

# INSPECTION REPORT

**GOLDTHORN PARK JUNIOR AND INFANT  
SCHOOL**

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104331

Headteacher: Mr K Rogers

Reporting inspector: Mr M Johnstone  
21114

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2000

Inspection number: 225148

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 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ward Road  
Wolverhampton  
West Midlands

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr N Whyle

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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21114			The school's results and pupils' achievements
Richard Barnard	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
13526			Pupils' welfare, health and safety
			Partnership with parents and carers
Brian Aldridge	Team inspector	Mathematics	Leadership and management
17454		Design and technology	
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4926		Religious education	
Judy Dawson	Team inspector	History	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a large community primary school for boys and girls aged three to eleven years. It is situated in the south of the Metropolitan Borough of Wolverhampton. Housing in the area is mainly semi-detached or terraced, with a mixture of private and rented properties. There are 391 pupils on roll, consisting of 186 boys and 205 girls. The number on roll is similar to that at the time of the previous inspection. At the time of this inspection there were 22 children in the reception class and 37 who were part-time in the nursery. (The nursery and reception classes are now referred to as the Foundation Stage) The children come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. The large majority are of Asian origin. The percentage of pupils who have English as an additional language (84 per cent) is very high. About a third of these receive additional language support. Assessment of children on entry to the main school indicates that attainment is broadly average except in communication, language and literacy, where it is below average. The percentage of pupils who are eligible for free school meals (14 per cent) and the percentage of pupils who have special needs (22 per cent) is broadly typical of schools nationally. There are no pupils who have a statement of special educational need.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

In the previous inspection report in 1998, the school was found to have serious weaknesses in standards, teaching and leadership and management. Over the past two years, the school has reacted positively and effectively to these issues and has been largely successful in moving forward on all three fronts. Standards are similar to the national average in most subjects, teaching is satisfactory and improving and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. The commitment of the school to raising standards and the capacity of the school to improve are good. There are still areas to be improved and some initiatives have not yet worked through sufficiently in practice. However, these do not now constitute serious weaknesses. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Good leadership is raising standards.
- It knows its weaknesses, is committed to improvement and monitors and evaluates its performance well.
- Pupils' work is planned effectively.
- Pupils do well in art and design, religious education and history.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in a multicultural society and racial harmony underpins the work of the school.
- Provision for children under six is good.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in speaking across the school and standards in writing, particularly for boys in the juniors.
- Standards and the pace of learning in information and communication technology
- Investigation and problem solving in mathematics and science.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the previous inspection in February 1998 there were below average standards in seven out of eleven subjects and weaknesses in teaching in the juniors related to shortcomings in planning, assessment and teachers' knowledge in some subjects. The headteacher was not positive enough in directing the work of the school and the school development plan needed some refinement. The governing body was not sufficiently involved in long term financial planning, did not monitor the school's performance and did not fully comply with statutory requirements. The school accommodation was also judged to be unsatisfactory.

There has been good improvement in a short period of time. Standards in most subjects have improved over the past two years, although they are still not high enough in aspects of English and information and communication technology (ICT). The quality of teaching is better now, particularly in the juniors. Planning and assessment are mostly good and a good programme of in-service training has improved teachers' knowledge in most areas where it was judged to be unsatisfactory. The leadership of the school is good, there is a good school development plan and the governing body is much more involved in strategic planning. All statutory requirements are met. New building work is imminent and will address the problems with the accommodation.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	C	D	D	E
Mathematics	E	E	C	D
Science	C	E	E	E

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

Average                C

below average        D

well below average    E

Many children begin nursery with little English. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage but by the time they enter Year 1, a significant minority of children have not had time to acquire the necessary skills in English to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy. Standards in other aspects meet national expectations for this age group. By the end of the infants when pupils are seven, standards exceed the national average in writing and are similar to it in reading. Standards in mathematics and science are similar to the national average.

The table shows that in the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds, standards in English were below the national average and in science were well below. In both subjects, standards were well below average when compared with similar schools (schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals). Standards were average in mathematics but were still not high enough when compared with similar schools. Provisional results from the 2000 national tests indicate good improvement in science. In English and mathematics, results are similar to those in 1999. Inspection evidence, including observation of lessons and scrutiny of the pupils' work from last year and this year, indicates that standards are now similar to the national average in mathematics and science. There have been improvements in English and standards, though still below the national average, are closer to



it. Scrutiny of optional national tests in other year groups indicates rising standards. In the work seen, pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) attain similar standards to all other pupils, although some find difficulty in understanding fully what is required in a test situation. The school has set ambitious targets for the next two years. These have not been achieved in 2000 and the school is setting more realistic and achievable targets for 2001. Given the current rate of progress, the school is on course to get close to these.

Standards in religious education exceed the requirements of the local agreed syllabus and pupils make good progress. In ICT standards are below national expectations and are not high enough. Work in art and design at seven and eleven and in history at eleven is better than normally seen.

### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Attitudes to the school	Children in the nursery quickly settle and enjoy learning. At all stages, pupils are keen to learn and try their best. They maintain concentration and show good levels of interest in learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. These high standards occasionally slip in a few lower junior lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and there is a high degree of racial harmony. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall but is limited by a lack of opportunity for pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning.
Attendance	Attendance is below the national average but has shown a steady increase over the past three years. Rates of unauthorised absences are below the national average.

### **TEACHING AND LEARNING**

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>Aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>	<b>aged 7-11 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Satisfactory

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This has improved, particularly in the junior classes since the previous inspection. There is now a larger percentage of good teaching, little unsatisfactory teaching and greater consistency in both teaching and the pace of learning across the school. Better planning, leadership and analysis of what works well and what does not have brought this about. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) is mostly good. This overall improved quality of teaching meets the needs of all the pupils effectively. In the 90 lessons seen across the school 57 per cent were at least good and two per cent were unsatisfactory. These were in lower junior classes. Nine per cent of the teaching was very good. The quality of teaching of children in the foundation classes of nursery and reception is good overall. Across the school, relationships, the use of resources, planning and the use of assessment are particular strengths in the teaching.

The teaching of literacy is mostly good. Teachers have a secure grasp of the National Literacy Strategy. This good understanding is steadily improving pupils' achievements and the quality of their learning. Literacy skills are used well to support learning in other subjects. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. Teachers are developing a sound understanding of how to use the National Numeracy

Strategy, which is helping to improve standards. Pupils are expected to work hard in the great majority of classes and they produce a good amount of work. Most teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking or apply their skills to a mathematical problem. There is a similar weakness in teaching and learning of science where pupils develop a good general knowledge but find difficulty in applying it to a problem. Art and design, history and religious education are well taught and pupils make good progress. Some teachers lack confidence and expertise in the teaching of ICT and pupils' progress is uneven and generally unsatisfactory as a result.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is mostly good and an appropriate statutory curriculum is in place. There has been good progress in curriculum planning since the previous inspection. All pupils have equality of access and opportunity. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good procedures and support in classrooms ensure that pupils make good progress at all stages.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision, particularly in the Foundation Stage and the infants. Planning to support pupils' linguistic development is good in all subjects and ensures they make at least similar progress to all other pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good in all four aspects. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Cultural and religious differences are respected and valued. The school is a harmonious society. Adults set good role models for the pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are effective procedures for promoting good attendance and behaviour. Child protection procedures and systems for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Pupils' attainment and progress are monitored well and information is used satisfactorily to guide planning.

Overall, there is a satisfactory partnership with parents. The development of this partnership is a key element in the school's plan for improvement. Parents of children who have EAL are targeted effectively by the school for special support and guidance.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. This key area of the school's work has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The headteacher provides a clear direction for the school. Curriculum leaders, under the co-ordination of the deputy headteacher, have worked hard on the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and are committed to further improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors form a very close link between parents, the local community and the school. There is a unity of approach between governors and staff and they share the goal of improving pupils' achievements. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has improved this aspect of its work markedly. It has succeeded in analysing well what works and what does not. This is bringing improvement in pupils' attainment and quality of learning.

The strategic use of resources	Budget planning is secure and good account is taken of the principles of best value in relation to the purchase of goods and services. Specific grants are accounted for well and used effectively. Staffing and learning resources are satisfactory, although parts of the accommodation are unsatisfactory. Building work to address this is imminent.
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## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• They would feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• A closer partnership with parents and communications sent home in Punjabi as well as English.</li> <li>• More interesting activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspection evidence confirmed that communications are only sent out in English. The governors and the headteacher are aware of this issue and are taking steps to ensure that parents and carers have access to information in Punjabi. The school has plans to strengthen the parental partnership by developing initiatives, in collaboration with other schools, to encourage more parental involvement in their children's learning. Inspectors feel that the school provides a satisfactory level of extra-curricular activities and provides a level of homework that is similar to that found in most schools.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. In most areas of learning, children begin school with broadly average attainment. However, in the most important aspect of communication, language and literacy, attainment is below average. Most children have a limited understanding of English and below average speaking skills. About a third of the children speak no English. Their personal and social skills are similar to other children of the same age in most aspects, but many children, especially the girls, lack self-confidence. This affects their ability to concentrate and get on with the work expected of them. With good teaching in the Foundation Stage and effective and well-targeted support for children who have English as an additional language (EAL), children learn well and make good progress. By the end of the reception year, they attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. Despite their good progress, a significant minority of the children have not had time to acquire the necessary skills in English to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy.
2. In the 1999 tests and teacher assessments for pupils aged seven, standards were above the national average and those of similar schools in writing, but below average in reading. They were average in mathematics. Between 1997 and 1999, this position remained broadly the same in reading and writing but improved in mathematics. Teacher assessments in science placed standards above the national average. Provisional results for 2000 and inspection evidence indicate that standards are high enough to be in line with national averages in mathematics and science. Overall standards are average in English but not as high in reading and speaking as in listening and writing. These judgements reflect the general picture of standards in these subjects at the time of the previous inspection. In English, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to extend their speaking skills. This places some limitations on the pace of their learning in all subjects. Boys did markedly better than girls in all subjects in 1999. This remains the same in 2000 but the gap is narrowing. Well-targeted teaching and greater awareness on the part of teachers is helping offset the girls' initial lack of self-confidence. Overall, the pace of learning in all three subjects is good throughout the infants.
3. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged eleven standards in English were below and in science well below the national average. In both subjects standards were well below average when compared with similar schools. Standards were average in mathematics but were still not high enough when compared with similar schools. Teacher assessments underestimated the performance of pupils. Provisional results of the 2000 national tests indicate good improvement in science. In English and mathematics, results were similar to those in 1999. Scrutiny of the pupils' work from last year, the small amount of work completed this year and observation of lessons indicates that standards are now similar to the national average in mathematics and science in Year 6. There have been improvements in English but standards are not yet high enough. They remain below the national average but are much closer to it. Scrutiny of optional national tests in other year groups indicates rising standards. Teacher assessments in 2000 were much more accurate and reflect improvements in the school's monitoring and assessment systems. In the tests for 2000, girls did significantly better than boys in writing, but boys outperformed girls in mathematics and science. These differences have been carefully analysed by the school and appropriate targets set to narrow the gap. There is evidence that this is happening in the work seen during the inspection. In English and mathematics, the school set ambitious targets for 2000 and 2001. These have not been achieved in 2000 and the school is setting more realistic and achievable targets for 2001.

