

INSPECTION REPORT

ST MATTHEW'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Smethwick, West Midlands.

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 104000

Headteacher: Mr D Breedon

Reporting inspector: Mr D Speakman
20086

Dates of inspection: 25th – 29th September 2000

Inspection number: 225173

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Windmill Lane Smethwick West Midlands
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev P. Nicholson
Date of previous inspection:	9 th December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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Mr D Speakman 20086	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information technology Design & technology Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? Leadership and management.
Mr S Hussain 9981	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curricular and other opportunities? Provision for personal development including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs M Hatfield 26519	Team inspector	Science Geography History Physical education Under fives`	
Mrs J O'Hare 8316	Team inspector	English Art Music English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities? Assessment

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 11
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12 - 14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14 - 16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18 - 19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19 - 22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22 - 23
PROVISION FOR PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	23 - 24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25 - 28
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29 - 44

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Matthew's CE Primary School provides full-time education for 163 pupils aged between five and eleven, 28 children in reception and 41 part-time in the nursery. It is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school. There are 103 pupils identified as having special educational needs. This, and the percentage of pupils with statements, are both above the national average. The school community is mixed with a wide range of ethnic origins represented in the school population. There are 127 pupils who qualify for extra support because they have English as an additional language. Most pupils come from the area surrounding the school and the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are well below average overall. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is well above the national average. Most three-year-olds start school with levels of attainment that are very low when compared to what is expected for children of this age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school that provides a good quality education overall and provides a firm foundation on which pupils can build their future education. The quality of leadership and management of the school is excellent and there has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is very good in the Early Years Unit, good overall, and enables pupils to make good progress and achieve standards that are generally in line with those expected for pupils at eleven years of age. It also enables pupils to develop good attitudes to their learning. The strengths of the school outweigh the areas that could be improved. Setting the above factors against the above average cost of educating each pupil, the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides very well for children in the nursery and reception and gives them a very good beginning to their education. The Early Years Unit is a strength of the school.
- Teaches pupils well, encourages good attitudes to learning and enables pupils to make good progress.
- Encourages and achieves very high levels of personal development of pupils and very good relationships.
- Enables pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to make good progress through good educational provision and care.
- The provision for moral and cultural development is good. It is very good for their social development.
- Shows very good levels of care for its pupils.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher, key staff and governors are excellent and the school is run very efficiently.
- Parents think highly of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, information technology and design and technology.
- Pupils' access to the National Curriculum, because they are often withdrawn from class for support.
- Attendance, which is below average.
- The curriculum for English, science at Key Stage 1, and information and communication technology.
- The level of adult support for teachers in class.
- The resources in some subjects.

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 a good level of improvement since it was last inspected in December 1996. Standards of attainment in English are still below average at both key stages. However, standards in

speaking and listening are satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and pupils make good progress in all elements of language. There is a much greater than average proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language or with special educational needs. Standards in mathematics have improved and they are now average at the end of both Key Stages 1 and 2. In music and physical education at Key Stage 1, standards are now average and there has been a good level of improvement in meeting this key issue. The standard of teaching in science is now good and through the implementation of national recommendations for science, there is now a satisfactory level of continuity of pupils' experience. Satisfactory progress has been made in the construction of schemes of work to support short-term planning and secure progression within the curriculum. However, some schemes of work, such as English, still need to be developed so that they are relevant to these pupils' needs. The results of assessment are regularly recorded and used systematically to inform teachers' planning and are used effectively to set individual, class and school targets. Very good progress has been made in the development of the cultural development of pupils and it now accurately reflects and celebrates the rich cultural diversity found within the school. Overall, the school has made a good level of improvement in meeting the key issues raised by the previous inspection.

Main judgements in 1996 were that standards achieved required some improvement, the quality of education needed improving, the school's climate for learning was good and the management and efficiency were good. By the time pupils leave the school, standards are now generally in line with those expected and these have improved. The quality of education, especially teaching, is good; there has been a very good level of improvement here. The good climate for learning has been maintained and the new leadership and management are now excellent. This represents a very good level of improvement. The school has a very good capacity to sustain this level of improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	E*	E	E*	E
Mathematics	E*	E	E*	E
Science	E*	E	E*	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

E* indicates the school's performance being in the lowest 5% nationally.

Children under five make very good progress from a very low starting point. However, they do not generally achieve the early learning goals for children at the end of the foundation stage. Pupils continue to achieve well throughout the school, and by the end of Key Stage 2, inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics and science are judged to be average. However, because there are a large number of pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language, attainment in English remains below average. The data for 1999 should be interpreted with some caution. Out of the 23 pupils who took the test, 19 were on the register of special educational needs; therefore, these scores do not truly represent the current situation. When compared with similar schools, attainment in National Curriculum assessment tests in 1999 in English and mathematics was well below average and below in science. There was a significant improvement in 2000 and the school surpassed targets for that year. Progress in design and technology and in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory and standards are below those expected for pupils at this age. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have high levels of enthusiasm and interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The school is an orderly community. The behaviour of the children in the Early Years Unit is very good. Behaviour is generally good across the school, although there are a small number of pupils who occasionally lapse in their behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show high levels of initiative and responsibility in their learning and in other aspects of school life. Relationships across the school are very good.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory – below average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching varies from excellent to poor. Eight per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, and this generally occurs in large classes, with a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, some for behaviour, and a lack of adult support for teachers and pupils which makes teaching very difficult. In these lessons, the quality of the learning is generally unsatisfactory. In the Early Years Unit, two-thirds of the lessons seen were of a very good or excellent quality. At Key Stage 1, all teaching was satisfactory or better, with almost all lessons being of a good quality. At Key Stage 2, half of the lessons were judged to be good or very good. This gives a good whole-school teaching profile, in which two thirds of lessons were judged to be at least good and most were at least satisfactory. The good quality teaching enables good quality learning to take place and pupils to make good progress. Most planning is of a good quality and work is generally planned so that it is appropriate to different pupils' needs. Basic skills are taught well. Literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills are of high priority in a school in which there high levels of pupils with English as an additional language, with special educational needs, or with behavioural problems. Where extra adult support is available, it is effective. However, this is not sufficiently provided and when not, some class management difficulties were noted. Teachers set good role models to pupils and their patience and tolerance of inappropriate behaviour are commendable and effective in diffusing potentially difficult situations.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children in the foundation stage and satisfactory for those in Key Stages 1 and 2. The curriculum for pupils in the infant and junior stages is inappropriate in English, science at Key Stage 1, and information and communication technology.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good and it enables pupils to make good progress against their individual targets. They are well supported, but their withdrawal from class limits their experiences in other subjects.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good and pupils make good progress. There is a welcoming environment for these pupils, which encourages their learning and progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is good overall. It is satisfactory for their spiritual development, good for their moral and cultural development and very good for their social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school shows very high levels of care for its pupils and ensures that they are safe and well cared for both before and after school, and during the school day.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The quality of leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff school is excellent. The headteacher has a very clear vision regarding the development of the school and this is clearly communicated to and shared by all members of staff and governors. The reflection of the school's aims in its work is excellent. All staff are fully committed to constantly improving provision and raising standards. Their commitment to seeking the highest possible achievement for pupils across a wide range of learning experiences, and the personal development of all pupils, is of high importance to the staff. Governors, staff and parents express great confidence in the leadership of the headteacher
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The contribution of the governors in shaping the direction of the school is excellent. They fulfil their responsibilities very well. Governors have high levels of involvement in the life and development of the school. They know the school well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's overall evaluation of its performance is very good and is used to very good effect in school improvement. The headteacher and staff work very well with governors to identify what the school does well and what can be improved. The headteacher monitors and supports teaching effectively and know the staffs' strengths and weaknesses well.
The strategic use of resources	The financial management of the school is good. Care is taken to ensure that money is well targeted and that the best value for spending is achieved. Spending is well linked to priorities in the school development plan. The school effectively evaluates the impact on standards of their financial commitments. The school has a satisfactory level of teaching staff, but there are too few support staff for some classes. The adequacy of accommodation and resources is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • They think that the behaviour is good, that their children are making good progress and children are helped to become mature and responsible. • They think that the teaching is good and that children are expected to do their best. • Most feel that the school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable about approaching the school with problems or questions. • They feel that the school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work their children get to do at home. • The information they receive about their children's progress.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. Teaching is good and teachers generally establish good levels of behaviour in their classes. Pupils do make good progress, become sensible and mature. The school works well with parents and is very supportive of their concerns. The leadership and management are excellent. The team does feel, however, that the annual reports are of a good quality and parents need have no concern about the information they receive about their children's progress. Homework is appropriate to these pupils and supports their work in class effectively.

Parents think highly of the school. In both questionnaires and at the parents' meeting, they express confidence in the school and what it is doing for their children.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 or above in the national tests in 1999 for seven-year-olds in reading and mathematics was below the national average, and in writing was well below. The percentage of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 was well below the national average in reading and mathematics, but was close to the national average in writing. Teacher assessment in science indicates that the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above and the higher Level 3, was well below the national average. Over the last four years, although standards have remained below average in reading writing and mathematics, they have kept pace with national trends, and improved in mathematics. In reading, standards are as in 1996, dipped in 1998, but regained in 1999. In writing, standards have regained 1996 levels after dipping significantly in 1997 and steadily rising between 1997 and 1999. In mathematics, there has been a steady and significant rise in standards each year since 1996 until 1999. Overall, this shows a generally improving situation in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and particularly in mathematics. There is no evidence to indicate that there is any difference in the performance of boys and girls.
2. **At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above and the higher Level 5 was very low when compared to the national average in English, mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools, attainment in English and mathematics was well below the national average, but in science was below. These unsatisfactory test results can, in part, be explained by the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in that group. Out of the 23 pupils who took the test, 19 were on the school's register of special needs. Although there are no national figures available as yet against which to match the Year 2000 results, there was a dramatic improvement last year. Sixty-five per cent of pupils attained the nationally expected Level 4 in English and sixty-nine in mathematics. This surpassed the targets set for that year by a significant amount. Over the last four years (1996 – 1999) standards have varied. From a low base in 1996, standards in English, mathematics and science dipped in 1997, rose in 1998 and dipped significantly in English in 1999 and slightly in maths and science. Although attainment has remained consistently below average, the overall trends when last years results are considered show a significant rise in standards.**
3. Assessments completed within the first few weeks of entry indicate that the overall attainment on entry to the nursery class is very low. Although children in the Early Years Unit make very good progress, almost all do not achieve the early learning goals for children at the end of the foundation stage. Pupils enter school with standards that are still below average, except in their personal development, which many achieve.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is average and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. Attainment in mathematics and science is currently in line with the national expectation but below in English and information technology. Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science. Progress is unsatisfactory in design and technology and in information technology. In all other subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress, and by the end of the key stage, attain standards that are expected for pupils at seven. Although standards at the end of Key Stage 2 remain average overall, pupils make good progress. They have made significant gains in their skills and understanding of the language, but attainment in English is below expectations. Good progress is made in mathematics and science, and pupils at the top of the key stage are

currently working at levels expected for eleven-year-olds. Standards in information and communication technology and design and technology remain below average and progress is unsatisfactory. In all other subjects, pupils make sound progress and achieve standards that are expected for pupils at this age.

