

INSPECTION REPORT

WOLLESCOTE PRIMARY SCHOOL

STOURBRIDGE, WEST MIDLANDS

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103800

Headteacher: Mr S. Eales

Reporting inspector: Mr A. Calderbank - 7979

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th October

Inspection number: 230454

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Drummond Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands.
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S. Walton
Date of previous inspection:	January 26 th – 30 th 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7979	Mr. A. Calderbank	Registered inspector	History; Religious education; Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? – The school’s results and achievements. What should the school do to improve further?
8989	Mr. M. Romano	Lay inspector		How high are standards? - Pupils’ attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2465	Mr. G. Yates	Team inspector	Science; Special educational needs.	How well is the school led and managed?
11922	Mrs. J. Watkins	Team inspector	Foundation Stage; Art and design.	
21910	Mr. G. Longton	Team inspector	English; Physical education.	
22669	Mr. T. Prosser	Team inspector	Mathematics; Design and technology.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2700	Mr. P. Sudworth	Team inspector	English as an additional language.	
17018	Mr. M. North	Team inspector	Information and communication technology	
23319	Mr. V. Leary	Team inspector	Geography; Music.	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wollescote Primary School is a large primary school for boys and girls aged three to eleven years in the Stourbridge district of Dudley, in an area of much social disadvantage. Thirty-seven per cent of the children are eligible for free school meals which is well above the national average. Just over fifty per cent of the children come from the Pakistani community. There is a small number from other ethnic minorities. There are 487 pupils in the main school and 100 children attend the nursery in either the morning or the afternoon session. When children start in the nursery, their attainment is poor for their age. Many are not fluent users of English and need additional support to understand the lessons. Thirty per cent of children are identified as having special educational needs which is above the national average. Fifty-four children receive external support mainly for moderate learning difficulties. Nine children have a statement of special needs, which is broadly average. The percentage of pupils with English as an additional language is very high at nearly fifty per cent. There is above average pupil mobility. For example, last year 52 pupils joined and 92 left the school other than at the usual time of admission or leaving. The school benefits from its involvement in local initiatives, including the Dudley Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Wollescote Primary School is an improving school. It provides a secure and purposeful learning environment for its pupils. Good leadership by the headteacher and the senior management team, along with good quality teaching are helping to improve standards and also to widen children's learning opportunities. Overall standards in English are below the national average and well below in mathematics and science by the end of the juniors. However, most children achieve well given their low starting point on entry to the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Most children achieve well, especially in English, given their low starting point on entry to the school.
- Children make a good start in the nursery because of good teaching.
- The school is well led by the headteacher.
- Teaching is good overall. Teachers are highly committed and well supported by classroom assistants.
- Children enjoy coming to school and relationships are very good.
- The procedures for managing pupils' behaviour and encouraging self-discipline are very good.
- There is good provision for pupils with special education needs.

What could be improved

- The use the school makes of assessment information to improve standards in mathematics and science
- Junior children's understanding and use of technical language, especially in science and mathematics.
- The accommodation for those pupils who are being taught in demountable classrooms.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the last inspection in January 1998. The leadership of the school is much more effective. The roles of senior and middle managers have been strengthened. Monitoring is now more explicit. Co-ordinators have been given time to look at the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects and new initiatives are formally evaluated. As a result, governors and staff are in a better position to identify what needs to be done to improve standards. The quality of teaching is significantly better. Lesson planning is now much sharper. It clearly identifies learning objectives. As a result teacher expectations are higher and clearer. Standards in English, mathematics and science are better than they were. Governors now monitor more effectively the impact of their decisions on the quality of education provided and the standards attained. The teaching of information and communication technology now meets National Curriculum requirements and standards in this subject are in line with national expectations.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar school
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	D	A
Mathematics	E	E*	E	C
Science	E*	E*	E	D

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E
In lowest 5% of schools	E*

For 2001 the school's category for comparison with similar schools has been changed to reflect the high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language. In this comparison, the results in English were well above average, in mathematics average and in science below average. The school exceeded its targets in English and fell just short in mathematics. Higher attaining pupils did particularly well in English with almost a fifth of the age group attaining Level 5 (above average). Inspection findings indicate that while standards in English, mathematics and science of pupils currently in Year 6 are below the national average overall, they have made significant progress in their learning since entering the school and are achieving well. They are on course to achieve the appropriate targets the school has set for eleven-year-olds taking national tests in English and mathematics in 2002. By the end of Year 6, standards in art and design are higher than those found in most schools. Progress is good in religious education and pupils meet the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus. In all other subjects, standards are average.

The 2001 Year 2 results show an improvement over the previous year in reading and writing. The results in mathematics were particularly good with all pupils achieving at least the expected standard. The current Year 2 pupils are attaining broadly average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The teacher assessments for science indicate that attainment is broadly average in this subject and the inspection findings are the same. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' attainment in all other subjects is average by the end of Year 2. Most children make good progress throughout the nursery and reception classes. Nevertheless, the attainment of many at the end of the reception year is below average in the key areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are happy in school and most give their full attention to lessons. They are keen to learn, work hard and do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils play well together in the playground. During lessons, they are quick to follow class routines.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. Boys and girls from different ethnic groups mix well. Relationships at all levels are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is below the national average. The school is doing all it can to improve this aspect.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	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 has improved since the previous inspection and is now good overall. This effective teaching has a major impact on the good progress that pupils are now making. Literacy and numeracy are taught well, using the national strategies. Planning is of good quality with learning objectives clearly identified and shared with pupils. This has a positive effect upon the quality of learning because pupils are given a good understanding about what they are going to do in the lesson. In English, mathematics and science, the practice of teaching pupils in classes organised on the basis of pupils' prior attainment is proving to be effective in raising standards. However, teachers need to ensure that pupils use their spelling skills accurately when writing in other subjects. Additional teachers and classroom assistants support pupils well but the school needs to explore how to provide more opportunities for pupils in Years 3-6 who are at an early stage of learning English to learn and practise new words. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support which is effectively targeted to their needs. Most lessons are well organised and interesting. However, some teachers lack confidence in teaching the full range of skills in music.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum meets national requirements. Teaching programmes are planned well, ensuring that pupils are provided with a suitable range of relevant learning opportunities. A satisfactory programme of extra activities and visits adds to the quality of education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school is successful in the early identification of pupils who have special educational needs and the targets on their individual educational plans relate well to pupils' specific needs. Pupils are involved in all of the school's activities.
Provision for pupils with	A high proportion of pupils start school speaking very little English.

English as an additional language	The support they receive from teaching and non-teaching staff ensures that they make sound progress overall.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. Residential visits promote individual and team-building skills. Pupils are given a good insight into different cultures. Spiritual development is satisfactory. Assemblies promote a sense of community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures are in place for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare; their personal development is well supported and monitored effectively. Members of staff work hard to encourage pupils to succeed in all they do. Good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment. In English this information is used well to improve standards but this is not the case in mathematics and science.

The school works hard to establish an effective partnership with parents. However, links with the main high schools to which most pupils transfer are unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and is well supported by his deputy and other members of the senior management team. Curriculum co-ordinators oversee their subjects well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils most of its responsibilities efficiently. However, teachers' annual written reports to parents on how well pupils are attaining do not record progress clearly in all subjects. Governors have a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff monitor the quality of teaching in all subjects very well. The careful analysis of assessment information in English has enabled them to improve standards significantly in this subject. This practice has not yet been extended effectively to mathematics and science.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial planning is good and resources are used well to support the development of the school. The careful use of all available funds and support from projects including the Dudley Education Action Zone grant has brought about significant improvements.

Staffing levels are satisfactory. There are good resources for most subjects. Seven classes are taught in demountable classrooms which have neither toilets nor running water. Since the last inspection the governors have spent a lot of money on internal refurbishment and improving the playgrounds.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• Teachers are welcoming and work well with parents.• The school is well led and managed.• Teaching is good.• Children are expected to work hard and as a result make good progress.• The school helps the children to become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The behaviour of the children.• The amount of homework children are given.

The inspection team agrees with the parent's positive views but not with the matters raised. Homework is given regularly and is similar in amount to that in other schools. During the inspection children behaved well.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The attainment levels of many children entering the nursery are well below the expectations for the age group. A high proportion of the children learn English as an additional language and a significant number have special educational needs. Most settle well on entry due to the good preparations made for them. The children had only been in school for a short period of time when the inspection took place. However, they were becoming used to classroom routines and were engaging in a good range of activities which were well suited to their needs.

2. By the time that they are ready to start in Year 1, most children have made good progress and achieve well in most areas of learning. Nevertheless, the attainment levels of many at the end of the reception year are below those found nationally in the key areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. These judgements are backed up by the results of assessments carried out by the school at the beginning and end of the nursery and reception classes. Children's attainment in these areas is similar to judgements made at the last inspection.

3. Many children enter nursery with poor social skills. They make very good progress in developing their independence and the ability to work with others. By the end of the reception year most children will achieve the expected learning goals for the age group in personal, social and emotional development. This represents very good progress. In literacy, they make a good start recognising letter sounds and by the time children are ready to start in Year 1 most have a bank of words they can recognise in print. However, many still have a more limited vocabulary than is expected for their age. In mathematics, number skills are better developed than those for shape, space and measure but attainment is below that found in most schools. A significant number of children have difficulty with the concepts and language of mathematics. Children make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are interested in their surroundings and observe carefully the changes involved in making bread or the way ice cubes become smaller as they melt. However, attainment levels are still below expectations by the end of the reception year. Very good progress is made in the development of children's physical skills. They can take part in vigorous physical exercise and most reach the expectations for the age group. In creative development, the children are making good progress in drawing, printing and painting. They enjoy experimenting with the sounds made by different musical instruments. By the end of the reception class, attainment is broadly in line with that found in most schools.

4. Over the past three years (1998 to 2000) boys and girls have under performed against the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1. However, the results in 2001 were much improved due in no small measure to the good teaching and support all pupils now receive, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Though pupils' attainment in reading was well below the national average, it was above average when compared with similar schools. Writing standards were just below the national average but well above those found in similar schools. Attainment in mathematics is impressive with all pupils attaining at least the expected national standard. When compared to similar schools the results were in the top five per cent. The teacher assessments for science show that attainment is below average. However, good progress has been made since the last inspection and pupils are now far more involved in undertaking their own scientific investigations.

5. Key Stage 2 results were also better in 2001 with more pupils obtaining the higher levels in English, mathematics and science. Based on test results for the past five years, the trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for these three subjects was below the national trend. The school's results in English, mathematics and science since 1999 had been declining. However, the improved results in 2001 have reversed this trend. Pupils' achievements in English were especially good with almost 20 per cent of pupils achieving the higher level 5. In mathematics and science, the attainment of pupils was well below the national average. However, in comparison with similar schools, standards were average in mathematics and below average in science. An issue for the school has been the under-achievement of boys in Key Stage 2. Various strategies are being used to try to improve their self-esteem and motivation. No obvious reasons were noticed during the inspection as to why boys should lose interest in their school work. Boys and girls in Key Stage 2 applied themselves equally and with interest in lessons.

6. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils are attaining at the expected levels for their ages in most subjects and their achievements are good overall.

7. Progress has improved in English because of the good use made of the information gathered from assessments to set clear individual targets which the pupils strive to achieve. The majority of pupils are now reaching the expected standard in writing, reading, speaking and listening at the end of Key Stage 1. However, very few attain the higher levels but the emphasis being placed upon improving standards is beginning to bear fruit. Though standards are below average by the end of Key Stage 2 a significant minority of pupils are making very good progress and attain highly. The school has rightly identified reading comprehension as a priority in its improvement plan. Writing standards are getting better and pupils write for a variety of purposes and audiences. Pupils use their language and literacy skills well in some areas of the curriculum. They have appropriate opportunities, for example in geography and history, to discuss ideas and to read for information. However, religious education lessons in Key Stage 1 only last for half an hour and this limits the amount of time pupils have to respond in writing. All pupils present their work neatly but many still have difficulties spelling common words when writing in other subjects.

8. Mathematics is taught in classes grouped according to prior attainment and overall this is benefiting the pupils placed in the middle and upper ability classes. However, there are large numbers of pupils in the classes containing the less able in Key Stage 1 and the work is too easy for some of them. Satisfactory use is made of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils' data handling skills are developed well through links to other subjects, particularly science.

9. There is evidence that standards are improving in science because pupils are now being taught in groups based on their prior attainment in Years 6 and 5. By the age of eleven, most pupils can carry out their own investigations.