4. Since the previous inspection, the quality of teaching has improved in junior classes. There is a much lower percentage of unsatisfactory teaching and more good teaching. There is much more effective planning and targeting of weaknesses that were identified in the previous report. These factors have ensured that pupils make mostly satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science throughout the juniors. Where there is targeted additional support for pupils who have special educational needs, progress is good. There has been good improvement in pupils' use of literacy and numeracy skills to support work across the curriculum. In English, by the age of seven, pupils have acquired more than one strategy to successfully read unfamiliar words and read with satisfactory understanding from a variety of suitable texts.
5. By the time they leave the school, pupils are enthusiastic, fluent, confident readers and show strong preferences about the books that they read. Pupils use library skills well and older pupils have a good understanding of a glossary, index and contents page. In English, there are weaknesses in speaking, spelling and grammar, particularly for the average and lower attaining pupils. Pupils, particularly the boys, do not use a wide enough vocabulary in their writing. Junior pupils do not sustain the progress they make in writing in the infant classes. In mathematics, good oral activities at the beginning of lessons are sharpening pupils' mental skills and most pupils have a secure understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in subjects such as design and technology and geography. In mathematics and science, the teaching of investigative skills and pupils' application of key skills to new learning in mathematics and science is being targeted, but is not yet clearly reflected in pupils' work. This is a weakness and slows the progress of pupils. It results in a significant minority of pupils not achieving as well as they could. Scrutiny of the work of last year's Year 6 pupils supports this view.
6. A key factor in the drive to raise standards is the marked improvement in leadership and management. From a position where there were serious weaknesses, there is now a much more rigorous and focused sense of direction and will to succeed. Staff have been successfully empowered and share a common commitment to improvement. The headteacher, senior management, curriculum co-ordinators and governors have worked hard and mostly effectively to target weaknesses. The literacy and numeracy hours are well established and bring a large measure of consistency to the teaching and learning in English and mathematics.
7. This general picture of more focused work is paying dividends in most other subjects and has resulted in good standards and progress in art and design, history and religious education. In design and technology, geography, music and physical education, progress is satisfactory and the standards of work seen are as expected for pupils' age. Pupils who have EAL and those who have special needs make similar progress to all other pupils. There is some high quality work in dance, although in music pupils' standard of singing is not as high as expected for pupils' age. Almost all pupils swim the required 25 metres by the age of eleven. At both seven and eleven, standards in art and religious education are higher than at the time of the previous inspection. At eleven, standards are higher in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Despite recent improvements in ICT, there are still weaknesses in teachers' knowledge and resources and insufficient coverage of the control aspects of the curriculum. This results in below average standards and inconsistent and generally unsatisfactory progress throughout the school.
8. In all subjects, in relation to their prior attainment, pupils who have EAL make similar progress to all other pupils. They achieve standards in line with most other pupils. In speaking throughout the school and in writing particularly in the juniors, pupils show that they have not yet acquired a wide enough range of vocabulary. They do not express their ideas and opinions

clearly and some lack confidence to speak in front of others. They show a satisfactory knowledge of punctuation as they read and write but their understanding and use of appropriate grammar is weaker. By the age of eleven, their handwriting is fluent, joined and well presented. In the national tests for English, mathematics and science some find difficulty understanding fully what is required and applying their knowledge to a particular problem. In this sense, their performance in tests does not always necessarily mirror their achievements in class work.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. Pupils show a good attitude to school which, together with a good appreciation of values, has a positive impact on their achievements. The good standards found at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained
10. Pupils like coming to school and show a good interest in learning. The youngest pupils settle well in the nursery and reception classes. They all show a keen interest in spite of many children having limited skills in communicating. Attitudes are always at least good and sometimes very good in nearly all lessons observed in infant classes. Pupils maintain concentration and show good interest in their learning. This was particularly evident in a Year 1 mathematics lesson where all pupils watched intently and in complete silence as other pupils drew 'less than' five buttons on the board. In Years 3 and 4 standards slip in a small minority of lessons and on a few occasions pupils lack concentration and make little effort. This was mostly due to unsatisfactory control by the teacher and work that failed to offer sufficient challenge for the pupils. In Year 5 and 6 pupils display good attitudes in the majority of lessons and generally work hard, concentrate and appreciate others' contributions. Pupils who have EAL have good attitudes to their learning and are polite to staff who support them.
11. At all stages, pupils' behaviour in lessons, assemblies, around the school and in the playground is good. There have been no temporary or permanent exclusions during the past two years, a figure well below the national average for primary schools. Parents report that very little bullying or oppressive behaviour occurs and a particular strength is the high level of racial harmony throughout the school. This has a positive impact on the level of relationships which are good throughout the school. Pupils show good manners; they are polite to visitors, hold doors open and say 'excuse me' when moving past. They work well in groups and in most classes listen keenly to what others have to say. They show good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.
12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Tasks such as returning registers or helping in the dining room, are undertaken eagerly from an early age. A display of activities and written work clearly demonstrates the pupils' appreciation of the residential visits arranged by the school and the positive impact these have on their personal development. Overall, development is limited by the lack of opportunities available for independent learning in subjects such as mathematics and science.
13. Attendance levels are below the national average. However, they have shown a steady increase over the past three years. The great majority of pupils attend school regularly; the overall figure is below average because many pupils take extended holidays for family reasons. The school recognises this well and makes good efforts to limit the impact of this on the pupils' progress. Rates of unauthorised absences are below the national average. Very few pupils are late and lessons start on time.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

14. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Throughout the school the quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) is good. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection. There is now a larger percentage of good teaching, little unsatisfactory teaching and greater consistency in the quality of teaching in junior classes. This is due mainly to the emphasis placed on the monitoring of planning, teaching and standards of attainment, which is leading to improved subject expertise and classroom management skills. In service training based on the needs of the school and of individual teachers has improved subject knowledge. Teachers now plan more effectively, using national guidelines and the Local Agreed Syllabus for religious education to improve subject coverage. There has been some improvement in the teaching of ICT, although this has not yet had sufficient impact on pupils' learning.
15. In the 90 lessons seen across the school 98 per cent were at least satisfactory, of which 48 per cent were good and nine per cent very good. Two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The quality of teaching of children in the foundation classes of nursery and reception was good overall. Twenty per cent of lessons, all seen in the nursery class, were very good. Although there was not a marked difference in the overall quality between teaching in lessons observed in the infants and the juniors there was some unsatisfactory teaching in junior classes. Very good teaching was seen in individual lessons in mathematics and science in the infants and in English, religious education, art and dance in the juniors.
16. In the Foundation Stage staff work well together. Nursery nurses and specialist support staff for those with EAL make a considerable contribution to learning. Planning is good and takes account of the needs of children with special educational needs. Teaching for the youngest children in the school remains a strength. Induction procedures for children joining the nursery are very good and have a significant impact on the way children settle into school and their personal and social development. All staff have good relationships with the children which puts them at ease. This was particularly evident when a specialist teacher taught a group of new children in two languages. The teacher's enthusiasm and enjoyment were conveyed to the children and helped them learn well. Teachers have a secure knowledge of how young children learn. In the best lessons this helps the teacher match the time spent on any task to the children's ability to concentrate. In some lessons not enough emphasis is placed on teaching children how to use words in sentences or pronounce the words they know correctly. Occasionally too much time is spent colouring in pictures. This slows the pace of their learning.
17. Throughout the school and in all subjects, the teachers clearly identify what they want pupils to learn in a lesson or sequence of lessons. Daily planning is linked effectively to longer term planning. In most subjects and classes, work is adapted for the needs of pupils with all levels of attainment. Where classes are shared between two teachers the quality of planning ensures that the transition from one class teacher to another does not hinder the pupils' learning. In many lessons teachers use their knowledge of the pupils well to target questions to assess understanding, or make sure that they are fully involved in the lesson. The assessment of attainment of pupils with special educational needs is good and teachers use this information to set work that helps them make good progress. The quality of marking is good. It helps pupils understand how to improve and helps teachers plan the next stages of learning. Some very good practice is evident in a Year 2 class where work is annotated and marking includes an assessment of understanding often gathered through discussion with the pupil.
18. Relationships are good and pupils trust their teachers. This is helping teachers establish suitable classroom routines for their new classes, ensuring that little time is wasted in lessons. However, where the teaching is unsatisfactory and in a minority of satisfactory lessons, pupils are not kept on task during group activities and unsuitable behaviour or lack of attention is not dealt with effectively enough. Good relationships are particularly evident in religious education

lessons where pupils' experiences in their own faith are often used openly by teachers to extend their own knowledge as well as that of the class. Teachers plan many educational visits and encourage visitors to the school to give pupils first hand experiences, which help pupils to remember information and improves understanding. Resources, which include videos, tape recorders, white boards, pictures and charts are used well to make lessons more interesting. Support assistants are used effectively throughout their time in the classroom. For example, in one registration period a teaching assistant helped two pupils make good progress in ICT skills, social skills and counting. She gave a shy girl the confidence to work on her own and ensured the two pupils understood the importance of taking turns.

19. The teaching of literacy is mostly good. Teachers have a secure grasp of the National Literacy Strategy. This good understanding is steadily improving pupils' achievements and the quality of learning. Literacy lessons have a good structure with effective whole class reading and writing activities, group and individual work and closing discussion sessions. Literacy skills are used well to support other subjects. Pupils are expected to listen carefully to both the teachers and to each other. There is good development of subject specific language in most lessons. However, not enough emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to use these words in sentences, or to explain their answers to questions in order to improve speaking skills. Teaching and support of pupils with special needs is mostly good. In introductions and summaries led by the class teacher, support staff are used well to help these pupils respond. Pupils are required to use a wide range of writing styles. In history, for example, pupils write as if they were Henry VIII. Pupils with all levels of attainment complete a large quantity of written work in many subjects, including extended writing, which provides them with a solid foundation of knowledge. Sufficient emphasis is placed on group reading during literacy lessons and similar techniques are used to support the development of reading skills in other subjects.
20. On the basis of the scrutiny of work and teaching seen, the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. Teachers are developing an understanding of how to use the National Numeracy Strategy, which is helping to improve standards of attainment in mathematics. Teaching in the lessons seen was mostly good. In the most effective lessons short, sharp and lively introductory sessions are improving mental arithmetic skills. Pupils are expected to work hard in the great majority of classes and generally they produce a good amount of work across the attainment targets of the National Curriculum. Whilst most pupils have a satisfactory understanding about mathematical ideas, teachers do not provide sufficient experiences in problem solving. They do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking or methods using the correct mathematical vocabulary. This hampers their problem solving skills and the development of their use of a range of methods. In the less effective lessons, some groups of pupils practice too much of the same number work when they could be moving onto the next stage. This means their rate of progress is not as rapid as it might be. Pupils use their numeracy skills in other subjects well, for example in graph work in science and geography.
21. Teaching in science is satisfactory. Many teachers miss opportunities to move pupils on from the wide breadth of knowledge provided in science to investigative and problem solving activities that require pupils to think for themselves. This has a detrimental effect on pupils' learning and slows their progress, particularly for the higher attaining pupils.
22. Little direct teaching of ICT was seen during the inspection. Teachers are planning for and beginning to make use of the recently purchased computers. The activities provided are frequently associated with other subjects. However, these activities often require very basic ICT skills and do not build on previous knowledge, or challenge pupils to think for themselves. Some teachers still lack the expertise to develop skills, knowledge and understanding in this subject. They are currently undertaking extended in-service training to improve their teaching.