5. **The many pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards achieving the targets set for them. There are six pupils with statements of special educational need who also make good progress because of high quality support from the staff. The school makes good use of its baseline assessment and other assessments to clearly identify pupils who require additional support. Work is very well matched to pupils' needs, which ensures good progress.**
6. **Standards of literacy across the curriculum are generally unsatisfactory. Speaking and listening are below average at Key Stage 1, with pupils entering the key stage with very low attainment in English. For some pupils, such as those entering with little or no knowledge of English, or some with special needs in language, this level remains depressed. At Key Stage 2, pupils make good and often very good progress in speaking and listening and standards are as expected by Year 6. In reading, standards are below average at Key Stage 1. Some pupils struggle to read, but for higher attaining pupils, attainment is as expected. At Key Stage 2, reading standards remain below average, but are closer to national expectations. Pupils' writing at Key Stage 1 is below average, and for a large proportion of pupils, is well below average. At Key Stage 2, pupils' writing is generally still below expectations overall, but there are some strengths. Older pupils write for different purposes. Some of these produce imaginative pieces of writing and effectively explore human feelings, such as those when confronted with racism.**
7. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in mathematics are average overall and pupils make good progress. Pupils generally build secure skills in number work, but there remain some areas of weakness. Pupils count reliably and they recognise numbers and place them accurately in order. However, in lessons, pupils use objects to count with and few have the skills to use number without the aid of objects. By Year 2, pupils have developed their number skills well and they count reliably, both backwards and forwards, sometimes using a number line for help. Many pupils are not yet able to quickly or accurately recall simple number bonds and they have to calculate these when working with number problems. More able pupils have a good recall of simple multiplication and addition bonds, and apply their knowledge well in mental calculations. Pupils have a satisfactory concept of shape and space. They read dials accurately and tell the time, for example, to the nearest hour.
8. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made significant gains in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics and have strengthened areas of weakness. They have made good progress and standards remain in line with expectations, although more secure. Pupils now confidently and accurately add, subtract and multiply numbers up to a thousand and are beginning to divide smaller numbers. Most are beginning to use decimals to two places and show a sound understanding of the value of different digits in numbers. More able pupils have a good understanding of fractions and equivalent percentages and decimal fractions. Others understand fractions but have not yet successfully made the link with percentages. Most pupils recognise number patterns and manipulate them effectively to predict the answers to questions. This demonstrates pupils' sound competency in number and sound skills in using, applying and investigating mathematical situations. They have developed a clear understanding of shape work with good levels of understanding when working with different aspects of shapes, such as measuring and drawing angles, being able to quickly recognise symmetry in shape and calculating areas. In lessons, younger pupils are able to measure distance using

centimetres and metres, but they are not ready to use smaller units and find considerable difficulty when trying to read scales that contain both millimetres and centimetres. By the end of the key stage they have developed this skill.

9. Numeracy is applied soundly across the curriculum and standards are satisfactory in other subjects. Pupils use co-ordinates accurately when using simple maps and apply their knowledge of directions with increasing accuracy. In history, pupils gain a concept of chronology by referring to time lines. In science, they apply satisfactory measurement skills, but younger pupils find some difficulty when working with smaller units. In physical education, they refer to clockwise and anti-clockwise directions.
10. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in science are in line with those expected for pupils at this age. Their attainment in the knowledge and understanding aspects of science is average but in experimental and investigative science, standards of attainment are below average. Pupils achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the life processes and living things, of materials and their properties, and of physical processes. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 carried out investigations using their senses, some with limited skill. They develop a satisfactory understanding of science in everyday life, such as understanding that much of the food we eat, such as fruit, begins life as seeds or that a number of everyday appliances use electricity. Many pupils record their observations appropriately in writing, in simple tables and charts and use scientific language. At the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are well placed to attain the national average, with some pupils achieving the higher level. They achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the life processes and living things, of materials and their properties and of physical processes. Pupils' achievement in science enquiry is also good. They make good progress in using their knowledge and understanding to carry out investigations and recording their findings in a variety of ways, including tables, charts and graphs. Older pupils carry out fair tests and explain clearly why they are fair. For example, Year 6 pupils suggest different ways of helping solids dissolve more quickly and are able to devise a fair test, describing how to alter one variable without affecting others. They make relevant observations, measure accurately and use simple equipment appropriately. Numeracy is used effectively in pupils' recording of their work and standards are satisfactory.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The school has successfully maintained the high quality of pupils' attitudes and behaviour since the last inspection.
12. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. They co-operate well with teachers and show good levels of interest and enthusiasm in their work. They show good levels of concentration and take pride in their work. Pupils are keen to answer whole class questions, and participate fully in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were very enthusiastic in interpreting language used in Tudor times into modern English.
13. The under-fives are developing good and positive habits in their learning. Their behaviour is very good. They share role-play areas and equipment with good consideration for each other and generally play and work very well together. They are on course to achieve the national targets for personal development by the time they reach five years of age.
14. Behaviour is generally good throughout the school. This makes a considerable contribution to pupils' progress in lessons and to the ethos of the school. Most pupils are extremely courteous and show high levels of respect for staff and visiting adults. The school is a friendly and orderly community. Pupils mostly behave sensibly in classrooms, and in and around the school. Lunchtime is a very pleasant social occasion where pupils

mix very well together and enjoy each others' company. There are a small number of pupils whose behaviour is occasionally unsatisfactory. The school is well aware of these pupils and is taking further measures to resolve this, for example, by reviewing the availability of classroom support assistants. Bullying is not a significant problem. When it occurs, the school has good procedures in place that would address the issue immediately.

15. Behaviour management by staff is usually good with a consistent whole school approach. Through this, pupils' work in developing classroom rules, and personal and social education, pupils have a good and clear understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They are aware of the system of rewards and sanctions, and believe them to be fair. One pupil was excluded for three fixed periods, and then permanently, in the last school year for unacceptable behaviour. This represents a marked improvement in the level of exclusion since the last inspection.
16. Relationships are very good. Pupils work together effectively in pairs and small groups. Many examples were seen in many lessons. For example, pupils worked well in pairs during Year 5 personal and social education as they discussed decision making at home, and what they thought about decisions such as shopping and sleepovers. They accepted each others' views and comments constructively. Pupils show a very high level of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. For example, Year 2 pupils recently studied the life and times of Martin Luther King and discussed the issues of respect and tolerance.
17. The pupils at this school are trustworthy and care for property. They respect their own property and that of others. They show respect for school buildings and there is hardly any litter about the premises. They all share equipment and learning resources sensibly in lessons.
18. Personal development is very good. So far as it can be judged, the school has made good improvements in this area since the last inspection. Pupils mature well as they progress through the school. Library and research skills are taught mainly through English lessons, and pupils can demonstrate a good level of independence in their learning. Pupils display a very high level of initiative in learning. In the literacy hour, good use is made of reference books and dictionaries. Pupils are good at selecting their own learning resources in most lessons. The School Forum allows older pupils to chair meetings between pupils and senior staff. Pupils have made many very good suggestions about improving the school in some way and many of their ideas have been implemented.
19. The school offers many, very high quality opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils accept responsibility very well. For example, monitors perform their tasks in a helpful and effective fashion and much pride is evident. Older pupils are caring towards younger ones. For example, at lunchtimes they help very effectively with dining arrangements.
20. Pupils make a valuable contribution to the community. For example, they regularly support charities and good causes through fund-raising and sponsored events. Clearly, they care for the community and those less fortunate than themselves.
21. Although the school makes every effort to raise attendance, it is unsatisfactory since it is below the national average for this type of school. The rate has improved very slightly since the last inspection. The rate of authorised absence is considerably above the national average and is largely attributable to illness. There is hardly any unauthorised absence. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when it was well above the national average. Punctuality is sound and registration periods are used as effective learning opportunities.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The quality of teaching is good at both Key Stages 1 and 2 and it is very good for children in the Early Years Unit. The quality of teaching ranges from excellent to poor. Out of forty-eight lessons observed, the teaching in four was judged to be less than satisfactory. These were at lower Key Stage 2 where the teaching of large classes, with a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, some for behaviour, and a lack of adult support for teachers and pupils, makes teaching very difficult. In the Early Years Unit, two-thirds of the lessons seen were of a very good or excellent quality. At Key Stage 1, all teaching was satisfactory or better, with almost all lessons being of a good quality. At Key Stage 2, half of the lessons were judged to be good or very good. This gives a good whole-school teaching profile, in which two thirds of lessons were judged to be at least good and most were at least satisfactory. The good quality teaching enables good quality learning to take place and pupils to make good progress.
23. Parents are pleased with the teaching at St Matthew's, and at the parents' meeting they said that these teachers "love their children". An outstanding feature of teaching is the care and patience that all teachers show for their pupils. There are a significant number of pupils that present challenging behaviour in class. This is dealt with effectively in a caring, calm and non-aggressive manner. Teachers remain well controlled in difficult situations and present themselves as very good role models for how these pupils should react if they find themselves in situations of conflict.
24. The previous inspection judged teaching to be good overall. The good quality of teaching has been maintained, but the unsatisfactory teaching is now in Key Stage 2. There is still a weakness in consistently applying the school's strategies for classroom behaviour management in some classes.
25. The Early Years Unit is a strength of the school and provides children with a very good start to their education. This is a great improvement on the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory. The teachers', nursery nurses' and support assistants' knowledge of how young children learn is very good and they effectively create an environment in which pupils feel secure and stimulated to learn. They quite rightly place a strong emphasis on children's personal and social skills and their language skills. In addition, good provision for pupils with little or no English and early identification for those with special educational needs ensures pupils make good progress.
26. In more successful lessons at Key Stages 1 and 2, teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and they make their expectations clear to pupils. They apply the school's behaviour management strategies well and skilfully manage pupils who present situations of challenging behaviour. Pupils who have specifically identified behaviour problems are dealt with firmly but in a caring way. This approach avoids confrontation and pupils usually calm down and learning for all continues. Occasionally, teachers have to seek the support of the special needs co-ordinator or the headteacher in more extreme circumstances. This is also effective in controlling pupils' behaviour. Good teamwork is evident and staff show high levels of commitment and morale. However, expectations of pupils' behaviour are inconsistent across the school. Some teachers tolerate more than others and, for example, do not always engage the full attention of pupils before they start their lessons. They try to talk whilst pupils are talking and occasionally fail to deal with more challenging pupils effectively. However, in these lessons there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a lack of adult support. Teachers provide good role models and retain their control, even when faced with high levels of provocation.
27. Most planning is of a good quality. Targets of lessons are made clear so pupils are aware of what is expected of them in lessons. Teachers' knowledge of the next stages of pupils'

learning is good and is based on secure day-to-day assessment of pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This is based on meaningful marking of pupils' work, particularly at the end of Key Stage 2. This gives encouragement to pupils but also provides pointers for improvement.

28. Work is planned so that it is appropriate to different pupils' needs, particularly in mathematics and English lessons. In these lessons, pupils are given work at suitable levels, either to consolidate previous learning where there is the need, or to extend the more able pupils. This was the case in a mathematics lesson in Year 2, when more able pupils were challenged appropriately and lower attaining pupils were provided with work that strengthened pupils' knowledge of number. However, planning is sometimes unrealistic and expectations of what the pupils can do are too high. This occurred in a Year 3 mathematics lesson, when pupils did not have the skills needed to cope with measuring in small units such as millimetres, and in geography in Year 1 when pupils were required to work with maps that were too difficult for them to understand. Some good links between subjects are planned. This happened when Year 2 pupils were shown word-processing as a form of printing when they were printing in art. This effectively illustrated the relevance of printing and where it had developed to in the current time.
29. Basic skills are taught well. This effectively meets the needs of pupils at this age. Literacy and numeracy are of high priority in a school in which there high levels of pupils with English as an additional language or with special educational needs. Personal and social skills are also identified as high priority in the school. These all receive good levels of attention in lessons and the school's aims and Christian ethos are reflected in the teaching of these life skills.
30. Where extra adult support is available, it is effective. Planning between teachers and classroom support, whether specifically for special needs, pupils with English as an additional language or general support assistants, is very good. They know what is expected of them, work confidently with pupils and make a significant contribution to the progress that pupils make. Their presence in class helps significantly with the management of pupils and they provide effective support in establishing good behaviour. Difficulties in class management were observed in classes with high numbers of pupils and with a significant proportion having special needs (over a half in one class). On one occasion, the mere entry of a special educational needs support assistant had a calming effect on the pupils. Some of them work with small groups out of class, such as for additional literacy or special educational needs support. Their support, therefore, is not always available at times when it would be helpful and teachers have to cope with difficult situations on their own.
31. Teachers use a good range of effective methods. When introductions to lessons are stimulating and of a quick pace, a good climate for learning is established and the quality of learning is good. However, teachers having to discipline pupils and deal with inappropriate behaviour lead to slippage of time and slower progress in some lessons. Teachers' enthusiasm inspires pupils' eagerness to learn, such as a literacy lesson in Year 6 when they studied Shakespeare's play 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'. Pupils expressed pleasure in reading and thinking about the words that Shakespeare used. A spiritual dimension to learning was effectively stimulated by the teacher's own enthusiasm. Being an English specialist, her knowledge was very good and her own appreciation of the text high. Good teachers' subject knowledge was also seen in Key Stage 2 science, in music and in art.
32. Teachers are very aware of pupils with special educational needs in their classes. They are skilled at ensuring that work set is at an appropriate level and that the level of difficulty

in questions ensures that pupils have understood lessons. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties are handled sensitively and effectively. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from class to receive additional support in basic skills according to their levels of attainment. This is beneficial for special needs pupils, but they sometimes miss out on other important work in other subjects. Teachers write pupils' individual education plans in conjunction with the special needs co-ordinator. Pupils receive very good support from the classroom support assistants who know their pupils very well and what they are doing with them. When in class, support assistants meet pupils' needs effectively and provide good levels of support for teachers in managing their classes.