10. Pupils' attainment in mathematics and science is not as high as it is in English because teachers do not make sufficient use of the information they get from assessments in these two subjects to drive up standards. Another common weakness at Key Stage 2 in mathematics and science is the fact that pupils who speak English as an additional language have difficulty remembering and using the technical vocabulary associated with the subjects. This has an adverse effect upon their performance not only in class but also when taking part in National Curriculum tests at the end of both key stages.

11. Information and communication technology is another rapidly improving subject because of new facilities and increasing teacher skills. The subject now meets National Curriculum requirements and standards are similar to those found in most schools. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus.

12. Standards have risen in art and design and in design and technology since the previous inspection. In art and design pupils' attainments are above average and in design and technology they are average by the end of Year 6. Standards in geography, history, music and physical education are similar to those found in most schools. In swimming, standards are above those expected. Almost all pupils can swim at least the required 25 metres by the end of Year 6 and many can swim much further.

13. Pupils who have English as an additional language make good progress in the Nursery and generally good progress in Key Stage 1. This is largely due to the good quality of teaching, the greater emphasis given to practical activities and the focused interaction between teachers and pupils. In Key Stage 2 their progress is satisfactory. Less emphasis is given to the use of real objects to help pupils' understanding and they struggle with some of the subject terminology which is introduced in mathematics and science.

14. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets set out clearly in their individual education plans. The range of provision available, including withdrawal for small group teaching and support in classrooms, contributes effectively to the progress which pupils make. In English, the school is very aware of pupils' strengths and weaknesses through the thorough assessment and testing procedures used in the subject. As a result, teachers are able to plan appropriate work and this ensures that the pupils achieve standards at least in line with their capabilities.

15. The school has not identified any pupil as being gifted or talented.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. The personal and social development of children under five is very good. The children in the nursery have settled very well into the routines expected of them. Most are responsive to adult guidance and follow instructions carefully. They make significant progress developing self-confidence and independence. In the reception class, children are attentive and enthusiastic about their work. For example, they showed good levels of independence and joined in enthusiastically as they chose the role play corner and adapted to an 'active play' situation. In all the lessons observed in the nursery and reception behaviour was good. The children share toys and equipment willingly with one another. The effective teamwork between teachers and nursery nurses in supporting groups and individuals makes a valuable contribution to the development of children's confidence and independence.

17. Throughout the school, pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They generally participate well in lessons. Most pupils apply themselves to set tasks with good levels of concentration and enjoy their work. The majority listen attentively to their teachers and to the contributions of others. They respond enthusiastically when asked to undertake tasks and willingly volunteer answers to questions. When asked to work in groups, pupils share equipment well, use it carefully and help each other.

18. Pupils with English as an additional language have good attitudes to their work throughout the school and they behave well. They work hard to overcome their lack of facility with the English language and persevere well with the tasks. Pupils with special educational needs are attentive and follow instructions carefully. They show an enthusiasm for learning.

19. Standards of behaviour are good. This confirms the views of the parents who returned the questionnaire. Pupils are responding positively to the structured approach to discipline in which good behaviour is celebrated. During lessons, teachers are good at noticing the pupils who follow instructions immediately and praise them. This serves to remind others what is expected from them. This positive approach is helping to create a good working atmosphere and contributing to pupils' progress. Most pupils behave sensibly in the dining room, the playgrounds and when moving around the school.

20. The very good quality of relationships is a strength of the school and contributes to the welcoming atmosphere, positive learning environment and supportive ethos. Pupils show respect for each other and for staff. They are polite and courteous to visitors. Improvements made to the playgrounds are having a positive effect upon behaviour at lunch times and playtimes.

21. The lapses by a small number of pupils whose behaviour is challenging are dealt with promptly and very effectively in accordance with the school's agreed policy regarding sanctions. There were two exclusions for a fixed period during the school year prior to the inspection. These were only implemented after considerable efforts had been made to find other solutions. During the inspection, there was no evidence of any sexism or racism.

22. Personal development is good. Pupils are taught to care for one another and to understand the impact of their actions on others. They learn that they must take account of the needs of others, especially those less fortunate than themselves, and raise money to help them. When given the opportunity to take on responsibility pupils respond well. For example, they act as monitors, operating the overhead projector and helping in the tuck shop. Pupils have some opportunities to take the initiative in their learning, but these are relative few.

23. The school is successful in promoting pupils' self-esteem especially amongst special educational needs pupils and those with English as an additional language. The presentation of rewards for good work, behaviour, attitude and attendance in assemblies is a key part of this. Pupils are developing confidence in their abilities and a shared sense of pride in their school. Discussions held with pupils show that they value greatly the opportunity provided for them to take part in residential visits.

24. Though the school's attendance rate has improved, it is still just below the national average. These statistics are a cause of concern and the school is doing its best to address the problem but some parents still fail to realise that absence from school means that their children fall behind with their work. Most pupils come to school on time. However, a few parents continue to send their children to school late, despite the school's best efforts.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

25. The quality of teaching is good and is a significant factor in the improvements in standards made at the school since the previous inspection. At that time, weaknesses were identified in the teaching and the school was required to address, as key issues, a wide range of matters relating to teachers' skills and professional development. The current inspection finds that the majority of these issues have been remedied.

26. During the week of the inspection, the teaching was judged to be good or better in 77 per cent of lessons and very good or excellent in 26 per cent of lessons. Very little unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Strong and effective teaching was observed throughout the school, leading to pupils learning well and often making good progress. The good quality of teaching represents good improvement since the previous inspection.

27. Key strengths throughout the school in teaching are the teachers' very good relationships with the pupils, their good knowledge and understanding of subjects and skill in questioning and providing explanations. A feature of all lessons is the clarity with which the learning objectives are made known to the pupils at the beginning. Teachers emphasise the necessity of homework. They place a high value on thorough planning and are well prepared for lessons. Despite the fact that there are many teachers new to the school a striking feature is the quality of very good teamwork, resulting in a high degree of consistency in most lessons.

28. Where the teaching was unsatisfactory the teacher's knowledge of how the learning objectives were to be achieved were limited. The methods used did not sufficiently stimulate or interest the pupils. Management and control of pupils who misbehave was weak. Activities were not matched to pupils' needs and the pace of lesson was slow.

29. Teaching in the Foundation Stage of learning (the nursery and reception classes) was never less than good and sometimes very good. It was good in 70 per cent of lessons and very good in 30 per cent. It is effective in helping the children to develop their skills. The teacher and support assistants plan, teach and evaluate activities together. Very good planning leads to effective deployment of support staff and helpers who promote good learning through their well prepared conversations and questioning. Teachers place a strong emphasis upon developing children's personal, social and emotional development. Very good progress is made in this area of learning because of the high quality of the teaching. Teachers ensure that opportunities to develop children's language skills are included in most activities. They stress mathematical language and provide children with good opportunities to observe things at first hand. Time and resources are used effectively.

30. In both key stages teaching was good or better in 77 per cent of lessons. In Key Stage 1 it was very good in 27 per cent and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. In Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was very good or better in 25 per cent of lessons. Only one lesson seen was unsatisfactory.

31. Teaching of English, mathematics and science is good overall in both key stages and this is helping to raise standards in these important subjects. Teachers understand the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and as a result they teach them effectively. However, some do not always ensure that pupils use their spelling skills accurately in other subjects. Teachers question pupils closely to assess or deepen their understanding. The quality of questioning was a strong feature of many lessons seen during the inspection. For example, a pupil in a mathematics lesson in Year 2 was challenged to work out the perimeter of a rectangle when given the measurements of adjacent sides. This good quality questioning promotes effective learning. However, in some classes, the questions in mental arithmetic sessions are asked at too slow a pace.

32. Teachers' explanations are of a high quality. In a geography lesson where pupils were studying the features of rivers, the teacher developed the pupils understanding when he likened tributaries to side roads joining a main highway. This resulted in good learning where pupils used terms like 'tributary' and 'source' correctly and showed a good understanding of the physical features of rivers.

33. There are high expectations in many lessons throughout both key stages with strong emphasis on the correct use of technical language. A teacher in Year 6 used his singing voice to demonstrate very effectively the musical terms 'dynamic' and 'tempo' thereby making the difference very clear to the pupils. Throughout the lesson he insisted on pupils using the correct musical vocabulary when evaluating their compositions.

34. In many classrooms, the pupils benefit from well displayed information that guides their work in spelling, writing and number. The reception class has key words and numbers on prominent display and the adults draw children's attention to them. A similar display of musical terms in the music room supports pupils' learning.

35. Good use of resources in many lessons, notably in the Foundation Stage, English, mathematics, science, geography, music and design and technology helps to stimulate pupils' interest and to focus their attention on key learning points.

36. The quality of teaching in information and communication technology (ICT) has improved significantly since the previous inspection when it was found to be unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and variable in Key Stage 2. This is not now the case. During the week of the inspection, teaching was good overall. Teachers make very good use of the plenary sessions to evaluate the progress pupils' have made towards achieving the objectives of the lesson. In religious education the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers use discussion well to develop listening and speaking skills but lessons in Key Stage 1 only last for half an hour and this is not long enough for pupils to respond at length in writing.

37. The teaching of geography, design and technology and physical education is better than it was at the time of the last inspection and is now good. In geography teachers create worthwhile opportunities for pupils to engage in enquiry-based learning and develop and consolidate new skills acquired during literacy lessons. In design and technology there is a significant improvement in pupils' design and evaluation skills. The quality of teaching in history is satisfactory overall. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the teaching of art and design. Whilst the quality of teaching in music is good overall, the expertise of some of the staff is not as high as it is in other subjects.

38. Teachers' planning has improved since the last inspection. There is a consistency across the school which has a very positive impact on teaching and learning. Daily plans are detailed and identify specific skills to be taught. In general, teachers provide work which matches pupils' learning needs. This is true for the full range of attainments. For example, pupils in Year 1 were challenged in a design and technology lesson when creating models of houses. They examined the teacher's model, identified features, experimented with ways of making hinges and were encouraged to use the correct technical vocabulary.

39. Throughout the school teachers use a good range of teaching methods and classroom organisation to maximise the learning opportunities. They include opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class as well as to work individually or in small groups. The school's practice of grouping pupils in both key stages by attainment in English, mathematics and science helps teachers to focus on specific levels of skills and is resulting in good progress and the raising of standards in these subjects. However, in mathematics there are large numbers of pupils in the classes containing the less able in Key Stage 1. This is very demanding for the teaching staff and the work lacks challenge for some of the pupils.

40. The very good relationships that teachers establish with their pupils leads to lessons in which pupils behave well and enjoy learning. Pupils clearly like their teachers and support assistants and want to please them. Combining this with good subject and specialist knowledge and a high level of skill in such techniques as questioning and explaining, it is clear why teaching is now having such a positive impact on standards.

41. Teachers are making good use of the information they receive from assessments in English. In this subject the tracking of pupil progress is very detailed and effective in raising standards. However, in mathematics and science assessment evidence is not being analysed to the same extent in order to find out what needs to be done to improve standards. Most teachers mark work conscientiously and in the best practice pupils are given precise instructions on how to improve their work.

42. Homework is a regular feature throughout the school. It provides appropriate opportunities for parents to participate in their children's learning.

43. The work of the support staff is good. They play a vital role in managing the pupils and guiding them in activities. All have good relationships with the pupils and strong partnerships with the teachers thereby enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

44. The quality of teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is very good in the Nursery, generally good in Key Stage 1 and sound overall at Key Stage 2 with some that is good. In the Nursery the teacher chooses tasks which help to develop the pupils' language effectively, such as the good choice of texts which repeat words and help them to acquire the language of colour and knowledge of animal words. The carefully selected practical activities help pupils to work together and assimilate language from one another, thus further developing their understanding of English. Very good use is made of the bi-lingual assistant to interpret what is said into the children's own language in this initial stage so that the children can understand the instructions given in English. They are therefore becoming familiar with both languages.

45. The influence of the well organised co-ordinator for English as an additional language contributes to the generally good progress made in Key Stage 1, particularly in Year 2. Throughout the school pupils with English as an additional language are encouraged continuously and they are praised for trying. As a result, their self-esteem is enhanced and they gain in confidence. When seated in a group with the pupils, the teachers do not always ensure that pupils are seated correctly and consequently the pupils are looking at words on the teacher's demonstration white board from a side angle. On occasions the time that the pupils have to work with the English as an additional language support during a lesson is insufficient and the task which has been given to them cannot be completed. Not enough use is being made of practical objects to link language to meaning. For example, in an imaginative and challenging Year 1 lesson the class teacher and the support teacher modelled a verbal description about their bedrooms. The pupils then emulated this in paired conversations. However, the teachers did not make any use of dolls' furniture in their own example to link what they said to help those with little English understanding.

46. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. All teachers have an appropriate understanding of the curriculum needs for pupils who have individual difficulties especially with English. They take care to plan activities which take account of the pupils' capabilities. This has a significant impact on pupils' learning because it means that they are able to make good progress. The newly appointed special needs co-ordinator provides very good assessment advice where needed. Learning support assistants are very well briefed. Individual education plans are in place and are of good quality.

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

47. The quality and range of the curriculum are both good. The curriculum is broad and relevant to the needs of pupils. It is effective in promoting pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. The curriculum covers the full range of National Curriculum subjects and religious education.
48. The school has successfully tackled shortcomings in planning identified in the previous report, and the curriculum now builds progressively through the school. There are schemes of work and curriculum maps to guide teachers' planning in all subjects and good use is made of Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance to support planning. Good progress has been made in the provision for information and communication technology. Pupils now have lessons in the new computer suites and cover all aspects of the subject.
49. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good. It is planned appropriately to cover the recommended six areas of learning and provides a successful basis for transition to the National Curriculum. Aspects of the literacy and numeracy hours are introduced gradually and effectively as the children's concentration lengthens.
50. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies with the care needed to meet pupils' needs and standards in both these areas are showing improvement. In other subjects good account has been taken of the latest national guidance to ensure that pupils' skills are being systematically developed as they move through the school. However, religious education lessons in Key Stage 1 only last for half an hour and this is not long enough for pupils to respond at length or in depth in writing.
51. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The quality of specialist support, pupils' individual educational plans and the monitoring by the co-ordinator are good and links with outside agencies and parents are effective. Requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are met. The school has developed a good balance between the level of support in classrooms and withdrawal from classes of pupils for the specific needs identified on their plans. They have equality of access to all subjects of the curriculum and class teachers and support staff are well aware of pupils' needs.
52. Pupils who have English as an additional language are well integrated into the classes and occasionally withdrawn for individual or group support where their specific needs are best met in this way. They follow the same curriculum as other pupils and are supported by bi-lingual assistants or additional teachers. Lessons focus well on both subject language and subject content and there is sound provision overall for the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills.
53. There is an effective and well-planned programme for the pupils' personal, social and health education. The science curriculum underpins the work on healthy living and appropriate attention is given to sex education and drugs awareness.
54. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities that interest pupils and help raise standards supplements pupils' learning experiences. These opportunities include sports clubs, such as football, basketball, cricket, and netball. In an effort to improve pupils learning a summer school is held. Year 5 pupils are given the opportunity to attend a residential camping experience at Astly Burf, while Year 6 have a prolonged stay at Kingswood where they follow an outward bound course. All pupils are encouraged to attend these courses. Pupils also go on educational visits to complement their work in school. For example, during the inspection pupils in Year 6 were making preparations for visiting a river as part of a geographical study.

55. Links with the community are satisfactory overall. Visitors to the school help to enhance the curriculum. For example, the school nurse comes into school on a regular basis, selected talks and demonstrations take place and there is a regular visit by the 'Animal Man' to the nursery. Assemblies are taken by leaders from the local religious centres as well as other contributors. The school takes part in local music festivals. It is part of the 'Dudley Action Zone' and benefits from this organisation. Through a business partnership, the school has been provided with calculators and laptop computers.

56. The school has good links with local primary schools. However, liaison with the main feeder high schools is not effective. Pupils visit the high schools prior to transfer and a member of staff from the receiving school visits the primary school. However, there do not appear to be any other links between them. Closer links with the high schools has the potential to make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning.

57. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This finding is similar to that of the previous inspection.

58. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Religious education gives pupils an insight into the values and beliefs of others through studies about major religions such as Christianity and Islam in Key Stage 1 with the addition of Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism in Key Stage 2. Pupils also consider general spiritual concepts. For example, in Year 6 pupils consider ideas such as spirit, love, imagination, hope and faith. Assemblies fulfil legal requirements. They are planned and organised on a phase or year group basis with themes in mind to promote a sense of community, within a moral framework, which acknowledges values common to all beliefs. For example, the current theme for Key Stage 2, during the inspection, was 'Caring for Others' and 'Trying to Help'. Acts of collective worship usually include short periods of reflection.

59. Provision for moral education is good. Pupils in the nursery quickly understand what is acceptable behaviour. Older children learn to understand the difference between right and wrong. There is a well understood approach to behaviour management. Class rules are negotiated and effective incentive schemes are in place. For example, success is rewarded in assembly with certificates for individual pupils. The school promotes environmental awareness strongly and in a previous year gained a Community Pride Award from the local authority. A mini-enterprise initiative by Year 6 pupils raised money to provide benches for a 'Quiet Area' in the grounds.

60. Provision for social education is good. This confirms the views of parents who feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Residential visits, such as that by Year 6 pupils to Kingswood Centre, promote individual and team-building skills. A Summer School for Years 4 and 5 pupils involves the playing of team games and other social activities. Pupils' awareness of those less fortunate than themselves is promoted through fund-raising, such as in support of the Mayor's Charity or to help build primary schools in Namibia. There is an appropriate programme of personal, social and health education in place. Throughout the school pupils are encouraged to undertake helpful tasks within the classroom and sometimes to assist with the smooth running of the school. In some lessons they are expected to work with a partner or as part of a group. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities includes clubs for homework, sports and art activities. There are opportunities to enjoy taking part in public performances such as the Leavers' Concert. Very good relationships are a strong feature of the school.

61. The provision for cultural education is good. Visits and visitors contribute substantially to pupils' knowledge of British cultural heritage. Bi-lingual support and texts in home languages give appropriate recognition of the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and add to the richness and diversity of cultures encountered by all children. Art and music contribute to pupils' cultural education in a variety of ways. For example, Year 6 pupils were introduced to the work of Andy Warhol as part of one art and design lesson and Yoruba designs provided the stimulus for pattern work using batik techniques in another. The works of famous composers are used in assemblies to create an atmosphere of quiet, for example, pupils listen to Elgar's 'Nimrod' on entering and leaving the hall. Pupils in Year 3 used 'Carnival of the Animals' as a basis for a dance routine presented to the rest of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

62. The school has very good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. Pupils' personal development is well supported and monitored effectively. The school is a happy and caring community in which to work. This supportive ethos is underpinned by the promotion of good behaviour and self-discipline in pupils. Parents responding to the questionnaire indicated that they were happy with the levels of support their children receive. The findings of this inspection are similar to that of the previous report, with a very caring community being in place.

63. As at the time of the last inspection, there are very good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance. The school works hard to achieve an improvement in attendance. Registration procedures are appropriate and there are rewards in the form of certificates presented at assemblies for high attendance. The school is rigorous in following up reasons for non-attendance. The deputy headteacher liaises closely with the education welfare officer on absence, particularly for pupils below 90% attendance, and appropriate action is taken. Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of good attendance and the effect that poor attendance has on attainment and progress.

64. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' behaviour are very good. The clear behaviour policy is known to all including parents, and is consistently and effectively applied by all staff. Rewards have a major part to play in pupils' development with well-structured systems for pupils to receive table points, stickers and certificates. This raises pupils' self-esteem and is very much a part of the school's behaviour management. The positive use of the 'report card' to encourage good behaviour was seen on several occasions to have the desired effect. Parents are kept well informed about sanctions to be applied early in the process through a series of letters home. The midday supervisors, who have a key part to play in the management of pupils' behaviour, have a very effective card system, where the red card is a final warning. This entails a visit to the deputy headteacher and a letter home. The school rarely excludes pupils, but last year two pupils had to be excluded as a last resort. The procedures for dealing with exclusions are very effective and well documented.

65. The school provides a safe environment and issues of health and safety are well addressed. Appropriate policies are in place and adults display a good general regard for all aspects of children's safety. The site manager is conscientious in his duties, ensures that the school is kept clean and responds quickly to any hazards. The support staff, including classroom assistants, special needs support and bilingual staff (some of whom are funded by the Education Action Zone and Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant), all give very good support in class and around the school. They ensure that there is someone available to comfort and care for any children needing re-assurance. Effective arrangements are made for the provision, administration and recording of first aid. The headteacher is the designated person for health and safety and child protection. Teachers and staff new to the school are appropriately inducted into the school's arrangements early in their work at the school. The child protection arrangements meet the guidelines of the local authority's 'Area Child Protection Committee'.

66. Procedures for supporting pupils' personal and social development are good. Issues, such as bullying, racism and sexism are dealt with effectively during the weekly personal social and health education programme. This also helps children to understand about caring, sharing and the needs of others. Feelings are discussed, and several sessions were observed which reinforced the idea that relationships are very important. Health education and sex education are taught sensitively.

67. Personal progress is monitored well. Each year, the pupils carry out a self-evaluation exercise, and all are involved in their own target setting with targets put up in the classrooms. The pupils have opportunities for study support and there are various effective monitoring systems in the school which are provided through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) or the special needs co-ordinator.

68. The previous inspection report highlighted the fact that the quality and rigour of assessment practices in the school were weak and inconsistent. Since then satisfactory progress has been made in this aspect. There are now good procedures in place for monitoring the achievements of pupils and guidance for the practice of these are outlined in a well-constructed policy document. The information gained about pupils' achievements through baseline assessment in their first year at school is used well to help plan to meet their needs. It is used also to predict the attainment levels of each year group but this is made extremely difficult as the school's population is constantly changing. In the rest of the school the best-developed practice is in English where the tracking of pupils' progress is very detailed and effective in raising standards. However, in mathematics and science assessment evidence is not being analysed to the same extent in order to find out what needs to be done to improve standards.

69. There is good identification of the learning objectives in lesson plans and in teaching so pupils have opportunities to evaluate their performance. Teachers use the plenary sessions well to gauge pupils' achievements. Comparisons of pieces of pupils' work thought to be at similar levels are made to ensure there is agreement about grades. Some useful portfolios of exemplars of graded work have been established for staff reference.

70. Good arrangements are made to track the progress of pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs. Targets are set for individuals for listening, speaking, reading and writing and these are assessed at regular intervals. Good records are kept of pupils' progress and a new system is being maintained throughout the school to ensure this is kept in a consistent way.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

71. The school's partnership with parents makes a good contribution to the education their children receive. An overwhelming majority of those responding to the questionnaire said they would feel comfortable in approaching the school with questions or a problem and that the school is welcoming and works well with parents. A small number of parents felt that the amount of homework their children are given is insufficient. The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views and disagrees with their adverse views. The amount of homework is similar to other schools and is given regularly. The findings of this inspection are similar to that of the previous one.

72. Information sent out to parents is satisfactory overall. Parents of pupils entering the Nursery receive a handbook, have their own home/school agreement, and receive home visits from the bi-lingual home/school liaison teacher and assistants. This is in addition to the 'playtalk' project funded by the Education Action Zone for the pre-nursery children, which ensures that children, and their parents, have a pre-nursery 'boost' in language and social skills. The nursery provides very good links with its parents. Parents of children with special educational needs receive good information about their children's progress and parents generally receive good information about events. They receive support from bilingual teachers or teaching assistants if this is necessary. All teachers find time to attend to parents' needs and are available at the end of the school day. At the three parents' evenings each year the targets set for pupils are discussed. Information about the curriculum is sent home on a half-termly basis for each year group. This contains advice on how to help with homework. However, pupils' reports, whilst satisfactory overall, do not give enough information on areas for improvement, neither are they sufficiently clear in stating the progress made by pupils in each subject. All relevant information is included in the school's documentation sent out to parents. The omissions from the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents noted at the time of the previous inspection have been remedied.

73. Parents make a good contribution to their children's education by their involvement in the life of the school. They are encouraged to get involved with their child's homework and are invited into school to attend performances or to come to curriculum events. Parents are involved in helping with swimming supervision throughout the school. In addition, some help in the nursery and in Key Stage 1. Some of them also join the Parents' and Teachers' Association, which organises events throughout the year, including Christmas and Summer Fairs. The school runs parenting courses and organises classes particularly for Asian parents. Parents have benefited significantly from these and some have gone on to become classroom assistants. The school is especially active in organising the induction of Asian and refugee families. The impact of parents on the work of the school has improved due to the work of the home liaison worker who makes home visits where necessary.

