

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **ST ELIZABETH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Foleshill, Coventry

LEA area: Coventry

Unique reference number: 103710

Headteacher: Mrs E M Travers

Reporting inspector: Mrs Gloria Hitchcock  
2535

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 225151

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 with Nursery

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: St Elizabeth's Road

Foleshill

Coventry

Postcode: CV6 5BX

Telephone number: 02476 687527

Fax number: 02476 683628

Appropriate authority: The Local Education Authority

Name of chair of governors: Mr P Sheridan

Date of previous inspection: February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Gloria Hitchcock 2535	Registered inspector	English as an additional language	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
Richard Barnard 13526	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare, health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
Judy Dawson 20911	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
Andrew Matthews 19410	Team inspector	English Information technology Design and technology Physical education	
Glesni Thomas 22248	Team inspector	Science Art Under-fives Equal opportunities Special educational needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St Elizabeth's Catholic Primary School is located in Foleshill, an economically deprived area north of Coventry's city centre. Most of the pupils come from the immediate locality. There are 210 pupils (104 boys and 106 girls) in the main school and a further 47 part-time pupils (27 boys and 20 girls) in the nursery. At the time of the last inspection there were 207 pupils in the school, so numbers have stayed about the same except that there is now a nursery with an extra 47 pupils. Children start school in the nursery once they are three and in the main school once they are four. Children's attainments are well below average when they start school. Forty per cent of pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, which is above average, 21 per cent are on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs and three pupils have statements of special educational need, figures which are broadly average. The main area of special needs is learning difficulty. Thirty-one per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is very high compared with other schools and 39 per cent come from minority ethnic backgrounds, which is also very high compared with other schools.

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

This is an effective school. Standards of pupils' work have risen overall in the last few years and pupils make good progress. The school does well compared to others with pupils from similar backgrounds. The climate created within the school is a strength; all pupils are respected and valued. The teaching overall is good and teachers are committed to helping the pupils do well. The high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language receive very effective support and as a result make good progress. The new headteacher has a very clear view of what the school should be and is supported well by the staff and governors. The school provides good value for money.

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

- The good teaching of most basic skills and the effective partnership between teachers and classroom assistants helps pupils make good progress.
- The good quality of the provision for the youngest children gives them a good start in school.
- It provides very good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well.
- The strong teamwork of the whole school community reflects the school's aims.
- It cares for the pupils well, which ensures that pupils love coming to school.

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

- Standards in English, particularly writing.
- The information gained from assessing what pupils can do is not used sufficiently well to help pupils move forward.
- The standard of work and quality of teaching is not checked sufficiently regularly.
- There are not sufficient opportunities for pupils to work independently, to use their initiative and to take responsibility.
- Parents are not given sufficient information about how they can help their children make progress and do not have sufficient opportunities to be involved in the life of the school.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in February 1997 and in some areas it has made good progress. Standards are now higher and the quality of teaching has improved. Most of the key issues have been dealt with well. Provision for the youngest pupils has improved considerably, with the addition of a nursery and an improved range of activities to help pupils learn and develop. Standards in science have also risen considerably due to staff training and improved planning. The roles of subject co-ordinators have been improved, but they still do not have sufficient opportunities to check what is actually happening in classrooms. Planning for design and technology and geography has improved satisfactorily. Assessment of what pupils can do in all subjects still needs to be improved, but the planning for English, mathematics and science has shown good improvement. The school is in a good position to improve further.

### **STANDARDS**

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	[1997]	[1998]	[1999]	[1999]	
English	D	C	D	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	D	D	C	A	
Science	C	C	E	C	

In the most recent tests this year standards in mathematics are still the same as the national average and in English are below average but there has been a significant improvement in science, due to the school undertaking extra staff training and supporting the use of scientific language for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Standards in class work in Year 6 generally match these results in mathematics and English and are now above average in science. The school has set lower targets for the 2001 tests because there are greater proportions of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language in the cohort. Particular strengths are pupils' listening skills, their achievements in science, number work in mathematics and the progress of pupils in the Foundation Stage and with English as an additional language. Comparative weaknesses are pupils' skills in writing, their ability to use the library for independent research and the investigation elements of mathematics and science. Given that pupils start school achieving standards well below the national average, inspectors found that pupils achieve well.

#### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils' behaviour is good but a minority is sometimes disruptive. However, pupils respond well to their teachers' good management.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Relationships with adults are very good and pupils often help each other out in class; their ability to take initiative and responsibility is not as good as it should be.
Attendance	Below the national average, but steadily improving.

Pupils love coming to school and are very enthusiastic about their lessons and out of school activities. They are proud of their school and keep it clean and tidy, which makes a big contribution to the attractiveness of the surroundings in which they learn.

#### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching overall is good and has a positive impact on what pupils achieve. In 22 per cent of lessons seen it was very good. Teaching is very good in one of the Year 1 classes, in Year 6 and in the specialist teaching for pupils with English as an additional language. Only three per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. Teaching is consistently good in the Foundation Stage, where pupils are helped to settle into school quickly and are given a good start to their schooling. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are used effectively

and the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. However, marking often does not help pupils identify what they need to do next to improve and, in some classes, too much use is made of worksheets that do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to work independently. Particular strengths are teachers' good management of the pupils, which keeps them focused on their work, the very good relationships with pupils, which encourage them to do their best, and good questioning, which makes pupils think. The partnership between teachers and classroom assistants has a particularly good effect on pupils' achievements and progress.

#### **OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is a good range of activities for children in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils throughout the school receive effective help based on their individual needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for spiritual development and social development is good; for cultural development it is satisfactory and for moral development it is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good.

The school works hard to ensure that pupils are taught right from wrong and this has a positive impact on the life of the school. The staff know the pupils very well and are committed to caring for them. In particular, the support given to pupils who speak English as an additional language is a strength of the school. Every effort is made to stress the importance of pupils attending school regularly. Parents think highly of the school and there are satisfactory links with parents but they do not have enough opportunity to help in the life of the school.

#### **HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the school is satisfactory overall.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are committed to the school and perform their duties well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. There is not sufficient checking on standards of work and teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Good.

There are not sufficient procedures for checking systematically on the quality of teaching but the new headteacher has a very clear view of what the school should be like and how to achieve it. Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory, apart from the library, which is poorly stocked. The school makes the most of the Victorian building with modern extensions and creates an attractive learning environment. The school applies the principles of best value well when purchasing goods and services. The number of staff, including classroom assistants, is good.



## 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>• Pupils are expected to work hard.</li><li>• Their children are helped to become mature.</li><li>• Behaviour is good.</li><li>• Their children like coming to school.</li><li>• The teaching is good.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They receive insufficient information about how their children are getting on.</li><li>• The amount of homework.</li><li>• Extra-curricular activities.</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. They also agree that parents do not receive enough information about how their children are getting on and, in particular, how they can move forward. Inspectors judged that an appropriate amount of homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school has set realistic targets for improvements in standards and is on course to meet them. Targets for the year 2001 are that 64 per cent of pupils should reach at least average standards in English and 68 per cent should reach similar levels in mathematics. This is slightly below this year's targets and below what is expected nationally, but the group due to take the tests has a greater proportion of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. Given that pupils start school with attainments that are well below average and that some speak very little or no English, the pupils make good progress and achieve as well as they are able. This is because the school provides well targeted support for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language. Standards have improved steadily overall since the last inspection, in line with national trends, but do go up and down according to the particular year group.
2. In 1999 school's results in national tests for eleven-year-olds matched the national average in mathematics, were below average in English and well below average in science. However, compared with similar schools St Elizabeth's performed well above average in English and mathematics and average in science. There was a significant improvement in the test results in 2000, especially in science. There is no significant difference in the standards reached by boys and girls.
3. A particular strength was the increased proportion of pupils gaining levels higher than expected for their age in mathematics and science. English test results were not as good and the proportion gaining the level expected of their age was below that of schools nationally. This is partly due to the fact that around a third of pupils speak English as an additional language and, in fact, make good progress throughout the school. However, there are still weaknesses in writing that need to be improved and reading could be improved further. Part of the reason for the dramatic improvement in science is the decisive action taken to address weaknesses by:
  - introducing the national guidance for planning science teaching;
  - a whole school initiative to use scientific language in literacy lessons;
  - a whole school initiative to improve mathematical skills relevant to science;
  - specific language support targeted at Years 2 and 6.
4. When pupils start in the nursery at the age of three, attainments are well below average, especially in language development. By the time they enter Year 1 standards have risen, particularly in mathematical skills, but are still mainly below average. The school's good provision for these young children's personal and social development means that when they start Year 1 they have above average skills in this area. They are below average in early reading and writing skills and in creative development, and average in mathematical skills. Given that they start school well below average they make good progress, due to the consistently good teaching, which is focused on their individual needs.
5. Infants make good progress due to the good grounding in basic skills of reading, writing and especially mathematics. They are helped by the good support for pupils with special educational needs, where teaching is targeted on their individual learning plans. Another factor is the very good support for pupils who speak English as an additional language; a significant number of pupils from a variety of countries with a very limited understanding of English, who make good progress as a result of teachers' thorough planning and the skilled specialist teaching they receive. For example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson the specialist teacher used real life objects such as tins of rice as the class teacher introduced cylinders, quietly helping her group to say the words. She combined reinforcing the correct mathematical terms with fostering genuine interest, as when one pupil, new to the country, showed a sense of awe as she rolled a small pink ball in her hand and said 'sphere'. Pupils do better in mathematics in the early stages, partly because they are allowed to take the base line assessment in their home language, whilst the tests taken by seven-year-olds are all in English. The fact that so many pupils achieve standards in line with the national average is partly a reflection of the progress made by pupils with English as an additional language, as well as those with special educational needs. In Year 1 pupils make good progress in counting to 20 and back again and identify simple two and three-dimensional shapes such as cubes, cylinders and spheres. In Year 2 the more able pupils count up to 100 in 2s, 5s, and 10s and add and subtract up to 50. However, much of the written work is completed on worksheets, many of which are the same for most of the pupils, which means that some find the work too easy and some find it too hard. In junior classes progress fluctuates but is satisfactory overall, with very good progress in Year 6. In one lesson, as a result of the

teacher's high expectations and the pace of the lesson, the number of pupils who understood how to convert fractions to decimals and back again rose from just a few to almost all the class.