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

33. The quality and range of activities provided for children who are under five is good, and reflects the high quality of teaching. The curriculum covers all of the six areas of learning recommended nationally. However, these activities now need to be carefully built into a curriculum for the foundation stage and planned for children's development through the 'Stepping Stones' towards the early learning goals for children at the end of the reception year.
34. The school's curriculum provides a range of worthwhile opportunities for learning which meets the pupils' interests and aptitudes. The curriculum for pupils with special needs and those for whom English is an additional language is appropriate and meets their specific needs. However, at present, these pupils are regularly excluded from making full use of the available opportunities offered by the school, as they are withdrawn for extra support in small groups. At the time of the inspection, there were examples when these pupils missed science, music or art in order to attend special tuition. The school is presently investigating ways to overcome these barriers to pupils' full participation in the whole curriculum.
35. The curriculum generally meets the requirements in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and the foundation subjects. Whilst the strategies for teaching literacy skills are satisfactory overall, the school has not adapted these to meet the specific needs of the pupils at St Matthew's School. As a result, the curriculum for English is not, therefore, entirely relevant for the pupils. The provision for mathematics is much stronger. Basic skills of numeracy are well developed and the National Numeracy Strategy is adapted to meet the particular needs of the pupils in most classes. Where this happens, it works well. There are good links between subjects, which help the pupils to apply their skills and to improve them. However, information technology is under-used throughout the curriculum and, as yet, it is not a carefully planned feature of the curriculum. Presently, there is insufficient balance in science in Key Stage 1. Sex education and learning about the harmful effects of drugs takes place on an informal basis. This is a deliberate decision taken by the governors.
36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, which includes provision for higher attaining pupils, is good. This represents maintenance in the quality of provision since the previous inspection when there were particularly good arrangements to support these pupils. Pupils' needs are identified at an early stage and very good support, which includes speech and language therapy and behaviour modification, as well as academic support, is provided throughout their time at the school. Individual education plans contain very specific targets for pupils to achieve. However, no mention is made of individual pupil's strengths, which may be used in supporting their weaknesses. These targets are reviewed regularly. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from classes such as history, geography, science, personal and social education, art and music. This limits their full

access and entitlement to the National Curriculum and the school should be careful that the pupils do not miss the same subject each week. However, the quality of provision when they are withdrawn from class is good and gives them a good foundation for developing their basic literacy and numeracy skills. Very careful consideration is given when dealing with pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The headteacher and the special needs co-ordinator are fully involved with these pupils and with supporting the staff when difficulties present themselves. These pupils receive very skilful and sensitive care from all the staff, keeping the disruption to the learning of other pupils to a minimum.

37. All pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the school's provision. This is evident in the organisation of pupils with special educational needs and for those who have English as another language. An additional factor contributing to the pupils' good progress in literacy and numeracy is the formation of target and booster groups designed to meet the needs of pupils with differing needs. The curriculum is well planned for all pupils, with teachers carefully identifying different levels of work for their pupils. This impacts positively on the rate of learning and pupils, including the more able ones, make good progress. The school has successfully addressed this issue from the previous inspection report.
38. The school is particularly successful in providing an appropriate curriculum for pupils for whom English is an additional language. This is further enhanced through a warm and welcoming environment that it provides for them and for their parents. As a result, they are well integrated and make good progress. There is very good liaison between various agencies to ensure that pupils receive maximum learning from the curricular opportunities on offer to them. Staff keep abreast of developments in this area by attending courses and using the resources from the local Drop-in-Centre. Practical advice is provided and concerns discussed. The school uses the nationally recommended guidance for planning and the delivery of the curriculum. While tasks are carefully modified to the needs of these pupils, nevertheless, demands are made on them to ensure that they achieve their full potential.
39. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities which include sport, drama and art. The curricular opportunities on offer are further enhanced by educational visits to such places as the Alternative Energy Centre in Wales and to the Frank Chapman Residential Centre where pupils can extend their learning across all areas of the curriculum, take up interests and mix socially. The school makes good use of visits to the locality and participates in events such as the Birmingham Cathedral Leavers Service and the National Indoor Arena Choir festival. The vicar of St Matthew's Church gives excellent spiritual support to the school community and encourages other church members to be involved in the life of the school. Her regular high quality input adds greatly to the learning opportunities of the pupils and actively supports the Christian values which underpin the school curriculum.
40. The school has good links with the local community, including the receiving secondary school. The good links benefit the pupils' smooth transition between phases. The police participate in the school activities regularly and make regular visits. This helps the school community to see them as friends.
41. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is good overall. This is a strength of the school and makes a considerable contribution to its ethos. The school has made clear improvements to social and cultural development since the last inspection.
42. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Several instances of spirituality were found in the work pupils do and in the planned opportunities in some areas of the

curriculum. Where teaching is most effective, for example, story telling in literacy lessons, it enthralled pupils and allows them to respond at a deep level concerning life and living. One good example of this was seen as Year 6 pupils discussed “the beauty of the English language” in ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’. Music is used well by the school to create a positive and spiritual backdrop, for example, to inspire creative writing. Matters of growth and existence are effectively promoted in science and opportunities are taken to study the minibests and pondlife to be found around the grounds. Year 2 pupils were enthralled at the natural patterns they saw when they cut open pieces of fruit in a science lesson.

43. Pupils’ moral development is good. As a consequence pupils grow to be rounded and well balanced individuals. Moral values are frequently reinforced through stories, fables and discussion of standards of behaviour. Pupils in each class are well involved in devising class rules at the start of the school year and there is consistent and frequent reinforcement of the school’s rules and values. The effective behaviour management strategy and the consistency with which it is applied contribute very well to pupils’ clear sense of right and wrong. Most pupils continue working and concentrating well on tasks even when there is disruption caused by a peer. The school’s personal, health and social education policy is effective in supporting the moral and social development of pupils, especially during circle time.
44. Social development is very good. Pupils collaborate on tasks very well and this was seen often in lessons such as science and physical education. The many high quality opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for others allows them to develop strong citizenship skills. A good example of this is the school forum, which includes representatives from most year groups. The wide range of extra-curricular activities including sports, drama and various clubs allow pupils to work with others in a strong social context. Residential opportunities for Year 6 pupils allow them to reflect on their role in a small community as they take part in many team-building and learning tasks at outdoor pursuit centres. A very strong feature of the school is the high level of racial harmony amongst pupils at all times. The school has successfully maintained this characteristic since the last inspection.
45. Opportunities for cultural development are good. This represents very good improvement in addressing a key issue of the last inspection to give greater emphasis to the cultural development of pupils. Work in literacy has included international literature. For example, Year 6 recently enjoyed stories about Shakespeare, Ghana, Jesse Owens and Martin Luther King. The school library is very well stocked with a rich variety of books concerning many different cultures. Pupils have studied different cultures such as the Victorians and ancient Greeks in history and geography. In art lessons, pupils learn about major artists and how their culture and environment influenced them. Pupils undertake many visits to places of interest including museums and the town centre. Religious education is well supported by trips to places of worship including churches, temples and mosques and these allow pupils to increase their awareness of different faiths in the community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. This is a strength of the school. The school takes very positive steps to ensure pupils’ health and safety. The level and quality of support in this regard are very good. The educational and personal support and advice given to pupils are good. These provisions contribute significantly to the caring and family ethos of the school, and are very effective in supporting pupils. Parents feel that the school’s staff have the pupils’ welfare at heart and that they work hard to enable pupils to achieve their best. Some good improvements have taken place in the school’s provisions since the last inspection. The school has clearly maintained its strong caring ethos.

47. The breakfast club is well used and managed. It provides pupils with an exceptional, positive and calm start to the day. Arrangements for lunch are also exceptional with pupils benefiting from a particularly nutritious and enjoyable lunch.
48. Arrangements for transfer to secondary school are good. Older pupils receive good quality information and guidance about high schools. There are effective arrangements in place to transfer information about pupils, for example, regarding special educational needs.
49. Arrangements for child protection are very good. The school follows the local authority's procedures fully. The designated officer is appropriately trained and very effective in dealing with any issues. The officer is well experienced and there is also another member of staff who is trained. Staff are vigilant regarding any possible concerns. The school has effective relations with external agencies.
50. The school has a very effective health and safety policy. Risk assessments are undertaken each term by the headteacher and site manager. Arrangements are made to ensure that equipment and appliances are regularly tested. Accident and emergency procedures are effective in dealing with problems. Two staff are trained and qualified in administering first aid. The school has plans to train other staff whose qualifications have lapsed. Fire drills are carried out regularly and are appropriately recorded.
51. The school works very closely with several external agencies in raising awareness of health and safety matters. The school nurse is a regular visitor and monitors pupils' general health and also gives talks for pupils on many aspects of healthy living. The community police officer is also a frequent visitor and gives talks on many topics including personal safety, 'stranger danger' and drugs education. Year 6 pupils take part in the 'crucial crew' programme each year and this provides them with a very basic but valuable awareness of how to deal with emergencies.
52. There are good arrangements to monitor and promote pupils' attendance. Any absences are followed up quickly. Problems are identified at an early stage and this enables the school to give pupils effective support. There is a good partnership with the educational welfare officer who works with the school. Staff take informal opportunities to speak to parents about the importance of good attendance. The system of rewards includes a certificate for the class achieving the best attendance each week. This is successful in creating a healthy spirit of competition amongst pupils.
53. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. There is a good quality behaviour policy in place. Detailed records are kept of any incidents of bad behaviour and this allows the school to identify any worrying patterns and trends. Where there are problems, this information is used effectively to monitor and track progress. Staff have high expectations regarding behaviour and they work very hard to maintain high standards. Good use is made of a wide variety of rewards and sanctions. Praise assemblies are held weekly and they include special mentions for good behaviour and work. These factors are effective in maintaining high standards of behaviour.
54. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils with special educational needs, with early identification soon after pupils start school. Work is planned carefully to meet their needs. Individual education plans are well written and contain realistic targets so that pupils' specific learning needs are met and their learning is built on step by step. The plans are reviewed regularly and are shared with all staff, parents and pupils.
55. The monitoring of the pupils' academic and personal development is good. The school's procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are good.