74. Links with the community are satisfactory overall. The bi-lingual home-school worker liaises very effectively with parents and is well acquainted with many of the families. She conscientiously follows through any issues parents might have and is available for translation purposes.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

75. The headteacher provides good leadership, promoting and sustaining a clear sense of direction for the work of the school. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. The previous inspection reported that the management structure had not been successful in securing an effective overview of the curriculum. This is not now the case. Four phase co-ordinators along with the support services co-ordinator are fully involved in monitoring curriculum provision. As a result clear and realistic targets are being set in English and effective systems are in place for monitoring the school's work.

76. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues raised in the last inspection report. Staffing structures have been altered and strengthened and monitoring and evaluation roles are now explicit. There are no longer inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. During the week of the inspection teaching was satisfactory or better in almost all lessons seen. The school has put in place good systems for assessing pupils' progress and uses the information well in English. As a result, standards have risen significantly recently in this subject. In mathematics and science the information is not used to the same extent to improve standards. The school now meets National Curriculum requirements with regard to information and communication technology.

77. The governors provide committed support for the school. Through its committee structure the Governing Body meets most of its statutory responsibilities and keeps an eye on school developments. However, end of year reports to parents do not give a clear picture of their child's progress in every subject.

78. The procedures for monitoring the implementation of policies and the quality of provision are good. A particularly significant improvement since the previous inspection is the development of the support and monitoring role of subject and phase co-ordinators. There is now a successful programme of monitoring of teaching. They scrutinise pupils' work and check teachers' planning to ensure that agreed teaching and learning policies are being implemented. This support has improved teaching strategies and enabled all teachers to develop their own skills and confidence. Initiatives, including the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively incorporated into the School Improvement Plan.

79. The School Improvement Plan is appropriately focused on the raising of standards. It is based upon a thorough review of the strengths and weaknesses in performance. All staff and governors have the opportunity to contribute ideas. The structure of the School Improvement Plan includes effective systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the progress made towards targets. For example, subject and phase co-ordinators carry out an annual review of their aspects and identify key priorities for the year ahead related to their responsibilities. The appropriate priorities in the plan are linked to specific targets that have deadlines for completion and criteria by which to measure success. The allocation of responsibilities for taking the necessary action is clear.

80. Financial planning and management are good. The headteacher, secretary and governors conscientiously follow clear financial procedures. The governors are aware of the need to obtain value for money. They follow agreed procedures to ensure they get the best deal for the school. All the recommendations made in last audit report have been put into practice. Out of a budget of £1.35 million, the school has a very low carry forward amount of £5,000.

81. Additional grants are used well. The school receives additional funding from the Dudley Action Zone. Projects to improve the quality of education are successful. For example, the establishment of a before-school computer club enables pupils to use and develop their information and communication technology skills. Additional playground staff support pupils in learning and then in playing new playground games. The 'play-talk' project is successful and a classroom assistant has been appointed to monitor attendance. A learning mentor has been appointed to work with specific pupils to develop their self-esteem but it is too early to form a judgement about the effectiveness of this provision.

82. The money allocated to the school to support pupils with special educational needs is appropriately used. The effectiveness of this provision is reflected in the good progress made by the pupils not only in academic work but also in personal and social development. The newly appointed support staff co-ordinator manages and organises the provision very effectively.

83. The school has a sufficient number of teachers to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. However, like many other schools, it has experienced difficulty in attracting suitably qualified and experienced staff to vacant posts. There is a satisfactory match of teacher specialism to the responsibilities they hold in the school and all were trained in the primary phase. Sixteen members of staff (approximately half) left during the last two years for reasons of retirement, promotion or maternity.

84. The headteacher has implemented a structured programme of personal evaluation linked to the identified needs of the school and of individual teachers. The evaluation process has been used well in providing for staff development. The school uses the support and guidance of the Local Education Authority in an effective way. The experiences and qualifications of all staff are used effectively to ensure complete curriculum coverage using the skills of individuals to their best advantage.

85. The school has good systems in place to induct new staff. The deputy headteacher is the school's mentor and phase co-ordinators also provide very effective support. Newly qualified staff are given opportunities to visit classes and observe good teaching as well as attending courses arranged by the Local Education Authority.

86. Education support teachers are very well deployed and make a valuable contribution to classroom learning, particularly when working with pupils who have special educational needs or English as an additional language. They are effective and have been fully trained and are well briefed by teaching staff.

87. The co-ordinator for English as an additional language has been in post for less than a year. During that time she has worked hard to organise resources and the support arrangements throughout the school. The mission statement for work with English as an additional language pupils is very good and there is other very helpful and supportive documentation, such as the 'Achieving excellence through self-assessment and observation' document. The action plan focuses on needs for different parts of the school and is the result of careful analysis. Teachers' own target planning and review of the previous term are very good. A range of new strategies has been brought in to try and improve the progress of English as an additional language pupils still further. Resources are very well organised and include a range of cassettes, puzzles, multi-cultural resources and learning games, although not enough evidence was observed of these being used throughout the school. A large emphasis was being placed on worksheets. Timetables for support are well organised to ensure a fair degree of support and where this is most needed. This support is focused appropriately on literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology. Staffing levels for the large number of pupils with English as an additional language are inadequate and the extra provision is having to be spread too thinly.

88. Whilst the accommodation is satisfactory overall, there are some significant weaknesses which cause difficulties for the school. The headteacher and governors have worked well with parents to improve the fabric of the building and to enhance the accommodation. Many parts of the grounds and buildings now provide effectively for the education of the whole child. The site supervisor has played a key role in helping to improve the school buildings, by decorating and completing many small jobs around the school. Since the previous inspection the new playground has been completed and a programme of internal decoration continued each year. The library has been further developed and a large information and communication technology suite as well as two smaller ones have been provided which are helping to raise standards in that subject. The reception classes and the nursery are widely separated which makes it very difficult to work closely together, to share resources and to facilitate good practice of the early years curriculum. Six classes are accommodated in old relocatable classrooms which do not have sinks, a water supply or indoor toilets for pupils to use. The heaters in some of these buildings do not have guards over them to prevent pupils from accidentally burning themselves. During the week of the inspection the main hall in the juniors could not be used for physical education because the floor was unsafe. The swimming pool provides pupils with exceptional opportunities in swimming. This is a strength of the school and the pool is very well used by many outside agencies as well as the school.

89. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are good overall. They are good for the Foundation Stage children, English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, art and design, geography, and physical education. They are satisfactory in history, music and religious education. The work recently completed on the school grounds has provided opportunities for pupils to use them to study science and art and design. The school makes good use of visits to interest pupils and residential visits are arranged for Year 5 and Year 6 which further enhance provision in physical education and geography fieldwork.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

90. In order to improve the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. **ensure that the information gathered from assessments in mathematics and science is used to raise standards by :**
 - making use of the good practice that already exists in English;
 - providing training for all staff in the best ways of using assessment information;
 - monitoring the implementation of a whole-school approach;
[Paragraphs 7, 10, 41, 68, 76, 131 and 143 in the main report]

2. **improve pupils' understanding and use of mathematical and scientific technical language in Key Stage 2;**
[Paragraphs 10, 13, 125, 130, 136 and 138 in the main report]

3. **continue to work with the Local Education Authority for improvements to be made to the accommodation, especially for those pupils taught in the relocatable classrooms;**
[Paragraphs 88 in the main report]

4. **Other weaknesses that should be considered by the school:**
 - the pace at which pupils' mental arithmetic skills are taught.
[Paragraphs 31 and 128 in the main report]

 - pupils' confidence in spelling common words.
[Paragraphs 7, 31, 118, 139 and 187 in the main report]

 - the quality of information contained in children's reports about their progress.
[Paragraphs 72 and 77 in the main report]

 - the length of religious education lessons in Key Stage 1.
[Paragraphs 7, 36, 50 and 188 in the main report]

 - links with the main high schools to which children transfer at age eleven.
[Paragraph 56 in the main report]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	125
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	30	65	27	1	0	0
Percentage	1.6	24.2	51.6	21.8	0.8	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y R–Y 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	61	487
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		272

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR–Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	38	126

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	331

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	52
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	92

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year.	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	26	33	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	21	26
	Girls	28	29	33
	Total	45	50	59
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (70)	85 (70)	100 (84)
	National	84(83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	26	23
	Girls	29	33	28
	Total	48	59	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (72)	100 (86)	86 (77)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	43	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	21	22
	Girls	30	17	27
	Total	49	38	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (49)	51 (38)	6 (50)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	21	17
	Girls	20	21	18
	Total	38	42	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (43)	56 (38)	47 (49)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	204
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	191
Any other minority ethnic group	11

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	1	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	27.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.5
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	300

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140
Number of pupils per FTE adult	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	15.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	13.8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

Financial information

Financial year	00 - 01
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	£
Total income	1,359,773
Total expenditure	1,363,756
Expenditure per pupil	2,527.81
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,370
Balance carried forward to next year	5,387

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	400
Number of questionnaires returned	93

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	29	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	37	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	38	13	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	45	9	4	2
The teaching is good.	58	39	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	50	5	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	53	40	4	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	27	3	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	43	45	7	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	53	38	4	1	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	37	4	2	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	32	4	3	10

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

91. Children are usually admitted to nursery on a part-time basis from the age of three. Entry into the reception class is at two points in the school year prior to the child's fifth birthday.

92. In nursery the specialist teacher leads a team of six nursery nurses. There are bi-lingual staff to support ethnic minority children. In addition, extra staff are provided by the Local Education Authority so that up to six children with particular special needs may attend the nursery and receive 'enhanced provision'. At the time of the inspection reception children were being taught in the main infant building in one class group by a teacher and two additional support assistants. The recommended Foundation Stage curriculum based on the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning has been introduced since the previous inspection and is in place in both the nursery and reception classes.

93. On entry to nursery the attainment of many children is well below the expectation for the age group. The majority of children, including those with special needs, and with English as an additional language, make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. Nevertheless, the attainment levels of many at the end of the reception year are below those found nationally in the key areas of language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. These judgements are supported by evidence taken from assessments carried out on all children at the beginning and end of both nursery and reception.

Personal, social and emotional development

94. At the time of the inspection almost all children in both nursery and reception had settled well into the established routines of the school. In nursery even the youngest children showed satisfactory skills of independence in washing their hands, putting on aprons to play with the water and in choosing what they would like to do. They are beginning to understand the need to share toys, and most listen willingly to adults and other children. The majority of the older children were able to maintain concentration when recording work in their work-books. In the reception class children are attentive, enthusiastic about learning and many are beginning to get involved in simple discussions, such as the type of clothing which is suitable for a baby or an older child. When working in groups many demonstrate good levels of independence and can stay on task without the need for direct supervision. In all the lessons observed in the nursery and reception behaviour was good. Children respond well to the high expectations of the adults who work with them. Teachers' planning indicates that the requirement to teach religious education in reception is fulfilled. Pictorial evidence indicates that children in the Foundation Stage are introduced to the idea that people with different cultures and beliefs should be treated with respect. For example, they re-create a Christian wedding, are told about a Muslim wedding and celebrate Diwali and the Chinese New Year, as part of planned activities in their knowledge and understanding of the world.

95. A strong emphasis is placed on personal, social and emotional development. Many children enter Nursery with poor social skills. By the end of the Reception Year most achieve the expected learning goals for the age group. This represents very good progress which relates directly to the high quality of the teaching. Progress of the pupils who have been placed in the nursery by the Local Education Authority for 'enhanced' provision also make very good progress in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy.

96. By the end of the reception year many children do not attain all the early learning goals in this area of learning. For example, in the current Year 1 a significant number of pupils still have under-developed language skills, such as limited vocabulary and a lack of confidence when talking to those not known to them. Consequently, many are not yet able to fulfil the requirements of language for thinking, such as the clarification of ideas and events. However, the more able can speak clearly and use their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple regular words.

97. Many children enter Nursery with poor language proficiency. Good provision is made to develop their skills in language and literacy. Speech therapy is provided extensively for those in need. Much emphasis is placed on encouraging children to talk. For example, adults join in with play activities to promote verbal responses to their questions and good opportunities are provided for children to play imaginatively in the pretend kitchen. Children are expected to listen to what activities are available at the beginning of the nursery session and to talk about what they have done at the end. Stories and rhymes are an integral part of each day. There are good opportunities to share books, recognise names in print and to make marks to represent writing as part of their play. These experiences are further developed in the reception class. Children are expected to contribute to conversations in both small and large groups. They learn to associate the visual symbols of letters with their sounds and to form them correctly. By the end of the reception year most have a bank of words they can recognise in print. The higher attainers are able to read the early books of the school's reading scheme. They write their own names and some simple words unaided. Information and communication technology is used effectively in reception to consolidate and promote literacy.