6. Standards in English in the 1999 tests for eleven-year-olds were close to the national average but they dropped to below average in the 2000 tests, especially in writing. Inspection evidence shows that standards are average at seven, although writing is a weakness, and below average at eleven. One reason for this apparent drop in the progress pupils make is that there are higher proportions of pupils who speak English as an additional language and with special educational needs in Year 6 than in Year 2. Taken overall, pupils still make good progress throughout the school, especially in speaking and listening, where they develop good skills. This is partly due to the specialist help given to pupils who speak English as an additional language and partly to the consistent use of good, well focused questions from teachers, which make pupils think and then respond. Pupils make good progress in reading but progress would be better still if there were more opportunities to read in school outside the literacy lessons and more opportunity to use the library for independent work and reading. There are also insufficient opportunities for pupils to do extended pieces of writing to develop their writing skills. This has an adverse effect on standards.
7. Standards in science are average at seven and above average at eleven. Pupils make good progress due to the good teaching they receive. All the pupils in Year 2 could complete an electrical circuit by connecting a switch, battery and bulb to make the bulb light up. Pupils make rapid progress in the juniors, especially in Year 6. Although standards in investigation and experimental work are not as high as other aspects of science, pupils still begin to identify what they have learned. For example, in one Year 6 lesson pupils made comments such as 'I didn't realise that soil had air and water in it'.
8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are currently average; this is an improvement and the school is well placed to improve still further. The new ICT suite, improved staff training and the specialist help from a classroom assistant have had a positive impact on standards and there are good plans to raise standards further. Pupils love ICT and their rapt attention in lessons is a significant feature of their good progress. They use ICT well in other subjects as when children in the nursery use the computer to 'paint' pictures and those in Year 5 made computerised tally charts of the merit points gained by individuals and groups within the class.
9. Standards in all other subjects are broadly average, with some strengths in gymnastics, where pupils are helped by the specialist coaching expertise of a classroom assistant, and in swimming. Literacy and numeracy are used well in other subjects; pupils measure the growth of roots and shoots and record their results in a graph in ICT. The school analysed the reason for the comparatively poor science results in 1999 and as a result ensured that literacy and numeracy lessons reinforced scientific language and ideas, which had a significant impact on standards. Literacy is also used effectively in history, for example when a Year 6 pupil gave an illuminating account of a day in the life of a Victorian child miner including words such as 'the weather was piercing with lumps of frosty, crisp snow on the ground'. This has a positive impact on pupils' learning and the progress they make.

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

10. Pupils have good attitudes to school, which has a positive impact on their achievements. They love coming and are proud of their school. The youngest pupils are settled well in the nursery and reception class and they show positive attitudes in lessons; they persevere with tasks, show good initiative and co-operate together well. For example, pupils showed great delight when co-operating in games with a parachute. Attitudes in lessons throughout the school are generally good and they show a steady improvement as pupils get older. Year 6 pupils' responses are often very good or excellent. Generally pupils are keen to get on with tasks and concentrate well. For example, in a Year 3 science lesson pupils were well motivated by the teacher's approach and were enthralled hearing about acid attacks on teeth. Pupils' enthusiasm for information and communication technology and swimming is having a particularly strong impact on their achievements. In a Year 4 swimming lesson pupils' enthusiasm and willingness to work well ensure they make good gains in their confidence. In some cases infants' concentration wanes during long lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language are very eager to learn, responding very well to the provision made for their needs.
11. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, assemblies, around the school and in the playground is satisfactory. A number of pupils find difficulty behaving appropriately, although they are beginning to respond well to the school's consistent approach to the management of their behaviour. Some boisterous and aggressive behaviour occurs but it has not been serious enough to warrant any exclusions from the school. There have been no permanent or temporary exclusions from the school over the past two years, a figure well

below the national average. The majority of the pupils know the rules well and are aware of how to behave appropriately. Most show good manners, are very polite and friendly and show good respect for the feelings of others. Racial harmony is very good with no evidence of racist behaviour. Relationships are good; pupils in most lessons work well in pairs or groups with a positive impact on their learning. This was very evident in several lessons observed in the computer room where pupils work very well in pairs.

12. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They respond with enthusiasm to extra-curricular activities. Few opportunities are provided for them to undertake responsibilities around the school, or to show their initiative or develop independent learning skills, such as using the library for research. They generally tidy up resources well. Books are well cared for and they show good pride in the school and its grounds.
13. Attendance levels are slightly below the national average but are showing a steady improvement. Rates of unauthorised absence are well below the national average. Few pupils are late and lessons start on time.

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

14. The quality of teaching is good overall; it is consistently good in the Foundation Stage (the nursery and reception), satisfactory in the infants, with very good teaching in one Year 1 class and good in junior classes, with some very good teaching in Year 6. In 58 per cent of lessons seen the teaching was at least good and of these, the teaching in 20 per cent was very good. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very good, which has a positive effect on the learning of these pupils. In only three per cent of lessons was the teaching unsatisfactory, mainly because the work given to pupils was not appropriate for their needs, which impeded their learning. This is a significant improvement since the last report, when 23 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. The improvement has been due, to some extent, to more staff training, so that teachers now have a better knowledge of the subjects they teach and their improved planning means that they have a clearer focus on what they want pupils to learn in each lesson.
15. The introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies have also had a positive impact on the quality of teaching; they have taken advantage of the support offered by their local authority, which included visiting specialists monitoring the teaching. This has had a positive impact on teachers' confidence and the progress pupils make. The teaching of basic skills, such as reading, writing and numeracy, is especially important in this school, where pupils start with levels of attainment that are well below average. They have embraced the new information and communication technology (ICT) initiatives enthusiastically and, while they have good plans to improve their teaching further, are beginning to use ICT effectively to support learning in all subjects.
16. The main weakness in the teaching is the inconsistent use of marking, where some teachers' marking helps pupils know what they need to do to move forward but this is not the case in all classes. Another weakness is the use of too many worksheets, which restrict pupils' ability to explore, investigate and move forward. Pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to investigate and take initiative in their own learning in mathematics and science and in the use of the library.
17. A particularly strong feature of the teaching at St Elizabeth's is the support given to pupils who speak English as an additional language. There is a specialist teacher who works alongside classroom teachers and classroom assistants to enable pupils to undertake the same work as others in their class. This has the added benefit of spreading the expertise amongst other staff in the school and has a significant impact on how well these pupils learn. In the nursery, support staff use their bilingual skills sensitively to help children settle into school and become familiar with the most important words they need to start learning. For example, in one lesson the staff used the morning break for milk to reinforce words such as 'sit down', 'what is your name' 'put it in the empty basket', with the bi-lingual assistant using two languages to help accustom children to their new world.
18. The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is well focused on the needs identified in each pupil's individual learning plan, and this has a major impact on the progress they make. Teachers' planning is good; they know the pupils well and use their day-to-day assessments of how pupils are doing to plan the next lesson's work. This is especially effective in the Foundation Stage.
19. The partnership between teachers and support staff is very strong, which results in pupils receiving consistent messages about what they are learning and how they are meant to behave. This has a very positive impact on how well they achieve. In addition, teachers manage pupils well; they have high

expectations of how pupils should behave and throughout the school reward good behaviour and gently but firmly discourage poor behaviour. This benefits the learning of all pupils, for example, in one Year 5 lesson, the rest of the class completely ignored the behaviour of one pupil who was not concentrating, and focused well on their own work. Not all pupils find it easy to concentrate for prolonged periods but the effective management of the teachers and support staff helps to reduce any difficulties to a minimum. Questioning is good throughout the school and in some lessons it is very good, as in a Year 1 mathematics lessons where the teachers' questions in the mental mathematics session were geared to the right level for each pupils' understanding, with the result that pupils moved forward in their understanding. The brisk pace creates a sense of urgency that inspires pupils to learn. Teachers use resources well to make work more interesting for pupils. They use homework effectively to extend pupils' learning and, in addition to set homework, frequently encourage pupils to continue work at home, as in one history lesson when pupils were encouraged to ask grandparents for historical objects such as old photographs, to bring the subject to life.

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

20. The school has made good improvements in this area since the last inspection and provides a broad and balanced curriculum covering all the subjects of the National Curriculum. The government strategies for the teaching of both literacy and numeracy are used appropriately within the school. A combination of national and the Coventry Education Authority's guidance is used to plan other subjects of the curriculum, ensuring that the complete National Curriculum will be covered. The curriculum for science is good for both infants and juniors.
21. The school plans for an appropriate allocation of time for different subjects. However, an appropriate emphasis on the core subjects of literacy and numeracy over the last few years has resulted in the foundation subjects of history, geography and art having less time allocated to them, especially in infant classes. Other lessons like numeracy and computer skills are sometimes too long for the younger pupils to sustain concentration. From the beginning of this term there is a legal requirement to teach the National Curriculum for each subject. The school has the planning in place and now needs to adjust the timetable to fully accommodate these subjects. The school employs a specialist teacher to teach music to all the classes. This is good provision, enabling the pupils to achieve standards in music that are appropriate for their age. The provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has improved considerably since the last inspection.
22. While the planning for the curriculum is generally secure, there are too few planned opportunities for pupils to study independently. In mathematics, for example, pupils do not have enough opportunities work on their own projects or explore different methods. They rarely make and test hypotheses or apply their learning to solving problems in their own ways. The teacher directs all the mathematics in the infant classes and most of their written mathematics is in the form of formal worksheets. In science, pupils have too few opportunities to experiment and investigate independently either individually or in groups. Pupils do not use the library sufficiently for research and their library skills are poor. The library provision is unsatisfactory and does little to encourage pupils to foster a love of books in pupils.
23. The planning for the new Foundation Stage for children in the nursery and reception classes is already in place and what was a weakness at the time of the last inspection is now a strength. The curriculum for these children is good, promoting all aspects of the early learning goals in appropriate steps to meet the needs of all the children. The support for children with English as an additional language is effective and the planning incorporates good provision for them. All aspects of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being implemented effectively and are having an impact on the progress the pupils make and the standards they achieve. The school promotes writing appropriately throughout the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 have written some moving personal accounts in the role of Victorian children writing an account of a day's work in a mine. A significant minority of pupils throughout the school is not fluent in English. The curriculum planning includes the teaching of technical language to support each subject and the teachers and support staff develop these pupils' general speaking and listening skills very effectively through carefully structured teaching. Numeracy is 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. A good range of visits and visitors have been built into the planning and matched to the school's curriculum aims. Older pupils have studied the local area. A discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils indicated that they would make good guides to the city! The residential visit to Dol-y-Moch not only enhances the pupils' environmental and geographical studies but also provides a major contribution to their social development. Lady Godiva made a real impact when she visited the infants when they studied famous local people.