23. Religious education, art and design and history are well taught and enable pupils with all levels of attainment to make good progress. This is due to teachers' good subject knowledge, enthusiasm and use of resources to stimulate learning. It leads to standards that are above expectations. A few teachers exchange classes for religious education, music and physical education to make best use of their own expertise. This improves the quality of experiences provided. Teaching and learning in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is satisfactory. A good emphasis is placed on safety aspects in all subjects where it is necessary. There is satisfactory use of homework tasks to consolidate and extend learning.
24. The quality of specialist teaching support for those pupils with EAL is good in the Foundation Stage and in the infants. It is satisfactory in the juniors. Pupils are correctly identified and appropriate targets are set for groups of pupils. They are assessed effectively against their learning targets and teachers use these well to inform future work. In subjects across the curriculum, planning to support pupils' linguistic development is good. For example, key subject vocabulary is identified in teachers' planning in history, science and religious education. In the most effective teaching, teachers clearly emphasise key linguistic skills such as letter sounds and model and promote good pronunciation and diction. In junior classes, these elements are not stressed sufficiently. Specialist support teachers use dual language effectively to develop pupils' learning.

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

25. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum covering all the subjects of the National Curriculum and includes the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The latter has been adapted and extended successfully to meet the needs of the diversity of faiths within the school. The pupils are provided with an appropriate curriculum for all other subjects except ICT. A combination of shortcomings in teachers' knowledge, shortages in resources and consistency in teaching of progressively more difficult skills from year to year result in pupils not achieving the appropriate levels for their age.
26. The curriculum is balanced in its allocation of time for different subjects. The change from a two year rolling programme for some subjects to a curriculum targeted for each year group has resulted in more rigorous planning. This is more closely matched to the needs of the pupils. Some subjects are still taught in intensive blocks of time for a few weeks, giving way to another subject later. For example, music shares weekly time with physical education in the juniors. This works well in most cases and the time spent on each subject is balanced over the year. The use of specialist teaching, for example, in music and physical education, makes a positive impact on the pupils' achievement.
27. The school has made good progress in the planning of the curriculum since the last inspection. There is an overall curriculum plan based on government guidance to support the amended National Curriculum. National initiatives have been used well to assist the more detailed planning for each year group. The teachers use appropriate commercial schemes to plan and link these to units of work suggested in the government guidance. All subjects have useful school schemes of work that reflect the programmes of study for the National Curriculum. Except in ICT, the planning builds on previous learning to ensure that the pupils make satisfactory overall progress. A good range of visits and visitors have been built into the planning and matched to the school's curriculum aims. This is a strength of the curriculum, providing depth and relevance as well as good community links.

28. The curriculum planning for the new Foundation Stage for children in the nursery and reception classes is already in place. The curriculum for these children is good, promoting all aspects of the early learning goals. These are in appropriate steps to meet the needs of all the children. The support for those children who have EAL is effective and the planning incorporates good provision for these children. The range of visits and the cultural experiences provided for the Foundation Stage children fully reflects the diversity of cultures within school.
29. All aspects of the national literacy and numeracy strategies are being implemented effectively and are having an impact on the progress that the pupils make and the standards they achieve. A significant minority of pupils throughout the school is not fluent in English. Although the curriculum planning includes the teaching of technical language to support each subject, pupils' general speaking skills are not so well developed. Numeracy skills are used well in other subjects. Pupils record their research in diagrams and graphs, use measures to support science and geography and are very familiar with the passage of time and 'time lines' in history.
30. There are wide links with the community. Older pupils use the facilities in the local schools well, using the swimming pool, computer suite, library and science laboratories to support their work in school. Year 6 pupils work with the science teacher from a local secondary school. Pupils work on the activities within the local education authority's 'Bridge project' and have received a grant to support a tree-planting project for the perimeter of the school grounds, contributing half the funding. The Foundation Stage teachers have good links with the Phoenix nursery where about one third of the children come from, and links with families before children join the nursery are effective in supporting a stress-free start to school. The pupils visit local places of worship and the local area as well as trips further afield. A parent leads an act of worship for those pupils withdrawn from school assemblies. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities covering sport, music and dance. All of the teaching staff are involved and about 20 pupils attend each of the activities.
31. The school successfully seeks to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. Boys and girls participate equally in the extra-curricular activities. Planning for pupils with special educational needs and those with EAL ensures that pupils can take full advantage of curriculum opportunity. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is used effectively to support pupils within the classroom and the speaking and listening skills of the younger pupils and the children in the Foundation Stage.
32. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Satisfactory provision for sex and health education is embedded in the science curriculum. Good health education starts in the Foundation Stage with children learning how to keep healthy and how to take care of themselves. Social education permeates the curriculum, although there is no separate provision for this aspect of the pupils' education.
33. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. This demonstrates an improvement since the previous inspection when spiritual education was judged to be unsatisfactory. The main strength of the provision for pupils' spiritual education lies with the religious education curriculum and the high quality of discussion and reflection promoted within the lessons. Pupils come to school with different beliefs and customs. These are respected and valued by both teachers and pupils. Pupils are led to understand their own potential, their strengths and weaknesses and the way that aspects of their beliefs are common to all. A Year 3 lesson about celebrations, for example, when pupils studied the Hindu Festival of Raksha Bandhan, led to a discussion about the relationships between siblings. Differences were acknowledged, accepted and valued. The history curriculum is planned to encourage pupils to empathise with the times and people they are learning about. For example, pupils

write as if they were Henry VIII, trying to decide whether divorce from Catherine of Aragon is the correct option to ensure succession. Pupils are encouraged to respect and value the environment and look for ways to improve it. There are good examples of teachers promoting awe and wonder. In a music lesson the teacher successfully built up curiosity as a clarinet was seen to grow in length from the small box it was kept in. These Year 1 pupils will remember the looks and the sound of a clarinet for some time!

34. From the time they start school, children are encouraged to explore the principles of right and wrong. Adults in school set good examples by their attitudes to each other and to their pupils. Each class establishes its own code of conduct and class rules and the beginning of each academic year and this process was reinforced in assemblies during the week of the inspection. Pupils are reminded of these and understand the need for rules to create an orderly society. Pupils are encouraged to think for themselves and the class rules are generated by mutual consent. Within their lessons, pupils discuss moral issues. They are aware of injustices in societies in the past but also understand that people's perceptions on right and wrong can change.
35. With its mix of cultures, the school is a harmonious society. Pupils have a good understanding of both the social and cultural similarities and differences between them and the school celebrates this diversity. Teachers encourage pupils to work together and there are some opportunities for independent research in groups or individually. Older pupils work the overhead projector and recorded music in assemblies. School educational visits are an important part of pupils' social development. Residential visits to Wales and Beaudesert enable pupils to socialise outside the context of school and to stay away from home. Part of the school's plans for development is to set up a school council.
36. The standards of art and design and history are good and the high quality displays do much to promote pupils' cultural development. They have an understanding of the work of different artists and know how the British culture has changed over time. Pupils study ancient civilisations and, when applicable, understand the effect of these on British history. Above all, the different family cultures within school are shared, valued and celebrated. Pupils have at least three visits outside school every year and actors dressed as Romans and Vikings visit the school. There is a bi-annual performance that involves the whole school and a Christmas concert. Other festivals, for example Diwali and Harvest Festival are celebrated throughout the year. Pupils have opportunities to listen to and perform music in their lessons and there is a school choir.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

37. Pupils are well cared for by all staff. Good standards of care ensure pupils are happy at school and have a positive effect on their achievements. Good personal support enables the youngest pupils to settle in quickly and good care is taken of them at the end of the day. All the special needs staff liaise well with outside agencies to ensure that the needs of these pupils are fully met. The school has good and effective procedures to identify and meet the needs of pupils who have special needs following the guidance in the Code of Practice.
38. Measures to promote and monitor good behaviour are effective. The great majority of staff applies the procedures consistently. Staff who look after the pupils at lunchtime are particularly effective in ensuring good standards of behaviour and relationships in the dining room and playground. Positive approaches to reward and praise work well in lessons. All staff have a good awareness of issues relating to oppressive behaviour and bullying and any potential occurrences are dealt with effectively.

39. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The effective application of the procedures has resulted in a steady improvement in overall attendance levels over the last three years. The school deals sensitively and sensibly with requests for extended holidays from parents. Child protection procedures are good and the deputy headteacher provides good advice and support to staff ensuring all have a secure awareness of issues. Health and safety procedures are effective and first aid arrangements are good. The school has taken good steps to deal with most of the issues raised in the previous report. However, parts of the older buildings are still damp and toilet facilities remain in poor condition. The imminent building programme will greatly improve these problems.
40. The previous inspection report criticised the school's inconsistent approach to assessing the pupils' performance and using information from the results of tests to plan work. There are now good procedures that are used consistently to assess performance in English, mathematics and science. Teachers keep accurate records. Even at this early stage of the school year, they show a good understanding of the needs of the pupils and provide support for pupils where it is most needed. The headteacher takes an effective lead in developing new strategies to improve the use of assessment through providing workable systems, thorough analysis of trends and helpful guidance to ensure consistency among the staff. In mathematics, shortfalls identified in performance have been identified and effective action taken to raise standards. In science, some teachers are developing a good system of recording and assessing the pupils' skills. This successful trial is to be extended to the whole school. Effective analysis of national test results has indicated some concerns about standards in writing, particularly for junior boys. The school has begun to develop more effective ways of improving pupils' skills in this aspect of their work.
41. Overall, the school makes satisfactory use of the results of assessment to plan the next stage in school improvement. However, more needs to be done in some subjects such as art and design, music, physical education and ICT to provide a stronger basis from which teachers plan the next stage in learning.
42. The teachers' assessments at eleven accurately reflect the pupils' performance in national tests. There were variations between test results and teachers' assessments of eleven-year-olds in 1999. The school analysed the differences carefully and in the tests for 2000 teacher assessments are far more in tune with pupils' performance in the national tests. The school has begun to collect samples of pupils' work to provide a guide for teachers. The staff make accurate and regular assessments of pupils with special educational needs and provide good individual education plans to target improvement. This successful practice is mirrored in the work with pupils who have English as an additional language. Staff working with children in the Foundation Stage assess the children on admission to the school and use the information effectively to plan work.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

43. Overall, there is a satisfactory partnership with parents which repeats the position at the time of the previous inspection. The development of this partnership is a key element in the school's plan for improvement. Parents of children who have EAL are targeted effectively by the school for special support and guidance. The school has organised special curriculum events in order to inform parents how they can help their children at home, particularly with reading. The school has plans to develop initiatives in collaboration with other schools in order to encourage more parental involvement in their children's learning.
44. The great majority of parents who expressed a view, indicated that their children are happy to come to school and attain good standards in most areas. They are pleased with the quality of teaching and that the children are expected to work hard. A significant minority of parents

indicated, both in the questionnaire and the parents meeting that their children did not get the right amount of homework, there were not enough extra-curricular activities and information sent home was only written in English. Inspection evidence confirmed that communications are only sent out in English. The governors and the headteacher are aware of this issue and are taking steps to ensure that parents and carers have access to information in Punjabi. Inspectors feel that the school provides a satisfactory level of extra-curricular activities and provides a level of homework that is similar to that found in most schools.