Information from these is used to track individual pupils' performance, particularly in English and mathematics. It helps teachers to plan the next steps in learning. A strength of these arrangements is the way that assessment information is used to form targets for individuals, groups and classes of pupils. This has led to the identification of booster groups in literacy, thus enhancing the pupils' attainment and resulting in improved standards. A very good example of this improvement is evidenced in the school surpassing its targets set for this educational year. Records are carefully maintained for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language. As there is considerable transience of pupils in the area, the school makes every effort to minimise the effects of disruption on pupils' education by ensuring that information is shared and passed on to the appropriate authorities and establishments. There is a knowledgeable assessment governor who keeps an overview of developments in this area. Regular reports are made to the governing body about assessments and how information from these is used for target setting. Analysis of the national test results are undertaken and appropriately addressed. Since the previous report, when assessment featured in the key issue for action, the school has addressed it very successfully.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

56. Parents have positive views of the school. Replies to the inspection questionnaire and responses given at the parents' meeting show that parents have a high level of confidence in the school, the quality of teaching and the attainment of their children. Parents say that the headteacher and governing body provide good leadership and management. They say that their children enjoy school and are pleased at the standards of behaviour. They feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Parents find staff approachable and helpful when there are problems. Parents of children with special educational needs are pleased with the support offered by the school. Parents value the commitment and care shown by all staff towards their children.
57. The school keeps good links with those parents who have children with special educational needs. Parents receive early notification of their children's needs and are kept fully informed from stage one of the Code of Practice. Regular meetings are held to ensure that parents are kept aware of all aspects of their children's needs, and are encouraged to be fully involved in their learning. Parents at the parents' meeting felt that children with special educational needs are supported very well.
58. A small number of parents felt that they were not kept well informed about their children's progress, but inspection findings disagreed with this. Also, some parents are not convinced that their children get the right amount of homework. Inspectors found the arrangements to be satisfactory. However, the headteacher is now reviewing the policy and practice in the school to ensure that sufficient homework is provided.
59. The school has maintained the high quality of information to parents and sound involvement of parents in their children's education since the last inspection.
60. The quality of information to parents, especially about pupils' progress, is good. The prospectus and governors' annual reports are detailed about the school's policies and procedures. The school issues newsletters regularly and these effectively keep parents abreast of developments in the life of the school. Parents value the curriculum information sheets produced for each class. These provide good information about forthcoming work for each term. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality. They are effective in informing parents about their children's achievements and important aspects of personal

development. They provide clear information to parents about what their children know, can do and understand. They also highlight future learning targets effectively.

61. Parental involvement in the work of the school is sound. Parents report that the school works closely with them and that relationships between parents and staff are good. Parents are made to feel welcome. The parents and teachers' association ('the friends of St Matthews school') organise a number of social and fund-raising events. The group raises a considerable amount of money each year for the school. Some parents help with school activities on a regular basis. They help in preparatory work for lessons, listen to readers, operate the school bank and support extra-curricular activities. Parent helpers are well briefed on their role. Home/school records show that parents are effectively involved in their children's learning at home. They give sound support in listening to their children read. All these factors contribute appreciably to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The headteacher has only recently been appointed. However, he was in post in the school as deputy head at the time of the last inspection when the leadership and management were judged to be of a good quality. The leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and senior staff are excellent and this aspect is a strength of the school. Because the headteacher has been in the school for seven years and has taught elsewhere within the immediate area for most of his career, he has a very strong knowledge of the area, of the children and their families and of their wide-ranging needs. He is also aware of changes that have taken place and how the school must adapt to address these. One of the main reasons for his success and the trust that the parents place in him, is that he uses this knowledge and understanding well in his management of the school, and in his short time as headteacher, improvements are evident. These include the way in which the conduct of pupils with behaviour difficulties is improving. He has also established a clear vision for the future of development of the school, and during his time as deputy head and acting headteacher, was able to analyse the school circumstances carefully and plan the way forward. He has quickly implemented many of these plans and is managing developments patiently and carefully. Parents show concern about the temporary nature of the staff, but this is a deliberate move on the part of the management team of the school. The headteacher and the governors are determined that they can be assured that teachers and support staff appointed permanently to this school will have the appropriate skills that are of a high quality. As part of this plan, the headteacher is building a team of staff that reflects the profile of the pupils in the school. Most of the ethnic backgrounds of the pupils in the school are represented on the staff, some in senior positions, and these people provide good role models to pupils who are too often of low self-esteem. This illustrates the depth to which the managers of the school consider the needs of pupils in school development. Parents need have no concern about the current quality of teaching. The headteacher supports them very well and manages what could be a difficult situation very competently. Currently, there is no deputy head, but the senior staff provides strong and effective support for the headteacher in a range of areas, not least of all in supporting pupils with behaviour difficulties.
63. The school aims are clearly reflected in its work and the Christian foundation of the school is evident in practice. The high standards in moral and social aspects of school life, and good progress overall, fulfil the school aims. All pupils are considered to be of equal importance and this forms a sound basis for the school to move forward. This approach is evident in practice in this school, which has a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language or special educational needs, and a large number of pupils requiring high levels of emotional support. The school achieves its main aims through addressing the specific needs of pupils.

64. The headteacher very effectively monitors the performance of teachers. There is an agreed timetable of observations for all staff, during which the headteacher assesses the quality of teaching and learning set against an established range of criteria. These observations focus on a wide range of features. They range from how teachers teach pupils and the resulting quality of learning, to the position of furniture and the quality of displays that establish an effective learning environment. Feedback is provided and the outcomes from observations are discussed with teachers. As a result of these observations, targets for development are agreed and these form the focus for the next observation. Monitoring of teaching has been very effective, as the quality of teaching seen during the inspection, provided by a largely temporary staff, was good overall. This quality has been maintained since the previous inspection. The monitoring of standards is well done. Areas of weakness are identified, for example, in mathematics National Curriculum assessment tests, and provision is made to address these. Consequently, overall standards are steadily rising and there was a significant improvement last year.
65. Curriculum co-ordination is currently difficult. Of the eight full-time and one part-time teacher, one is newly qualified and four are agency staff on temporary contracts. This leaves only four other teachers to carry the heavy burden of school and subject management. They work very hard and provide good levels of management overall, particularly in numeracy. However, there are some developments that need to be implemented in literacy and science. Core subject co-ordinators monitor standards in their subjects well and make an important contribution to the monitoring of teaching in their subjects. They also check and support teachers' planning and scrutinise the results of statutory and standardised tests, making good use of the information gained.
66. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator, who is part-time, is very conscientious and carries out her duties very efficiently. She effectively manages provision for such a large number of pupils and, through direct contact, knows her pupils well and she monitors pupils' progress towards meeting their specific learning needs. She is particularly skilled at using day to day assessments to extend or adapt her teaching to meet pupils' requirements. She works well with special needs support assistants, class teachers and effectively guides their work, whilst effectively using their many skills in planning and provision.
67. Governors make an excellent contribution to the leadership and management of the school, and their contribution to establishing the successful future of the school is highly significant. They regularly visit the school either to work informally in class with groups of pupils or to more formally observe provision in their area of responsibility. Current areas of priority are literacy, numeracy, assessment, information technology, curriculum development and implementing government recommendations, and establishing a stable, quality teaching staff. All speak with knowledge and understanding about their role, responsibility and what they see in school. In this way, governors have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and areas of concern. In addition to governors' meetings, there are other committees that meet and report back to the full governing body. The Chair of Governors meets frequently with the headteacher on an informal basis. There is also much formal and informal contact between other governors and the school. The management structures within the school are highly effective.
68. Although there is no formal appraisal model whilst the school awaits national guidelines, all staff have professional development discussions with the headteacher, who carries out in-depth classroom observations of all staff. They meet to discuss issues raised and those related to their specific responsibilities and their own professional needs. This model is well established and it informs provision for the professional development of staff. It is used to effectively identify some of the areas for whole school development. The

governors have set performance targets for the headteacher. Induction procedures for staff new to the school and for those new to the profession are good and smoothly introduce teachers and support workers to the life of the school.

69. The school's priorities for development and targets for improvement are highly appropriate and are identified very well. These are well rooted in a deep understanding of educational development, national priorities and the headteacher's and governors' excellent knowledge of the pupils, their families and their needs. The school priorities are first established by the senior management team and are then considered alongside national initiatives. These are presented to governors, who add, approve, question and discuss these alongside their own recommendations. These are then prioritised in the light of available finances and any constraints. Progress towards meeting their targets is very well monitored by personnel responsible, who report to the headteacher and the governors. The school's action to achieve their targets is excellent. Academic targets have already been surpassed and the school is well on the way to achieving its new management targets in the short time since the appointment of the headteacher.
70. The school's use of financial resources is good. Educational priorities are well supported through careful financial management. Funds for specific purposes are used appropriately. Priorities for development are carefully considered alongside available finance. The governors are well advised by the headteacher's wide experience in these matters and they take his guidance into account when preparing the budget. Financial matters are very well managed throughout the year and the school uses the local education authority services for its financial commitments. The highly efficient school administration officer keeps the headteacher and governors well informed about the status of the budget at regular intervals throughout the year. She also carefully monitors spending on a daily basis and the office is run efficiently. Being a member of the senior management team, she has a good knowledge of school management and this understanding adds to her efficiency and effectiveness. New technology is used to streamline processes and the school administrator is well informed. Computers are used very well to monitor finances, attendance, maintain pupils' records, word processing and the school receives e-mail.
71. The school has a good number of teachers who are appropriately qualified and experienced to match the demands of the National Curriculum. The staffing profile very well matches the profile of the school in terms of ethnicity and subject management. The previous inspection report identified a lack of expertise in the management of English. This has improved significantly and is now good. The number of teachers who have left the school in recent years, through promotion, retirement and family circumstances, has led to an unsettled staffing situation. The headteacher and governing body are endeavouring to address this issue constructively, through devising very positive strategies to minimise the impact of staff changes on teaching and learning. A good number of suitably qualified and experienced support staff provide good learning support for individual pupils and small groups. Very effective support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, this could be improved by extending this support to increase the level of inclusion for all groups of pupils. Children under five are particularly well supported. Teachers and support staff work very well together and good teamwork is evident throughout the school.
72. Effective staff development arrangements meet both the needs of the school and the professional needs of the staff. They are linked effectively to identified priorities in the school development plan. Newly qualified and newly appointed teachers are very well supported and induction arrangements are very good. Formal staff appraisal does not

take place but similar, very effective procedures are based upon annual professional interviews to set targets for staff development.

73. Resources are at least satisfactory for all subjects except for design and technology. There are good quality books in the library, carefully selected by the co-ordinator for English. Books representing different cultures are particularly good. These are invitingly displayed and the library forms a good base for pupils' quiet study. Well-displayed pupils' work and notices in various languages enhance it further. This factor helps the pupils for whom English is another language to feel welcome and included into the school community. There is sufficient storage space and all resources are easily accessible to staff, so that time is not wasted and lessons begin on time. The strategic use of resources is good because priorities identified by the school are financially supported.
74. Accommodation is satisfactory for the needs of the curriculum. This is a similar picture to that of the last inspection. Classrooms are of sufficient size and enable all areas of the curriculum to be taught. The school has a fair sized wildlife area and large pond which are well used in good weather for science related topics. The pond has recently developed a leak but the school is addressing this. The main hard surface play area caters effectively for outdoor games and break-times. Markings for games are worn and in need of re-painting. The whole premises are well maintained, tidy and clean. The school library is a little small and does not allow whole class usage but the school works around this, as it does with the lack of designated space for withdrawal work for pupils with special educational needs.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

75. In order to improve further standards and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:
1. Improve standards in English by:
 - Adapting the curriculum guidelines for literacy so that they are appropriate to the pupils;
 - Developing the key skills of reading, speaking and listening;
 - Planning for speaking and listening in English and other subjects;
 - Making greater use of information technology to support, consolidate and extend key language skills.
 2. Improve standards in information and communication technology by;
 - Improving resources;
 - Ensuring that all staff have the appropriate knowledge and understanding to use resources well;
 - Implementing current plans for development and improvement;
 - Develop the use of information technology across the curriculum.
 3. Review the use of adult support available with a view to increasing it and improving the level of inclusion for all pupils.
76. The governors should also include the following minor issues in their action plan.
1. Improve standards in design and technology by:
 - Raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can do;
 - Improving the resources available, both tools and consumable materials, so pupils have greater opportunities to develop and use their technology skills and understanding.

