

INSPECTION REPORT

MARLBOROUGH JUNIOR SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103312

Headteacher: Mrs. G Vanes

Reporting inspector: Mr P Belfield
21661

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 December 2001

Inspection number: 230748

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Green Lane Small Heath Birmingham
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Appropriate authority:	Governors
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. A. Smith
Date of previous inspection:	June 1998

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19692	Robert Folks	Lay inspector		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
31615	Elaine Radley	Team Inspector	Mathematics History Geography	
18331	Jon Sutcliffe	Team Inspector	Science Design technology Physical Education Religious Education	
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22396	Jenny Young	Team Inspector		English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Marlborough Junior School is situated in Small Heath in Birmingham. The school, which is over-subscribed, is larger than most primary schools and has 360 boys and girls in twelve classes. The attainment of the pupils when they start at the school covers a wide range but is well below average. All but three of the pupils (ninety-nine per cent) are learning English as an additional language. A fifth of the pupils (20 per cent) are at an early stage of becoming bilingual. Almost all of the pupils are of Mirpuri Pakistani heritage with a small number of Bangladeshi heritage. The home languages represented include Mirpuri, Punjabi, Pushto, Bengali and Urdu. Forty-three per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. Forty per cent of the pupils are included on the school's register of special educational needs which is well above average. Four of the pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school with many good features. Standards are rising due to the good teaching. The leadership and management of the school are good. The school is led very effectively by an inspirational headteacher. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of the teaching is good and ensures that, overall, the pupils make good progress in relation to their prior levels of attainment.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and manages it very effectively.
- The pupils have good attitudes towards school and work and they behave well. Attendance levels are well above average.
- There is a clear focus on the acquisition of English language.
- The school provides a stimulating curriculum and a wide range of extra-curricular activities.
- The school looks after the pupils well. There are very good procedures in place to monitor the pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science.
- The partnership with parents is very strong and the support they provide makes a very positive contribution to the pupils' achievement.

What could be improved

- The standards in English, mathematics and science, though improving, could be higher.
- The approach to the teaching of reading is inconsistent and the pupils' reading is not monitored closely enough by all teachers.
- The work provided for the more able pupils in mathematics and science could be more demanding.
- The teachers' marking of the pupils' work does not always tell them how they might improve.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in June 1998 and has continued to improve in many areas. All of the key issues from the last inspection have been addressed successfully. The standards achieved by the pupils in the national tests at age 11 have risen steadily, and for the three years up to 2001 the results have been above the national trend. Significant measures have been taken to improve the provision for ICT and standards have risen sharply. The needs of bilingual pupils are met more effectively although the subject specific language of mathematics and science needs further emphasis within these lessons. The links with parents have been strengthened and are now a significant strength of the school. Overall, however, there is still room for further improvement in the standards achieved in the core subjects, particularly in mathematics and science.

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 schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E*	E	E	C
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	D
Science	E*	E	E	E

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

These results relate to the pupils who took the tests in 2001. They show that the pupils' performance in English, mathematics and science was well below average when compared with all schools. When compared with similar schools the pupils' performance in English was average, in mathematics it was below average and in science it was well below average. The school exceeded its inappropriately low targets for 2001 and these have been raised for future years. Standards have risen year-on-year and the trend of improvement has been above the national trend.

The work that the pupils were doing during the inspection confirms the picture of a steady improvement in standards. Overall, the pupils make good progress and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, although more able pupils could do better in mathematics and science if the work was more challenging. There have been more noticeable improvements in English than in mathematics due to better teaching and the focus on helping the pupils to become proficient in English as soon as possible. The use and acquisition of English features strongly in most lessons, but there is a need to further develop the pupils' understanding and use of their mathematical and scientific language. There has also been a strong emphasis on improving the pupils' writing skills and the scrutiny of their work shows that standards have risen steadily over the past two years. The standards in reading are well below average and are not improving fast enough. The school has identified the need to focus more closely on improving pupils' reading skills and has made this a priority for development.