98. The quality of teaching is good. The opportunity to develop language is included in most activities. Teachers explain tasks carefully and clearly. Those whose first language is not English, including refugee children, are well supported. For example, real objects are provided to give visual assistance and adult helpers translate if necessary. Similarly, the six children who have been identified for enhanced learning are very well provided for and often undertake the same activities as the other children with additional individual support. During the inspection a group of younger children were enthralled to listen to the story 'Brown Bear, Brown Bear, Where Are You?' read in English and translated into Urdu. The good illustrations had an appeal, which transcended all learning and language difficulties. In reception, handwriting is very well taught using a multi-sensory approach.

Mathematical development.

99. Attainment levels in mathematics by the end of the reception year are below the expectations for the age group. Number skills are more highly developed than those for shape, space and measures where a significant number of children find difficulty with the mathematical language and concepts involved.

100. Most nursery children enjoy counting out loud and a smaller number of older higher attaining children can count reliably and use one-to-one, to count five objects. They learn how to sort and match items for size and colours and use the terms big and small. They have some understanding of comparisons of weight and volume. In both classes children learn counting songs and rhymes. In reception they match numbers to a larger number of objects and learn the vocabulary of ordinal numbers such as first and second. During the inspection a small number of higher attaining children were able to sort and record sets of five independently. As a class they applied their knowledge of numbers to construct a block graph of their favourite fruit. Computer software is used effectively to re-enforce number concepts. Most are able to name simple shapes they use as part of their artwork. Homework plays an important part in emphasising children's understanding and interpretation of number symbols.

101. The quality of teaching is good. Mathematical language is stressed. Good opportunities are provided for children to learn through play and other practical experiences.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

102. Children in the nursery are very interested in the world around them. They enjoy the planned activities which involve going out into the playground to look at patterns in the brickwork of their building and to find natural items, such as leaves and feathers. Work from the previous school year included very careful observational drawings of the diggers at work in the construction of a new extension. In an activity in the water play area their conversation was enhanced by a fascination with the way the ice-cubes became smaller as they melted and slipped through their hands. They expressed delight when pressure was released causing water to squirt out from a burst balloon.

103. The quality of teaching is good. Nursery and reception teachers provide good opportunities for children to observe why things change and how things work. For example, nursery children observed the changes involved in making bread. They observed how the toaster worked and discussed the changes which took place when slices of bread were made into toast. Similarly, in reception a group of children were engrossed in using very large construction equipment to build a model, taking a great pride in explaining how it worked to the rest of the class. In both nursery and reception, visits and visitors contribute positively to children's learning experiences. Nevertheless, despite the good provision, attainment levels overall are below those found in many schools by the end of the reception year, usually reflecting their levels of English language capability.

Physical development.

104. On entry to nursery many children have poor physical skills. By the end of reception they are broadly in line with the expectations for the age group, which represents very good progress for many children and reflects the good quality of teaching. A well-equipped outdoor area is used for activities, such as climbing, jumping and balancing allowing them to move with increasing confidence and control. In both nursery and reception most children join in moving to music. A few reception children showed considerable imagination and an ability to carry out their ideas in recreating the actions of 'Hickory Dickory Dock'. In both nursery and reception children, including the enhanced learners, enjoy the vigorous physical exercise, which these lessons require. Young children benefit from the school's swimming pool, through pre-school opportunities and the reception class have timetabled lessons towards the end of the year.

105. The quality of teaching is good. Many activities within both classrooms help children to develop manipulative skills in the use of a wide range of tools and equipment in safety. These include brushes, rollers, scissors, cutters, apparatus for threading and the computer mouse. Reception children benefit from the use of small apparatus at break time, for example, for throwing, catching and rolling.

Creative development.

106. Children in nursery and reception use materials such as dough and construction toys to make models. They draw, print and paint. Collaborative pictures, such as the 'Sunflower' in the nursery and the 'Speckled Frogs' in reception, reflect and promote children's learning and contribute positively to the attractive visual environment. Children are encouraged to express and communicate ideas as part of their play, for example, in the dry sand tray in nursery or in the pretend garden in reception. In both classes they enjoy experimenting with sounds made by musical instruments and in reception information and communication technology is well used as a teaching aid for sound discrimination.

107. By the end of the Foundation Stage attainment in this area is broadly in line with that found in most schools, which represents good progress. The quality of teaching is good.

108. Overall the quality of provision is good. It is very good for the enhanced learners whose needs are very well met by frequent one to one attention from an adult. A particular strength is the good quality of teaching, which represents an improvement since the previous inspection. It encompasses identification of the needs of individual children, careful planning, very clearly identified learning objectives and a very good awareness of how young children learn. Children's progress is carefully monitored.

109. A successful 'Play talk' scheme for pre-school children, which builds on the work of the Mothers' and Toddlers' group, and operates in the Nursery building as part of the Education Action Zone initiative, has helped to raise standards of attainment of the participants significantly. The enhanced provision for the six children with special needs owes much to the inclusive nature of the arrangements. A specially designated teacher for home-school liaison ensures that there are good links between the two. Initiatives include a home visit prior to children starting nursery, a nursery and home-school agreement, and an atmosphere which feels welcoming to parents at the start of each session. There is scope to update the nursery handbook and give consideration to more written translation of the good information which is available. Transition arrangements between nursery and reception are appropriate for the children whose time spent in the pre-school nursery groups prepares them well for entry to reception. Curriculum talks for parents by the reception teacher assist them in understanding the expectations in literacy and numeracy and the targets set for individual children. Both the nursery and reception are housed in spacious accommodation and are well resourced. However, they are situated in separate parts of the building some distance away from one another and this does not make for optimum efficiency in the use of the resources available.

ENGLISH

110. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that the pupil's achievement in reading was well below the national average and just below average in writing. However, when compared to similar schools the school's results in reading were above average and in writing well above. These results are an improvement over the previous year and the findings of the last inspection. Inspection findings are that this improvement has been maintained. Currently, pupils are attaining broadly average standards in reading and writing. The majority of pupils are working hard to achieve the school's target by the end of the academic year.

111. By the time pupils reached the age of eleven in 2001, although the school's results were still below the national average, the pupils' attainment was well above average when compared to similar schools. The school achieved its best ever performance with almost one fifth of the pupils reaching the higher Level 5. This was an impressive improvement over the previous year. Inspection findings are that this improvement is being maintained. Again, the pupils are working hard to achieve the school's target by the end of the year. Standards in English have improved significantly since the previous inspection.

112. The improvement in the results at the age of seven and eleven can be explained by a significant improvement in the quality of teaching and the strong and effective emphasis on teaching English according to the National Literacy Strategy. In addition, the school has put into place many special initiatives of its own to help develop literacy for all groups of pupils.

113. Teachers work very hard to improve the English results of the very high number of pupils who begin their education with very low levels of English and the higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. There is also a high number of pupils who join the school after the age of seven who have not benefited from the good foundation in English that Wollescote pupils receive.

114. By the end of Year 2 most pupils listen attentively and follow instructions closely, though in one Year 2 lesson a few pupils tended to call out instead of putting their hands up. Pupils listen to teachers' instructions and this helps them to make a confident start to their activities. Teachers provide good opportunities for questioning, discussion and role-play and most pupils make good progress. In a Year 1 class, pupils enjoyed playing a game, passing a pebble round the circle. When pupils had the pebble it was their turn to speak. This ensured that everyone had an equal opportunity to contribute and all pupils were included in the lesson. Teachers make very good use of carpeted areas in classrooms to make it easier for pupils to listen attentively in lessons.

115. By the age of eleven the majority of pupils have improved their listening skills. For example, during whole school assemblies and the literacy hour most pupils listen attentively. Adults make a conscious effort to promote speaking and listening skills throughout the curriculum. Support staff work very effectively with small groups to support speaking and listening. However, few pupils use complex sentence structures, unless that is the focus of the lesson. They have to be frequently reminded to develop their idea more fully. A significant minority of pupils fail to listen to adults and consequently, also fail to improve their speech. When given frequent opportunities to speak, for example at the end of lessons when pupils sometimes read out completed work, some pupils demonstrate self-assurance, but for others there is a reluctance and a lack of confidence to speak out in front of others. For example, at the end of a Year 4 lesson pupils enjoyed listening to a play script written from a story by one of the groups. In a Year 5 lesson when pupils returned to the classroom from their special group activity the whole class listened attentively while the group read out the work they had completed. It is quite understandable that many pupils with English as a second language find it very difficult to comprehend technical language in subjects such as science and mathematics. The school is exploring ways to overcome the problem which is leading to a degree of under-achievement in these subjects. These judgements are similar to those made at the time of the last inspection.

116. Though reading standards have improved since the previous inspection, they are still well below the national average. However, inspection evidence indicates that by the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress in all aspects. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as a second language and this is having a positive effect on raising standards in reading. Guided reading is used effectively in Year 1 and Year 2 and there is a good match of texts to pupils' prior attainment and developing skills. Phonic skills, such as recognition and articulation of letter sounds, are developed effectively and this helps pupils tackle unfamiliar texts. Those pupils in Year 2 who are capable of higher attainment know the contents and index pages of books and what they are used for. The school tries hard to encourage parents to assist their children in learning to read by regular practice at home. Older brothers and sisters also help pupils with their reading.

117. Pupils continue to make good progress in reading in the juniors (Years 3-6) but standards are still below average. Higher attaining pupils in all year groups are confident readers. Pupils in Year 6 were familiar with many books by Roald Dahl and enjoyed reading books telling of the adventures of Harry Potter. The majority of pupils who were heard to read make good use of local libraries and this gives them an added interest in reading. Pupils are taught library skills from an early age. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning. Most pupils could describe how to use the library classification system and were able to locate books in the school library. This is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when it was found that most pupils at Key Stage 2 were unable to use the classification system to locate non-fiction books. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils are in line to reach national expectations in reading with higher attaining pupils in Year 6 exceeding the national standards for their age. However, there are a number of pupils who find reading quite difficult. The progress of pupils in reading is regularly assessed throughout the school. Teachers keep individual and group reading records. The use of graded reading schemes throughout the school is beneficial in ensuring good progression in pupils' skills. The school has spent a considerable sum of money on attractive textbooks for the literacy hour, and on books for the new school library. The range of fiction books throughout the school is good.

118. By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in writing is broadly in line with the standard expected for their age. Most pupils make at least satisfactory progress with many pupils making good progress from a very low base when they enter the school. Teachers plan activities that are interesting and well matched to pupils' needs so that most pupils work productively, although many work too slowly in their written work. Year 1 pupils can label a chart showing the life-cycle of the frog. In their history lesson they write about what is old and new. By the age of seven, most structure sentences properly, although they do not always punctuate them correctly. The school tries hard to encourage pupils to improve their spelling but many pupils struggle with spelling simple words and need extra help. The higher attaining pupils in Year 2 develop and extend their work well, choosing words for interest and effect. Most pupils' handwriting is legible and consistently formed.

119. Pupils' writing becomes more organised in Key Stage 2. Though pupils are now making good progress, standards overall are below average because pupils are just beginning to benefit from the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils are more confident in producing writing for a wide variety of purposes and audiences than they were at the time of the previous inspection. Using skills learned in their literacy lessons earlier in the week of the inspection the higher attaining pupils in Year 5 wrote a set of instructions to make a pizza. This was a very good lesson due to the excellent teaching and the pupils' own interest and hard work. By the age of eleven, the higher attaining pupils write with interest, developing and sustaining their ideas through the text. For example, they use 'Marwell House Mystery Writings' to write a newspaper report of a crime, analysing the text well to give what details they know of the character. Another Year 6 group use 'Boys' Tales of Childhood' by Roald Dahl to help study the differences between autobiography and biography. The homework task set for the pupils was to write a biography of a member of their own family. The pupils looked forward to this with excitement. The third group in Year 6 wrote an introduction to a story trying to use powerful words. They used a range of punctuation, such as commas and speech marks, in their writing. However, many of these pupils do not reach a level of attainment appropriate for their age. Most teachers provide some opportunities for different types of writing in subjects, such as history, geography, religious education and science.