45. Annual reports are satisfactory. Appropriate detail is provided on pupils' achievements but individual learning targets are not included consistently. Newsletters give good information to parents on work to be done on a termly basis. This helps parents support their children at home. Termly open evenings give parents good information on the progress of their children. Parental attendance at these evenings and for other events is good. Parent governors have recently established good links with parents and carers. This initiative is having a positive impact on developing the home-school partnership. Very few parents help in the school on a regular basis. Good links established by the nursery with parents help ensure that the youngest pupils settle quickly in school.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership and management of the school are good. The key leadership skills of the headteacher have improved considerably since the previous inspection. At that time criticisms were levelled at the lack of direction and the weak procedures for collecting information about the work of the school. The headteacher now provides a clear and unambiguous direction for the school. The structures he has designed and is operating provide good quality information. He uses this information to plan changes to what teachers plan and how they teach. The role of the senior management team and middle managers has been developed so that curriculum leaders, under the co-ordination of the deputy headteacher, play an important part in curriculum leadership. Curriculum leaders understand the needs of their subjects and are enthusiastic about the improvements that have been made and look forward to making further improvements. The deputy headteacher's skills complement the work of the headteacher and the administration and management of the school run smoothly. The work of tracking and improving behaviour and the school's welfare procedures are managed well.
47. The school is working hard to meet its aims. Most of these are met through the curriculum. Teachers have planned the curriculum so that pupils experience learning, that develops smoothly from year to year. The aims are reflected well in the school's commitment to provide a caring and purposeful environment in which all are able to achieve their potential. There is a relative weakness in the aims in that they do not pay sufficient attention to the wider aspects of pupils' development. Staff and pupils share a commitment to good relationships and respect for one another. The school's good policies and procedures include a firm commitment to equality of opportunity.
48. The formation of curriculum teams to manage the curriculum priorities of the good school development plan is a step forward from the position found at the time of the last inspection. Curriculum leaders now play an important part in gathering information and ensuring that the measures taken to ensure improvements keep on track. Governors too play a full role in monitoring the work of the school. They carry out reviews of children's books and observe lessons. They have forged very close contact between curriculum co-ordinators and year groups and now hold firm views about the needs of the school and how these needs should be met. The information gathered from this variety of sources is used to good effect in the school's development plan. This too has improved and the processes and the plan itself are of good quality.
49. Governors form a very close link between parents, the local community and the school. They pass information to the school about the aspirations of the local community, they carry out such duties as managing drop-off points in the morning and encouraging parents to become involved in supporting the school. Senior managers, curriculum leaders and governors demonstrate a unity of approach and share the goal of improving pupils' achievements. The governing body has set in place good procedures for monitoring the school's provision for special educational needs. These enable them to act as a critical friend. They have a named governor who takes an active interest in the delivery of that provision and in the progress of the pupils. The governors have attended to the omissions in the school prospectus and annual report to parents that were found at the time of the previous inspection.
50. Budget planning is secure. The school currently operates within a deficit budget which has been agreed by the LEA. It has a sensible plan to retrieve the deficit over the next three years, which takes a prudent view of future pupil numbers and links well with the educational priorities as set out in the school development plan. Budget monitoring procedures are satisfactory and the school has taken effective steps to meet the recommendations of the latest auditor's report. Good account is taken of the principles of best value in relation to the purchase of goods and services. The current school development plan provided a good basis

for the school to apply these principles to all of its activities. Specific grants are accounted for well and used effectively. Administrative systems are carried out effectively to ensure the headteacher and other staff spend the minimum of time on routine tasks. ICT is used well to support daily administration and help communications with parents.

51. The special educational needs co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for pupils who have EAL provide good leadership. This has a marked effect on the attainment and progress of these pupils.
52. There is a sufficient number of staff to fulfil the requirements of the National Curriculum. All staff show good commitment to improving standards. They have suitable qualifications and experience and work effectively to promote learning. Good use is made of some teachers' expertise to provide enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching in religious education and music. All staff are keen to improve their skills and take part in training to improve their knowledge of the subjects. The headteacher reviews the teachers' performance effectively and sets appropriate targets for development. Priorities are also linked to those in the school's future plans. This aspect of the school's work has improved much since the previous inspection and is beginning to have a beneficial impact on standards in English, science and mathematics. Staff share responsibility for leading subjects and take their work seriously. They report to their colleagues on what they have learned through in-service training, lead staff meetings and provide effective guidance through good schemes of work and policies. The regular programme of monitoring teaching and learning by subject leaders and the headteacher has raised the quality of teaching. Training and the delegation of responsibilities have improved much in the last two years and have made a significant contribution to raising standards.
53. Staff working with those pupils with special educational needs and those with EAL contribute much to the pupils' progress. Their expertise is valued by colleagues and results in effective learning. Support staff, including those working with the children in the Foundation Stage, collaborate well with the teachers to ensure that good use is made of their time and expertise. Other non-teaching staff help to ensure the smooth running of the school at lunchtime. The administrative staff are efficient and well organised, freeing time for teaching staff and enabling the school to run smoothly. The school also provides places for students from local colleges to train as teachers and nursery nurses.
54. The school's accommodation remains a cause for concern although recently approved plans for re-development will remedy the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. The overall condition of the buildings is unsatisfactory, however, the staff work hard to improve the classrooms and corridors by displaying pupils' work attractively. The headteacher and staff have overcome the problems of communication between the four separate blocks of classrooms mentioned in the previous report. All staff now work effectively as a team. The school benefits from good outdoor facilities, including spacious hard surface and grass play areas. There is suitable provision made for children in the nursery with a separate play area, but this is not used by those in the reception classes. The library is not located in the main building, which restricts pupils' access.
55. The overall quality and range of learning resources is satisfactory in most areas. Resources in the Foundation Stage are good and impact well on children's learning. Very good reading resources are replacing older books and other reading resources for shared and guided reading activities within the Literacy Hour. These are being used effectively by teachers to enhance pupils' learning. The use of the school library to promote study skills has improved since the last inspection and is being appropriately developed. However, some of the book stock within the library needs updating. Resources for art, history, religious education and physical education are good and have a beneficial effect on standards. There is a shortage of tuned percussion instruments in music. Resources to support pupils who have special educational

needs are good and used well to develop pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. Despite recent improvements to resources in ICT, there are still insufficient computers and other resources to meet the demands of the National Curriculum.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

56. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of learning, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- 1) continue to improve attainment in English by:
  - (a) planning more opportunities for pupils to develop confidence and skills in speaking,
  - (b) in the juniors develop pupils writing, particularly for the boys, by helping them improve their spelling, grammar and use of a wider vocabulary.

(These issues are discussed in paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5, 8,10, 77, 78, 80 and 113)

- 2) improve pupils' problem solving skills in mathematics and science by:
  - (a) in mathematics, providing more opportunities for them to apply their skills, explain their thinking and use the correct vocabulary to record their work, both orally and in written form,
  - (b) in science providing more opportunities for pupils to predict the outcome to experiments, interpret results and evaluate scientific evidence.

(These issues are discussed in paragraphs 5, 12, 20, 21, 84, 86, 88 and 92)

- 3) improve attainment and the rate of progress in information and communication technology by:
  - (a) improving the subject knowledge of the teachers,
  - (b) building up sufficient resources, including those for control and modelling, to meet the demands of the National Curriculum,
  - (c) ensuring that work given to pupils extends their skills, knowledge and understanding and builds on this consistently from year to year.

(These issues are discussed in paragraphs 7, 14, 22, 25, 55, 117, 121 and 122)

### **In addition to the key issues above, the following less significant weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:**

Develop whole school assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. (paragraphs 41, 108, 116 and 132)

Include more individual targets for improvement in pupils' annual reports to parents. (paragraph 45)

Continue to work to improve attendance rates (paragraph 13)



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

Number of lessons observed	90
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	50

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	48	41	2	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	391
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		64

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	83

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	288

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	31

### *Attendance*

<b>Authorised absence</b>	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.4

<b>Unauthorised absence</b>	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	25	32	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	23	23
	Girls	24	28	30
	Total	44	51	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (81)	89 (82)	93 (86)
	National	82 (80)	83 (80)	87 (83)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	25
	Girls	28	30	29
	Total	52	54	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (81)	95 (85)	95 (86)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	31	31	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	20	19
	Girls	26	21	21
	Total	43	41	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (65)	67 (59)	66 (69)
	National	70 (65)	69 (65)	78 (72)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	16	15
	Girls	22	20	21
	Total	35	36	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (65)	59 (65)	59 (71)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	288
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	44
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27.4
Average class size	30

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

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

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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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	1999/00
	£
Total income	621082
Total expenditure	647249
Expenditure per pupil	1520
Balance brought forward from previous year	8235
Balance carried forward to next year	-17932

## *Results of the survey of parents and carers*

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	411
Number of questionnaires returned	96

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	40	1	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	32	57	9	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	53	3	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	46	21	8	2
The teaching is good.	39	51	7	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	46	8	6	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	38	53	6	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	39	46	9	2	4
The school works closely with parents.	36	33	15	7	8
The school is well led and managed.	38	41	8	3	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	50	9	2	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	44	22	10	6

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Letters and other information are only sent home in English

## **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**

57. Children join the nursery from the age of three and attend in either the morning or the afternoon. The children with birthdays in the first half of the academic year transfer to the reception class in the September after their fourth birthday. A second reception class [not established at the time of this inspection] is created every January to accommodate the children who become four later in the year. Entry to the nursery is staggered over the first two weeks of term. During inspection week several children started school for the first time. There will be eighteen children on the role in the morning and seventeen in the afternoon. The reception class has twenty-two children with approximately one third who have not attended the school nursery. Most come from another local nursery and almost all have some form of pre-school experience before joining the reception class.
58. The provision for children under five was good at the time of the previous inspection. The quality of the provision for the Foundation Stage, which includes all the children who have not yet started Year 1 of the National Curriculum, remains good. The arrangements for children beginning their school life, including the home visits made by the nursery teacher, enable the children to feel secure and happy in the nursery. The overall good teaching is having a positive impact on children's learning.
59. Many children begin nursery with very little English. The nursery staff work very hard to extend the children's vocabulary. The bilingual nursery nurse and the teacher supporting children with EAL enable all children to communicate in their mother tongue while guiding them towards fluency in English. The nursery staff make careful observations of the children's achievements when they start school and during their time in the nursery and reception classes. Children enter the nursery with below average communication skills due to their limited English. Their personal and social skills are similar to other children of the same age in most aspects, but many children, especially the girls, lack self-confidence and self-esteem. Their mathematical, physical and creative development and their knowledge and understanding of the world are similar to other children of the same age. They make good progress in the foundation stage but by the time they enter Year 1 a significant minority of children have not had time to acquire the necessary skills in English to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy. Most children in all other aspects of their learning meet these goals.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

60. Children entering the nursery rapidly feel safe and secure in their new environment as a result of the caring and supportive environment created by the adults. The children are encouraged to communicate at every opportunity, first with adults and then with their peers. They behave very well, entering school with some understanding of the needs of others. Many demonstrate pride in their achievements. For example, children enjoy playing colour and shape Bingo and are proud when they succeed. In the reception class they begin to share and take turns and most are aware of the acceptable boundaries of behaviour. They are confident to try new activities and maintain attention for increasing lengths of time. In the reception class, most listen carefully although several do not yet have the English skills to understand all that is said.

All have respect for each other's cultures and beliefs but boys tend to dominate group or class discussion. When discussing books with three children, for example, the boys discussed the story enthusiastically while the girl had to be asked direct questions before she would speak. Even then, she was reluctant to use more than one or two words, although it was evident she understood her favourite story.