The standards in mathematics are rising steadily but they could be higher. The pupils are grouped by ability in Years 4, 5 and 6 and although this is having a positive impact in some lessons, in others the teachers do not always ensure an appropriate match of work to the pupils' abilities and interests, particularly for the more able pupils. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to apply their mathematical knowledge to investigations and problem solving and their ability to calculate mentally is a weakness. In science, more pupils are now achieving the expected level 4 with many beginning to make good progress. But there are occasions when the lack of challenging work for the most able limits their progress.

Although the higher attaining pupils are not yet achieving as well as they could, the number of pupils achieving above the expected level in English and science in attaining Level 5, improved by eight per cent and four per cent respectively in the national tests in 2001. These improvements are not evident in mathematics.

A consistent strength of the pupils' work is their attainment in information and communication technology and standards have risen since the last inspection. This is because the teaching is consistently very good. The pupils achieve the expected levels for their age in all other subjects by the time they leave the school.

Those pupils who have special educational needs are well supported by teachers and classroom assistants and they make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are eager to come to school; they take pride in their achievements and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils behave well in and around school and are able to work on their own.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to take responsibility and they grow in confidence and self-esteem.
Attendance	Very good. The pupils are rarely absent and are punctual.

The pupils' personal development has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is promoted through an excellent personal, social and health programme that is taught across the school; the pupils are given many opportunities to take an active part in the life of the school. A children's council has been formed and this allows all pupils to contribute to decision-making in the school. The procedures to improve attendance have been very successful and attendance is now well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The improvements in the teaching have been the key to raising standards. The basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and this ensures that the pupils make good progress. Overall, however, the teaching is better in English than in mathematics. The teaching in English is generally good because the work is well planned and the teachers make sure that the pupils are clear about what they should learn. The teaching in mathematics is satisfactory. In mathematics, the teachers make effective use of the three-part lesson structure recommended in the Numeracy Framework, but the work is not always as demanding as it might be and the pupils are not always helped to understand or acquire mathematical language. Similarly in science, the work planned for the more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging and the rate of progress for these pupils is slower than it could be.

The classroom assistants provide a very good level of support for groups and individuals; they are clear about their role and how they can deepen and extend the pupils' learning.

The pupils with special educational needs are taught well and their work is carefully matched to the targets in their individual education plans. This allows the pupils to make good progress. There is a strong and relevant emphasis on the pupils' language and literacy development; the work is challenging and the pupils are well supported by teachers and support assistants.

Most of the pupils learn effectively and the teachers work particularly hard to meet the needs of bilingual learners. The pupils invest much effort in their work. Examples of this were seen in all subjects and in all age groups. The pupils concentrate very well and show strong interest in what they are taught.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school gives a high priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy but it also plans a good variety of supplementary visits and activities to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum for all of the pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school's provision and the quality of teaching and learning for the pupils with special educational needs are good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school deploys its teachers and classroom support staff very effectively. The staff are skilled at seizing opportunities to improve the pupils' English language within lessons. They need to place greater emphasis on the effective models of the spoken and written language in mathematics and science.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school makes very good provision for the pupils' social and moral development, and good provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The provision makes a significant contribution to the pupils' positive attitudes and their good behaviour and personal relationships.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's procedures for child protection and welfare are very good. The school has very good procedures for monitoring the pupils' attainments and tracking their progress in English, mathematics and science. Standards have risen steadily year-on-year in these subjects.

The curriculum is further enriched through a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which includes residential visits. Very good use is made of the local community to support the pupils' learning. The partnership with parents is a strength. The parents are well informed about how well their children are doing.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The management of the school by the headteacher is very good. She is very ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The monitoring and support for teaching and learning has had a very positive impact on raising standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are fully involved in the life of the school and are strongly committed to its improvement. They fulfil all of their responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher, key staff and governors evaluate the school's performance rigorously.
The strategic use of resources	Very Good. The time, money, people and specific grants are used well and the school gives good value for money.

The leadership and management of the school has many strengths. The school's evaluation of its performance results in appropriate action being taken to raise standards and to improve the quality of education provided. The support for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English is very effective. The co-ordination of subjects by key staff has been effective in identifying priorities for development, but there are weaknesses in the co-ordination and leadership in mathematics. The school has an appropriate number of staff; the accommodation is adequate and has recently been improved. Resources for learning are good. The school applies the principles of best value to its work.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The progress that their children make. • Their children enjoy school. • The way the school is led and managed. • The good teaching. • The school expects children to work hard and to try their best. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • The range of activities provided outside of lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework.