120. Throughout both key stages the quality of teaching is good overall and it has improved significantly since the last inspection. During the inspection 90 per cent of the teaching observed was good or better. Teachers show good knowledge and understanding. They are technically competent to teach basic skills. Teachers plan very effectively, setting clear targets and objectives which pupils understand. Good use is made of time, support staff and other resources. Teachers and support staff work very well together. They assess pupils' work thoroughly and use assessments to help and encourage pupils to overcome difficulties. The teaching methods used by most teachers are effective. The management of pupils is good, given the fact that there is a significant minority of potentially disruptive pupils, especially in Year 5. Teachers manage these pupils very well.

121. As a result of good teaching, most pupils, including those with special educational needs and with English as a second language, acquire new knowledge and skills, develop their ideas and increase their understanding. Most pupils show interest in their work and sustain their concentration. They understand what they have to do and what they have to do to improve. These good attitudes are a significant factor in the pupils' achievement and learning.

122. The curriculum is well planned and organised. Schemes of work are based on the National Literacy Strategy and are planned to ensure the continuous progress of pupils. The leadership and management of English by the three co-ordinators is very good. Procedures for regular assessment and evaluation are in place. They provide valuable information on pupils' progress, which is used to identify pupils who will benefit from additional support. Resources are good and used well. The level of support

provided for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils who have English as their second language is good. However, there is a need to provide more concrete experiences for those older pupils who are just beginning to learn English as a second language. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology in English, for example, to draft and redraft pupils' writing. There is a shared commitment to further improvement in the subject.

MATHEMATICS

123. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in standards throughout the school. When the pupils enter the nursery, their attainment is very low but by the time they leave the school at eleven the majority have made good progress. This is a significant move forward and due mainly to the quality of planning, the good teaching and the setting arrangements in both key stages. In comparison with similar schools the standards in mathematics at the age of eleven are average.

124. At Key Stage 1, the attainment of pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests was very high in comparison with the national average with all pupils achieving at least the nationally expected level. This reflects a pattern of improving performance since the previous inspection. The scrutiny of work shows that pupils make good progress from a very low base; for example, many pupils who enter the school are new to the country and have no English. The school is also working with a large number of pupils identified as having special educational needs. When compared to similar schools, the school's results were in the top five per cent.

125. Although there has been some improvement in standards over the last two years in Key Stage 2, the attainment of pupils' in the 2001 National Curriculum tests was well below the national average. Pupils with good English language skills are performing at expected levels but pupils at an early stage of English language acquisition have problems in understanding the mathematical language used and the concepts introduced during lessons. This was demonstrated in a Year 6 middle set lesson on data handling. One group of pupils experienced a great deal of difficulty in understanding the work until the intervention of the classroom support teacher who is able to help them to understand the problem as she is able to speak the pupils' language.

126. Key Stage 1 pupils are steadily gaining in confidence with numbers. There is a wide range of ability. For example, by the end of Year 2 the more able pupils can tell the time correctly and have a secure understanding of place value to hundreds and beyond. They can estimate and measure accurately and solve problems involving capacity. The less able pupils can count to 20, add units and units and have knowledge of coins to £1. They can balance objects and know the meaning of heavy and light. However, a substantial number of pupils are still having problems sequencing numbers and need practical and repeated help. Pupils' books show the need for more practical work to consolidate straightforward ideas. Throughout Key Stage 1, mathematics is taught in sets and overall this arrangement is benefiting the pupils. However there is a need to evaluate this practice in relation to the less able pupils. The large set of pupils is demanding on the teaching staff and the work may lack challenge for some the pupils.

127. By the age of eleven, pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding is developing well. All mathematics lessons take place in planned sets and pupils have clear targets that are based on their current work and aimed at raising mathematical achievement; homework is set on a regular basis. By the end of the key stage the more able pupils are able to use all four operations to solve problems and they understand the relationships between percentages, decimals and fractions. The lower attaining group can multiply tens and units by units, use doubling and halving to work out problems and add and multiply

numbers by ten. Pupils are beginning to become more analytical when looking at questions and trying to overcome the language barrier when problem solving. There is a wide range of ability within the year groups and this can be illustrated by comparing the work of the more able Year 6 pupils who have a secure knowledge of probability and record their work as a fraction while the lower ability group are working on ordering simple fractions.

128. Progress in using and applying mathematics in problem solving and investigations is sound. In lessons, teachers expect pupils to explain how they find answers to mental problems and throughout the school pupils are given the opportunity to use their skills and understanding to solve mathematical problems. However, the teaching of mental arithmetic skills is in need of improvement. In a number of lessons observed the questions posed by the teachers are asked at too slow a pace and pupils are not being mentally challenged. In work on shape, space and measures, progress is good. By Year 2, pupils tell the time accurately to the quarter hour. Pupils in Year 4 can use a calendar and know how to find the perimeter of regular shapes. Year 6 pupils know the correct geometrical terms to define two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Pupils' data handling skills are developed through links to other subjects, particularly science.

129. Pupils benefit from good teaching and learn well in lessons so that they gain confidence and make more secure, over time, their knowledge and understanding of mathematics. One-third of all lessons seen were satisfactory while the other two-thirds were at least good. This is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers prepare thoroughly and organise their lessons well. They manage pupils very competently and this leads to good behaviour and a calm atmosphere in which pupils can concentrate and work hard. However, in a small number of lessons the pace of working could have been better if teachers had made clear to all pupils at the start of the task the time available for completing the assignment. Throughout the school good teaching from the support teachers and assistants makes a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding and progress.

130. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in Key Stage 1 and satisfactorily in Key Stage 2. The growing complexity of mathematical language presents a real barrier to the understanding of concepts for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Although these pupils do receive some valuable support from the teachers and learning support staff, not enough is yet being done to help these pupils to grasp the key mathematical ideas.

131. Throughout the school the marking of pupils' work provides them with good guidance and individual targets for pupils are used well to extend and challenge. The monitoring of teachers' planning and their teaching has been used to good effect to support improvements in mathematics. Lesson planning will however benefit from closer monitoring of how well teachers match tasks to the individual needs of pupils and the effectiveness of review sessions at the end of the lessons. A new assessment procedure is being implemented but it has not been in place long enough for it to have any effect on improving standards. The school intends to analyse the information carefully in order to improve tracking the progress of, and setting attainment targets for, individual pupils and whole year groups. Teachers make satisfactory use of information and communication technology in mathematics, for example, when collecting data.

132. The management of the subject is good. The current co-ordinator is relatively new, but after consultation with other staff, has already decided to implement a new assessment procedure throughout the school. He works in close partnership with the previous co-ordinator who teaches in a different key stage. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and has a sound grasp of standards. He is aware of the resources needed to support the delivery of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

133. In the teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001, the proportion of pupils attaining the national expectation was just below the national average. However, 13 per cent of pupils achieved the higher Level 3. This was a significant improvement on the previous year when no pupils attained the higher level. Inspection findings confirm that these standards are being maintained. When compared to similar schools standards are well above average. Pupils of all abilities, including those who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, continue to achieve well. This is due to the good standards of teaching and the appropriate emphasis placed on investigative science in teachers' planning. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in improving pupils' scientific understanding because pupils are now far more involved in undertaking their own scientific investigations.

134. The high number of pupils in the infants who speak English as an additional language benefit greatly from the support they receive in science lessons from staff funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG). The strategy adopted in allowing pupils to discuss their scientific ideas in their first language and then explain their thoughts in English is proving to be very successful. It ensures social inclusion for all pupils in science lessons, because pupils are then able to take a fuller part in class discussions. For example, during the inspection week in a Year 2 lesson one child did not have sufficient command of the English language to identify an object as being made out of wood. After discussing what he thought the object was made out of in his mother tongue the EMAG support teacher taught him the English word. He then confidently used the word 'wood' in a group discussion.

135. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 2 in National Curriculum tests in 2001 was well below average. It was below average when compared with similar schools. Even though standards are well below average there is evidence of improvement on the previous year's results with, for example, 8 per cent of pupils achieving Level 5, which is twice that attained in 2000. There is no significant difference between the results of boys and girls.

136. Inspection findings confirm that sharply focused teaching with pupils being taught in groups based on prior attainment in Year 6 will improve standards further this year. However, standards remain well below average by the end of Year 6. By the end of the juniors pupils have an appropriate knowledge of the topics they have covered but there is a high number of pupils who speak English as an additional language and who find it very hard sometimes to express their ideas clearly using the correct scientific terminology. In an interview with some pupils from Year 6 it was evident that they had a satisfactory understanding of much of the work they had undertaken but they needed a lot of prompting because they had difficulty in using scientific language, for example in explaining the difference between 'transparent' and 'translucent'.

137. By the end of Year 2, pupils investigate and classify objects made from different materials accurately and sort them into groups. They learn that they need exercise and a good diet to remain healthy. Pupils look at good and bad things to eat and make good use of their mathematical skills in using block graphs to record their favourite cereals. They make good progress in setting up tests for themselves with varying degrees of support from adults. Most pupils show a clear understanding that the results of tests are affected by the conditions under which they are carried out. They experiment with different sources of light and discover that shiny objects reflect light. Good use is made of information and communication technology skills in, for example, producing posters to show why electricity is dangerous. Pupils are given the opportunity to use their writing skills. For example, in describing the difference between a tree and a plant one child wrote, 'Plants have a stem, trees have bark.' Below average attainers need adult help support to complete practical work and record their results in pictures or on prepared worksheets.

138. By the time they leave the school, most eleven-year-olds can carry out investigations. For example, they plan and carry out successfully an experiment to identify which of four solutions is pure water. There is some inconsistency in writing up experiments in that there are few reasons given for why something has happened. In some cases pupils only write, 'what we found' descriptions. For example, during a topic about electricity one child stated that the first circuit worked better than the second but gave no explanation why. Pupils can identify micro-organisms and know, for example, that tooth decay is caused by bacteria. However, many pupils' lack of scientific vocabulary limits the progress they make. In one lesson during the week of the inspection the teacher did everything possible to ensure that the pupils understood the difference between 'attract' and 'repel' when using magnets. Despite her best efforts pupils still referred to paper clips becoming 'stuck' to the magnet.

139. Pupils are given satisfactory opportunities to use their literacy and numeracy skills. The results of experiments are accurately presented in graph form. Pupils write up their own well presented investigations but the quality is sometimes below average because not enough attention is given by pupils to the correct spelling of well known words.

140. The quality of learning is good overall throughout both the infants and the juniors. In most lessons observed the skills of enquiry, including observation and measurement, were being developed alongside knowledge and understanding. Teachers do not over-direct the work but allow pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning by letting them test out their predictions.

141. Pupils' attitudes to science are good overall. In all the lessons seen, pupils showed an interest in what they were doing. Most listen attentively and willingly contribute, sometimes with adult support, their own ideas to class discussions. Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language are keen to learn and show noticeable pride when they are able to use English scientific language correctly.

142. The quality of teaching in science during the week of the inspection was good in both the infants and juniors. No lessons were observed in Year 4. Most teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. This is evident in the good introductory explanations that are given to lessons. A strong feature of the teaching is the sharing of objectives with the pupils. Sometimes opportunities are lost in allowing pupils to undertake practical investigations for themselves with teachers carrying out the experiment. Very good support is given to infants by EMAG staff. Teachers give an appropriate emphasis to the development of hypothesis, prediction and investigation. Practical activities are well organised and through effective questioning teachers gain satisfactory insight into pupils' level of understanding. However, not enough attention is given to ensuring that higher attaining pupils give explanations about why things have happened.

143. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator monitors planning and the phase co-ordinator has observed the quality of teaching. One member of staff is currently undertaking a study of the ways that pupils might further develop their language skills in science. The school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines to help teachers' planning. Satisfactory assessment procedures are in place when topics have been completed. However, the information is not being brought together in order to set targets for individuals and groups and to inform future planning in the subject. The school recognises that this needs to be done. Resources are good. Most of the issues identified in the last inspection report have been addressed successfully. Teaching has improved in quality but the use made of assessment information remains an outstanding issue. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

144. Only one art and design lesson was seen during the inspection, consequently no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching. Examination of pupils' sketch books and portfolios of work from the previous school year, together with displays of work from the current year, indicate that pupils' attainment in art and design at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national expectations. By the end of Key Stage 2 it is above average. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

145. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 having had good experiences in exploring colour, texture, shape and form in two and three dimensions. This continues during Key Stage 1 where most pupils, including those with special needs and who speak English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. In Year 1 they experiment effectively with line patterns, record carefully self-portraits from observation, create detailed collages using natural and man-made materials and investigate appropriate techniques, such as pleating and folding, to make mobiles. They sort fabrics by colour and texture into a woven piece of work and experiment with cold dyes to understand which colours go together. During Year 2, they draw subjects through a viewfinder and expand a picture from a small part (as in flowered wallpaper). They record well their observations of line, shape, colour and texture and use fastening techniques, such as running stitch to affix felt shapes to calico.