61. The quality of teaching is good. The adults form good role models for the children; always treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. They have swiftly identified those children who are shy and gently encourage them to participate without pressurising them. For example, the reception teacher waited patiently while a girl with EAL struggled to name a triangle, giving her gentle support and making her feel proud when she mastered it. Children are encouraged to take turns to speak and not to interrupt each other. Children with special needs are given the same support. A reception aged child who attends the nursery class, for example, showed great confidence when using the computer or coming to talk to adults that were new to her. Children in the reception class use the equipment provided carefully. For example, they return spreaders to the glue pots and clear up their paper cuttings. Resources are set out for the children as it is the beginning of the school year and the children are new to the classroom. The equipment is accessible and the teacher is aware of the importance of developing independence as children become confident in their new surroundings.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

62. In both the nursery and the reception class there is a significant minority of children who find communication difficult. Some of the youngest children who started school this week find it difficult to make eye contact or alter their expressions in response to conversations with adults or other children. In some cases, but not all, this is due to the lack of knowledge of English. Adults are sensitive to this, giving the children space while encouraging them to communicate as often as possible. Small achievements are valued and celebrated; the first smile is deepened as adults respond to this first effort at communication.
63. The quality of teaching is good. In both the nursery and the reception classes, adults take every opportunity to expand their children's vocabulary. By the time children are four, most have a good technical language to support their work. In mathematics, for example, almost all know the names of simple shapes like circles and squares. They understand and use the names of parts of the computer. Many children talk along side each other and some discuss their work with each other and show interest in their neighbour's work or play. Because they have not yet mastered the English language, there are a significant number of children who will not reach the early learning goals for communication by the time they start Year 1 of the National Curriculum.
64. Teachers provide good rhyming and rhythmic activities in both nursery and reception. Children enjoy these even if they do not fully understand the words. They all join in, the older children hearing and saying the initial sounds of some words. Some find other words that begin with the same sound. In the reception class, most have a good attempt at writing their own names. By the time children are at the beginning of Year 1 most write simple words accurately and some write sentences using capital letters and full stops accurately. They write for a variety of purposes including lists, labels and captions as well as plain text. Almost all children, including those with special needs, form letters neatly and accurately by the end of the reception year and their handwriting is good.
65. The children in the reception class point to the writing on a page and know that it carries meaning. They turn pages correctly, holding the book the right way up. Most children 'read' the story by looking at the pictures, some higher attaining children injecting expression and

different voices for the characters in the picture. One child, for example, used a deep sad voice to represent Gordon in his book about 'Thomas the Tank Engine'. Some children wait for the adult to prompt them or ask questions before attempting any form of reading. Many children, especially the girls with EAL, do not use language sufficiently to demonstrate an understanding of the elements of stories and are unable to answer questions about the characters, setting, action or outcomes of the stories they hear.

66. The staff in the Foundation Stage encourage the children to feel confident in 'reading' and writing. In the nursery the adults demonstrate delight in books and in the writing the children produce. In the reception class children are encouraged within their groups to identify words and tell the story from pictures. Some opportunities are missed in reception to share a book with the children before they work in their groups.

### **Mathematical development**

67. Most children join the nursery with some mathematical understanding. The quality of teaching is good and from the first day the children are encouraged to sing number songs, match objects and count the children sitting in a circle. The nursery teacher teaches the children to count objects one by one to aid accuracy. She emphasises the names of the numbers while the nursery nurse and the teacher supporting the children with EAL translate when necessary. Children learn quickly, especially when specific language is used, like the names of shapes.
68. In the reception class many children count accurately to at least 10. They are beginning to identify the number before or after a single digit number. They select the larger or smaller shape and select suitable shapes to make a picture. For example, when making a picture of a house, children select a triangle for the roof and a rectangle for the chimney. Several children understand positional language, pointing to the shape above or below the one I pointed to. Few children, however, use the words themselves. By the time children start Year 1 of the National Curriculum, the majority draw accurate sets of objects up to 20. They use larger numbers to support their work on measures. For example one child had used cubes to compare the weight of two objects. One object weighed 24 cubes, the other, 37. He identified the heaviest object. Lower-attaining children and those with special needs match objects to numerals up to 10.
69. The teachers have a good understanding of the steps children make in their mathematical development. They provide good resources, generally explain new work clearly and give the children appropriate support in groups or individually. They take care to promote mathematical language. As a result, even those children who find English difficult have a good mathematical vocabulary. Daily counting and ordering activities, changing the date, naming the days of the week, counting the number of children present or the days the sun was shining during the week all contribute to the children's awareness and understanding of mathematics. Most children achieve the early learning goals for mathematical development by the time they start the National Curriculum in Year 1.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

70. Children enter the nursery class with a basic general knowledge. They come from families with a range of different cultural traditions and have had access to English culture through television and their environment. They bring an understanding of different cultures and traditions to the nursery class. This is valued and celebrated by the adults and there is harmony amongst the children. The quality of teaching is good. Many children, especially the girls, use tools well, rolling dough and cutting paper competently. Children use the computer appropriately, controlling the 'mouse' and selecting their favourite animation or tune. They show an interest in their environment although they do not always talk about it. Adults

encourage the children to find things out for themselves. New children were encouraged to examine and touch a collage older children had made while the adults helped them to articulate what they had found.

71. In the reception class children develop a satisfactory understanding of the passage of time. They find out about the seasons and the weather and learn that the earth is shared with plants and animals. They learn stories about the creation from different cultures and have some understanding of the shared values within these stories. Children visit the Buddhist temple and the local church to support their understanding of different faiths. Some children express their likes and dislikes and select their own way to record their work. Their work is supported with encouraging and helpful comments from the teacher who records each child's progress and identifies the next stage in his or her learning. The children have access to a rich and interesting curriculum that is supported by visits to West Park and Kingswood, Beech House Farm and the Bantock House Museum. This broad curriculum enables the majority of children to achieve the early learning goals for knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they join Year 1.

### **Physical development**

72. The nursery does not have a permanent enclosed area for the children to use for outdoor activities although this is part of the plan for the new building that is due to be completed next year. However, there is a paved and grassed area that has room for climbing equipment and wheeled toys. An appropriate selection of pedalled vehicles, toy prams, large blocks and other outdoor equipment is available for the children to use. As a result, children drive tricycles with some skill, pedalling forwards and backwards and steering along the painted snake in the playground. They run and jump, climb the ladder to the slide and are confident to slide down. The child with special needs is cared for well, supported appropriately but allowed to be as independent as possible. In the hall the children stand on one leg, hop and skip or gallop in time to music. They are developing an awareness of space and any collisions that occur on tricycles are usually because it is fun! Songs and nursery rhymes are used to make movements interesting.
73. No physical education lessons or outdoor activity were observed in the reception class during the week of the inspection due to the way the timetable is structured. Curriculum documents and records show that the children have access to appropriate activities and that the children make at least satisfactory progress. Almost all the children have good manipulative skills, handling small tools and objects with skill and care. The reception children learn how to keep healthy and the best food to eat. They already cut out accurately and manipulate small pieces of paper with precision. The teacher has high expectations of the children's pencil control and the children demonstrate above average skills in handwriting. On the evidence available, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in this aspect of the children's development.

### **Creative Development**

74. From the time they start school in the nursery class children enjoy drawing and painting. The tables containing drawing materials are popular choices and the children demonstrate care and accuracy with their drawing. Faces have accurate features, often with eyes with long lashes! In the reception class children mix colours and the pictures on the wall show that they select the colours carefully. Children fit and overlap shapes and select the ones they need for their purposes. When using mathematical shapes, for example, children selected a yellow circle of sticky paper for the sun and fitted shapes carefully within the outline of a letter template. They work and play alongside each other well and even the youngest children take on the role of their granny or their parents. Difficulties with the English language means that some children do not express and communicate their ideas easily and this aspect of their creative



development is not as good as their practical creative skills. The adults in the reception class work hard at developing the language of children with EAL within the structure of the lessons. There are insufficient opportunities for the children to join in drama, story telling and role-play in order to extend the children's imaginative vocabulary and skills of expression.

75. Children have a satisfactory repertoire of songs and by the time they are in Year 1 they identify different sounds and move rhythmically to music, understanding that sounds can be changed or repeated in patterns. Their overall creative development is in line with other children of the same age and they meet the early learning goals for most aspects by the time they begin the National Curriculum in Year 1.

## ENGLISH

76. The school has a high percentage of pupils who have EAL, with about a third entering school with very little or no English. From this below average base on entry, standards in the 1999 tests and teacher assessments for pupils aged seven were above the national average and those of similar schools in writing, but below average in reading. Provisional results for 2000 and inspection evidence indicate that overall standards at seven are similar to the national average. Speaking skills are below average, listening and reading are average and writing is above average.
77. Inspection evidence indicates standards are below the national average by the age of eleven in speaking and writing. The results of the 1999 and 2000 national tests reflect these findings. Results for 2000 have stayed at a very similar level to those in 1999 and not kept pace with improvements nationally. However, both inspection evidence and the school's own assessments of performance in all year groups, indicate rising standards. Whilst still below the national average, standards are now much closer to it. The school is fully aware of gender issues concerning attainment and has effectively targeted boys' writing as a result of careful analysis of the 2000 test results. Overall, standards are broadly similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection, except in writing in the juniors and speaking, where they are not as high.
78. Although teachers are now effectively promoting a technical subject vocabulary in lessons such as mathematics and science, most pupils demonstrate a limited knowledge and understanding of a broad vocabulary. This means that many are not able to express their opinions, views and ideas clearly. They lack the confidence and skill to speak in front of an audience. However, higher attaining pupils do express themselves well and achieve standards expected for their age. When teachers effectively challenge pupils to justify their opinions through skilful questioning, as seen a Year 5 literacy lesson, pupils make better progress in speaking. Generally there are an insufficient number of planned opportunities to develop pupils speaking skills across the curriculum and through other school activities such as assemblies. Attainment in listening at seven and eleven is in line with the national average. Although a small minority of pupils easily gets distracted in lessons and loose concentration quickly, most other pupils are able to listen attentively in many different situations and follow instructions accurately.
79. At seven and eleven, attainment in reading is in line with the national average. Although satisfactory, pupils make slower progress in reading in comparison with writing in the infant years. By the age of seven pupils have acquired more than one strategy to successfully read unfamiliar words and read with satisfactory understanding from a variety of suitable texts. On some occasions, the books pupils read lack sufficient challenge in order to move pupils on at an appropriate rate, particularly in Year 2. By the age of eleven, pupils are enthusiastic, fluent, confident readers and show strong preferences about the books that they read. Teachers structure guided reading activities very effectively during the literacy hour. This ensures pupils make good progress in understanding the texts that they read; and most pupils talk about the significant events, themes and characters in books well. Juniors' library skills are well developed and pupils know how a library is organised. They use a glossary, index and contents page well.
80. In the infants pupils make good progress in writing and standards of attainment at seven are above the national average. Pupils write simple sentences and stories well and pupils use basic punctuation such as full stops and capital letters correctly. Across the school, pupils make good progress in handwriting and by the age of eleven, their handwriting is joined, clear and fluent. Work is neatly presented in most subjects across the curriculum. Teachers provide plenty of opportunities for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes

across the curriculum. English skills are promoted very effectively in other subjects such as history and religious education. For example, pupils in a junior lesson were asked to write an account of the life of Henry VIII from the king's point of view. In the juniors, progress and achievement in writing do not match that found at the infants. The weaknesses in the writing of most juniors are in spelling, grammar and the use of a wide vocabulary in their writing. Higher attaining pupils achieve standards expected for their age and can use interesting vocabulary in order to enhance their writing. For example, one Year 6 pupil wrote: "*Charity knew something was definitely wrong. Charity was extremely scared, nevertheless, her curiosity overpowered her*". Although some pupils were observed using dictionaries in some lessons, overall, teachers do not sufficiently encourage pupils to routinely use them in order to improve their spelling. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring a sound knowledge and understanding of a range of punctuation rules and they apply this knowledge correctly when writing independently.

81. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was mostly good. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was observed in the juniors. The school has very successfully implemented the National Literacy Hour. This has had a positive impact on improving the quality and consistency in teaching since the previous inspection. Introductions using the big books are lively and develop pupils' confidence and interest in the topic well. There is a good emphasis on teaching the pupils the correct letter sounds and combinations. This impacts well on their learning by helping them tackle unfamiliar words successfully in their independent reading. Group activities are well managed in most lessons, although in a minority the independent working group tasks lack sufficient challenge. All lessons have a closing discussion session. In the less successful lessons, this is too short and does not provide enough opportunity for pupils to practise their speaking skills or for teachers to make their expectations clear to groups who have not worked so well. Planning for the subject has improved markedly and teachers target the development of literacy skills effectively across the curriculum. Throughout the school, teachers have a secure understanding of the subject that enables them to model and demonstrate key skills such as expressive reading effectively. They use questioning skills effectively to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of texts. When there are shortcomings in teaching, learning objectives for independent work tasks within the literacy hour are not sufficiently identified in planning and are not sufficiently structured or explained to pupils to ensure they make sufficient progress in their learning. In a junior lesson when teaching was unsatisfactory, the teacher had low expectations of behaviour and of the amount of work pupils were expected to complete.
82. The co-ordinator for the subject provides very good leadership and is strongly committed to raising standards in the subject. There are effective and systematic procedures to monitor attainment and the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. Through careful analysis of assessments and regular audits of particular aspects of the subject, the co-ordinator has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. An appropriate subject action plan has been devised to address weaknesses.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. The standards achieved by seven and eleven-year-olds in mathematics are similar to the national average. This reflects the results of the national tests of 1999 and provisional results for 2000. They are higher than the results in English. This has reversed the picture found at the time of the previous inspection when mathematics' standards were lower than those of English and science. Over the past three years standards in tests for eleven-year-olds have improved faster than the national figures and the difference in the performance of boys and girls narrows from wide margins when pupils are seven.

84. Pupils are competent when calculating using pencil and paper methods and higher attaining pupils have good mental recall of number facts. Usually pupils manage work on shape, measures and managing information in graphs and charts to average levels. This last area is used well in geography and history, for example, and measuring skills are used in design and technology and progress is improving in work on probability. However, most pupils have difficulty applying their knowledge and ideas when faced with problems. One reason for this is that although most pupils have a satisfactory understanding about mathematical ideas, they do not have enough experience in problem solving. However, the main area of difficulty is related to pupils' understanding of language. They do not have sufficient opportunities to explain their thinking or methods and lack immediate recall of the correct mathematical vocabulary. This hampers their problem solving skills and the development of a range of methods. Speaking skills are below average; for example, in a Year 6 lesson higher attaining pupils did not use the term diagonal when describing a shape. Instead they talked about the "thing that went from a corner". This below average level of speaking skills is not as marked in the infants where pupils have worked through the numeracy strategy from an earlier stage of their development and therefore use mathematical vocabulary more easily. Pupils use their numeracy skills successfully to support work in science, design and technology and geography
85. In individual classes in each year group teachers use the numeracy strategy lesson structure to good effect. The key factor in successful lessons is the oral and mental starter which teachers plan for their classes. For example, in Year 5, a bright and brisk starter on doubling, halving and using digit cards worked well. This lesson continued to be successful because the teacher insisted that pupils explained their thinking. Higher attaining pupils were able to talk about their methods for multiplying 56 by 34. When teachers plan appropriate objectives and explain their expectations to pupils, as occurred in a Year 1 lesson, then pupils' learning is extended and they see the value of what they are doing. Throughout the school teachers use resources well. For example, in Year 6, white boards are used effectively in both classes to encourage pupils to show their methods and therefore their thinking. This worked particularly well when pupils were encouraged to work in groups and had to talk to each other about which method they would be using.
86. Teaching is satisfactory overall and has improved since the last inspection. There are examples of good quality teaching in each year group. In half of the infant lessons observed teaching was good or better and there were no lessons observed in which teaching was of unsatisfactory quality. In the juniors two-thirds of the teaching was of good quality but none was better. One lesson was unsatisfactory due to ineffective management of pupils' behaviour and pupils not being set work that made them think and work hard. Overall, expectations of pupils are satisfactory. Pupils are expected to work hard in the great majority of classes and generally they produce a good amount of work. However, pupils should be enabled to tackle more challenging work. Additionally, too few teachers demonstrate their own thinking and methods. Lessons are inclined to be more effective when explanations are clear and vocabulary is used correctly. For example, too many teachers use the term 'sum' when talking about any calculation, whatever arithmetical process is involved.
87. Much of the improvement is due to the greater emphasis placed on teaching by the headteacher and subject co-ordinator. This better quality of teaching has had a positive effect on the rate of learning in the majority of lessons. The improved leadership skills of the headteacher and the subject co-ordinator are seen in the high quality of analysis carried out on mathematics results in standardised tests. These analyses show the co-ordinator what areas of the curriculum should be modified and how teachers can improve the rates of pupils' learning. However, not all teachers are using this information and at times some groups of pupils practice too much of the same number work when they could be moving onto the next stage. Overall, the standards, teaching and leadership in mathematics are continuing to

improve and the co-ordinator has good plans to ensure that this rate of improvement is maintained.

## SCIENCE

88. Since the previous inspection, results in national tests in science have improved. The preliminary results of national tests in 2000 at the end of Year 6 show that three-quarters of the pupils attained at least average standards. A fifth attained the higher level 5. This improvement, particularly noticeable since the 1999 national tests, is the result of more effective planning, well focused monitoring of teaching and analysis of pupils' work by the headteacher and subject leader. Little improvement was made between 1996 and 1999 but more effective teaching and consistent use of national guidelines has impacted well on standards. Teacher assessments at seven show that standards vary between above average and average being broadly in line at the end of 2000. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are close to the national average although there are weaknesses in pupils' competence in investigation, interpretation of data and use of scientific vocabulary. Progress is hampered by the pupils' limited language skills and lack of depth of understanding of scientific concepts. However, the school partially compensates for these weaknesses by providing good coverage of the content of the subject.
89. Throughout the school, progress in science for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory. Progress is good in a Year 2 and 5 class and in Year 3 due to the good subject knowledge of the teachers and effective planning. The interesting and imaginative use of resources enthuses the pupils. In lessons in these classes there is a good balance between direct teaching of scientific facts, practical work and opportunities for the pupils to record their findings in variety of ways. The teaching varies between satisfactory and very good, being satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are supported effectively and worksheets are matched carefully to their levels of ability. Similarly, good support is given to those with English as an additional language. The teacher working with these pupils in a Year 2 class made good use of picture and simple word clues to encourage the pupils' confidence. Lesson planning in all classes includes well-focused objectives that are shared with the pupils. As a result, pupils are left in no doubt about what is expected of them. Objectives are reviewed at the end of lessons and the teachers assess what has been learned.
90. Pupils enjoy science and work productively. They take pride in presenting their work well. The teachers emphasise the effective and safe use of resources and the pupils respond with care. During lessons the pupils behave well as the teachers exercise firm and friendly discipline expecting politeness and encouraging co-operation and collaboration. Pupils in Year 3 responded with excitement and interest when studying their own teeth and a large model of the mouth. Very effective use of resources and many opportunities to take part in practical work such as tasting different foods enthused the Year 2 pupils and enabled them to make good gains in understanding the importance of healthy eating.
91. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Throughout the school the teaching of scientific knowledge is emphasised. This helps pupils to develop secure skills and understanding of life and living processes, physical processes and materials and their properties. Standards in these aspects of the subject are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. The teachers have secure understanding of these aspects of science and teach them well. Their teaching includes a good range of experiments and opportunities for the pupils to present their work well and use their numeracy skills in charts, graphs and diagrams. Pupils record their work accurately with some correct use of scientific vocabulary. They use well-formed handwriting and follow a scientific structure in recording experiments. However, their limited scientific understanding and weak spelling detracts from their work and this is an area for extending literacy skills. In each class the teachers mention correct terms although there is insufficient practice of the spelling of these words. The pupils apply their numeracy skills well. In a Year 4 lesson, the pupils recorded accurately in charts and graphs how the temperature of freezing and hot water

changed over several minutes. They were unable to explain why this happened and what would happen if the ice and hot water were left for several hours.

92. At the ages of seven and eleven, standards in using and applying science are below average. Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to predict the outcome to experiments or interpret results and evaluate scientific evidence. This slows down learning in this aspect of the subject. Although pupils realise the need to be systematic when doing experiments, they lack confidence in drawing conclusions about what might happen if their experiments were modified. The school is aware of this gap in the pupils' understanding and the hard-working and effective subject leader is working with some colleagues to devise ways of improving pupils' competence in this aspect of their work.
93. The teachers' confidence in teaching science has improved since the previous inspection. A firm and shared commitment to raising standards has resulted in improving standards. The school has a satisfactory range of resources. They are in good condition and used well, although there is a limited number of good quality science books in the library. Computers are not used sufficiently to develop the pupils' research skills. In some classes, the pupils have good opportunities to take part in visits to places of scientific interest and the pupils discuss these visits enthusiastically.
94. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The subject leader monitors her colleagues' plans regularly and offers helpful and constructive advice. There is a strong commitment to raising standards further and the thorough analysis of national test results has helped to bring a sharper focus to planning work. The staff have identified areas for improvement in the subject and are working effectively to remedy weaknesses. There are good procedures for assessment, including end of topic tests and the use of national tests in some year groups. The information gained is used satisfactorily to plan work.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. Standards of attainment in art and design have improved since the last inspection and are now above those expected at both seven and eleven. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be in line with national expectations.
96. Pupils throughout the school experience a wide range of media and techniques. They use a variety of methods such as drawing, painting, printing, modelling, collage techniques and computer generated art to successfully communicate their ideas and observations. Pupils show they are able to use sketchbooks effectively to evaluate their own work and find ways to improve and refine their designs.
97. Pupils across the school have a good knowledge and understanding of the work of other artists in different times and cultures and use their knowledge to inform their own work. For example, in Year 5 pupils successfully study aboriginal art. They then use earth colours and dotted pattern effectively in order to create their own designs in the style of traditional Australian art. In Year 4 pupils successfully reproduce paintings in the style of Van Gogh.
98. From an early age pupils make good gains in skills such as observational drawings. By the time pupils are eleven they have a good awareness and understanding of line, form, shape, tone and pattern. Pupils also show they have a good sense of colour, pattern and design in order to express their own ideas. For example, in Year 5, pupils pay very good attention to colour and pattern to create psychedelic designs. In all their work, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning and show good levels of creative effort. They take pride in their work and approach it conscientiously. They work co-operatively and share materials appropriately. These factors are a positive influence on their learning.