2. Develop the science curriculum by:
 - Adapting the government curriculum guidelines to suit the needs of the school;
 - Improving assessment procedures.
3. Raise the level of attendance.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Provision for pupils with English as an additional language

77. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress through careful assessment of their needs. These are undertaken as soon as these pupils are admitted in collaboration with the rapid-response teacher provided by the local education authority. The information from these assessments are carefully recorded and used to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. These pupils make good and often rapid progress, as evidenced in Year 6. Their attainment is commensurate with their abilities, and for some pupils, it is near or at the national norm. There are two pupils for whom attainment is above average. As there is considerable transience, information about these pupils is shared and passed on to the next establishment
78. Teaching of these pupils is good through appropriate and specific tasks to meet their needs. While these are carefully modified, nevertheless, the staff make demands on the pupils. This results in good and often very good progress in language acquisition. These pupils are very well integrated through the welcoming environment that the school and staff provide in class. This factor assists the pupils to feel confident to contribute to class discussions and to be involved in the curriculum.
79. Curriculum opportunities for pupils with English as an additional language are satisfactory rather than good, because they are regularly withdrawn for individual and small group support. They are, therefore, excluded from making full use of the available opportunities offered by the school. Reasons for this are mainly timetabling of lessons when specialist help can be given to them. At present, the school is looking at ways to overcome these barriers to full participation in learning.
80. Assessments are carefully gathered and maintained in all classes. The performance of pupils with English as an additional language is carefully monitored, including personal development and attendance. A strength of the school's arrangements is the welcome these pupils and their parents receive. This helps their confidence and assists them to learn and make progress. Assessment information is carefully gathered and shared between all parties. As these pupils often move around, the school is very well aware of the need to pass all information to the next school. These pupils are also well supported and guided by the staff. The school has been imaginative in this approach by appointing a black teacher to be responsible for this area. She is particularly gifted in understanding the academic and personal needs of pupils with English as an additional language. She is highly regarded by the other staff in the school and in the local education centres for pupils with English as an additional language.
81. Parents of pupils with English as an additional language are regularly and frequently informed about their children's progress. Where there are problems, the parents are invited to check with the class teacher on these pupils' progress and personal development. An open-door policy is another factor in the school's care for these pupils.
82. The leadership and management of provision for pupils with English as an additional language are excellent. The headteacher and the co-ordinator are pivotal in these

arrangements. The headteacher has an overview of these pupils' progress and discusses all concerns with staff, parents and the pupils themselves. The co-ordinator has carefully chosen library resources to ensure that different cultures are well represented. There are multi-lingual notices in the library and around the school. This factor contributes well to the pupils feeling welcome and subsequently confident to learn. The school receives a grant to help pupils with English as an additional language receive suitable help. This is spent appropriately in respect of staffing. Extra funding is taken from the general budget in order to provide suitable learning resources, such as books, for example.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

83. Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

84. Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Un-satisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	13	52	25	6	2	0

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

85. 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)	20.5	163
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	101

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14	102

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	127

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	39
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

86. Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.4
National comparative data	5.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.04
National comparative data	0.5

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

87. 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	12	14	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	6	9
	Girls	14	14	13
	Total	20	20	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (70)	77 (73)	85 (70)
	National	82 (80)	83 (85)	87 (83)
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	5	9	7
	Girls	14	14	13
	Total	19	23	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (74)	88 (77)	77 (77)
	National	82 (80)	86 (83)	87 (81)

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

88. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	12	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	0	0	3
	Girls	4	5	6
	Total	4	5	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	20 (44)	24 (22)	43 (48)
	National	70 (63)	69 (62)	78 (68)
Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	0	N/a	5
	Girls	8	N/a	7
	Total	8	N/a	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	38 (63)	N/a	57 (48)
	National	68 (63)	69 (64)	75 (68)

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

89. Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	19
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	26
Indian	18
Pakistani	20
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	72
Any other minority ethnic group	7

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

90. Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	3	1
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

91. Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	26.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	309

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.4
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

92. Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000 0
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	£
Total income	425309
Total expenditure	422094
Expenditure per pupil	2100
Balance brought forward from previous year	482
Balance carried forward to next year	3697

93. Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	200
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59.5	38.1	0	0	2.4
My child is making good progress in school.	59.5	31	2.4	0	7.1
Behaviour in the school is good.	52.4	33.3	7.1	0	7.1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26.2	50	4.8	7.1	11.9
The teaching is good.	50	45.2	0	0	4.8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45.2	38.1	9.5	4.8	2.4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	31	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61.9	35.7	0	2.4	0
The school works closely with parents.	57.1	33.3	2.4	0	7.1
The school is well led and managed.	54.8	35.7	0	2.4	7.1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61.9	33.3	0	0	4.8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38.1	28.6	9.5	0	23.8

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

94. Nursery and reception children receive a very good start to their education. The previous inspection reported that provision for early years was satisfactory. Good improvements have been made and overall provision is now good. The new Early Years Unit is becoming well established and both nursery and reception classes are very well organised. The quality of teaching is, overall, very good. Standards are broadly similar to those reported in the previous inspection.
95. Most children start in the nursery with very poorly developed skills in all the areas of learning, particularly in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal development. This is confirmed by initial assessments conducted with these young children. By the time they are ready to start Year 1, most children have progressed very well but attain standards that are below the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. This is due to the overall very good teaching in these areas of learning. In personal, social and emotional development, their achievement is excellent. By the time they enter Year 1, attainment is in line with the early learning goals. This is because of the high quality of teaching in this area of learning.
96. Admission arrangements to both nursery and reception classes are smooth and effective. Twenty children attend the nursery on a part-time basis and six children attend full-time. Of the twenty-eight children in the reception class, all attend full-time and all have attended the nursery. Early years co-ordination is very good. All staff work together as a very good team. In both classes, children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very well supported and make very good progress towards their learning targets. Staffing, accommodation and resources for the foundation stage are good.

Personal, social and emotional development

97. Almost all children enter the nursery class with very under-developed, immature skills in personal and social development. By the time they leave the reception class, most achieve the early learning goals in this area. This shows very good progress and reflects very skilful teaching in both classes, where children are valued and encouraged to feel confident about what they can achieve. Behaviour is outstanding and children develop excellent attitudes to learning. In both classes, children play and work together very well. They share resources when making sandwiches and take turns fairly when using constructional apparatus. Most listen and maintain concentration when listening to stories, such as 'The Giant Sandwich'.
98. Staff have established clear daily routines to which the children respond very positively giving them confidence and a sense of security. Adults provide excellent role models, always treating each other and the children with respect and courtesy, leading to the development of excellent relationships. Staff provide children in both classes with opportunities to make a 'word tree', with 'caring' and 'hurtful' words. This helps the children to think of others, understand each other's point of view and become aware of the difference between right and wrong. Adults promote children's personal development very effectively in both classes, by ensuring that equipment and resources are easily accessible to them and help them to become independent. Staff encourage children to develop responsibility, for example, in helping to clear away equipment and in being register monitors.

Communication, language and literacy

99. Provision for language development in English is very good. The overall quality of teaching in this area varies from very good to excellent and directly impacts on the very good progress the children make. Planning is mainly effective but some planning emphasises activities, rather than learning objectives. Very good opportunities for parents to reinforce language development are provided, through sending home 'language packs' for parents and children to share. Both nursery and reception children enjoy listening to stories and readily share books. Adults use talk to very good effect, interact with children positively and value what they have to say.
100. Elements of the Literacy Strategy are very well used in the reception class. Through the very effective use of the Big Book, 'Buster Mccluster', some children show awareness of rhyming words and can continue a rhyming string. Many recognise some initial sounds, through playing interactive games. Some begin to understand that print tells them what the story is about, but many have very limited understanding. Children who attain more highly know what 'author' and 'title' mean. Nursery children 'reading' the Big Book 'The Giant Sandwich', with an adult, are enchanted by the story, enthused by the nursery nurse's exciting approach. Reception children develop confidence in writing over and under the teacher's writing. A few develop sound pencil control, practising patterns and letter formation with increasing skill, but most find this difficult. Nursery children experience role-play in 'Mrs Woodbine's Office' and some use the writing materials to 'make marks', with increasing confidence.

Mathematical development

101. From a very low base on entry, children make very good progress, but attainment is below expectations by the end of the reception year. Children who attain more highly achieve the early learning goals by the time they start in Year 1. This is a direct impact of the skilful teaching in both classes. Staff provide very effective opportunities for children to sing and act out number songs, such as 'Five currant buns in a baker's shop' to encourage them to understand 'taking one away' and to use money. Very good use is made of the children themselves and of staff to enhance mathematical language development, for example, 'tall', 'short', 'taller', 'shorter'.
102. Most reception children are able to count to five reliably, and as a group, to ten. Pupils who attain more highly recognise numerals 1 to 9, and are able to match a card, for example with four dots on it, to 4 objects. Nursery children are becoming familiar with numbers, and are developing confidence in attempting to count, through the provision of effective number rhymes, games, activities and resources. Staff use every opportunity to maximise children's mathematical development, for example, when counting out resources, and at registration time using days of the week and dates, to reinforce skills and introduce higher numbers. Good opportunities are provided for shape, space and measures through well organised practical activities. Teaching of the basic skills is clear and accurate.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

103. Children enter the nursery class with a low level of general knowledge. They build on this knowledge to help them understand the world in which they live and make very good progress as a result of skilled teaching. Adults provide very good opportunities and experiences for children to investigate by using their senses. Nursery children begin to recognise and name a range of fruit and enjoy tasting them, but talk about their experiences with very limited speaking skills. Reception children use their senses through making sandwiches, and make choices about sandwich fillings. Some discuss ingredients, expressing preferences in tasting different fillings, with limited but developing language. Some begin to understand healthy foods.

104. Adults support children very well in investigating their surroundings, linking this with planned opportunities for language development. For example, nursery children who speak English as an additional language, experience a walk around school with the language support nursery nurse who skilfully encourages their interest and response through questions in their own language and in English. They express wonder at the space in the empty hall, become aware of different places, and gain confidence in using their language skills. Reception children create their own environments by using play 'road' mats. They become aware of change over time, by looking at photographs of themselves as babies and toddlers. Staff encourage children to use such 'time' language as 'past', 'then', 'yesterday'. They develop good cultural awareness through, for example, story, food technology and celebrating festivals such as the Chinese New Year.
105. Reception children create simple designs and, in both year groups, select resources, cut and join things together safely. They use construction kits to construct and build, with growing confidence and skill. Children use computers with support, and some develop basic information technology skills. Worthwhile opportunities are provided for children in both classes to become aware of the wider world through experiencing out of school visits, for instance, to Sandwell Valley. Visitors to school, such as the police and nurse enrich the curriculum.

Physical Development

106. The outdoor secure play area of the Early Years Unit provides a very good resource to encourage children's physical development. Staff provide opportunities for nursery children to run, jump, balance and climb safely, using a good range of equipment. Staff talk to them and help them to explore new ways of moving, but their imaginative skills are under-developed. They use wheeled toys and large apparatus with growing control and co-ordination, becoming aware of the needs of others in the space around them.
107. Teachers build on the children's physical skills, and reception children move more imaginatively, with improving co-ordination and control. They develop awareness of space and show respect for others' space when playing among them. They show increasing control in clothes and fastenings, and some are able to fasten buttons and zips, although many need help with this. In both year groups, staff teach skills such as threading laces and handling small tools, for example, paintbrushes, writing tools and scissors, to help children gain safe control of these finer movements. Their hand-eye co-ordination and fine manipulative skills are under-developed, but improving, with very good support and focused teaching.