24. The school has appropriate links with the Cardinal Newman School, where most of the pupils move on for their secondary schooling. Teachers from the school observe the work in Year 6 and there are two-way links between pupils from St. Elizabeth's and Newman's. The nursery is very much a part of the main school and the vast majority of children in the nursery move into the reception class, providing continuity within the Foundation Stage.
25. There are very strong links with St Elizabeth's Church where the school community regularly attends Mass. There are many links with the wider community. Year 6 pupils receive coaching from the A.T.7 Sports Centre and pupils in Years 4 and 5 walk to Livingstone Swimming Baths. Classes visit the Broad Street library and the local police and community safety team support the work in school. Classes visit the Partnership Centres, where there are strong links between business and education and the school has visited a Coventry City football match promoted through the Business in the Community scheme. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities including cross-country, netball and football and the computer club that runs twice a week. All these activities enrich and extend the curriculum and enable pupils to develop their personal and social skills as well as their computing and sporting prowess. The school is sensitive to the wishes of the pupils and the clubs reflect their interests.
26. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils have equal access to all the activities of the school. Boys and girls participate equally in extra-curricular activities. Planning for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language ensures that pupils can take full advantage of what is happening in school. The Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Grant is used very effectively to support pupils within the classroom and especially well to develop the speaking and listening skills of the younger pupils and the children in the Foundation Stage.
27. There is suitable provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Provision for sex and health education is within science and religious education. 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.
28. The provision for spiritual development is good. Good opportunities for reflection and prayer are provided daily in a range of assemblies and also prayers at the start and end of the day and at lunchtimes. The strong emphasis on Catholic faith successfully develops pupils' awareness and self-knowledge. There are limited opportunities planned in lessons for pupils to reflect on the wonder of the world around them, although occasionally teaching ensures pupils become excited or moved. For example, in a music lesson pupils show anguish when told a violin bow is made of horse hair until they realised that the horse was not killed to provide the hair.
29. Pupils' moral development is promoted very well. Good behaviour is encouraged by positive reinforcement of examples of good behaviour. All staff strongly promote the themes of honesty, truth and justice. Good relationships are positively promoted throughout the school; all staff provide good role models especially in relation to the high level of care shown. Moral issues are promoted well in assemblies and staff take good steps to explain to pupils the impact of their actions on others.
30. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Plenty of opportunities are provided for pupils to work together and in groups. Pupils are encouraged to raise funds for charities, for example an orphanage in India. Pupils are encouraged well to take part in a range of sporting events with other schools. For example, Year 6 pupils partake with enthusiasm in a joint athletics session with pupils from a local special school. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility and use their initiative.
31. The school's provision for cultural education is satisfactory. Pupils are taught about the culture and traditions of other groups. Displays around the school illustrate how an awareness of a range of faiths and cultures is stimulated.

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

32. The school provides a very caring environment for all its pupils, which makes them feel valued and cared for. Staff know the pupils and their backgrounds very well, ensuring that the monitoring of personal development is effective. Incidents of aggressive behaviour or potential bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively.

33. Child protection procedures are very good and all staff are aware of potential issues. First aid arrangements are good with a good number of suitably trained staff. Procedures to identify and monitor health and safety issues are good; reviews are carried out rigorously and full reports made termly to the governing body. Adequate supervision is provided for pupils as they move around the school during playtime and lunchtimes; however, some pupils do wander in and out of the school building rather than have an orderly routine.
34. The school has a good behaviour management policy with a strong emphasis on praise, rewards and development of self-esteem. All staff implement the policy with good effect ensuring an overall satisfactory level of behaviour in spite of the fact that the school has a number of pupils with behavioural problems. The very good use of support staff in lessons means that in most cases the behaviour of these pupils does not limit the learning of other pupils in the class.
35. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are very good and this has resulted in a steady improvement in the overall level of attendance. The very effective monitoring by the school administrative staff and the regular, well-informed support of the Education Welfare Officer, ensure that parents are quickly contacted when potential cases of persistent absence occur.
36. Overall, assessment procedures are satisfactory although the school does not use the information gathered sufficiently well to help pupils plan their learning. The school makes good use of National Test results and the optional tests for Years 3, 4 and 5 to focus attention on areas for development. For example, the analysis of 1999 results indicated weaknesses in science in the juniors, which have been dealt with well, as standards now show. Assessments made in the nursery and reception classes are used well to help pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage. However, records are not used effectively to plan pupils' future work in the infants. Work in English, mathematics and science is assessed throughout the school and teachers are aware of pupils' attainment. This information is not used to set individual targets for pupils' development or to plan their next stages of learning, which impedes progress. Assessment procedures are not fully developed for all other subjects. Assessments of pupils with English as an additional language are excellent and for those with special educational needs are very good, with a subsequent positive impact on the progress these pupils make.

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

37. There was no judgement on the quality of the partnership with parents in the last report, but the school is keen to improve what is now a satisfactory partnership with parents. The great majority of parents who expressed a view are very happy with the school and the standards their children achieve. The school has established very good home links in the nursery. The 'all about me' project provides a very effective process that enables children to settle well in the nursery and provides the staff with very good information on the children and their backgrounds. This encourages parents to provide regular and effective help in the classroom.
38. The information provided by the school is satisfactory. Newsletters are good and provide regular information on the life of the school and also termly details on what pupils will learn about in each subject. The school prospectus and governors' annual reports to parents are helpful and informative documents. The school has an appropriate home/school agreement.
39. Parents are provided with good access to the staff if they have problems or concerns. Annual reports on pupils' achievements meet legal requirements but do not provide consistent information to parents, especially in relation to identifying targets or areas for pupils' future development. Some are good and give an evaluative indication of attainment, whereas others only describe what has been studied, for example, 'has studied the daily life of people in Tudor England'. The best reports give very good advice on areas for development as in some Year 1 reports. Consultation evenings are used well and parents feel they are helpful. Feedback to Year 5 parents on reading during the summer break has resulted in improved standards for pupils this term following good parental help. The school does not use the opportunity of home/school reading records to give all parents a better chance to help their children read at home.
40. Parents provide good help to clubs such as football and computer. Very little parental help is used in the classroom and parents do not use the computer suite. The community education programme, which has arranged activities for parents in relation to literacy and numeracy, has had limited impact on encouraging parents to be involved in their own and their children's education.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall, with strengths and weaknesses in different aspects. In particular, the way the school operates reflects the aims and values of the school very well. There is an atmosphere of respect for each individual, which is established by the headteacher and governors, supported by staff, and is reflected in the day-to-day life of the school. Staff are determined to help the pupils succeed.
42. The new headteacher took up her post just over a month before the inspection, so has had little time to make an impact on the school. However, she has a clear view of what the school should be and what should be done to achieve this. One example of the effectiveness of her strategy is the improvement in provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language. The EAL specialist teacher now works mainly in classrooms alongside teachers, which has the benefit of helping pupils do the same work as their peers and also of giving teachers additional skills in supporting these pupils. The headteacher is strongly supported by staff and governors, which has a positive impact on the drive to improve the standards pupils achieve.
43. The delegation of responsibilities to teachers has improved since the last inspection, with subject co-ordinators now able to plan for their own subjects; they have an amount of money which they can spend on their subject and they check teachers' plans. However, there is still insufficient monitoring of what is actually being taught in classrooms. In addition to co-ordinators, the senior management team do not check the quality of teaching on a regular basis and this should be improved. Whilst the headteacher and governors are clear what the school's priorities are, and run the school accordingly, the way the current school development plan is constructed does not identify these priorities sufficiently clearly.
44. There are good levels of staffing and satisfactory levels of resources to help pupils learn, apart from the library, which has too few good quality books to encourage pupils to read and research their own information. The accommodation is satisfactory and the school is bright, clean and well cared for. This has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning; they take a pride in their school and enjoy working in it.
45. The governing body carries out its duties well and meets all its legal requirements. Governors are knowledgeable and well informed about the work of the school and bring a wide range of skills to benefit the school. The governors and headteacher have a clear view of the financial position of the school. They take full account of the likely future pupil numbers and the school's commitments when approving spending, which is linked to the educational priorities. One example is the additional money spent on providing extra classroom support for pupils in the Foundation Stage and the infants, which is having a significant impact on the progress that pupils make. Spending is monitored very thoroughly.
46. The school administrative staff provide a very good level of support and advice, enabling all staff, especially the headteacher, to spend the minimum amount of time on general administrative duties. The school applies the principles of Best Value well in its work. Money allocated to the school for specific purposes such as staff development, pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language is used well and has a positive impact on pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.



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

47. In order to improve the standards of attainment and quality of education further, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
- Raise standards in English by:
    - providing more opportunities for pupils to practise their developing writing in the infants and to do more extended writing in the juniors;
    - provide more opportunities for the children in the Foundation Stage to practise their developing writing, using better quality paper to help them make clear marks;
    - providing more opportunities to read in school;
    - making more regular assessments of what pupils can achieve;
    - giving pupils more clear feedback on how they are doing and how they can improve. \*(Paragraphs: 3, 6, 16, 39, 66, 68)
  - Improve the way assessment information is used to:
    - plan the next stage of pupils' learning;
    - set targets for individuals so that pupils of all abilities do as well as they possibly can;
    - involve pupils in evaluating their own progress towards these targets. \*(Paragraphs: 16, 36, 80,96)
  - Ensure that senior staff and subject co-ordinators keep a regular check on standards of work and the quality of teaching. \*(Paragraph: 43, 68)
  - Provide more opportunities for pupils to work more independently, to take initiative and put their learning into practice especially:
    - in mathematics, science and reading;
    - in taking increasing responsibility for aspects of life in the school.(Paragraphs: 6, 22, 30, 64, 77, 84, 85, 90, 91, 100)
  - Build on the good start provided in the Foundation Stage to involve parents further in pupils' education by:
    - encouraging parents to help more in the classroom and in school activities;
    - giving parents guidance on how to help their children at home, especially in reading;
    - ensuring that reports more consistently tell parents what their children can achieve and how they can improve further.(Paragraphs: 6, 39, 43, 63, 64)

## **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Review the length of lessons in infant classes to:
  - ensure that younger pupils are not too tired to concentrate by the end of the lesson;
  - provide greater flexibility in timetabling the broad range of activities planned by the school.(Paragraphs: 10, 21, 96, 111)
- Ensure that reception children have access to a play area for the Foundation Stage.\* (Paragraph: 58)
- Improve the quality of library resources. (Paragraph: 68)
- Improve the way the school's priorities are identified to:
  - involve the whole school community;
  - more clearly emphasise the key priorities;
  - provide a forward view beyond the current year.(Paragraph: 43)

\* indicates an area that has already been identified as a priority by the school.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed

64

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

32

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

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	18	38	39	3	0	0

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

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

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	47	210
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		88