Inspectors endorse the positive views expressed by the parents. They do not share their views on the amount of homework. The level of homework is appropriate for the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests show that by the age of eleven standards in English, mathematics and science are well below the national average and inspection findings support this view. However, although standards remain well below average overall, the school's improvement over the past three years has been consistently above the national trend and the pupils' performance has improved steadily. The improvement is continuing. The school exceeded its targets, although these were not ambitious being based on over-cautious assessments by teachers. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils of all abilities make good progress overall and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
2. In English, although the majority of the pupils listen well, standards of spoken language remain well below average. In reading, the pupils continue to develop their word-attack skills; by the time they leave the school, although many pupils can read fluently, they do not always have a clear understanding of what they have read. However, the teaching of reading is not consistent across the school and all staff do not monitor carefully enough what the pupils read at home. Most of the higher attaining pupils can read fluently and with good expression; many enjoy reading for pleasure and have an appropriate understanding of what they read. The pupils are able to write for a range of purposes and audiences but their writing frequently lacks rich and stimulating vocabulary. The staff work hard to develop the pupils' use and understanding of English and most pupils make good progress. The school has recently introduced an individualised programme to teach spelling using the computers; this is having a positive impact on the pupils' willingness to learn and their spelling.
3. In mathematics, the pupils generally make satisfactory progress, but this could be better, particularly for the more able pupils. The majority of pupils know their multiplication tables by the time they leave the school and have a good understanding of the value of numbers. They can add and subtract with numbers up to a thousand. They are less confident when doubling numbers, particularly, decimal numbers or those containing fractions. The pupils lack confidence in applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. The work of the more able pupils lacks challenge and there is a need to provide more practical and problem solving work in mathematics.
4. In science, the pupils achieve well and many pupils make good progress. By the time they leave the school the pupils know about food chains and know the difference between vertebrates and invertebrates. They understand how exercise affects pulse rate, temperature and breathing rate. They measure and record their results accurately. However, they have little opportunity to plan their own work, and the more able pupils are occasionally given work that is undemanding.
5. Standards in information technology are average by the time the pupils leave the school and the pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Skills are taught progressively year-on-year. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have developed sound word processing skills. In religious education, the pupils reach the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the age of eleven. In art, music and design technology standards are satisfactory, but standards could be higher if more time was allocated to these subjects. In all other subjects the pupils attain the standards expected for their age and they make good progress.
6. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Learning support assistants work and plan closely with class teachers to

ensure the pupils' learning needs are met and they provide good support either to individuals or small groups. The pupils have individual education plans that contain small, achievable targets for improvement and these are reviewed regularly to ensure that the pupils are making good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. The school provides a safe and welcoming environment. The pupils enjoy coming to school, are eager to learn, co-operate well in lessons and respond to challenge. They are happy to share their ideas with each other and their teachers, knowing that their opinions will be respected and valued.
8. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Their attendance is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. During the Achievement Assembly, it was evident that the pupils take pride in being singled out for good work and there was generosity of spirit as they applauded those who had been chosen. The pupils are aware of their importance in achieving a calm, orderly environment where everyone is valued. The values of tolerance, kindness and courtesy are well reflected in the pupils' attitude and this is a strength of the school.
9. Behaviour was commended in the previous inspection report. It is still good. The pupils behave well during lessons, move around the school in a quiet, orderly way and show respect and courtesy for school staff and visitors. The pupils have a good understanding of how their actions affect other pupils and this is reinforced during the very good "Design for Living" programme and at assemblies. There is a common approach to discipline from all school staff and there have been no exclusions in this academic year. The school's 'Five Star' scheme is used very effectively by all of the staff to promote good behaviour and to encourage the pupils to accept responsibility.
10. The pupils' personal development is good and many opportunities are provided for them to take responsibility. These include being monitors, members of the School Council and the healthy eating group, taking part in circle time activities and in discussions and debates.
11. A lot of effort and hard work has been made to improve attendance. The attendance rate is well above the national average and the school is to be commended for its achievements in this area. The pupils are punctual and enjoy coming to school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The good quality teaching has been the key to raising standards. The classroom assistants provide a very good level of support for groups and individuals; they are clear about their role and how they can deepen and extend the pupils' learning.
13. Where the teaching is at its best, the teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are required to teach and this is demonstrated in the range and the quality of the work that is produced by the pupils. The teachers' lesson plans are clear about what the pupils are to learn. They build very successfully on previous work and the pupils are given challenging tasks. The teachers organise pupils in a variety of ways, but most lessons begin with carefully directed whole class teaching. This is followed by small group and individual work.
14. The teachers have a thorough knowledge of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy. The teaching in English is good because the teachers plan well and help the pupils to understand the learning objectives for each task. The teachers' competency in teaching phonics is good and the word level work is taught systematically in all classes. The basic skills