99. The quality of teaching is good. Good quality wall displays of pupils' art around the school and whole school art projects such as the sculpture and Millennium tile projects ensure that a positive ethos for the development of the subject is promoted. Teachers have good subject knowledge that makes a considerable impact on the quality of attainment and learning in the subject. When teaching is most effective planning is thorough and lessons are well organised and delivered. Resources are well prepared and are used effectively to promote ideas and motivate pupils. Teachers give clear explanations and use demonstration effectively to support learning. They promote subject specific vocabulary effectively and have high expectations of pupils' responses. The co-ordinator provides good leadership. There are successful strategies and initiatives to monitor and develop the subject.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

100. Standards are as expected at both seven and eleven. Pupils in all year groups understand the design, make and evaluate processes involved in design and technology. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards at eleven were below average. This was because of the lack of opportunity to evaluate their work and the way the subject was organised in two year cycle of curriculum planning. Both of these areas have been addressed and now the curriculum plan is based on nationally recognised schemes of work. The curriculum gives pupils a wide range of experiences and means that all pupils judge the quality and suitability of their work when they have finished.
101. In none of the four lessons observed did the quality of teaching fall below satisfactory levels. The teaching observed in two infant classes was good; in both lessons teachers planned work which made good links to pupils' work in English. In Year 1 the teacher made good use of books to demonstrate how stories can be presented in a variety of ways. Pupils enjoyed the books with moving parts and giggled with excitement; this helped them to begin the lesson interested in their work. The teacher successfully focussed the lesson with well-directed questions. By the end of the lesson pupils explained how scissors worked although they were not encouraged to use terms such as lever. This is an example of a missed opportunity for pupils to be given the appropriate vocabulary and then be encouraged to use the terms as often as possible in explanations of their work. The same was true in a Year 6 lesson where pupils had to construct a square frame using straws and make it is rigid and stiff as possible. The examples produced were successful but there were missed opportunities to reinforce and extend the correct vocabulary.
102. In contrast in Year 2 the class were introduced to a range of wheeled toys and the teacher, by careful questioning, assessed one pupil as being particularly knowledgeable about cars. Very early in the lesson the teacher introduced the term chassis. The higher attaining pupils used this word correctly when questioned. Here the teacher encouraged pupils to draw on their speaking and listening skills. The teacher repeated new words, pronounced correctly, and asked pupils to follow her example and by the end of the lesson most pupils had produced detailed and labelled drawings of their vehicles. In lessons in Year 2 and Year 6 teachers encouraged boys and girls to participate well. They were reminded that men and women drive tractors and fire engines and in Year 6 girls were encouraged to answer questions even if some boys were more energetic in their responses.
103. Pupils in Year 4 researched control mechanisms when they looked at pop-up books. The teacher had drawn up a useful lesson plan that clearly set out what pupils had to achieve and how these objectives were different to the planned activities. These plans are taken from the revised curriculum and by the end of Year 6 pupils have experienced working with a range of materials and tools. Memorisation skills are not as sharp as they should be, for example when Year 6 pupils were asked what they used to stick pieces of timber together they pointed to a



tray of glue-guns and answered ‘those hot things’. Improving the speaking skills of pupils and the development of the correct technical vocabulary remain weaknesses in the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

104. Standards in geography have improved since the previous inspection. Most pupils attain the levels expected for their age by the end of the infants and juniors. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory. In Years 2, 5 and 6 the pupils make good progress in practical work due to the effective use of fieldwork on residential visits. Few geography lessons were seen due to the school’s timetable arrangements but evidence from planning, displays of work and analysis of the pupils’ books shows that geographical knowledge is developed consistently. However, there is some repetition of the teaching of key skills between year groups as topics have a similar content. Teaching is mostly satisfactory but it is good in Year 5 and when opportunities are provided for practical work.
105. Pupils in Year 1 develop a satisfactory understanding of the locality through visits to buildings, parks and places of interest. They record their work appropriately using pictures and diagrams and make knowledgeable comments about the area where they live. They successfully compare urban life with that of the seaside. These early skills are developed well in Year 2. The pupils have a secure knowledge of the names of the countries of the British Isles. The teachers provide good displays, including a range of maps, organise field trips and a residential visit and encourage the pupils to learn the correct geographical vocabulary. The teachers use geographical study to extend the pupils’ literacy skills and make good use of skills taught in numeracy lessons to develop the pupils’ understanding and use of charts and graphs. However, in some classes, there is too much emphasis on recording using simple worksheets. This work is similar for all pupils and does not take sufficient account of variations in ability.
106. In the juniors, the pupils study a variety of themes including rivers, mountains, settlements and life in India. Some of this work is of good quality and reflects the teachers’ interests and enthusiasm. Good work in Year 5, involving debate about pedestrians and the impact of cars on the environment is challenging and interesting and the pupils’ work shows effective use of literacy skills in arguing a case. In Year 6, pupils make attractive brochures about holiday destinations using a good variety of computer skills to present their work effectively. Most pupils work hard and produce a good quantity of work. The teachers structure the topics well to extend geographical knowledge and skills, spending an appropriate time on the subject. Within the topics, the teachers provide suitable opportunities for the pupils to learn about maps, develop an understanding of how settlements are formed and to compare locations. The pupils describe erosion and the effects of weather on living conditions competently but have a limited geographical vocabulary.
107. The pupils talk enthusiastically about the residential visits. They enjoy geography and are keen to discuss their work. They present work well using well-formed handwriting. They are prone to make some basic spelling mistakes. In the lessons seen, the teachers show secure knowledge of the subject and plan effectively, taking account of the needs of the different abilities in the class. Lessons start well with the teacher sharing what is to be done clearly and succinctly. As a result, pupils are left in no doubt about what is expected of them and behave well. A good technique in a Year 5 lesson encouraged the pupils to share their ideas with the class and they made appropriate gains in their understanding of the uses of water. The worksheets provided were well matched to the needs of the different groups in the class and included sub-headings to guide those with special educational needs.
108. The subject leader has a suitable understanding of the geography curriculum and monitors both planning and teaching effectively. Helpful analysis of the pupils’ work is beginning to influence

the planning of work that builds on the pupils' previous experience and knowledge. The co-ordinator is developing systems to assess the pupils' geographical skills but these are currently underdeveloped.

## HISTORY

109. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attainment in history was below national expectations at seven and eleven. The school has worked hard to improve the curriculum and teaching in the subject, assuring that the development of historical skills is at the forefront of all lesson planning. As a result infants now achieve standards similar to other pupils of the same age, while juniors now attain higher than average standards.
110. The system of teaching history as part of the two year rolling programme of topics has been changed and teachers now plan work for each year group. The school uses the government guidance for teaching the subject. This includes a comprehensive coverage of different times, from ancient Egypt to the twentieth century. Running through these themes is the development of the understanding of the passage of time. Teachers ensure that pupils understand where their area of study fits chronologically. This is reinforced by the effective use of 'time lines' in the classrooms and in the hall.
111. Pupils are taught to use historical evidence from the start. In a lesson in Year 1 the pupils used their own experience to identify different types of houses. A walk in the locality is planned for the next lesson to identify differences between modern and older houses. In Year 2, pupils use the diary of Samuel Pepys as an example of first hand evidence of the events of the Fire of London. They are beginning to understand that accounts of historical events vary and that first hand experience is usually more reliable. Their understanding of the differences in fire fighting in the seventeenth century and the present day was made vivid with a visit from the local fire brigade. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported and the teachers ensure that their experiences are shared and valued. A teacher demonstrated great interest when one pupil told her that they don't have stairs in houses in India.
112. In the juniors teachers take care to promote historical vocabulary, ensuring that those who are not fluent in English are not disadvantaged. Much of the group work is arranged so that pupils of different abilities work together, so that those who need additional support learn from their peers. Pupils with special needs have appropriate support with work that is planned to meet their needs and adult support when appropriate. As so much of the work is based on pupils' own research, pupils make good progress within their different ability levels. They remember facts well. Pupils in a Year 4 class, for example, remembered the causes of the Second World War from the previous week's lesson. Their understanding of cause and effect, underdeveloped at the time of the last inspection, is a focus within the curriculum planning and is now secure. The work in history continues to make a significant contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Much of the pupils' writing for different purposes is executed within the history curriculum. Pupils write letters home, as evacuees, they keep diaries as Victorian children working in factories and make lists of the differences between ancient and modern Egypt. There are examples of accounts of Roman and Viking visits to school.
113. The teachers enjoy history and this enthusiasm is passed on to their pupils. They generally apply themselves to their research and written work. Their books contain work that is presented well. Very little incomplete work was seen in the pupils' books. Older pupils are eager to use the CD-ROM to extend their knowledge and use research skills well. They generally listen carefully to their teachers and to each other. However, many pupils show a reluctance to contribute to class discussions or to report orally on their findings. In most cases, the teachers compensate by encouraging these pupils to speak by asking questions. But in one

lesson when a boy and a girl reported to the class on the evidence they had found about evacuation, only the boy spoke.

114. All the history teaching observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory and over half was good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when one third of the teaching in the juniors was unsatisfactory due to a lack of teachers' understanding of the subject. The improved subject planning and the emphasis on the teaching and application of historical skills have ensured that the teachers have appropriate and clear aims for their lessons. This has a good effect on pupils' learning.
115. In the good lessons, examples of which were found in both infants and juniors, the teachers encouraged the pupils to apply their research to empathising with the situations or people they were studying. Pupils imagined how they would feel working between large machines in a weaving factory or cleaning a chimney. These teachers used resources well to stimulate the pupils' imagination. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils. Where teaching was satisfactory the lesson was too long and pupils began to lose concentration or there was not enough challenge for the higher attaining pupils in the class. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully, some showing them how they could improve their work. Teachers assess their pupils' achievements at the end of each unit of work.
116. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The deputy headteacher looks after the subject alongside the curriculum team for history and geography, as there is no history co-ordinator at present. The headteacher monitors the teachers' planning. The management team has a good understanding of the way the subject needs to be developed to fully accommodate the revised curriculum. There is a good range of visits to museums and places linked to the history curriculum. This brings history alive and makes it relevant to the pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

117. Although standards are below those usually seen at seven and eleven, there has been improvement in provision and teaching since the previous inspection. A number of new computer systems have recently been purchased. Teachers are beginning to use these regularly but there are still insufficient computers and other resources to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. There are suitable short and long-term plans to remedy this. A good initiative that partly makes up for the lack of equipment is the arrangements with the local secondary schools and the university Science Park. All juniors have the opportunity to use a computer suite at some stage and Year 6 have a course of lessons, both in a secondary school and in a Science Park. These arrangements are helping develop pupils' skills well.
118. By the age of seven pupils use a mouse competently to move shapes across the computer screen. They write simple sentences using a basic word processor and correct errors but are slow finding letters on the keyboard. They follow instructions on the screen to access menus to change programs and enter data in boxes with help. They have some experience of making a programmable toy move by using coded keys.
119. By the time they leave the school pupils use word processors to write and correct their work. They create posters using simple functions to create borders, and add pictures. However, most pupils only use very basic editing skills. All pupils have experiences researching information from a database, using the Internet and e-mail, using results from experiments to produce graphs and using spreadsheets. However, they have too few opportunities to develop investigation and problem solving skills or practice and refine ways of using different programs on a regular basis. This slows down the pupils' learning. Opportunities are provided for pupils to take photographs with the digital camera, though few understand the process of putting the pictures onto the computer. Pupils have very little experience controlling events or sensing

physical data using computers due to lack of equipment and suitable programs. This was also identified as a weakness in the previous inspection. Some pupils lack basic skills such as loading a program. Pupils have little knowledge or understanding of the place of information and communication technology in society. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make similar progress to others. There are no specialist resources to help them learn.