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

#### **Special educational needs**

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		45

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	67

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.1
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	17	13	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	12	14
	Girls	10	11	12
	Total	24	23	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (89)	77 (89)	87 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	13
	Girls	10	12	9
	Total	24	26	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (89)	87 (93)	73 (89]
	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	8	21	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above				
	Girls	15	17	16
	Total	21	22	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (74)	76 (56)	76 (81)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above				
	Girls	15	17	16
	Total	21	23	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	72 (77)	79 (85)	72 (82)
	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	
Black – African heritage	3
Black – other	0
Indian	31
Pakistani	11
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	109
Any other minority ethnic group	24

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

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

*There were no exclusions*

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3
Average class size	26.3

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	175

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	6

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.5
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	470,785
Total expenditure	465,209
Expenditure per pupil	2,050
Balance brought forward from previous year	39,186
Balance carried forward to next year	44,762

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	224
Number of questionnaires returned	73

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	41	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	36	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	49	8	5	10
The teaching is good.	75	22	0	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	58	32	7	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	26	5	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	42	45	7	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	63	30	1	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	44	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	37	12	0	11

## **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**

48. Since the last inspection, provision for children under six has improved and is now good. There have been two significant elements to the improvement. Firstly, the school now has a nursery class that provides good quality part-time education for 47 children from age three. Secondly, in the reception class, the curriculum has been improved and now caters well for the needs of four and five-year-olds. Throughout the Foundation Stage, teaching and non-teaching staff work very effectively together to provide good quality early education for all children, including those who have only a tentative grasp of English. As a result, children achieve well and their personal and social skills are more advanced than would normally be expected of children in this age group.
49. Children are admitted to the nursery in the autumn following their third birthdays and move to the reception class a year later. All the children in the reception class have attended a nursery setting and most attended St Elizabeth's nursery. On entry to the nursery, children's attainment is well below average; many have a restricted vocabulary, a significant proportion is not fluent in English and a few do not communicate at all in English. When they enter the reception class, they have positive attitudes and a good degree of independence and self-motivation in their learning. This is because of the good teaching and specific importance attached to nurturing personal and social skills in the nursery. In numeracy, their skills are approaching those expected of children in this age group but the majority have underdeveloped language skills. By the end of the Foundation Stage, in their personal, social and emotional development, the majority are set to exceed the early learning goals that young children should reach and in mathematics, the majority are on line to reach these goals. In all other areas of learning most children will not yet have reached all the set goals by the time they enter Year 1 but they will have made good progress given their attainment at entry. This is a consequence of the skilful teaching and successful approach of the Foundation Stage team in promoting positive attitudes to learning and nurturing language skills.
50. The school's good provision for promoting personal social and emotional development begins with an induction programme which successfully eases the transition between home and school, promotes trust and respect between home and nursery and builds children's confidence and self esteem. The nursery's very good induction programme includes set visits and drop-in sessions and provides parents with the opportunity to speak confidentially with nursery staff. An excellent element of the programme is the 'All about me' project. This entails parents and children working together at home or at a drop-in session to create collage pictures, paintings or drawings. These pictures, together with family photographs, are displayed as a montage and provide a very strong link between home and nursery for each child. The inspection took place early in the autumn term when children had been attending a full nursery session for only a few days. As a result of the good induction procedures, the vast majority left their parents or carers confidently, some greeting one another with hugs saying 'You're my friend'. Parents were welcomed to remain as long as they wished to support the very few children needing a little more time to adjust confidently to the nursery.
51. The development of good personal and social development is a priority in the nursery and the foundations are well laid in the early part of the school year when the emphasis is on giving children the skills, confidence and initiative to become effective learners. Nursery staff have high expectations and clear objectives for establishing good routines, for instance by giving good visual clues to help children remember whether they belong to the ladybird or butterfly group. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of these young children and use sound creatively to remind children of what is expected; the gentle sound of wind chimes signals to children that they need to listen and music is played to remind them they should be tidying up. Children are encouraged to make responsible choices from their earliest times in the nursery and as a result, by the time they are in the reception class, they have a good level of self-motivation. For example, during a reception literacy lesson, children not working directly with an adult selected well a range of activities to promote pencil control, letter recognition and information technology skills. They concentrated well and persevered with their chosen activities, often for a considerable length of time. Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff encourage positive relationships; they show respect for the children and in turn the children learn to respect themselves and one another. Snack times provide good opportunities for sharing and co-operation is well encouraged, particularly through the use of parachute games. Because of the good provision, the majority of children are in line to exceed the early learning goals for personal and social development by the time they enter Year 1. Only a minority of children are in line to attain the communication, language and literacy early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Nevertheless the vast majority make good progress throughout the

Foundation Stage. Children's speaking and listening skills are very well promoted from the onset. Careful listening is encouraged and children respond well in story and rhyme sessions. Each child is given the opportunity to talk to their nursery groups about their "All about me" montages. This elicits a very good response and makes a good contribution to promoting the development of speaking and listening skills. During the week of the inspection, a reticent child with a limited use of English blossomed when given this opportunity and with sensitive adult support enthusiastically talked about his work and his family. In the reception class children's good listening skills are further developed in story sessions. Good planning ensures that stories are well linked to other areas of learning and are relevant to children's interest and levels of maturity. Stories are read with skill; during the week of the inspection, a dramatic story reading, accompanied by gesture, ensured that all children, including those with a limited grasp of English, were enthralled. As a result their listening skills were enhanced.

52. Written language skills are effectively promoted in both the Foundation Stage classes. In the nursery children are encouraged to recognise their names and other written and symbolic forms of representation. At small group time children identify their own names and are made aware of text during the many informal story telling session that take place in the book area. Written language was very well promoted during one group session when a special letter from a teddy bear was opened and read to the children. As a result by the time they enter the reception class the majority of children are ready for more formal approaches to reading, though few recognise sounds or letters of the alphabet. At the time of the inspection, about a third of children in the reception class had acquired a small visual vocabulary to support their introduction to reading. Most are aware that text carries meaning and have good book handling skills. The majority confidently attempt to 're-read' a familiar story and point to text when doing so. A few have pre-reading skills expected of this age group, re-tell the story coherently and logically, starting with 'Once upon a time' and include sequences which closely resemble the text such as 'Mummy said, what's the matter'
53. Appropriate provision is made for children to develop their writing skills. In the nursery, children learn to express their ideas by drawings that, as the year progresses, are accompanied by words written by an adult. In the reception class, children write a few short sentences, sometimes copied from adult writing. They learn to write letters and begin to understand how letters combine to make words. A weakness is that they are not shown how to use their existing knowledge of letters and words to write for themselves and have insufficient opportunity to write for a range of different purposes. Children are sometimes given writing materials that enable them to draw bold and satisfying pictures and letters. However, the exercise books these young children use do little to encourage them to express their ideas in writing because they are unable to make good, clear marks on the poor quality paper. The vast majority are in line to master many, but not all, of the steps leading towards their writing goals by the time they leave the Foundation Stage.
54. In mathematics, children enter the nursery with skills that are below average. They make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage and are in line to attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. This is a consequence of good provision and range of enjoyable and relevant activities. In the nursery, children enjoy singing number rhymes and counting the number present in their groups. They learn that only a certain number can participate in some activities, for instance only four children are allowed to play in the home area. They have opportunities to match colours and shapes and to gain an early understanding of capacity through their activities in the water tray. By the time they reach the reception class, the majority can accurately count to ten and some can count well beyond. Almost all recognise numerals to at least ten and can accurately match sets of objects and numerals. A few can solve simple mathematical problems such as "If I have five sweets and I give you one, how many will I have left?" During the week of the inspection one of the key mathematical objectives was to help children use the language of comparison and the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears was very effectively used to support this. Most of the children could label big and little objects and some used the term 'medium sized' accurately. In one mathematics lesson the teacher, whose role is to raise the attainment of ethnic minority children, worked very effectively with children who had English as an additional language to determine that most had a secure understanding of the concept. Overall, children's understanding of positional language was less well developed. By the time they leave the reception class, almost all children add and subtract. However, a few children need the support of an adult to successfully do so. Most can tell the time in hours and can recognise and name a few common geometric shapes.
55. In their knowledge and understanding of the world, children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in the development of information and communication technology skills. Nursery children rapidly gain computer skills and most use the mouse with confidence to create screen pictures using a paint program. In the reception class, these skills are extended and they successfully use icons to change

functions and to alter screens. They investigate objects and materials using all their senses. Throughout the Foundation Stage, at snack time when fruit is served, staff encourage children to comment on the taste and texture of the different pieces of fruit they select. In the nursery they watch ice melt and feel the coldness of the water; they dig in the nursery garden and talk about the texture and smell of the soil. In the reception class they compare and classify fruit by colour. 'Oh look at that red' said one child when printing with cut apple shapes. Most four-year-olds use a range of tools successfully; they use rolling pins and cutters when working with malleable material and most can use scissors adeptly. They have some cooking opportunities and during the week of the inspection helped to make, and taste, porridge. However, although they have opportunities to build with some construction kits, the range is limited and they lack the opportunity to build with large bricks and opportunities to work with wet and dry sand are limited. Good use is made of photographs to help children gain a sense of place and a sense of time. The range of different languages and home cultures of children attending the nursery and reception classes is well used to enrich and broaden the experience of all. By the time children leave the reception class, the majority are close to reaching the goals set for this area of learning.