are taught thoroughly and so the pupils have a firm foundation on which to build. The teachers use skilful questioning to assess and extend the pupils' understanding. This was evident in an excellent lesson in Year 4 when the pupils were re-drafting a story. The teacher used very effective strategies to help the pupils to select alternative vocabulary to improve their writing. All of the pupils were involved in the discussion and in the selection of more interesting words.

15. The teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of strategies to support those pupils who are becoming bilingual. There is close liaison between the class teachers, specialist teachers and support staff and in their joint planning sessions they are able to discuss the needs of individual pupils and plan the support they will receive. The support teachers are deployed effectively and the pupils are given quality models of spoken and written language enabling them to grow in confidence and to develop their skills. A good example of this was seen in a lesson in Year 6: the pupils formed discussion groups and the teacher got them to express their opinions about the characters in a book that they had read. This work is further enhanced when the pupils are asked to express their opinions on topical issues such as the dangers of smoking, or bullying.
16. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory overall. The teachers make effective use of the three-part lesson structure recommended in the Numeracy Framework, but they do not always sufficiently challenge all of the pupils. Although pupils are taught in ability sets in Years 4 and 5 and in streamed classes in Year 6 some teachers do not take sufficient account of the range of ability within each set or class and the tasks provided result in underachievement, particularly for the more able pupils. The most successful teaching is characterised by careful planning that identifies what different groups of pupils are to learn; very good relationships and effective management of the pupils. In a good lesson in Year 3, each of the groups in the class was challenged to construct and interpret a tally chart and frequency table. The tasks varied in difficulty, but the work made appropriate demands on each group and all of the pupils experienced success. The pupils' behaviour was very good in these lessons; they learned at a brisk pace and they were proud of their achievements.
17. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and their work is carefully matched to the targets in their individual education plans. There is a strong and relevant emphasis on the pupils' language and literacy development. The work is well matched to the pupils needs and the teachers and support assistants provide a good balance of challenge and support. The pupils' progress in lessons is carefully checked and recorded and forms the basis of discussions between all of the staff involved in supporting learning and the class teachers.
18. The teaching has some particular strengths. The teaching of ICT is very good and the teachers are skilled in using ICT to support the work in other subjects. In science and geography the work prepared for the pupils is interesting and varied. It includes discussion work, clear explanations and tasks suited to all abilities. In spite of the poor facilities for physical education, the good quality teaching enables the pupils to make steady progress in gymnastics and games.
19. There are some areas for development in the teaching. Most pupils learn effectively and the teachers work particularly hard to meet the needs of bilingual learners and the targets set out in their individual language plans. The pupils invest much effort in their work. Examples of this were seen in all subjects and in all age groups. Pupils concentrate very well and show strong interest in what they are taught. However, the approach to the teaching of reading across the school is inconsistent and there needs to be better monitoring by the teachers of what the pupils are required to read at home. The school has rightly recognised that more attention needs to be given to the pupils' understanding of what they read. The work provided in mathematics and science, particularly for the more able pupils, is not always sufficiently challenging. Some teachers do not make sufficient use of on-going day-to-day assessments of the pupils in order to plan further work for them at an appropriate level. There is also a need to provide the pupils with more opportunities to master mathematical and scientific language by

giving it greater emphasis within lessons. The scrutiny of the pupils' work reveals an inconsistency in the marking as some teachers do not provide the pupils with a clear view of how to improve.