120. When pupils are given the opportunity they use computers sensibly. They persevere with their work and take turns when working in twos. Their sensible behaviour at the computers helps them to make progress. In the whole class lesson seen pupils were very keen to complete the tasks set, and worked hard.
121. Only one lesson of direct teaching was seen during the inspection and this was satisfactory. In this junior lesson, good use was made of a local secondary school computer suite to introduce pupils to the power of a spreadsheet. The teacher was well prepared, managed the unforeseen problems well, and made sure that all pupils understood that spreadsheets improve the speed of calculation. Discussions with the co-ordinator and observations of pupils working at computers indicate that there are weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge and their understanding of how to use computers effectively. This leads to inconsistencies in provision across classes and from year to year, and limits what pupils can learn. Throughout the school teachers plan the use of computer programs to support literacy, numeracy and other subjects. However, very little time is actually spent on the computer during each lesson. Too often tasks do not take into account different pupils' skills using computers or those in other subjects. Teachers are aware of the need to develop their own skills and are undertaking a programme of in-service training. They use other equipment such as videos and the digital camera well to help pupils learn. For example, Year 6 pupils were well prepared for a video of the Hindu story of creation. The teacher challenged them to find answers to different questions before the video started, and there was a suitable discussion afterwards to check understanding.
122. There is satisfactory co-ordination of the subject, which includes monitoring and evaluation of provision and standards. It also includes in-class support to help teachers develop their own and pupils' skills. This is being used effectively to identify and plan to correct weaknesses. There is a suitable policy that sets out the aims of the school clearly and to which all teachers are committed. A satisfactory outline scheme of work identifies areas to be covered in each year. It is directly related to the latest National Curriculum guidance, but does not help teachers understand how to cover all aspects. Assessment and recording of attainment and its use to plan work is unsatisfactory. The school is fully aware of the weaknesses in the subject and is working to rectify them.

## MUSIC

123. At the time of the previous inspection, attainment was in line with national expectations at seven. This has been maintained. Pupils sing a range of different songs and nursery rhymes. They identify the differences in the way instruments are played and move rhythmically to music, repeating rhythmic patterns with obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm. Pupils in Year 1 sing tunefully and respond to the music that they hear, applauding their teacher's prowess in recorder and clarinet playing. This lesson had some good support for pupils with English as an additional language as the nursery nurse encouraged pupils to pull funny faces like a clown.
124. There has been some improvement in pupils' attainment in the juniors since the previous inspection. This is similar to expectations for pupils' age in most aspects. Singing is a weaker element. In Year 5 pupils select suitable instruments and compose music to illustrate the lines of "The Big Bang" as part of their topic on space. The words are challenging and pupils made

a good attempt to illustrate them with, for example triangles for light as well as the obvious cymbals for the big bang. They were aware of dynamics and pace and worked well together to produce their contribution to the performance. Younger pupils use untuned instruments and body sounds to develop patterns of four-beat rhythms. This lesson was very long and pupils found it difficult to maintain their concentration throughout. However, they made good gains in learning overall as the teacher was careful to gradually extend their learning throughout the lesson with progressively more difficult tasks.

125. The singing in the assemblies and hymn practices for juniors observed during the inspection was unsatisfactory. There was little challenge in the repertoire and pupils had no opportunity to warm up their voices so the singing was flat. Posture was poor. There was little enthusiasm except when singing simple rhythmical hymns. The teachers praised the pupils when they had put little effort into their performance. Although teachers were careful to talk about the meaning of the words and to link them with the theme for assemblies there was little attempt to improve the quality of the singing beyond sustaining notes for the correct length of time. While accepting that it is the beginning of a new school year, there is no evidence of a culture of good vocal performance in school.
126. There was some good teaching in music lessons. The school makes good use of teacher expertise by some sharing of responsibility for music teaching. However, three different teachers taught the subject well. All these good lessons involved pupils in some form of composition and evaluation of their work. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs made good progress in these lessons, as did the rest of the class. Relationships were good, the lessons were planned well and everyone involved enjoyed them. In another lesson, the teacher's planning was good but pupils became bored and restless. This was a singing lesson and pupils did not sing in tune or maintain either correct phrasing or rhythm. The three hymn practices for infants and lower and upper juniors lacked challenge and pace. Relationships with the pupils were sound and the lessons were planned appropriately. There were some gains in learning as pupils learnt new words and the way the tunes should be sung. There was little improvement in performance.
127. The school has a choir and several recorder clubs. There is an annual performance with a whole school major performance every two years. Commercial schemes of work are used successfully to support the teaching of music and the curriculum is planned to correlate with the government guidance for the subject. The statutory requirements for music are met.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

128. In the previous inspection, standards were below national expectations across a range of activities including gymnastics, games and dance. Since then, standards have improved and the quality of the work seen is similar to that expected. Some of the work seen in dance in Year 5 was better than that normally seen for pupils of this age. Almost all the pupils leave the school able to swim the minimum 25 metres.
129. In the one infant gymnastic lesson, pupils moved around the indoor space confidently and moved along benches in a variety of ways. They had satisfactory co-ordination and balance and had the necessary confidence to transfer their movements to working at a height. The quality of teaching was satisfactory. There was an appropriate warm-up activity and safety aspects were clearly stressed. Good demonstration by the teacher and support for individuals as they worked had a good effect on pupils' learning. Pupils enjoyed this first session in the hall, were enthusiastic and wanted to do well. The organisation of the group activities meant that some pupils had to wait too long to take their turn and this slowed the rate of their learning. The teaching assistant gave good support to the less confident special needs pupils and this helped them make good progress in the lesson.

130. Most juniors co-operate well when getting out and putting away equipment and know the correct way to carry heavy items. They understand the importance of warming up and cooling down in a lesson and are developing satisfactory skills in transferring weight to different parts of the body. They co-ordinate their movements well and put together a simple sequence. In games activities, pupils show satisfactory hand-eye co-ordination when working with a ball. They throw, catch and use a hockey stick effectively. In dance, pupils respond imaginatively to a variety of movement challenges and build up a good sequence of movements to simulate a rocket taking off into space.
131. In junior classes, the quality of teaching is mostly satisfactory. In the one dance lesson seen it was very good. The teacher's enthusiasm and subject knowledge were key factors in the very good progress of the pupils. This enthusiasm was transmitted successfully to all the pupils who clearly enjoyed the lesson. A digital camera was used effectively to help both the teacher and the pupils to assess the quality of movement. All teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and appropriate expectations. This ensures a good structure to lessons and high levels of pupil involvement in the activities. This has a good effect on pupils' learning. In most lessons, insufficient use is made of critical appraisal in order to show pupils how their work might be improved.
132. Much of this improvement in standards is due to two key factors. Co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and has had the opportunity to work with teachers in lessons. This has helped teachers realise the importance of quality in pupils' work and the need to build on skills from year to year. A commercial scheme of work, adapted to meet the needs of the school, is being used effectively to improve the development of key skills from year to year. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities enhances pupils' learning in dance and games. There are no whole school procedures for assessing pupils' progress and this places limitations on the effective development of key skills and knowledge from year to year. Teachers are not sure which skills have been acquired and thus plan from a less secure base. There are plans to address this issue by devising end of year group targets for teachers to aim for.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

133. Standards in religious education are above those required in the syllabus used by most of the schools in the local area. This subject, together with the way it is used to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is a strength of the school. It has a very good impact on the pupils' respect of those with different faiths, and helps them prepare for life in a multicultural society. It makes them think carefully about their own attitudes and beliefs and have confidence in their own beliefs and values. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with those required.
134. By the age of seven, pupils have a broad knowledge of the Hindu and Christian religions and have some knowledge of other religions, for example Islam and Buddhism. They are very aware that there are aspects of their own and other pupils' lives that are very important to them, and already recognise many traditions, symbols and customs of different faith groups. They understand the moral teaching behind stories such as that of Krishna and Sudhama. In their studies of relationship they demonstrate an understanding of words like loyal, truthful, thoughtful, and caring, and understand emotions such as jealousy and pride. In their study of the celebrations of marriage, they make astute choices of characteristics they want in a life partner, and know about the traditions that link with the celebrations. They make up their own rules about caring for the environment. They visit places of worship, for example a mosque and a church, to develop their knowledge and understanding related to places of worship.

135. By the age of eleven, pupils have an extensive knowledge of different faiths. They have a good grasp of all the areas of learning required in the syllabus. They appreciate meanings behind symbols, traditions, religious celebrations, and places associated with worship. They compare and contrast stories from different religions, for example of creation. They understand the effect of religious beliefs and customs on relationships and attitudes. For example, they understand the importance of the Hindu festival of Raksha Bandhan and its importance in family life. They appreciate and accept that there are differences in beliefs within different religions. Pupils are prepared to express well thought out opinions about universal questions. At seven and eleven, the knowledge and understanding of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, exceeds those suggested in the most recent government guidelines.
136. Pupils' attitudes and their behaviour in lessons are good. They enjoy lessons. They talk about their own religions confidently and share their experiences, or participate in discussions willingly. They listen to each other, and respect each other's opinions. Pupils often involve their parents who provide additional materials to illustrate their own customs.
137. Throughout the school literacy skills are developed well through the subject. In one lesson in Year 6, pupils read the story of creation aloud together, engaged in group discussion and made a list of adjectives to describe the God who made the perfect world. Pupils use different styles of writing effectively. For example, they write in role as if they had completed the Muslim pilgrimage of the Hadj. Pupils are encouraged to write about their own beliefs, and this leads to some well presented extended writing. Their subject specific and wider vocabulary is continually extended and pupils use this vocabulary in their discussions and in written work. Numeracy skills are used where appropriate, for example, the numbers of Bibles sold annually was discussed in Year 6.
138. The quality of teaching is good. Some very good teaching occurs in the juniors. Some class teachers exchange with others for religious education to ensure that enthusiastic and confident teachers use their good subject knowledge and expertise to extend pupils learning. Lessons are well planned and organised. This means little time is wasted. Resources are used well in all lessons to stimulate learning. For example, a video was used to illustrate the Hindu creation story and real Rakhi bracelets supported the discussion about religious festivals. Pupils looked at a range of different crosses when they discussed symbolism, and the power of the cross, illustrated in the story of St Columba. Teachers know the pupils well and manage lessons sensitively to ensure that all pupils from all backgrounds and religions represented in the class can participate. This was very evident in one lesson about celebrations that initially focussed on birthdays. One pupil whose family religion does not celebrate birthdays was carefully included. Teachers recognise that the pupils themselves have much to offer explaining their own customs and give them plenty of opportunities to share their experiences and learn from each other. Work is well marked and includes many encouraging comments. Attainment is assessed regularly through short but well designed tests and information collected is used appropriately.
139. Subject co-ordination is good. Monitoring and evaluation of curriculum content, teaching and standards plays an important part in the development of the subject. Pupils are given many first-hand experiences. They visit different places of worship, meet religious leaders, and handle symbolic objects and clothes. This makes a very important contribution to the high standards attained. The school successfully uses the local syllabus as a scheme of work, but is also currently combining recent government guidelines with this syllabus to improve the quality of provision further.