Creative Development

108. Staff provide many purposeful activities for children to explore colour, texture, shape and form and to develop independence and decision making skills through choosing appropriate materials and tools for their activities. Resources are used very effectively and management of the children is excellent. Very effective group organisation means children are included in experiencing all activities. The 'dressing up' area and 'Mrs Woodbine's Office' encourage role-play, but opportunities to extend children's creative development are sometimes missed by insufficient intervention by staff.
109. In the nursery class, children begin to differentiate colours and, with very good support, create a collage of vegetables using a wide variety of materials, tools and media. Reception children explore colour and texture to create self-portraits. A music trolley is accessible and provides very good opportunities for nursery children to explore the sounds of musical instruments. They join in singing familiar songs, but many lack confidence. Reception children are able to sing simple songs and rhymes, such as 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears' with gusto. They happily explore how sounds

are made by using a variety of untuned musical instruments. Some are able to recognise repeated sounds and patterns.

ENGLISH

110. Standards in English, by the age of seven, in the national tests of 1999, were below the national average in reading and well below in writing. However, standards match those in schools with a similar intake of pupils in reading, and exceed in writing. By the age of eleven, 1999 results indicated very low attainment. However, these statistics should be treated with some caution as over eighty percent of pupils in that cohort, were on the register of special educational needs. While standards have remained below average, trends in both key stages have been upwards. Results for 2000 indicate that pupils' attainment rose significantly, and that targets set by the school have been exceeded. Inspection evidence supports this improvement. Standards by the end of both key stages are below average overall but the pupils make good progress. However, the school has a very large number of pupils with special educational needs and with English is an additional language. Both groups of pupils make good progress through the good support they receive to help them to learn basic skills in reading and writing.
111. The majority of pupils enter school with very poor skills in all areas of language and literacy. They make good progress. Despite this, their levels of attainment remain below the national average by the time they are seven and eleven. In the previous inspection, standards appeared to be slightly better but in the last four years, there have been significant changes to the school's context. There has been a significant increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs and of those with English as an additional language. A much higher turnover of pupils is another contributory factor, which affects overall standards.
112. Pupils' speaking and listening skills upon entry into school are very low. Though staff address this issue through a variety of activities and skilled questioning techniques, standards are below average by the time pupils reach seven. For a large number of pupils, standards remain well below average. Many pupils are able to talk confidently to adults, teachers and their friends, but they struggle to express their ideas when speaking in front of the whole class. At the time of the inspection, there was evidence that pupils were beginning to follow their teachers' instructions, despite their short concentration span. Teachers and support staff work hard on this and they manage to secure improvements during the time pupils spend in infant classes.
113. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make good, and often very good, progress in speaking and listening. As a result, pupils reach standards, which are average by the time they are eleven. They organise their thoughts in a logical and structured manner as observed in Year 6. In a very good literacy lesson, the pupils were able to discuss the beauty of the language in *Midsummer's Night Dream* and to translate complex expressions into modern English. There are some opportunities, such as plenary sessions at the end of lessons, for pupils to participate in discussions, but these are not carefully planned into English or into other subjects. Activities such as drama are well used in some classes, but they do not form a regular feature in all classes.
114. Many pupils enter school with very limited knowledge of books. They take a long time to acquire word-building skills and fluency in reading. Teachers work very hard and use a good range of activities to improve their pupils' skills. Pupils make good progress throughout the key stage, but by the time they are seven, a significant number of pupils still lack those skills. Guided reading activities are used effectively, and those pupils who experience problems receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants. The

school actively encourages parents to help their children to read at home.

115. Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 2. By the time they are eleven, most pupils read fluently. For some pupils, there is limited understanding, because of language limitations. However, for about two-thirds of Year 6, there is good comprehension and appreciation of literature. Pupils talk knowledgeably about the characters in their books and many pupils in that year group know how to skim text to pick out the essential points in their reading. Pupils can locate and use reference material in the library and in their classes. This ability effectively helps the pupils to study topics across other subjects. A strength of reading activities is a good choice of books representing different cultures. In discussion with the pupils, it was evident that they thoroughly enjoy stories and poems from around the world. This also indicates that the school makes a deliberate effort to compensate for pupils' limited literary backgrounds and to widen their reading experience. This is a contributory factor to pupils' improvements in vocabulary and in forms of expression.
116. Pupils have limited experiences of writing when they start school. It takes considerable time before they know how to write enough words to express their ideas. Consequently, standards in writing by the end of Key Stage 1 are below average, with a large proportion of pupils for whom standards are well below the national standards. Most pupils learn to write simple sentences using full stops and capital letters by the time they are seven. Handwriting and spelling are well taught. Through systematic teaching, many pupils in Year 2 are able to join letters successfully.
117. Although pupils in Key Stage 2 are provided with many opportunities to practise writing and spelling rules, standards remain below average. The levels of tasks provided for pupils are well matched to their specific needs and in Year 6, pupils are introduced to real challenges in their writing. A very good example of this was observed when pupils were involved in writing biographies and autobiographies. One pupil sensitively wrote from Ghandi's perspective about a journey through Pretoria, where he experienced racism in its ugliest form. The language this pupil used was particularly suitable to express the painful situation. Pupils are able to draft and redraft their work, changing sentence structure and content. Pupils are provided with opportunities to write for different purposes and to think about different readers. The more able pupils are appropriately challenged. This is reflected in pupils in both stages reaching the higher levels of attainment. Pupils learn to use their ink pens effectively in Year 3, and by the time they are eleven, their handwriting is well formed and generally fluent. These activities prepare the pupils well for their written work in secondary school. However, the use of information technology throughout the school is incidental rather than a planned feature of teaching writing skills.
118. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. Teachers have responded well to the demands of the National Literacy Strategy. For example, they make good use of shared reading sessions to teach the important skills. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and know how to teach literacy skills. Teachers in both key stages plan and organise their lessons well, particularly in the management of group work. There is appropriate challenge for the more able pupils and those pupils who require modified tasks are also given tasks to meet their specific needs. Teachers generally have high expectations of what their pupils are capable of achieving. Lessons are well paced and the final sessions are used to summarise key learning points. Pupils are well managed by their teachers, particularly in those classes where there is good support from classroom assistants. However, there are some teachers in Key Stage 2 who receive very little help with some of the pupils who present unacceptable behaviour. This results in slower progress for pupils because the teacher's attention is taken up with having to deal with disruptive pupils. Teachers keep good records of pupils' progress and attainment. This information is used well to plan the next steps of pupils' learning. Another factor contributory to the

good progress pupils make is the way teachers involve their pupils in their own learning. Individual targets are set, displayed in the pupils' books, reviewed and when these are achieved, new ones are set. Marking is regular and meaningful. Teachers praise their pupils' work but also give them some pointers as to how they may improve it. This helps the pupils to make good progress.

119. There is a good co-ordinator for English who has undertaken this responsibility in September. She is enthusiastic and understands how the curriculum for English should develop throughout the school. She also co-ordinates the development of English for those pupils for whom it is an additional language. Through her knowledgeable approach, the school library now contains a good variety of books representing other cultures. This arrangement effectively widens pupils' experience of reading and is a contributory factor to improving understanding and appreciation of the rich diversity of British culture. Nevertheless, the co-ordinator ensures that the pupils also celebrate what is best in English literature. This was evidenced in a very good lesson in her class, where the beauty of the language of Shakespeare visibly excited the pupils. They were engrossed in this session.
120. The curriculum for English is satisfactory. However, the school has not adapted the literacy guidelines to the needs of its pupils. Furthermore, planning for use of skills of reading and writing, and how these skills may be used across all subjects, are not carefully built into programmes of work. Systematic and progressive learning of speaking and listening skills is not yet in place. This results in missed opportunities for improving these skills in English and across other subjects.

MATHEMATICS

121. Over the last four years standards in mathematics have remained below average, but they have kept pace with the national trend of improvement. There has been a steady and significant rise in standards each year since 1996 until 1999. Overall, this shows a generally improving situation in standards at the end of Key Stage 1 in mathematics. At the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils who attained the nationally expected level was very low in comparison with the national average. Although there are no national figures available as yet against which to match the Year 2000 results, there was a dramatic improvement last year. Sixty-nine percent of pupils attained the nationally expected Level 4 in mathematics, and this surpassed the school's targets. Although attainment has remained consistently below average over the last four years, the overall trend, when last years results are considered, shows a significant rise in standards.
122. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, standards of attainment in mathematics are average overall, and pupils, including those with special education needs, make good progress. However, there remain some areas of weakness. Younger pupils make a secure start to building skills in number work, they count reliably, recognise numbers and are able to sequence a set of numbers. In lessons, all pupils use objects to count with and few have the skills to use number without the aid of objects. By Year 2, pupils have developed their number skills well and they count reliably, both backwards and forwards, using a number line for help. Many pupils are not yet able to quickly or accurately recall simple addition, subtraction and multiplication number bonds, and they have to calculate these to help them find the answers to number problems. However, more able pupils do have a good recall of simple multiplication and addition bonds, and they are able to apply their knowledge well in mentally doubling numbers up to fifty. Pupils have a satisfactory concept of shape and space. They recognise and name an appropriate range of common shapes and are able to identify basic patterns of symmetry

in shape. They can read dials and accurately tell the time, for example, to the nearest hour.

123. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good progress, have made significant gains in their knowledge and understanding of mathematics, and strengthened areas of weakness. Standards are still in line with expectations, which is similar to standards at the time of the previous inspection. Number skills of the majority of pupils are sound and they confidently and accurately manipulate numbers, adding, subtracting and multiplying numbers up to a thousand. Most are beginning to use decimals to two places with a secure understanding of place value to this degree. They can calculate the answers to division sums involving smaller numbers. More able pupils have a good understanding of fractions and they are able to calculate the equivalent percentages and decimal fractions. Other pupils show a sound understanding of fractions, but do not competently work with percentages, as do the higher attaining pupils. Most pupils recognise number patterns and manipulate them effectively to predict the answers to questions. For example, if they know that the answer to $3 \times 37 = 111$, they will confidently predict the answers to 6×37 , 9×37 , 2×37 and so on. This demonstrates pupils' sound competency in number and sound skills in using, applying and investigating mathematical situations. They have developed clear understanding of shape, and this enables pupils to work with good levels of accuracy when measuring and drawing angles and be able to quickly recognise symmetry in shape. Their knowledge of shape and number operations gives them confidence when calculating the areas of rectangles and compound shapes made up from rectangles. In lessons, younger pupils are able to measure distance using centimetres and metres and choose appropriate units. They are not yet ready to use smaller units, and find considerable difficulty when trying to read scales that contain both millimetres and centimetres. By the end of the key stage they are able to measure and estimate with appropriate accuracy. Pupils construct graphs accurately and are able to use them to extract information about different topics.
124. Numeracy is applied soundly across the curriculum. Pupils use co-ordinates accurately when using simple maps and apply their knowledge of directions with increasing accuracy. In history, pupils gain a concept of chronology by referring to time lines. In science, they apply sound measurement skills, but younger pupils find some difficulty when working with smaller units. In physical education they refer to clockwise and anti-clockwise directions.
125. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers generally have good levels of subject knowledge, which enables pupils to gain a sound understanding of all the areas of learning covered. Planning is good and is structured to enable pupils to build upon previous learning. However, in practice, it is not always based securely in a reliable assessment of what pupils are already able to do. In a lesson in which pupils were expected to measure in millimetres as well as centimetres, insufficient attention had been given to preparing pupils for such small measures and large numbers. Many pupils failed to achieve the necessary skills, they lost confidence and were unable to proceed with the lesson. Behaviour deteriorated and the teacher had to work hard to retain a calm atmosphere in class. Teachers share the learning objectives with their pupils clearly so that pupils are clear about what it is they are to learn. Teachers who maintain a brisk pace in both the mental session and during the pupils' main task, inspire an alert response and good levels of concentration throughout the lessons. Teachers work hard at controlling their classes and the resulting behaviour in most lessons is good. A small number of pupils show challenging behaviour, but this is dealt with in a calm and patient manner and there is generally little disruption to teaching and learning. However, in some classes the high proportion of time spent in trying to control pupils who need attention slows progress of the whole class. In these classes, there are high percentages of pupils with special educational needs, some with behaviour difficulties, and there is insufficient additional adult support for both teachers and pupils. When this is available, a significant

difference in pupil management, and therefore better behaviour, was observed. Teachers use questions skilfully to extract pupils' knowledge and to extend their thinking. On occasion the mental sessions and explanations are lengthy which result in pupils losing concentration and lessen the time available for them to work at the main task. The plenary sessions are well used to assess the progress pupils have made in learning during the lessons and in some instances to extend their thinking further. Teachers usually manage their pupils well so that the atmosphere in most lessons helps pupils to learn and make good progress.