56. Provision for creative development has areas of relative strength and weakness and this is reflected in children's attainment. Most are not likely to fully attain all the steps in the goals set for this area of learning by the time they leave the reception class. Throughout the Foundation Stage, staff plan carefully to nurture children's imagination through role play. In the nursery, there are good opportunities for children to empathise with imaginary characters, for instance, the teddy bear whose broken arm is bandaged. Staff help children enter into the fun of the 'Isn't it funny how a bear likes honey' game and they respond with glee as the adults act out the game for the first time. The playhouse provides good opportunities for children to imitate adult behaviour, which the very young nursery children do, each in his or her own world. In the reception class, despite the relatively cramped conditions of the playhouse, children begin to inhabit a common imaginary world. Hats for the Three Bears are provided to stimulate play and Mother Bear dons her hat and purposefully does the ironing but other children find it less easy to step into the roles of Father and Baby Bear. However, children's learning is considerably enhanced by the good provision to teach directly the conventions and language of role-play. During the week of the inspection, the reception class teacher read 'The Three Bears' story, four children took the parts of the main characters, and the EAL specialist teacher reinforced key ideas. 'Jordan is Daddy Bear, who is Daddy Bear?' she said and the class replied 'Jordan is Daddy Bear'. The well-chosen actors provided good models for their peers and as a result children were given the language of the role-play, their understanding and vocabulary were extended and their learning was enhanced. The sound provision to promote children's music skills starts with the good use of well chosen recorded music in the nursery. In both classes children enjoy singing a range of rhymes and songs and nursery children are encouraged to try out 'Round and round the garden' with their families at home. Provision for art, appropriate in the nursery, is weaker in the reception class and, overall, children do not make the progress they are capable of because they lack sufficient suitable opportunities. For instance the task, observed during the week of the inspection, of sticking squares of tissue paper onto large adult drawn pictures of fruit did not serve well enough to advance children's creativity.
57. By the time they leave the reception class children are likely to attain some, but not all of the learning goals for physical development. In their timetabled physical education lessons some show levels of co-ordination expected in this age group as they skip and run around the school hall. In the nursery there is limited scope to develop gross motor skills. However, some children control and pedal a tricycle skilfully. Children in the reception class do not have access to large play equipment and therefore their physical skills are underdeveloped. Most handle pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with the level of skill expected of this age group, and are able to put on and take off their outdoor clothes. Some nursery children persevere well in putting on outdoor clothing for themselves.
58. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good. The strong Foundation Stage team works very effectively together. Support staff and students use their bilingual skills very well to sensitively support children for whom English is a second language. A strength is the good planning which underpins the teaching and learning throughout the key stage. Staff have good knowledge and understanding of the needs of these young children and as a result learning opportunities are well tailored to the children's needs. Careful day-to-day assessments of children's progress are made throughout the stage. For example, during the week of the inspection, observations of nursery children's personal, social and emotional behaviour were recorded. In the reception class, staff recorded pupils spoken language, assessed children's understanding of comparative measures and kept up-to-date records of the progress children made in recognising words. Some of this information was well used to plan for the next stage of children's learning. Resources are adequate and better in the nursery than in the reception class. Overall, the accommodation for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. A weakness is that the outdoor environment is underdeveloped and



is not readily accessible to reception class children. Cloakroom and shoe changing arrangements in the reception class are such that a considerable amount of teaching time is wasted each day. Because parents of reception class children do not as a matter of course come into the classroom each day the school loses the opportunity to maintain and further strengthen the good home school links that were established in the nursery class.

## ENGLISH

59. In the 1999 national tests for pupils aged 11, standards were below average in English. Although the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 4 was close to the national average, the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 5 was well below the national average. However, when compared to similar schools, the results were well above the national average. Over the last three years pupils' results have been close to the national average, with no discernible difference between boys and girls. Results for 2000 show that, whilst the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level 4 was slightly lower than the previous year, the percentage achieving the higher level 5 tripled. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of the present Year 6 is below average, with particular weaknesses in writing and this is reflected in the lower, but realistic, target set for the 2001 National Curriculum tests.
60. The attainment of seven-year-old pupils in the 1999 tests was average in reading and below average in writing. When compared to similar schools, pupils' attainment in reading was well above average and above average in writing. Over the last three years there has been no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. The results for seven-year-old pupils in the 2000 national tests showed a fall in the percentage of pupils gaining the expected level 2 for writing but standards have been maintained in reading. However, this whole year group had a much higher than average proportion of pupils with EAL. Inspection evidence for the present seven-year-olds indicates that attainment is average overall but with weaknesses in writing. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good; these pupils are well supported and make good progress.
61. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills, which are developed well by teachers' good questioning in all subjects. Pupils with EAL are given good support by classroom assistants and particularly good support by an EAL specialist teacher. As a result, these pupils make good and often very good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills and this allows them to take a full and active part in literacy lessons.
62. Pupils make good progress through the school in developing their reading skills. Teachers in Year 1 build well on the work of the Foundation Stage. Pupils enjoy following the literacy text and the appropriate word games, which build up their sight vocabulary and knowledge of phonics. There is adequate communication between home and school through the reading record books, and in Year 1 these give a clear indication to parents how they can help their child to improve. However, this medium of advice and dialogue is not used with sufficient consistency throughout the school. Pupils develop their confidence in reading aloud in Year 2 and have developed satisfactory decoding skills, with the majority self-correcting when they make mistakes. Pupils enjoy books but the selection for the higher-attaining pupils is not challenging enough. Whilst teachers and support staff work hard to raise attainment in reading for pupils with lower ability and those with special needs, not enough information is sent home in Year 2 to enable this support to be continued by the parents.
63. Juniors with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language make good progress in reading. Extra support for literacy in Year 3 enables lower-attaining pupils to make good progress and to develop enthusiasm for reading. Whilst lower-attaining pupils throughout the rest of the key stage make at least satisfactory progress, parents do not have enough information from the school to be able to help their child to build on the skills acquired in school. Pupils are introduced to a wide variety of texts in their literacy hour and very regularly take reading books home. However, the potential progress of some above-average readers is slowed because pupils are only able to change their books on a fixed day each week. By the age of eleven, pupils have made good progress and have developed satisfactory reading skills. They self-correct appropriately, use punctuation well and show good empathy skills with the characters in the stories. The great majority of pupils still enjoy reading to parents on a regular basis and older pupils benefit from the good selection of books in the class libraries. However, pupils have unsatisfactory library skills and make very little use of the school library to support their learning or to develop their love of books.
64. Pupils enter Year 1 with below average writing skills and standards of writing remain below average throughout the school. Attainment has fallen since the last inspection. In the infants pupils have

opportunities for a range of writing within the National Literacy Strategy and pupils in Year 1 make clear progress in such stories as *Wolf and the Kids* and the story of Joseph. Satisfactory progress continues in Year 2, although the progress of the higher-ability pupils is occasionally restricted by the low expectations of some work sheets. Pupils show clear development in their spelling and punctuation skills. Progress in pupils' writing skills in the juniors is not as good as it should be, mainly because pupils do not have enough opportunity to develop their skills in extended writing and partly because the majority of teachers do not identify in their marking what pupils need to do to improve their work. Some higher-achieving pupils in Year 4 do make good progress; this was clearly shown in the descriptive writing of one pupil who wrote 'snow covers the ground like a quilt of diamonds'. There is clear development in pupils' understanding of grammar in set exercises but this is not transferred into pupils' own writing. Pupils' writing progress slows down in Year 5, with a significant minority of pupils making unsatisfactory progress, particularly in the volume and accuracy of their writing. Opportunities for extended writing increase in Year 6, where there is a noticeable improvement in the quality and volume of work as well as in the punctuation and spelling. The good quality marking in Year 6 brings pupils' attention to areas for improvement and they respond positively to the high expectations. Appropriate choices of literacy texts sometimes link well with other areas of the curriculum, such as history. For example, pupils' knowledge of workhouse conditions in Victorian times resulted in good standards of empathy writing. This was clearly shown in an imaginary conversation between a pupil and *Oliver Twist*, "I bet you are freezing, here have my coat." There are well planned opportunities for pupils to develop their writing skills in science, where the school has been particularly successful in developing pupils' scientific language

65. Spelling is taught systematically throughout the school through the Literacy Hour and, in addition, many pupils learn spellings at home. Pupils have a sound knowledge of how to combine letters to make different sounds. They acquire their spelling skills steadily through the school but the school's marking policy, that identified spellings should be practised by the pupils before the next piece of work, is not applied systematically and, as a result, some spellings continue to be spelt incorrectly. Letter formation is carefully taught in infant classes. By the time they are seven most pupils have neat well-formed writing, with higher-achieving pupils having joined script. The development of pupils' handwriting continues in the juniors where pupils develop their own individual style that is mostly neat and accurate. However, handwriting in Year 5 does not show the steady development of the other years, with too many pupils printing rather than using joined script. By the age of eleven pupils' handwriting is in line with national standards.
66. Teaching is good overall; it is good in the infants and satisfactory in the juniors. Teachers plan their work well and the sharing of the learning objectives with the pupils gives a clear focus to the lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge of the literacy hour and generally plan challenging work for pupils of all abilities. There is effective teamwork in all classes between teachers and learning assistants and this results in pupils receiving good support during all parts of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs and EAL are particularly well supported and make resulting good progress in lessons. This was evident in two very good lessons that were observed, one in Year 1 and the other in Year 3. In both lessons very good collaborative work between the teacher and classroom assistants led to these pupils making very good progress. Teachers use questioning well, revising and building on pupils' previous knowledge. Pupils' behaviour in the great majority of lessons is good because teachers have good classroom management strategies and there are clear expectations of what pupils should do. Although teachers support pupils well, occasionally, such as in one Year 4 lesson, teachers' expectations that pupils should work independently are not met and the quality of work produced by the pupils is not as high as it should be. The pace of lessons is generally good and this maintains pupils' interest and concentration well. However, not all teachers make enough use of time limits to ensure that pupils produce sufficient work to reinforce the skills that have been taught.
67. The literacy co-ordinator has worked hard to introduce the strategy through the school. The school has made good use of the local authority literacy consultant who works closely with the school. The writing weaknesses were identified through analysis of 2000 National Curriculum tests but the co-ordinator has not recently had release time to observe teaching and learning in the classroom. She does, however, monitor teachers' medium-term planning. The school makes sound use of the non-statutory assessments in Years 3, 4 and 5 and of standardised reading tests to plot pupils' progress through the years. However, teachers only assess one piece of pupils' writing a year and this is not enough to monitor individual pupils' progress or to help raise standards in this area. Resources are satisfactory and there was some good use of computers to enhance pupils' writing for display purposes. The school's library provision is unsatisfactory at present. Whilst books are Dewey classified, many are not set out in the correct order. A significant number of books are not in good physical condition and are in need of replacement.