146. Overall progress through Key Stage 2 is good. Skill development is less marked in Year 4 than in the other age groups. Work of a high standard includes Year 3 pupils' observation of Asian design as a stimulus for sketching, cutting and arranging shapes eventually using tissue paper and over-laying techniques to make imaginative patterns. Higher attaining pupils show good skills in figure drawing, successfully enhancing their work with colour washes. In Year 5, slab and coil techniques are used well to make clay pots based on observations of the work of Clarice Cliff, demonstrating skills in joining, painting and varnishing. Good work by the current Year 5 pupils on Greek vases links well with history and the investigation of materials for headwear in Year 6 involves effective cross-curricular links with mathematics for measurement. Character masks made out of papier-mâché, for *Moldymort* and the *Vicious Green Goblins*, for use in a public performance, are of the highest quality.

147. The subject is well led. Since the previous inspection opportunities have been created for the co-ordinator to increase the effectiveness of her role. An appropriate policy is in place, which reflects the most recent curriculum requirements. There is much emphasis on pupils' skill development. The system of using extended lesson time over a block of half a term is very effective, giving pupils sufficient time to develop and extend their ideas. Teachers' planning indicates clear learning objectives which build on what pupils already know, can do, and understand. For example, in the one lesson observed, pupils' use of printing blocks had drawn on their skills to draw a figure with movement which had been addressed in a previous lesson. The work of famous artists and craftsmen is used effectively to stimulate pupils' imagination and contributes positively to their cultural development. Sketch books and portfolios give a good indication of the progress made by children as they pass through the school. Samples of differing levels of attainment contained in them are to be 'levelled' as a further aid to assessment.

148. Additional activities such as the 'Summer School' for Years 4 and 5, and the 'Krafty Kids Club' for pupils in Years 5 and 6 contribute well to the overall standards achieved. Good resources include a kiln. Strong community links are evident, for example, in some of the displays produced by parents, the use made of the Living Library Gallery and the contribution made by a professional artist who designed the garden railings. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology. For example, pupils in Year 2 use drawings programs to produce colourful pictures in the style of Mondrian.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

149. The teaching of design and technology is appropriately planned in 'blocks'. At the time of the inspection no lessons in the subject were being taught in Years 5 and 6. However, a scrutiny of work previously completed by pupils, an examination of photographic evidence and teachers' planning enable judgements to be made.

150. Standards are better than at the time of the last inspection when attainment was judged to be unsatisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2. The school has addressed the weaknesses identified in the previous report and standards are now in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. There is some good work displayed around the school.

151. Throughout the school all pupils make good progress. Pupils in Year 1 have been able to express their own ideas well in drawing and labelling a building. They plan their models carefully and, with supervision, successfully use scissors, glue and cardboard boxes to put their ideas into practice. Pupils in Year 2 have planned out puppets in their designing books and noted in detail the stages to be followed in constructing them. The more able who have completed the puppets are now in the process of successfully evaluating their work. Pupils are very careful workers. They use resources well and clear up after their activities. Teachers draw pupils' attention to the need to work with care and children work in a safe manner. Children enjoy their work and are pleased to talk about their models.

152. Good links with literacy were in evidence in a Year 3 class when important words such as 'pneumatic', 'vibration' and 'inflation' were recorded on the blackboard during a discussion about how air can be used to produce and control movement. This practice was especially beneficial to those pupils who speak English as an additional language because it helped them to understand some of the technical language used in the subject. However, this is not always the case. Within this lesson pupils were at the planning and designing stage and some very thoughtful suggestions were put forward. Good links with numeracy were seen in Year 4' pupils' work on analysing bread products when they recorded their findings in a star profile. Bread baking was followed by pupils evaluating their product in line with the basic recipe they had used. A clear and detailed explanation on how levers work was recorded in pupils' design books after they had completed their work on designing and constructing a book containing moving pictures. Pupils in Year 5 have been involved in constructing detailed step by step designs for a moveable toy and again all stages have been produced with care. By Year 6, design and technology skills are being used in a number of ways. For example, fairground rides driven by belts and pulleys are planned, drawn and evaluated. Some pupils use their skills commercially to design and make items that can be sold within the school in aid of charity.

153. The overall quality of teaching seen was good with very good teaching observed in two lessons. Planning and teachers' understanding and knowledge of the subject are much better than at the time of the last inspection. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. As a result of the support provided, they display a high level of motivation and enthusiasm and make good progress. Skills and knowledge are developed through both key stages by following a well structured scheme of work which enables pupils to build upon what they have achieved and learned at earlier stages. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when it was found that pupils' attainment was not consistently developed as they moved through the school. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to produce work of which they can be proud. They have a positive attitude to their work and behave well in lessons, sharing and handling equipment sensibly. However, there was no evidence of teachers using information and communication technology in the design process.

154. Leadership and management of the subject are sound. The teachers are supported in their work through appropriate documentation and resources. Assessment procedures are good and the information gathered is used effectively to guide curricular planning. Criticisms and issues raised in the previous inspection have all been remedied.

GEOGRAPHY

155. By the ages of 7 and 11, pupils' attainment matches the levels expected nationally. They make good progress in the development of geographical knowledge of peoples, places and environments. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make similar progress. They also develop skills in carrying out geographical enquiries both in and out of school.

156. Teachers in Year 1 and 2 make good use of the school and the local area and as a result Year 2 pupils can tell you about some of the features of Lye and what they would see on a walk around the school. They talk confidently about the seaside and about the differences between islands and their own locality. In discussions pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary, such as 'seaside' and 'beach'. They are developing an awareness of changes in environments, for example, that the beach life in Blackpool in Victorian times differs from contemporary British seaside holidays. Displays, weather boards and regular use of local maps and maps of the United Kingdom and the world is widening their understanding of weather patterns and places in the world. Pupils know they live in England. They know that you have to go to Pakistan by plane or boat because it is across the sea. Pupils in Year 2 are developing an appropriate awareness of the differences between physical and human features in a landscape.

157. At Key Stage 2, pupils look carefully at the school environment noting aspects about the school which they like or dislike. To improve the school's environment they have developed a wildlife garden. They think about wider environmental issues as they look at aspects of pollution and recycling. By Year 6, pupils have learnt how to use a range of maps confidently and to draw their own. They are developing their understanding of contours as imaginary lines that provide information on heights of land. Pupils have some knowledge of other communities, such as village life in Brazil, and know that climate and geographical features affect lifestyle. They understand that village life in South America is very different from life in Lye, but there are also similarities; for example, that pupils still have to go to school. As part of their geography visits to the local High Street and the village of Trysul, Year 4 pupils looked at how these two places differ and how the local environment can be protected and improved. In Year 6, pupils demonstrated very good knowledge of physical features of rivers. They know that the estuary is where the river enters the sea and an oxbow lake is a loop in a river which has been cut off. Use of information and communication technology (ICT) for research is an improving feature. Pupils use database programs to analyse results of surveys. For example, pupils in Year 5 carried out research on traffic pollution in their local high street and used ICT to analyse the results. The "In the news" board helps pupils to keep abreast of current world developments and adds much to their personal development, especially cultural awareness.

158. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good. Very good and good lessons were seen in both key stages. As noted in the previous inspection, a strength is the use made of field trips to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of their environment. Lessons are carefully planned and activities matched to the different ability levels within the class, with an emphasis on exploration, investigation and research, a significant improvement since the previous inspection. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the teachers skilfully revised previous learning using this strategy effectively to focus pupils on the next stage of learning. For example in a very good lesson in Year 6, the pupils revisited key words in their 'investigating rivers' topic. The teacher's expectations were high and pupils constantly challenged by rigorous questioning to use precise geographical terms. Many of the teachers are very good communicators. In a lesson a teacher helped pupils understanding of tributaries when he likened tributaries to side roads joining a main highway. In the less effective lessons, the level of learning was

satisfactory but constrained by the resources not always matched to pupils' varying levels of attainment. For example, some maps were too complex for pupils with English as an additional language to access. In consequence, the teacher had to focus extensively on these pupils. This affected the concentration of others who did not achieve as much as they should. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are well developed in geography lessons.

159. The management of the subject is very strong and has been a major factor in improving standards. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's recommended guidelines and rewritten their scheme of work. This, with some staff training, has improved teachers' subject knowledge and planning. Resources have been improved and updated. Assessment procedures are good. The co-ordinator samples completed work from all year groups, monitors teaching and gives valuable feedback. There is a strong partnership between the leadership, teachers and support staff which enables all pupils to learn effectively.

HISTORY

160. History was not being taught in Key Stage 1 during the inspection because the pupils were studying geography. However, evidence from the school's portfolio of work completed last year, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with the co-ordinator provide sufficient evidence for judgements to be made. Standards have improved since the previous inspection when attainment was found to be below the national expectation in Key Stage 1 because pupils had insufficient knowledge and understanding of the past. Throughout the school all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are making sound progress and achieving standards similar to those found in most schools.

161. By the end of Year 2 pupils can list the similarities and differences between old and new toys of the same design. They make sensible observations. For example, they note that in the past toy cars were made out of tin whereas today we use other materials, such as plastic. They learn about important historical events and famous people from the past, such as Florence Nightingale and the Great Fire of London. They develop some awareness of chronology as they put into sequence cars from different periods.

162. In Key Stage 2 pupils' skills in historical enquiry are appropriately developed through the examination of artefacts and the use of primary sources of information, such as newspapers and interviews. As a result, by the end of Year 6 most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of past civilisations, such as the Ancient Greeks, and significant periods in English history, such as the Tudor age. They have a clear understanding of how life has changed in Britain since 1948. Since the previous inspection pupils' library skills have improved and they are now able to investigate, question and look for reasons. This is very evident in the work they have just completed about the life and times of John Lennon, which the pupils researched for themselves.

163. The pupils enjoy finding out about people and events of the past. Year 6 pupils showed keen interest and listened carefully to their visitor talking about life in Britain immediately after the Second World War. They had prepared their own questions, which they asked politely. However, pupils can become distracted when the work they are asked to do is too difficult.

164. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very good teaching observed with the older pupils. Teachers prepare carefully and their planning clearly identifies the facts or skills they want the pupils to learn. These are made known to the class at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers subject knowledge is secure overall. In the better lessons appropriate emphasis is placed on highlighting the strategies of finding out and the selection of various materials. Artefacts from the time, such as records and books, are used appropriately to stimulate pupils' interest and understanding. This was particularly

evident in the Year 6 classes where the teachers used a good balance of skilful questioning techniques, together with visiting speakers to challenge pupils to think carefully about life in post war Britain. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory when the teacher does not make sure that pupils understand what they have to do. When technical words are not explained carefully it has a detrimental effect upon the quality of learning. For example, in a Year 4 class pupils were learning about the Vikings but were unable to complete the task on their own because they did not understand what the word 'raid' meant.

165. There is a clear subject policy and the scheme of work has recently been reviewed to include the revised National Curriculum. Issues, such as the development of independent learning, which were identified in the previous inspection report as a weakness have been remedied. The subject is well co-ordinated. The co-ordinator monitors planning and appropriately retains samples of pupils' work to ensure that there is a satisfactory progression as pupils move through the school. Assessments are currently carried out at the end of each unit of work and the information is used effectively to identify what is working well in the subject and what needs to be improved. Resources are adequate overall but the school needs more artefacts. Visits and visitors successfully provide additional enrichment. Satisfactory use is made of information and communication technology to research for information.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

166. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) at the end of both key stages are now average overall. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection when they were found to be weak by the end of Key Stage 1. By the end of Key Stage 2 at the time of the last inspection pupils reached the national expectations in using ICT to communicate using text and graphics, but their attainment in all other aspects fell short of what was required. The subject did not meet National Curriculum requirements. The pupils now have regular opportunities to be involved with the subject in designated information and communication technology lessons and in other areas of the curriculum. Most pupils are confident in using ICT and have good attitudes in lessons.