126. The co-ordinator is new to this responsibility. She is enthusiastic and manages the subject well. She supports her colleagues well and monitors all aspects of the subject effectively. She assists with planning for teachers who are new to the school, checks other planning meticulously and has made herself aware of the quality of provision in the subject through her good level of monitoring. The main concern is to raise standards throughout the school, and to do this, the co-ordinator has developed and applied an effective assessment process. National Curriculum assessment test papers are used to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and this information is used to strengthen the curriculum and teaching in these areas. There are also good systems for tracking the progress of individual pupils, so that the school can be sure that pupils are doing their best. The co-ordinator is well supported by the nominated numeracy governor, who talks to her about numeracy development, observes lessons and reports back to governors. Although there has been some development of resources, they are still insufficient for fully effective learning in lessons. The provision of day-to-day classroom resources, such as rulers with appropriate measuring scales, is unsatisfactory.

SCIENCE

127. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment currently make good progress in their learning throughout the school. Attainment in science at the end of both key stages is broadly average. This is an improvement on the 1999 results. Current standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. A key issue in the previous report was to improve arrangements for the teaching of science in order to secure the continuity of pupils' experience. There has been a good level of improvement in this issue, which is now satisfactory.
128. The results of Teacher Assessments in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1 reflected levels of attainment that were well below the national average. They were in line with the average for similar schools. Standards of pupils currently at the end of the key stage are broadly average, indicating an upward trend. In 1999, forty three per cent of pupils at Key Stage 2 attained the expected level (Level 4) for eleven-year-olds. This indicates an improving trend, compared with 1998, when thirty eight per cent of pupils attained Level 4. However, the attainment in 1999 is still low in comparison with the national average, and below average in comparison with similar schools. This is mainly because of the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in that cohort, and the high level of numbers of pupils moving in and out of the school. In 2000, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 was eighty four per cent, a very considerable improvement, further continuing the upward trend. The improvement in standards is mainly due to continued good teaching, improved curricular provision since 1996 and also to the good leadership and management of the subject. Boys do better than girls in tests at the end of Key Stage 2, but there was no evidence to support this in work seen or in lessons observed.
129. At the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are currently well placed to achieve most of the targets for pupils of this age. Their attainment in the knowledge and understanding aspects of science is average but in the experimental and investigative aspects of the

subject, standards of attainment are below average because the Attainment Target 'Scientific Enquiry' is not systematically addressed over time. This has a negative effect on pupils' progress. Most pupils achieve well and build on their previous learning in a structured way as a result of consistently good teaching. They achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the life processes and living things, of materials and their properties, and of physical processes. During the inspection, pupils in Year 1 carried out investigations using their senses to explore, observe and describe the school environment, some with limited skill. Year 2 pupils observed seeds in a variety of fruit and most understand that all plants begin life as seeds. Most identify some properties of a range of materials and some describe and sort them, according to their properties, for example, texture. They develop a satisfactory understanding that a number of everyday appliances use electricity. Pupils who attain more highly know how a bulb lights up in various electrical circuits. Most can recognise and name a range of sources of sound and can compare loud and quiet sounds. Many pupils record their observations in writing, in simple tables and in charts, using appropriate scientific language. Some pupils who attain more highly use their knowledge and understanding to explain their findings. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who speak English as an additional language are well supported through the good use made of support staff. This enables them to make good progress and attain well in comparison to their prior attainment.

130. At the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are well placed to attain the national average, with some pupils achieving the higher level. They achieve well in their knowledge and understanding of the life processes and living things, of materials and their properties and of physical processes. Pupils' achievement in science enquiry is good. Therefore, pupils' achievement continues to be good overall. They experience a wide range of practical investigative activities, which contribute very effectively to their overall good progress in all aspects of the subject. They achieve well in using their knowledge and understanding to carry out investigations, record their findings in a variety of ways, including tables, charts and graphs. Pupils in Year 3 learn that light can travel through some materials, many, with limited understanding. Year 4 pupils show a sound level of knowledge of friction as a force to slow down objects, carrying out 'fair' tests with support. Pupils in Year 5 investigate whether sound has greatest amplitude through solid, liquid or gas. They carry out fair tests and are able to explain why they are fair ones. Year 6 pupils suggest different ways of helping solids dissolve more quickly and are able to devise a fair test, describing how to alter one variable, without affecting others. They make relevant observations, measure accurately and use simple equipment appropriately. Pupils who attain more highly know that scientific ideas are based on evidence. The majority of pupils effectively consolidate and extend their previous knowledge and understanding of aspects of life processes and living things. In their studies, Year 6 pupils investigate the life cycle of plants, demonstrate understanding of pollination and germination and identify such organs as petals, stamen and stigma in various plants. When writing down their findings, standards of presentation are mainly good. Pupils who have English as a second language are well supported and achieve well because of this very effective focused support. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and this enables most of these pupils to make good progress. However, the use of adult support available does not always ensure an appropriate level of inclusion for all groups of pupils.
131. The overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good. At Key Stage 1, it is consistently good. At Key Stage 2, teaching varies from satisfactory to good. It is good in upper Key Stage 2. As a result, pupils in both key stages make good progress overall. Teachers' subject knowledge is very secure and impacts positively on the overall good progress that pupils' make in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers' planning is effective, with clear learning objectives. Where teachers have high expectations, levels of challenge match pupils' prior learning and contribute well to good progress, for instance, when Year 6 pupils investigate dissolving substances. Teachers

use resources very effectively for pupils to gain first hand experiences, for example, when Year 5 pupils carry out 'fair tests' in work about the amplitude of sounds. The quality of marking is generally appropriate and often helpful to pupils. Where teachers manage their class well, pupils behave, respond and concentrate well and try very hard to do their best so that the quality of learning is good. Where class management is less effective, pace is lost and pupils lose interest; this impacts negatively on pupils' progress. As a result of the overall good teaching, most pupils in both key stages have good attitudes to learning. Most pupils enjoy experimental activities, demonstrating enthusiasm and interest in the 'hands on' approach to science. In a Year 2 lesson, some pupils expressed real wonder on seeing the pattern of seeds when fruit was cut open. In group activities, most work well together with growing confidence. They relate well to each other, to teachers and other adults. These very good relationships well motivate pupils of all abilities and make a significant contribution to the good progress made within most lessons.

132. The curriculum is broad, but there is an imbalance at Key Stage 1, as the investigative aspects of the subject in the attainment target, 'scientific enquiry' are not sufficiently addressed. A national scheme of work has been implemented but this now needs to be tailored to meet the specific needs of the school and address a time-scale for the delivery of the attainment targets. Assessment and recording procedures currently do not give teachers a clear picture of what pupils know, understand and can do. Assessment is not consistently used to plan what the pupils should learn next. There is no collection of samples of pupils' assessed work to assist teachers to come to consistent judgements about pupils' attainment levels. Links with literacy and numeracy are effective. For example, pupils often record their observations in writing. Teachers encourage the use of appropriate scientific vocabulary. Pupils measure and count in a range of contexts and use tables, charts and graphs to record findings. Little use of information technology was seen during the inspection. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The head teacher currently manages the subject, pending the appointment of a new science co-ordinator. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is being developed positively. Science resources are adequate, well organised and accessible to staff and pupils. The school grounds are used very effectively as a resource for investigative work, including a science garden area and greenhouse, but the pond area is currently not in use because of recent vandalism. The curriculum is enriched by good use made of visits, for example, to the Alternative Energy Centre in Wales and to Birmingham Science Museum.

ART

133. From the lessons observed in both key stages, it is evident that pupils achieve standards which are typical for their ages. They make satisfactory progress in both key stages. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its standards.
134. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to mix colours as they experiment with different shades, as observed in Year 2. Pupils used a variety of colours to produce pleasing printing patterns. The teacher used an art lesson to combine mathematics with art: pupils completed symmetry pictures from magazines. In this class, pupils were observed printing after the style of William Morris. The teacher widened their cultural experience further by introducing them to 'Intaglio' printing. The classroom assistant effectively used information technology to demonstrate another form of printing. This lesson resulted in good learning gains for the pupils in art. In Year 1, pupils made attractive models using plasticine, which the teacher arranged artistically on a display. This is a good strategy for encouraging the pupils to give of their best and to sustain their efforts, in the knowledge that staff would value them.

135. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on their previous learning and continue to make satisfactory progress. In a good lesson in Year 3, the pupils identified patterns based on animals, plant forms and objects. They learned to appreciate different floral and animal patterns. In a discussion, they evaluated line, shape and colour. In Year 4, the teacher sensibly integrated science with art, when the pupils investigated colour and shape in nature. An attractive display of tree-trunk rubbings and patterns inspired by a butterfly, zebra and caterpillars. These pupils' learning was further enhanced through an investigation of patterns in mathematics. One pupil used her developing literacy skills to produce a sensitive poem based on observations of illustrations of crocodiles, lizards and tortoises. In Year 6, the teacher imaginatively used dance music to inspire her pupils to draw figure movements, using charcoal. These were particularly effective.
136. The quality of teaching in art varies from good to satisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and help pupils to understand aspects of the work of past artists and their heritage. For example, Year 2 pupils were given a good explanation of 'Intaglio' printing, which clearly explained how this developed. Illustrating how printing has developed to present day computer word processing followed this up. Group work is well organised and follows careful planning where sound learning can take place. Pupils are managed efficiently and they are all willing to co-operate with the clearing up at the end of the lesson.
137. The overall curriculum for art is satisfactory. The staff sensibly use the national guidelines which give continuity and progression to pupils' learning. However, some pupils are regularly excluded from making full use of art curriculum because they are withdrawn for small group support in English. The school is presently looking at timetables to find ways of removing these barriers to pupils' full participation in learning. Resources for art are satisfactory, well labelled and accessible to pupils and their teachers. This was particularly evident in Year 6.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

138. Standards in design and technology at the end of both key stages are below those expected for pupils of this age and pupils make unsatisfactory progress, particularly in the making aspects of design and technology. This is not as good as at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be satisfactory. At Key Stage 1, pupils make models of ladybirds by covering a balloon with papier-mâché. Once dry, they will add features such as a head, legs and paint the model to look realistic. In planning their model, pupils make simple drawings, and can explain what they are going to use for a head, legs and the spots and plan what colours they are going to paint the body. At Key Stage 2, pupils have made musical instruments out of boxes, elastic bands and a range of other materials, such as pasta, that produce sounds in a variety of ways. They have made designs beforehand and planned carefully how they are going to construct their instruments. Evaluation is an ongoing feature of their work and pupils constantly seek ways in which they may improve the quality of their finished product. Pupils at Year 6 have produced some effective models of Tudor houses. These are realistic, well finished and accurate in scale and proportion. These were completed as part of a project completed at home. The range of work is limited and there was no evidence of models using mechanical features or electricity. Models are limited to card and some wood, but the range is limited.
139. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although some good teaching was seen during the inspection. This is because of the limited range of opportunities for pupils to reach high standards in their products. Short term planning is satisfactory and builds on previous learning, but it lacks reference to developing skills at a higher level. The subject does,

however, interest pupils and they take full advantage of the limited opportunities. Subject knowledge is sound and sometimes good and ensures pupils acquire satisfactory knowledge and understanding in design, and in making to a lesser degree. Pupils are reminded of the need to evaluate work in progress and to consider ways to improve. Satisfactory use is made of well-focused questions to give pupils ideas and to help them develop understanding. This was seen in Year 5 where the teacher asked relevant questions, related to both science and technology, in order to try to help pupils improve their instruments. Good use of plenary sessions helps pupils share learning, evaluate each other's products and develop presentation skills. Relationships are good and appropriately high expectations of independence and behaviour mean pupils work well together and share ideas. They enjoy practical tasks and are happy to talk about their work and explain what they are doing.