## MATHEMATICS

68. In the 1999 national tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils attained levels that were in line with the national average. Their achievements were well above those of pupils in similar schools. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels was less than the national average. The national comparisons for the year 2000 are not yet published but the pupils who were in Year 6 this summer achieved higher results than last year with 79 per cent achieving at least the expected level and 39 per cent achieving the higher level 5. These results are much higher than the national average for 1999. This year group had achieved levels that were well above the national average in their Year 2 national tests and their achievements have been maintained. The present Year 6 pupils are more in line with those in 1999 and attainment at eleven is similar to other pupils nationally.
69. In the 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds the school achieved similar results to others nationally but was well above the average of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was below the national average. In 2000 a slightly lower proportion attained the expected level but a higher proportion attained level 3 than in 1999. Pupils who are now in Year 2 have similar attainment to other pupils of the same age nationally. Although the inspection judgement in the last report indicated that standards were average at seven, the national tests results were then below average, and standards over time have risen in line with the national trends.
70. The school assesses the children's mathematical abilities at the beginning of the reception year. The results of these tests show that their attainment is broadly in line with those of other children of the same age and that the majority attain the early learning goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. Some of these assessments are carried out in the home language for those children for whom English is an additional language. The national tests at seven are solely in English. The fact that many of these pupils achieve national expectations by the time they are seven is a measure of the very good progress they have made. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is very good. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they have additional help from the support staff for pupils with special needs and the teaching assistants. Their progress in lessons when they have no support is sometimes unsatisfactory. There are too many examples of these pupils not understanding or completing the work they are given or being regularly tested at levels that are too high for them to succeed without support. Other pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Years 1 and 2.
71. In Year 1 pupils learn to count, arrange in order, add and subtract small numbers in their daily mental arithmetic sessions. Teachers ensure that pupils use the correct mathematical vocabulary and teach them how to find patterns in numbers. In one lesson observed during the inspection the pupils found, for example, how to add eight plus one. They counted up to 20 and back again. Some pupils have more advanced skills. One pupil doubled 24 in the same lesson. During the year, Year 1 pupils learn to count in twos and fives, add and subtract using two digits and solve simple shopping problems. They identify and name simple two- and three-dimensional shapes. During the inspection the younger pupils in Year 1 learnt the properties of squares, circles, triangles and rectangles. Higher attaining pupils drew their own shapes using templates and rulers. The older pupils began the week identifying these and additional two-dimensional shapes. By the end of the week they had used this knowledge to identify three-dimensional shapes and the shapes of each face, moulding them accurately with plasticine and learning more of their properties by building with them. The whole class made very good progress in these two lessons. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language was very good due to the skilful teaching they received from their support teacher. Her expertise in teaching the mathematical vocabulary, emphasising the mouth shapes, while maintaining the sense of awe shown by one pupil, new to the country, as she rolled the sphere round in her hand as she repeats the word, was exemplary. During the whole class lesson she produced real objects, for example tins of rice, as the teacher introduced cylinders, quietly helping her pupils to say the word. She has very high expectations, expecting her pupils to succeed. By the end of the lesson they were all able to contribute to the whole class plenary.
72. In Year 2 pupils count in ones and fives to one hundred as a whole class group. Most find it difficult to do so individually. The teaching assistant gave good support to pupils with special educational needs during this mental arithmetic session by showing them the patterns the numbers of the five times table make on a 10 by 10 number square. The teacher ensured that pupils with little English were encouraged with praise when they attempted to repeat language relating to time, which formed the main focus of the lesson. By the end of the year, higher attaining pupils count on and back in twos, fives and tens. They add and subtract within 50. Pupils find halves and quarters of shapes and numbers, identify odd and even numbers and are beginning to understand place value. They compare shapes, weight and length and

record data on simple charts. Much of the work is completed on prepared worksheets, the majority of which are the same for all pupils regardless of their abilities. This means that some of the work is too easy for the more able pupils while other pupils struggle when they have no adult support. The worksheets have no date so pupils and teachers are unable to see how much they have improved or what they need to do next. Pupils do not have enough opportunity to select their own methods or to experiment with numbers, using and applying the skills they have learnt. Pupils' learning is constrained by these worksheets and this is a weakness that the teachers need to address.

73. The mathematics teaching in the infants is sound in two classes and very good in one of the Year 1 classes. All teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and the numeracy strategy. Where the teaching is very good the teacher uses the time available very effectively to ensure that her pupils sustain concentration. She questions them well, directing appropriate questions to individual pupils based on knowledge of their needs. Pupils are encouraged to use mathematical language. She uses her voice well to generate anticipation. Social skills are promoted throughout the lessons; pupils put their hands up to speak and take turns. The really good relationships, the enthusiasm and the sense of urgency generated by the pace of the lesson enables the pupils to learn swiftly and with great enjoyment.
74. The rate of pupils' progress fluctuates throughout the junior years with the most rapid progress being made in Year 6. In the lessons observed, while there was a very small amount of unsatisfactory progress, most was at least satisfactory and very good progress was made in Year 6. This was a direct result of the teacher's high expectations, the good pace and balance of the lesson, the good use of resources and the precise way the teacher used the result of the pupils' previous work to focus on the needs of individuals. As it became apparent that some pupils had difficulty with converting, for example  $4\frac{3}{1000}$  to 4.0003 she gave either the class or a group of pupils immediate help. By the end of the lesson the number of pupils understanding how to convert fractions to decimals and back again grew from a few to almost all the class. Pupils use mathematical language such as "reduce to the lowest common denominator" and instantly respond with  $\frac{1}{2}$  when asked for the simplest way of representing  $\frac{50}{100}$ . The pupils with special needs were withdrawn to work with the special needs' teacher and were given work at a level that was challenging but achievable so that they also made good progress.
75. The school has been using the National Numeracy Strategy and the local authority's pilot scheme during the time these pupils have been in the juniors and this has ensured that they have steadily built on their understanding of number, measures and shape and space. The use of the strategy now means that pupils make steady progress as they move through the school. This was a weakness at the time of the last inspection. Much of the work on data handling is reflected through other subjects. In science, for example, pupils measure the growth of shoots and roots and record them on a graph. Weather data is recorded, pupils record averages from the data they collect. Tally charts are used daily in some classrooms to record individual or group merit points. Pupils are beginning to use computers to access and record data in a variety of ways. The provision for this aspect of mathematics has improved since the last inspection when it was poor, and there are more opportunities for pupils to use mathematics within other areas of the school curriculum.
76. Throughout the juniors pupils carry out simple investigations, mainly through their number work. These are usually in the form of commercial or teacher-produced worksheets or textbook exercises. They solve problems applying their skills. For example, they find the sum of two angles and deduct the total from 180 to find the size of the third angle of a triangle. They do not work together on extended projects or pursue their own investigations. Almost all the work in the books is calculated using the methods suggested by the teacher, and pupils' own jottings or experiments are rare. Pupils are, for example, told how to divide a three-digit number by a two-digit number. They then perfect the technique. They do not 'have a go' before being given the standard methods. Therefore pupils' opportunities for creativity are very limited.
77. Throughout the school the relationships between the teachers and their pupils are very good. Praise is used appropriately and pupils' contributions are valued. In one or two lessons, however, the pace is lost because the teacher interrupts the lesson to deal with inappropriate behaviour from individual pupils. This causes other pupils to lose concentration and the restlessness escalates. However, most teachers manage behaviour well, knowing when to ignore inappropriate behaviour to maintain the integrity of the lesson and when to reinforce appropriate behaviour patterns. Almost all the teaching throughout the juniors is at least satisfactory. In the only lesson when teaching was unsatisfactory time was not used effectively and some pupils' behaviour dominated the lesson. The activities planned for some pupils did not help pupils meet the targets for the lesson, so their progress was unsatisfactory. In another lesson the teacher demonstrated a really good understanding of the subject as she discussed the attributes of prisms with her

pupils and used vocabulary such as 'polyhedron' and asked pupils to define the properties of a tetrahedron. She set appropriate work for the different abilities of her pupils and the level of challenge had a positive impact on pupils' learning.

78. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the effective deployment of the adults in the mathematics lessons. They know exactly what to do, questioning and supporting the pupils very well, all the while extending the mathematical vocabulary. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is always very good and sometimes excellent. The teacher for pupils with special needs gives her pupils the confidence to learn and expects them to succeed. The very good teaching in Year 6 gives the pupils the tools they need to meet the requirements for the subject at the end of the key stage.
79. The pupils' work is marked accurately throughout the school and the teachers expect the work to be well presented. Written comments encourage and praise pupils appropriately. However, there are few comments that inform the pupils about what they need to do to improve. Although pupils are told of the learning targets for each lesson they do not have personal targets for improvement, either as individuals or as groups or classes. As pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons this is a missed opportunity to give pupils the responsibility for raising the level of their achievements. Teachers keep records of individual pupils' progress but they are not used sufficiently to set targets for future learning with the pupils to give them challenge and the pride of meeting their targets. The co-ordinator for mathematics does not monitor either the pupils' work or the teaching but does monitor teachers' medium term plans. As a result he has been unable to identify where there is a need for changes in the way the pupils learn or where there is good practice that could be effectively shared with other teachers.

## SCIENCE

80. Standards in science have improved since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress and attain standards that average at seven and above average at eleven. In the 1999 tests for eleven-year-olds, pupils attained standards that were well below average in comparison with schools nationally and above average when compared with similar schools. The results of the 2000 tests show a significant improvement. The proportion of pupils reaching the standard expected of eleven-year-olds rose from 76 per cent to 93 per cent. An even more significant increase was achieved in the proportion reaching the higher level 5, which rose from the 1999 figure of 7 per cent to 43 per cent in 2000. Although final figures for national comparisons are not yet available, there are indications that the school's results for 2000 compare favourably with the other schools in the country. Since 1996 the school's results have been broadly in line with other schools nationally with the exception of 1999 when standards fell. The outcomes of the 2000 tests indicate that the school has made significant recent progress.
81. In the 1999 statutory teacher assessments of seven-year-olds, the school's results were well below average. The 2000 results showed a significant increase in the proportions of pupils reaching the expected level for seven-year-olds. This rose from 73 per cent in 1999 to 82 per cent in 2000, while the proportion reaching the higher level 3 rose from nil in 1999 to 29 per cent in 2000.
82. The findings of the inspection broadly confirm the results of the most recent statutory assessments at seven and eleven. The recent improvement in standards can be attributed to the accurate analysis of weaknesses revealed by the 1999 SAT results and the decisive and effective action taken to address the weaknesses by:-
  - introducing a curriculum based on the QCA guidance;
  - a whole school initiative to use scientific language in literacy lessons;
  - a whole school initiative to improve the mathematical skills relevant to science;
  - specific language support targeted at Years 2 and 6.
83. When pupils enter Year 1, their knowledge and understanding of the world, including their scientific development, is below that expected. By the end of Year 2 their attainment is broadly average because of the good teaching they experience. By then almost all pupils correctly complete an electrical circuit, connecting switch, battery and bulb holder to make the bulb light up. They know that a switch is a circuit breaker and that different kinds of switch are appropriate for different uses, such as doorbells and lights. Most accurately identify different materials, name several metals and know that materials can be changed. They are aware that when water is heated or cooled physical changes are observed. In Year 1, they make good progress in identifying the different materials used for constructing homes. They observe changes in humans and are aware that all animals, including humans, grow old and change. They identify changes that occur with age and know that many older people have grey hair. Their observational drawings of an elderly woman show that many have observed that older people have wrinkled faces. They are aware of

some of the limitations of youth. One child noted: “When you’re young you can’t drive a car because your feet can’t reach the pedals”. Overall, learning is good in the infants and pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject with the exception of scientific enquiry, which is an area of relative weakness because pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to systematically build up the necessary skills in this area.

