role has not been sufficiently developed to enable her to have a good overview of standards across the school and to focus on improving teaching and learning and raising standards. Broadly satisfactory progress has been made in this subject since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

186. At the end of both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, reach the standards expected nationally for their respective ages; this is the same as during the previous inspection. They make satisfactory progress through each key stage.
187. In their dance lesson, pupils in Year 2 move in a controlled fashion in a suitable range of ways, using their imagination well to imitate the mood of recorded music. They do not, however, make good use of space and tend to bunch together too much. In Year 4, pupils collaborate effectively to identify the symbols used on maps, prior to devising a 'treasure hunt' as part of their work on early orienteering skills. Year 5 pupils pass and receive balls safely and accurately. They work satisfactorily in teams and understand the reasons for different styles of passing in a game. Standards in swimming are in line with those expected at the end of Key Stage 2.
188. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, teachers plan their work well. Usually, they manage pupils well and ensure that they make satisfactory contributions to their own learning, but, in Key Stage 1, there are some pupils whose reaction to being in a large space, such as the school hall, is immature. As a result, these pupils fail to apply themselves well enough to their learning and make less progress than they should and could. Generally, pupils respond soundly to the tasks set them and learn at a reasonable pace, participating satisfactorily and making satisfactory gains in their skills, because teachers plan activities that are securely matched to pupils' abilities and needs. One lesson in Key Stage 2 was well taught because the teacher:
- explained the tasks to the pupils clearly so that they knew the purpose of the lesson;
 - devised interesting and relevant activities that captured their imagination;
 - had high expectations of their application and behaviour; and
 - ensured that they worked productively and used time well so that their enthusiasm and concentration was sustained.
189. Overall, the accommodation is adequate for teaching the required curriculum. Within this judgement, however, the fact that there is no grassed area readily available for pupils to practise on, for example for football or cricket, is unsatisfactory. On the other hand, the school hall is a good facility. All areas of the required curriculum are covered over time. The system of assessing pupils' attainment is securely tied in with teachers' planning, but there is no secure system for using this information to track pupils' progress. There is good provision to extend pupils' learning through extra-curricular clubs, many of which are well attended. Regular fixtures against other schools are held in football and cricket; the school has performed extremely well in cricket over a number of years.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

190. Pupils make satisfactory progress through both key stages and their standards at the end of both key stages are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. They have been maintained since the last inspection.
191. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils begin to understand that religions have special places for worship. They consider in detail the features of a church and know that Christians take their children to be baptised as a sign of belonging. They understand that their birthdays and other historical events, such as the gunpowder plot, are celebrated as types of festivals, and that there are religious celebrations to mark events such as the birth of Jesus. They know that people give gifts at times of celebration and understand that it is the thought and care behind giving which is important. By the age of eleven, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of world religions such as Buddhism and Islam. They have a sound knowledge of the founders of religions and their teachings. They begin to discover that religious festivals are celebrated in varying ways in different countries of the world.
192. The quality of teaching is good, overall, with no unsatisfactory lessons and one judged to be excellent. Lessons are well planned with good introductions in which pupils are carefully questioned and subject vocabulary introduced. Good methods are used to make lessons interesting and to capture pupils' imagination. This was shown, for example, in a Year 2 lesson on giving, where the teacher had wrapped up parcels for pupils to open that contained qualities and ideas that cost nothing. In the excellent lesson, well-planned and prepared activities kept pupils' interest as they began to act out the story of the Three Wise Men and opened a surprise package containing fragile nativity figures, whilst learning about the birth of Jesus. Religious education lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking, listening and writing skills. Often they work in their literacy groups, with appropriate writing tasks that they are all able to complete, as in Year 5 and 6 lessons on how Christmas is celebrated in Australia. However, an analysis of pupils' work also shows that in some lessons writing is just copied from the board with little understanding. Pupils' work is generally well marked with useful comments.
193. Pupils work hard in lessons and are enthusiastic about their work. Very good relationships within classes gives them the confidence to bring their own religious traditions into lessons, helping to develop better understanding and making the subject more relevant for all.
194. The coordinator provides sound leadership and management for the subject. National guidance materials have been introduced to support the locally agreed syllabus, and to help ensure continuity and progression in learning. Assessment information is not routinely used to ensure that teachers plan work that is closely matched to pupils' developing needs. Teachers' planning and pupils' work are reviewed regularly, but there has been no monitoring of teaching within religious education, with a view to developing teaching and learning.