140. Government recommendations are currently being implemented, but it is too early yet to see the impact of these on standards. Resources are unsatisfactory for a school of this size and for pupils of this age. There is a trolley with some tools and resources, but these are not appropriate, nor of a suitable range, to enable work at levels expected of eleven-year-olds.

GEOGRAPHY

141. During the period of the inspection it was possible to observe only one lesson at each key stage. Therefore no judgement can be made on the overall quality of teaching and learning. Judgements are also based on scrutiny of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning, displays and discussions with pupils. Evidence indicates that pupils of all levels of prior attainment, including pupils with special educational needs and those for who English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress by the end of both key stages. Pupils at both key stages attain standards expected for their age.
142. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils study their immediate environment, identify features seen on their way to school and record observations in pictures and writing. Year 1 pupils find out the different reasons why people move house. Those who attain more highly demonstrate an awareness of localities beyond their own such as Birmingham and Stirling. Pupils who attain more highly become familiar with a map of the British Isles, but this is too difficult for most pupils to understand. Year 2 pupils acquire appropriate geographical skills, produce simple maps of 'Our holiday place', and describe its features. They complete simple grids with a town plan, to show its landmarks.
143. Pupils in Key Stage 2 consolidate and extend their previous learning appropriately. Year 4 pupils experience a field study of the local area by going out into the community, well supported by adults. They observe transport and industry in the locality and begin to appreciate their effects on the environment. At the end of the key stage, pupils study life in India and make comparisons between life in India and in Britain. They make graphs to show levels of rainfall during the Monsoon season, developing an appropriate understanding of how climates affect people's lives. They learn to use maps and atlases and to identify different scales. Little use of information technology was seen during the inspection. Pupils' numeracy skills are effectively used in using grids and maps, and literacy skills are effectively enhanced in written recording. Pupils enjoy lessons, behave well, are interested and have positive attitudes to learning.
144. In the lesson seen, at Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching was satisfactory; it was good at Key Stage 2. Good aspects of teaching are the very good attention to safety given in fieldwork and the promotion of appropriate geographical terms, such as, 'transport',

'industry, 'climate'. Less effective aspects are when expectations are too high and resources used are too challenging for the pupils, for example maps at Key Stage 1.

145. The leadership and management of the subject are good and the curriculum is appropriate. Documentation provides useful guidelines for continuity, progression and planning. The good use of visits, for example, to Edgmond Hall and the Frank Chapman Centre enhance the curriculum.

HISTORY

146. During the period of the inspection it was possible to observe only one lesson at Key Stage 1. Therefore no judgement can be made on the overall quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1. Judgements are also based on scrutiny of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' planning, displays and discussions with pupils. Evidence indicates that pupils of all levels of prior attainment, including pupils with special educational needs and those for who English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress at the end of Key Stage 1. They attain standards expected for their age at the end of the key stage.
147. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. They attain standards expected for their age at the end of Key Stage 2.
148. At Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrate an appropriate awareness of the past and an increasing sense of chronology through sequencing objects and events. They compare toys of today with those in the past and know that ways of travelling, and clothes that people wear have changed throughout history. Pupils in Year 2 develop a sound understanding of life in Britain in World War 2. They learn how to find out about the past using a range of sources including pictures, books and photographs.
149. At Key Stage 2, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are consolidated and extended appropriately. They demonstrate knowledge of everyday life and events when studying topics such as the Ancient Egyptians, the Ancient Greeks, the Tudors and the Victorians. Year 5 pupils begin to recognise features of Doric, Ionic and Corinthian styles of Ancient Greek architecture. Many start to select and link information from a variety of sources and compare modern and ancient buildings effectively. They are aware of differences between fact and opinion through reading contrasting reports in Athenian and Spartan 'newspapers'. Little use of information technology is seen during the inspection. Literacy skills are effectively enhanced in written recording, especially at Key Stage 2. Numeracy skills are used in making a sequence chart of toys at Key Stage 1, and in 'Count like the Egyptians', at Key Stage 2.
150. In the Key Stage 1 lesson seen, the quality of teaching was good. Teaching at Key Stage 2 varies between satisfactory and good and was satisfactory overall. Effective aspects of teaching are good introductions to lessons and building on previous learning, which contribute well to pupils' knowledge of their own learning and to the pupils' positive attitudes and good efforts. Well focused questions, good use of resources and clear explanations promote the acquisition of skills of historical enquiry, and the development of appropriate historical terms, such as, 'rations', 'column', 'architecture'. Most pupils enjoy history, listen well and are interested in finding out about the past.
151. Leadership and management of the subject are good and the curriculum is appropriate. Documentation provides useful guidelines for continuity, progression and planning. Good use of visits, for example, to the Galton Valley Heritage Centre at Smethwick, and Oak House (a Tudor house) enhance the curriculum.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

152. Pupils' attainment in information technology is below the level expected nationally at the end of both key stages. Few pupils have experience of using computers outside school, and this limits their appreciation and understanding of the importance of using the latest technology. There has been insufficient investment in developing and improving the resources for information and communication technology since the last inspection. The school now has this in hand and is currently taking delivery of a sufficient number of good quality computers to enable development in both the long and short terms.
153. By the time they are seven, pupils display only very basic word processing skills. They control the mouse and use the keyboard to type simple words, and write their own names and short sentences. Their skills however, are very limited and nearly all use one finger only and spend a lot of time searching for letters. Pupils show competent mouse control when using an art programme to draw colourful pictures. The very youngest pupils use an interactive CD-ROM to consolidate early counting skills. They show a satisfactory understanding of the program and are able to control the mouse with a good degree of accuracy, thereby using the program effectively. Word processing is used effectively by the support assistant in Year 2 to illustrate the development of print and to highlight a current printing process. During the inspection there was very little evidence of information and communication technology skills being taught or of information technology being used to support other subjects at Key Stage 2. In a design and technology lesson, some pupils were using a CD-ROM for reference and they used it satisfactorily to access information required.
154. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. There is insufficient direct teaching of the skills of information and communication technology itself. Teachers provide very little or no opportunity for pupils to learn as a class and to practise their skills of mouse control and word processing. As a consequence, pupils do not develop or consolidate their skills effectively. Pupils learn only very slowly throughout both key stages. They gain some skills in word processing but do not have the opportunity to develop their skills to a satisfactory level. They find difficulty in typing text at a reasonable speed and editing their work. A few pupils can load from a menu or open a file previously saved, and some save or print their work unaided. A small number of pupils do not know how to exit a program and shut down the computer, they think that the best way is to turn off the electricity supply at the switch. There is no evidence of pupils using programmable toys or writing simple control programs to control the movements.
155. Information and communication technology is a major development concern to the school. Little development has taken place over recent years, but the new headteacher has a very good knowledge in teaching information and communication technology and setting up appropriate provision. He has quickly set about developing this through specific grants available to the school and is spending the money wisely. Current plans are appropriate to establish a good provision for both the teaching of specific information and communication technology skills and for information technology to be used to support work in other subjects. Software loaded into all computers currently being delivered is up-to-date and of a high specification, staff training is on-going and more is planned to enable all staff to be able to use the new resources to good effect. The school is now well placed to improve both provision and standards in this subject.

MUSIC

156. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained its average standards. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout both key stages.

157. By Year 2, pupils know how to control their instruments to accompany singing. They learn to play patterns to various beats and generally manage to start on time to the teacher's counting. Pupils recognise and name different percussion instruments. They learn that music can be represented in symbols and demonstrate that they can read and play these from left to right. This ability also helps the pupils with learning to read.
158. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at both Key Stages 1 and 2, although it ranges from good to unsatisfactory. In more successful lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge, and are able to explain clearly the meanings of technical terms. This enables pupils to develop secure skills in beginning to read and interpret symbols in music. Pupils are well organised and managed, with interesting lessons holding pupils' attention and concentration. For example, one music lesson was successfully linked with the pupils' 'sound' topic in science. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, organisation is poor, too much time is wasted and the purpose of the lesson is lost. As a result, behaviour becomes unsatisfactory and learning is less successful. In Key Stage 2, pupils build on previous learning and by Year 6, pupils understand how to interpret music symbols and to read notes. In a lesson observed in this class, the pupils improved their performance through practice. The pupils sang an Ugandan song with considerable expression and with clear diction. They successfully managed to sustain pitch and sang tunefully.
159. Teachers in both key stages use a recorded programme, but they make it work for them by adapting it to the needs of their pupils. For example, in Year 6, the teacher interrupted the tape to explain and teach various points of expression, reading notation and expression. This good teaching resulted in the pupils making good progress. In Year 3, the teacher imaginatively used music to create an atmosphere of suspense and magic. Pupils subsequently were inspired to write lively descriptions in their extended writing. However, teachers miss opportunities to use music for assemblies, for example, where pupils can be introduced to various excerpts of music from different times and cultures.
160. Since the previous inspection, when it was judged that resources were unsatisfactory, the school has purchased some percussion instruments. There are some compact discs and tapes, but some of them need to be replaced if listening and appraising are to be improved.
161. The school follows the national guidance for music. This arrangement contributes to the continuity and progression in the curriculum. However, at present there are pupils who regularly miss music because they are withdrawn for small group or individual support in English. They are, therefore, excluded from making full use of the available opportunities offered to other pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. During the period of the inspection it was possible to observe only one lesson at Key Stage 1 and therefore no judgement can be made on the overall quality of teaching and learning at this key stage. Judgements are also based on scrutiny of teachers' planning.
163. Pupils of all levels of prior attainment, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. They attain standards expected for their age at the end of Key Stage 2.
164. A key issue in the previous inspection report was to raise standards in physical education at Key Stage 1. The school has worked hard to address this key issue and standards are now satisfactory. In the Year 1 lesson observed, teaching is good, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, pupils' standards of attainment are in line with those expected for

their age and their progress is good. Scrutiny of teachers' planning reveals that the requirements of the National Curriculum are fully met.

165. At Key Stage 2, pupils' skills are consolidated and extended appropriately. Pupils in Year 4 practise and improve ball skills of sending and receiving, in relation to invasion games. They work in small teams and develop appropriate co-ordination and control in the development of game skills. In gymnastics, Year 6 pupils devise and perform sequences of movement, demonstrating control and fluency in jumping and travelling, both on the floor and on the apparatus. They improve their performance through practice and through discussion of their own and others' skills and techniques. They understand and apply basic principles of safety in movement and can work safely alone and with a partner. By the end of Key Stage 2, 50 per cent of Year 6 pupils can usually swim unaided for at least twenty five metres. This is below expectations for this age group.
166. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is good overall, ranging from satisfactory to good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and planning is effective. Clear instructions given to pupils ensure they know what is expected of them, and promote their understanding. Suitably challenging activities make an effective contribution to pupils' sound progress in skills development. Most enjoy their lessons, are enthusiastic and make good physical efforts. High expectations encourage good teamwork, respect for others and fair play. Pupils listen attentively and willingly follow teachers' instructions. Good overall class management elicits a good response, promotes good behaviour and very positive attitudes. Where class management is varied, pace is lost, noise level becomes unacceptable and this has a negative impact on pupils' progress.
167. Leadership and management of the subject are good and the curriculum is appropriate. Documentation provides useful guidelines for continuity, progression and planning. Accommodation and resources are good. The provision of extra-curricular sporting activities enhances the physical education curriculum.