84. By the age of eleven, pupils attain standards that exceed those expected. Juniors make good progress, building well on their achievements in the infants, except in scientific enquiry, which remains relatively underdeveloped. However, in Year 6, more rapid progress, including that made in collecting, measuring and evaluating evidence relating to plant growth, ensures that in this area, overall, pupils attain satisfactory standards. In their work on animals and plants, pupils in Year 6 accurately classify animals using keys. In their work on the interdependence of animals and plants and on adaptation, they attain standards above those expected for eleven-year-olds. Pupils in Year 3 formulate questions that indicate appropriate development in their scientific thinking, for instance: “Do you have plaque when you have your baby teeth?” In a lesson on the body Year 4 pupils’ use of scientific language well. Progress increases in Year 5, and pupils’ work on force is of high quality.
85. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject and generally behave well in class. They are attentive and usually concentrate well and the vast majority use equipment sensibly. They begin to identify what they have learned; for instance, following a lesson on soil composition pupils in Year 6 said:
  - “I didn’t know soil was made of ground up rock”
  - “I didn’t realise soil had air and water in it”
  - “I didn’t think that bits of leaves and animals were meant to be in soil”
86. Throughout the school work is very well presented; there is nothing slipshod. Pupils work with care and take a pride in what they do. These positive attitudes have a considerable impact on their learning and on the standards they achieve.
87. Teaching is good throughout the school. A strength is teachers’ good subject knowledge, evident in the clarity of teaching aims and the use of key vocabulary to teach and reinforce important concepts. Questioning is often well used to probe for meaning and to extend pupils’ skills and understanding. A good example of this was in a Year 6 lesson when pupils responded well to skilful questioning and were able to hypothesise reasons for the failure of broad beans to germinate.
88. A strong element of the school’s successful teaching is the way that teachers form very effective partnerships, often drawing on the specialist skills of others. Invariably these collaborative efforts lead to very effective learning as was seen during the week of the inspection in several science lessons including:-
  - team teaching in Year 1 parallel classes;
  - working in partnership with educators at the Coventry partnership centre in Year 2;
  - working in partnership with a Dental Education Officer in Year 3; and
  - team teaching between class teacher and EAL specialist in Year 5
89. Lessons are well planned and pitched to satisfy the learning needs and interest levels of the children. In a Year 3 lesson on dental health, children were enthralled as they heard about “acid attack” and, in Year 1, they were absorbed by the young baby and great grandmother who were living examples of the ageing process. In general, teachers use a good range of teaching methods and organisational strategies including whole class teaching and group work. A relative weakness is that the teaching of scientific enquiry is not well developed enough. This is a weakness that was noted at the time of the previous inspection and, although some progress has been made, there is some way to go before this element of the science curriculum is as well taught as other elements.
90. The school has successfully adopted the national guidance on science and this provides a sound framework for planning. Nevertheless, the school has not identified clearly enough how and when it intends to provide opportunities for the development of practical and investigative skills. Assessment procedures are good and the school has made very good use of assessments to target resources to improve performance. There is good curriculum leadership. However, the co-ordinator does not have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom but monitors teachers’ plans.

## ART AND DESIGN

91. During the week of the inspection, very little art was taught. Judgements are based on the two lessons seen, pupils' previous work, school documentation and on discussions with staff. Standards at seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected, as they were in the last inspection. However, not enough attention is paid to building up pupils' skills as they move through the school. This is now weaker than at the time of the previous inspection and this often has a negative impact on the quality of work pupils produce. To celebrate the millennium, the pupils in the school worked with a community artist to design and produce the Jubilee Wall, a large ceramic, wall mounted piece. This work is of good quality and has a positive impact on the school's provision for spiritual and cultural development.
92. As they move through the school pupils make generally satisfactory progress. By the time they are seven, pupils are beginning to use line well. Their paintings, linked to a religious education topic show appropriate use of colour. In Year 1 pupils effectively combine chalk and blow painting techniques and work in sketchbooks includes some colour mixing experiments. In Year 5 their still life pictures show vibrant use of colour and some good decorative elements. The use of sketchbooks to record and explore visual references is largely underdeveloped. However, in some classes sketchbooks contain some observational drawings and in Year 6 some drawings are very well observed and richly textured.
93. By the time they leave the school, the majority of pupils use line appropriately to express their ideas. They make sound use of their own observational drawings and the work of other artists as reference points for their city landscape pictures. A few use line well to give a sense of perspective. However, their use of paint is not sufficiently well developed and in a lesson observed during inspection week, a few pupils were frustrated because they did not have sufficient control over the water paint medium. On the whole, pupils' use of colour is not well developed enough because they have not had sufficient opportunity to experiment using a different colour combinations, tones and shades.
94. In the lessons seen most pupils enjoyed their art activities. Some pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties concentrated very well during art lessons, while others became quickly disheartened at the first setback. Most pupils concentrate well; however, when tasks are not well enough matched to their needs, a few lack the ability to persist and some silly behaviour occurs. Most use resources appropriately and in one class, during the first painting session of the year, pupils used the equipment provided very sensibly, sharing palettes co-operatively.
95. Teaching in art is satisfactory. However, teachers have rightly identified the need to extend their knowledge and skills in teaching the subject. The lessons seen were well organised and support staff were used well. In one lesson high expectations of behaviour were set. Tasks are not always thoughtfully enough set to further pupils learning and extend their skills. This year the school has adopted the national guidance and plans to review its use at the end of the year. At present the curriculum does not adequately ensure that pupils build up a range of skills across all elements of art and design because art activities are too often relegated to supporting learning in other areas of the curriculum. Assessment procedures are not yet fully developed. Staff are aware that at present insufficient time is allocated to art and design, but there are appropriate plans for the coming year. Resources for the subject are broadly satisfactory. The co-ordinator gives good leadership, has control of the budget for the subject but has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms, which has an adverse effect on standards. The school has the capacity to bring about improvements in this area of learning.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**


96. Standards at seven and eleven are in line with what is expected and, overall, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the years. This shows an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment and progress were unsatisfactory. There has also been improvement in pupils' designing and making skills but their evaluation of finished products is still comparatively underdeveloped.
97. By the age of 11, pupils have a sound understanding of the importance of design and a good working knowledge of a range of materials. All pupils worked last year with local students on the design and making of the plaque for the impressive Jubilee Wall. This showed good collaborative skills and a clear understanding of the importance of quality in the finished product. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of the correct choice of material for a specific purpose, clearly shown in the design and making of a slipper. Fundamental to this project were the improved skills that pupils have developed through their focused tasks involving the joining of materials. A weakness in the present process is the lack of formal evaluations to help pupils improve their future work.

98. Infants develop a range of cutting and joining skills and use these appropriately in their work, such as when they make moving parts for bodies and faces. Pupils are developing a good understanding of different types of levers. The sliding levers used to animate footballers and whales clearly demonstrated pupils' understanding of the lever principle and the importance of proportion. By seven pupils have a sound understanding of joining and combining materials when they make a cam action for lifting up Easter chicks. Pupils make satisfactory progress with their food technology; for example, older pupils create innovative designs for decorating their fruit drink. A good knowledge of fabrics was shown in Year 5 when making reflective armbands, which were fastened in a variety of ways. Year 4 pupils show a good awareness of audience in the design of their pop-up storybooks to be shared with Year 1 pupils. However, some designs are too elaborate and more a finished product in their own right rather than showing how the storybook and its different functions is to be constructed.
99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and has improved since the last inspection. The teachers demonstrate sound subject knowledge; lessons are well planned and provide appropriate challenge to pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers prepare resources carefully but sometimes, such as in Year 1 when the teacher provided templates for a whale, pupils' individuality and the opportunity to learn how to overcome difficulties is restricted and they do not learn as much from the task as they might. Praise for good effort and manners rewards pupils and is an important component of their enjoyment of the subject. Health and safety considerations are reinforced as teachers remind pupils of the potential dangers of the tools they are using. Pupils behave appropriately, respond positively to the tasks set and show good collaborative skills and sensitivity when sharing equipment. This has a positive effect on their social development.
100. The subject co-ordinator has improved the range of resources to meet the requirements of the newly introduced national guidelines. Whilst no formal recording of pupils' skills development is made, photographic evidence collected through the year gives some indication of the year group progress; however, this is not sufficient for teachers to build on pupils' individual strengths and address their weaknesses.

## **HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY**

101. Only one history lesson and no geography lessons were observed in the infants and there was very little work in the pupils' books, either for this year or for the last academic year. The school has appropriately concentrated on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and the planned curriculum for both history and geography has been greatly reduced to accommodate this focus. There was also very little evidence of history or geography in Years 3 and 4 in the sample of work for this year or last year. However, pupils in Year 1 have their study of the school environment on the walls of one classroom and pupils have a sound understanding of where they live and their route to school. Outside the classroom are signs and symbols relating to maps and, for history, a display relating to Lady Godiva's visit to school. Year 2 is studying the weather. In a history lesson in Year 2 pupils are studying the difference between holidays in the past and modern holidays. The teacher made sure that the pupils used appropriate vocabulary relating to time, for example 'recent' and 'oldest'. Most pupils are able to arrange pictures of swimming costumes in chronological order. Higher attaining pupils who managed this task with ease were not provided with appropriate work to extend their learning, which impedes their progress. The teacher's planning indicated that some pupils would write sentences with the pictures although this does not extend their historical understanding.
102. Only one history and one geography lesson were observed in junior classes. An analysis of the pupils' books and discussion with a group of pupils in Year 6 indicates that pupils have a sound historical and geographical knowledge. They have studied Ancient Egypt, the Ancient Greeks, the Vikings, Tudors and the Victorians and arrange them chronologically. Pupils explain some of the similarities and differences between them. They have a good understanding of the history of Coventry and the use of first hand evidence from, for example, local records and artefacts. They know that people writing after the event will not be as accurate as first hand witnesses. A strength of their work is the way pupils in Year 6 write as historical characters. One pupil, for example, begins an account of the day in the life of a Victorian child miner with 'It's a quarter to four and I have to go to the mine. I had a restless night. Edward was barking because we couldn't find any food for him. The weather was piercing with lumps of frosty, crisp snow on the ground...' The pupil has a real understanding of the hardships endured by poor Victorian children. They used a Foleshill Census of 1881 for research about Coventry characters and have debated for or against the 'new' railway.