167. In Key Stage 1 the standards achieved are in line with those expected for the pupils' ages and pupils are making good progress. A good range of work is planned for the pupils that involve the use of ICT in other subject areas as in when Year 2 pupils used the drawing programs to produce detailed and colourful pictures in the style of Mondrian. The pupils have knowledge of the use of ICT in other aspects of their lives. For example, they know about digital watches, the use of video recorders, mobile phones and can use audio recorders in class. In Year 1 pupils access the school's network to use the word processing facility and select a font and make alterations to its size.

168. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attain standards in line with the expectations for their age. They have built on the knowledge gained previously in the key stage and make good progress. Pupils can draft and redraft to the screen, using a broad range of editing tools. They can access the Internet and use it to research information in other subject areas. For example, in their history work on the 1960s they found out about the popular culture of that period. Pupils use control technology to make a hairdryer and other sophisticated machines to help them understand the place of technology in everyday life. There is use of ICT in other aspects of the curriculum; for example, pupils in Year 4 created various forms of graphs related to measurement of bones as part of science work. Pupils use digital cameras, scanners and audio equipment effectively.

169. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teachers are confident and have good knowledge of the requirements of the curriculum. This results in an overall consistently good standard of teaching to support the pupils so they make good progress from a low starting point. Some of the teaching is very good when teachers have chosen particularly engaging tasks so pupils often work in pairs supported well by the learning support assistants. All lessons have clear objectives for what pupils are to achieve. There is good organisation of the movement of pupils to their computer workstations after sitting on the

carpet as a class group. Resources are used very effectively and very good use is made of the plenary sessions so both the teachers and the pupil can evaluate the extent of progress made towards achieving the objectives of the lesson. The teachers have good knowledge appropriate to the needs of their pupils and so give good explanations of the tasks. They make supportive interventions when pupils encounter difficulties with their work and take care to ensure safe Internet access for their pupils. Teachers make very effective use of learning support assistants to help pupils during sessions in the ICT suite. This assists those pupils, who for a variety of reasons need more help with their learning, so that all can participate fully in the sessions.

170. The subject is managed very well by the two knowledgeable co-ordinators who produced a very good quality scheme of work to guide teachers. There is guidance to help teachers make assessments of pupils' progress in ICT but this has yet to be fully implemented. There are good quality resources throughout the school that are carefully maintained. The ratio of computers to pupils is good, as is the range of programs used. There has been good progress in this subject since the last inspection and National Curriculum requirements are now fully met.

MUSIC

171. By the age of seven and eleven pupils attain standards which match the levels expected nationally. This judgement shows that standards have improved for pupils at the end of both key stages since the last inspection. The school's good provision includes a recent appointment of a teacher with specialist music skills, the adoption of Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidelines and in-service training. These initiatives have resulted in raising the expertise and confidence of most staff and improving standards.

172. By the time pupils are seven, they sing clearly and in tune. They perform well together in singing practice. By Year 2, pupils are able to sing simple songs with changes in pitch and tempo. For example, in their singing practice they sang a range of songs from memory, generally keeping good time. They are developing an awareness of patterns in music. The majority of pupils can remember and repeat a simple pattern by clapping correctly and keeping to the beat. They are realizing that singing has a pattern. For example, in one lesson a pupil after singing a number of nursery rhymes said, 'Miss, there's a pattern like this in maths.' Using untuned percussion instruments they make up their own short rhythm and sound patterns and are developing an awareness of music being played at different speeds. However, composing is at an early stage of development.

173. Pupils in Key Stage 2, demonstrate a good understanding of specific vocabulary such as, 'pitch', 'dynamics' and 'tempo'. The pupils in Year 6 have average skills in composing, listening and in appraising and performing music. They are able to perform their own rhythmic patterns using a range of percussion instruments and are developing skills in appraising the compositions of their peers. However, the quality of this element of the curriculum is inconsistent across the age range. In singing, progress is satisfactory. Most pupils sing in tune and generally in time but with little expression.

174. Several pupils benefit from specialist teaching. Their attainment is generally good. They can sight read formal notation skillfully and confidently play their chosen instrument with a degree of competence. These skills, which are developed in their instrumental lessons, have some impact in class lessons. For example, in a Year 6 lesson a pupil who is learning the violin led his group in a composing activity which involved using formal notation. They are developing satisfactory listening skills being able to identify some of the instruments being played in an orchestral arrangement. Pupils listen to a variety of music, which includes music of other cultures and times.

175. Overall, most pupils achieve well in relation to their prior attainment by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive good individual support and also achieve well.

176. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Strengths include some teachers' very good knowledge of the subject, focused questioning and precise use of technical language. For example, in a lesson in Year 6, the teacher, using his own voice, explored the meanings of 'dynamics', 'tempo' and 'performance'. This greatly enriched the pupils' learning, especially their appraisal of their own performances. One pupil listening to a group performance evaluated it succinctly. "It gets louder at the end but faster in the middle. They must concentrate on their own parts more." Other strengths included the excellent management of the pupils' behaviour, warm relationships and good links with previous work. The careful drawing out of the pupils' responses significantly aided their awareness and appreciation of music. There is a sound pace to the lessons and many practical opportunities for pupil involvement. Teachers evaluate skillfully what the pupils are able to do and ensure that pupils improve on their earlier performances. They point up the reasons for carrying out an activity. 'We are evaluating so that when we are composing next week we will use the same criteria.' Some teachers in both key stages are less secure in their subject knowledge and this results in pupils making less progress in developing their skills. Overall, higher attainers are fully challenged now in their class lessons and this represents a good improvement since the last inspection. Learning is fun and this contributes strongly to the pupils' very positive attitudes, behaviour and excellent relationships.

177. The co-ordinator is new to the role but already has a good understanding of what needs to be developed. The curriculum is planned well. It has been significantly improved since the last inspection and now contains clear objectives for each year group and includes an emphasis on developing the pupils' skills as they progress through the school. Pupils are appropriately assessed at the end of each term. The expertise of some of the staff is not as high as it is in other subjects of the curriculum. There is a music room, a facility which is used well for music lessons. The use of information and communication technology in music is satisfactory overall. Resources are adequate. The subject now has a valued place in the school's curriculum and makes a good contribution to the pupils' wider learning experiences.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

178. During the inspection pupils were observed in games, dance and swimming in which they made good progress. The full range of physical activity including gymnastics is undertaken over the year and pupils in Years 5 and 6 have opportunities to extend their outdoor activities at Kingswood and Asley Burf on their residential visits. The school has a pool on site and swimming is a strength. Pupils begin swimming lessons at a very early age and make good progress as they attend lessons weekly until the end of Year 5. Even then the school organises a swimming club for those pupils in Year 6 who wish to attend. Almost all pupils can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6 and many can swim much further distances in good style. The school is very successful in local and district swimming competitions. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as their second language make progress in line with their peers. Overall standards are in line with expectations and have improved since the previous inspection when a significant minority of pupils were judged to be making unsatisfactory progress from year to year and achieving below average levels of attainment by the end of Key Stage 2.

179. By the age of seven, pupils change into their physical education kit with the minimum of fuss. The three Year 2 classes were all observed engaged in different activities. One class worked well on their dodging skills in readiness for improving their games skills. They worked effectively in teams and enjoyed watching pupils in other teams as they practised their skills. A second class worked on their

dance routines, linking their body shapes well to the music. This made a good link with their music lesson held earlier in the day. The third class practised side stepping, first on their own and then with a partner, which they found much harder. In all three classes teachers arranged appropriate warm up and cool down exercises at the beginning and end of the lessons and all pupils understood why it is important to do this.

180. It was not possible to observe older pupils in gymnastics as the school's upper hall was unfit for use due to a damaged floor which was to be repaired after the inspection. However, the school arranged for pupils to carry on with some of their lessons in dance in the much smaller community room. The teacher in a Year 5 class used her own ideas and those of her pupils to plan the lesson well which was linked to their Greek topic. The strength of the lesson was the pupils' ability to evaluate each other's performance and suggest ways in which they could be improved. Pupils could devise and perform the dance effectively employing a range of movements and body shapes. Pupils with English as a second language and those with special educational needs performed equally as well as other pupils and all enjoyed the lesson. Another Year 5 class displayed good skills at hockey as they used the new excellent hard surface area for their lesson. Other pupils were observed practising rugby and basketball skills. All pupils were very enthusiastic and co-operated well with each other, trying very hard to improve their skills.

181. Pupils' attitudes to physical education lessons are good. Pupils clearly enjoy the opportunity to engage in physical activity and most pupils behave well as they listen to instructions or when they have to wait for their turn to demonstrate. They all follow safety rules well. They co-operate sensibly with one another, in pairs and in groups, and use their initiative and imagination creatively. This was particularly noticeable in the Year 2 lessons observed.

182. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the subject and all safety issues. In most lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance. They give pupils clear instructions before exercises so that pupils understand what is expected of them. In swimming lessons, the swimming teacher and the class teachers demand constant effort from all the pupils in order to extend their swimming skills beyond a satisfactory level. During the inspection extra-curricular activities were provided in basketball, netball and swimming. Other activities are arranged according to the season of the year.

183. The co-ordinators of the subject are very enthusiastic. There has been a complete review of the subject since the previous inspection which has helped to improve pupils' performances. There is now a policy and a scheme of work, which teachers follow well. The system of assessment is being developed but as yet the information gathered is not being analysed in order to improve individual pupils' attainment or the quality of learning. The school makes good use of its two halls, very good outdoor areas and the pool which is used extensively by members of the community seven days a week. There is also a sports field of a good size. Resources are good, organised effectively and there is a good range of equipment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

184. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the expectations in the locally Agreed Syllabus. Throughout the school pupils make sound progress and there are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. The support given to pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language ensures that they make satisfactory progress overall. These findings represent an improvement since the previous inspection when a significant minority of pupils were judged to be making unsatisfactory progress in Key Stage 2.

185. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have developed a satisfactory knowledge of stories from some of the world religions. For example, they can relate the story of Muhammad and the tethered camel and the birth of Jesus in a stable at Bethlehem. Younger pupils in Year 1 understand that Christians say 'Thank you' to God at harvest time. They learn the importance of caring for each other and taking care of the world around them. In Year 2 they learn to appreciate that religious buildings, such as a mosque or a church, are special and people go there to worship.

186. During Key Stage 2, pupils study in more depth the stories and traditions of different religions, such as Islam, Sikhism, Judaism and Christianity. They know that people worship God in different ways and that the Qur'an and the Bible are sacred books. Pupils learn about religious symbols and rituals, for example the rules for preparing food. Younger children extend their knowledge of special people to include Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King. The previous inspection found that pupils' work was largely knowledge-based and that the concepts, understanding and attitudes which characterise religious education were not being developed. This is not the case now. For example, pupils in Year 6 learn to understand the meaning of sacrifice and write their own rules for living a good life.

187. All pupils respond positively to the teaching. They listen carefully to their teachers, and are keen to offer their views and take part in class discussions. Pupils in Key Stage 1 were able to talk about the work they had covered, and showed interest when listening to the story of the Nativity. Most pupils in Year 5 enjoyed finding out which food was kosher and which was non-kosher. Though pupils are taught common spelling conventions during English lessons, they do not always remember to use them when writing up their work in religious education.

188. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory overall in both key stages. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when it was reported that some teachers lacked the appropriate knowledge and understanding to provide effective learning experiences for their pupils. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the careful planning of lessons and the clarity with which the learning objectives are made known to pupils at the beginning of all lessons. Where teaching is less successful but still satisfactory, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are not as engaged in their learning as they should be because the teacher uses insufficient resources to help pupils' understanding. There are some good examples of teachers using the subject well to develop pupils' writing skills in Key Stage 2. For example, Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to retell a traditional story such as 'Ali the Shoemaker' or 'The Prodigal Son' but lessons only last for half an hour in Key Stage 1 and this does not give pupils enough time to write at length or in depth. However, the frequent discussion of religious topics helps to develop their speaking and listening skills.

189. Religious education contributes well to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its consideration of religious ideas, rules of life and the duties of individuals towards others.

190. The subject is very well co-ordinated and there has been significant developments within the subject since the last inspection. A new scheme of work has been introduced which takes into account Dudley's Agreed Syllabus. Though resources are adequate overall there is a need for more artefacts to enable pupils who speak English as an additional language to get a better understanding of the technical language associated with the subject. Visitors and visits to places of worship enhance learning. Assessment opportunities are built into the scheme and individual pupils' achievements are appropriately recorded.