103. Year 6 pupils visit Dol-y-Moch residential centre in Wales to support their environmental studies. They have learnt about Africa, rivers and the water cycle and have compared Coventry with Kenya. Pupils in Year 6 have appropriate mapping skills and recognise changes that take place due to both natural and man-made influences. They are aware of environmental issues. For example, they know that 1998 had the hottest July since records began and their books contain persuasive writing about global warming. One pupil had written, 'It is our fault. If we started it, we must stop it.' They are aware of economic issues and know, for example, that there is no point in keeping seaside shops open in the winter. Standards generally meet national expectations at the age of eleven in both subjects and knowledge of the local area has improved since the last inspection when they were below average.
104. In a history lesson in Year 5, the teacher used a video of the story of Cyclops and his good knowledge of the Odyssey to interest the pupils. An effective use of a vocabulary list to be used alongside the video ensured that pupils concentrated throughout. However, in spite of the fact that pupils had discussed some of the archaeological finds relating to Ancient Greece and had discussed myths, many pupils could not identify different types of evidence or define a myth. They retold the story well but higher attaining pupils were not sufficiently challenged, colouring in a facemask when they had written two or three lines underneath a printed picture. Pupils in a Year 3 geography lesson, however, made good progress as the teacher carefully built on their previous learning. Pupils, having learnt about the British Isles and found its position on a world map, also found the places they had been to on holiday and their continents. Most pupils then used an atlas to fill in European countries on an outline map. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special needs worked very effectively with the teaching assistant, finding British holiday destinations in a brochure and positioning them on a map. They discussed their likes and dislikes and used symbols like  to show the type of holiday. The teacher for pupils with special needs helped others to use the CD-ROM to find out about the countries of Europe. The adults in the classroom generated enthusiasm and interest, relationships were good and pupils worked co-operatively in their groups. This good teaching enabled pupils to make good gains in learning. Pupils with English as a second language had good support and one pupil was encouraged to tell the class about his recent visit to Pakistan. The teaching of history and geography was satisfactory in the other lessons observed.
105. The school makes good use of the local environment and facilities. They visit Coventry Cathedral and Spon Street for geography, and Victorian and Tudor history, Alton Castle and AT7. The Victorian Chilvers Coton School visit also supports the Victorian topic. Lady Godiva visited the school. Pupils have been very involved with the Millennium celebrations with the Memorial Park and the Millennium Wall. Although the amount of work has been reduced over the last two years, when schools were not required to follow the full National Curriculum in these subjects, the co-ordinators for history and geography have a clear vision for the future. They are working together to implement the government guidelines for teaching the history and geography curriculum, looking for ways to share time and resources. There is now a need to adjust the timetable, especially in the infants, to accommodate the new legal requirements for the subjects.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

106. Standards attained by pupils of seven and eleven match what is expected, which matches the judgements in the last inspection. The use of ICT to support other subjects has improved since the last inspection.
107. By the age of 11, pupils have good confidence using the various computer programs. They open a file, amend work, print off and save, as in their illustrated prayers to the Holy Spirit. They have good skills in the communications aspect of the subject. This was clearly shown in their work on producing a multi-media booklet, with text, which they have designed to share with Year 1 pupils. In this work pupils show a good knowledge of creating a stack of pages, introducing buttons to link pages and adding graphic objects with animation. This work resulted in very good collaboration between pupils, with pupils with special educational needs also making very good progress because of their pairing with sensitive and supportive peers. This particular group of eleven-year-olds are making very good progress in the communication aspect of the subject due to the very good quality teaching input and the very good support from a knowledgeable ICT assistant. Both the teacher and the assistant work very well with the children who have excellent attitudes to the work and are very excited by the programs they are using. Higher-achieving pupils also benefit from attending the extra-curricular computer club in which they have been using a digital camera to record aspects of the daily life of the school. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their work on control, for example using electronic instructions to control the movement of a toy robot, monitoring and data handling.
108. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject. This is due to well-organised planning and teachers' good subject knowledge, which has improved since the last inspection. Lessons are carefully planned and pupils benefit from the good pupil:computer ratio in the recently converted ICT suite. This means that pupils have good opportunities to practise the skills taught in the ICT lessons. Throughout the school pupils have good quality word processing skills and the weekly timetabled lesson for using these skills has been a key feature in this improvement. Pupils in Year 1 show good skills in importing pictures and typing their names underneath. Year 2 pupils demonstrate good confidence in an art program and combine the use of both a line and paintbrush tool to create simple pictures. Year 3 pupils' work on waves resulted from good collaboration in the importing of graphics and in changing the size, font and colour to make an impact on the audience. Pupils in Year 5 are developing sound data handling skills when sorting previously stored information to produce a variety of graphs about pupils in their class.
109. Teaching is good overall and some very good teaching was seen in Year 1, Year 3 and Year 6. Teachers use pupils' good collaborative skills well and, when working in pairs, pupils support each other sensitively. In this way pupils with special educational needs and EAL are well supported and make good progress. All lessons have good pace and the teaching of skills is good. However, the computers in the classroom are not fully networked and this makes it more difficult for the pupils to further practise the skills they have learnt during the week. This particular problem is being overcome by the networking of personal computers in each classroom in the near future. Teachers and the ICT assistant make good use of questioning and demonstration to reinforce and extend pupils' learning. However, the small computer screens are not sufficiently large for whole-class teaching. The school is aware of this and resources have been allocated for the purchase of large display screen.
110. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and understand how it can help and support their learning. Teachers build well on this enthusiasm in lessons. Older pupils particularly benefit from visiting a local transport museum where they have good opportunities to practise their control skills. The teachers' management of the pupils is often very good but occasionally the lessons are too long for the younger pupils. When this happens they are unable to sustain concentration for the full hour and as a consequence do not make consistent progress through the lesson.
111. The new computer suite is used well to support pupils' learning but, because of its position, pupils are not able to work independently on these computers without supervision. The co-ordinator has worked hard and successfully to introduce a new scheme of work that ensures all elements of the subject are taught thoroughly and skills acquired are built upon and developed. The school has made very good use of the ICT assistant who works closely with the co-ordinator and who has played an important role in the development of teachers' subject knowledge and confidence with the school's new programs. At present, the recording of the development of pupils' skills is not carried out sufficiently systematically. Whilst the planning for ICT is good, the planning of built-in assessments to ensure the curriculum has been taught effectively is a comparative weakness.

## MUSIC

112. A specialist teacher teaches all the music. Her good subject expertise and her enthusiasm ensure that the pupils make the most of their weekly music lessons. During the inspection pupils in Year 1 sang very enthusiastically, clapped rhythmically and almost all were accurate when identifying high or low notes. The teacher has high expectations of these pupils and her encouragement enabled them to be creative in ways of playing a tambourine. They name common percussion instruments. Pupils listened quietly to a fragment from 'The Aviary' from 'The Carnival of Animals' and gave perceptive opinions about the type of animal the music reminded them of. 'An elephant' caused the adults in the lesson some puzzlement until the pupil reminded them of the swaying trunk! Others identified butterflies and birds, an appropriate match with the composer's theme.
113. The teacher's high expectations enabled pupils in Year 3 to reach levels that were above average for their age. They started the lesson by clapping a rhythmic pattern. By the end of the lesson they were clapping three different rhythms alongside each other with percussion instruments, tapping fingers and singing at the same time. Their concentration level was very high. At the end of the lesson they performed an action song with gusto and a real feel for performance. A totally different lesson with Year 4 pupils was very successful in deepening the pupils' understanding of the development of musical instruments over time. The teacher played a Tudor rebec, a fiddle and a modern violin. Pupils not only saw the difference but also understood how instrument building has changed over time, appreciating the depth of the modern sound box on the violin. There was some concern on the part of one pupil about the fate of the horse that supplied the horsehair for the bow. She was soon reassured by the teacher who took her remark with absolute seriousness and explained that the horse was unharmed. The planning for the series of lessons supported the history topic. Pupils knew the rhythm of the pavane and clapped it accurately. They continued the rhythm to accompany the recording of the instruments playing 'Greensleeves'. The very good teaching and lively instrumental playing enabled the pupils to learn a lot in this lesson.
114. By Year 6 pupils use tuned percussion instruments and letter names for the notes to compose an accompaniment to a Victorian street cry. They had some difficulty in this, mainly due to the difficulty they had organising themselves in their groups. They were well supported by the music teacher and the class teacher as they worked but the pace of the lesson suffered because of the time it took to organise. The groups did not perfect their compositions and pupils found it hard to listen to each other perform at the end of the lesson. However, by the time they leave the school pupils' standards in music are in line with national expectations. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs have appropriate support and make good progress throughout the school.
115. The school has a music specialist and she co-ordinates the subject effectively. All the teaching was at least satisfactory and most was good or very good. The planning is based on the national guidance for the subject and relates closely to the other work the pupils are doing. Pupils sing well in assemblies and the Mass in Church. There are no instrumental groups or a school choir as the co-ordinator spends all her time in school teaching class music. The deputy headteacher provides a lively guitar accompaniment for assemblies and provision for the subject is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. Standards in physical education match the expectations for pupils of seven and eleven, as they were at the time of the last inspection. The standards in swimming in Years 4 and 5 are above that expected of pupils of these ages.
117. By the age of 11, pupils have experienced a wide variety of activities and games. They take advantage of the very good opportunities that are offered by the local sports centre, where specialist teachers introduce pupils to a range of sports, including basketball, volleyball, gymnastics, racquet games and athletics. Higher-achieving pupils show good skills in the standing triple jump and have a good technique for javelin throwing. Pupils' hurdling technique is more basic but some higher-achieving pupils dip well into the hurdle and push off hard with the trailing leg. Pupils' techniques are improved further by good quality coaching, team competitions and inter-school events in which all pupils take part in one of the athletics events. Pupils' outdoor and adventurous activities are further supplemented by a week's residential visit to the local authority outdoor centre in North Wales.
118. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their gymnastic skills in Year 1. They have appropriate balance when walking along a bench and show good tension before jumping and landing on a mat. Pupils

hold good body position when rolling. Pupils benefit from informed teacher input but sometimes too many pupils are inactive when individual coaching is given. Pupils move well to music in Year 2 when simulating gliding on ice skates and show sound control of bodies when turning and spinning. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 make good progress in their swimming. The younger pupils make particularly good progress in developing stroke technique through good quality coaching and a real enthusiasm to improve their performance. The more advanced swimmers in Year 5 make satisfactory progress in developing their breaststroke and crawl. However, some potentially higher-achieving pupils are developing an inappropriate screw kick, which was not corrected by the teacher.

119. The teaching is satisfactory overall but is good in junior athletics and for the swimming. This is because the teachers use their good subject knowledge well and the organised practices further develop pupils' skills and techniques. Good use is made in the infants of a classroom assistant's gymnastics qualifications and expertise. The subject is well organised by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has not yet had the opportunity to work alongside colleagues so that her good subject knowledge can be shared.
120. The pupils benefit from much improved resources due to parents' fund raising and national sponsorship. The very good range of after-school clubs and regular sporting fixtures against other schools considerably enhances pupils' enjoyment of the subject. Physical education plays a strong role in the development of pupils' social skills. Since the last inspection, there have been improvements in the standard of swimming and in pupils' attention and concentration in lessons.