20. An appropriate level of homework is set for all of the pupils. The very good support provided by parents ensures that the work is completed and this has a positive impact on the pupils' learning.

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

21. The school provides a good quality and range of learning opportunities that includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The curriculum meets statutory requirements for all subjects and provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The school rightly gives a high priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy but it also plans a good variety of supplementary visits and activities to provide rich and stimulating experiences for all the pupils. These activities are a strength of the school's curriculum and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning and particularly on their standards of written and spoken language. For example, during the inspection, the Year 6 pupils visited a pizza restaurant to make pizzas as part of their food technology learning. A recent visit by a professional author and story teller provided the pupils with inspiration for their own writing and, working with a member of the local repertory theatre, the pupils produced items of scenery for the production of *The Wind in the Willows*.
22. The curriculum offered to the pupils is further enriched through a very good range of extra-curricular activities and residential visits for the pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. Additional funds for out of hours learning are used very well to provide a homework club, a mathematics club, as well as groups for board games, cookery, sewing and circus skills. The Year 4 pupils also have the chance to learn to play the recorder.
23. The teachers' planning for literacy and numeracy is good. Co-ordinators usually guide and oversee the long and medium term plans based on the literacy and numeracy frameworks and teachers then plan thoroughly using an agreed format. In other subjects, the school has successfully adopted and adapted many elements of the nationally published schemes of work. Year groups use these schemes satisfactorily, frequently collaborating in their weekly plans. However, the quality of the teachers' daily planning is variable. Some plans do not outline how the required skills and knowledge will be taught to pupils of different abilities and daily plans do not always indicate how teachers will assess the standard of the work seen. Additionally, the length of some of lessons does not allow the pupils to gain maximum benefit from practical, investigative activities. This is frequently the case in lessons such as art, music and aspects of design technology. The school could usefully consider ways of extending the lesson time in these subjects so that the pupils have enough time to complete the planned work.
24. The school provides well for the pupils who have special educational needs. They have access to the full curriculum and are helped to benefit from it through careful planning and the good use that is made of the learning support assistants. They work and plan closely with class teachers to ensure the pupils' learning needs are met and they provide good support either to individuals or small groups. The pupils have individual education plans that contain small, achievable targets for improvement and these are reviewed regularly to ensure that the pupils are making good progress.
25. The school appreciates that because almost all of the pupils speak another language at home, it is essential to include issues relating to the acquisition of English language within every aspect of teaching and learning. This has been achieved successfully and is an improvement since the previous inspection.

26. The school's arrangements for personal, social and health education are excellent and a further strength of the school. Sex education and drugs awareness are taught along with citizenship, environmental awareness and social issues as part of a successful, cross-curricular 'Design for Living' programme. The school has recently won an international award for the success of its drugs education programme and the pupils' learning about citizenship is enhanced through participation in ward and city council meetings.
27. Another of the school's strengths is the very good use it makes of the local community. For example, a wide variety of people who work within the Small Heath community visit the school to take assemblies. There are also good links with the local infant and secondary schools. The older pupils use the facilities of the secondary schools to share lessons in science and information and communication technology (ICT) and to take part in dance and drama festivals. The school is also closely involved with local initiatives such as the Children's University.
28. Overall, the provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good. This very good provision makes a significant contribution to the pupils' positive attitudes and their good behaviour and personal relationships.
29. There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual development. Each day the pupils share an act of collective worship that provides them with opportunities to think about the world around them and the consequences of the things they do. They consider the wonders of life through their learning in subjects such as science, art and music. In an art lesson the Year 5 pupils express excitement and joy at the artistic talent of the teacher as she demonstrates pattern drawing. Their wonderment increases at the symmetrical results achieved through tracing and mirroring the same pattern. The school provides many opportunities for the sharing of thoughts and feelings. The pupils are positively encouraged to contribute to discussions, especially in circle time and in assemblies when they consider the values and beliefs of others. During an assembly taken by the chair of the governors they begin to understand that Christianity, Islam and other religions have many things in common. Opportunities for the pupils to experience the joy of singing together are missed when no songs are sung as part of whole-school assemblies.
30. The provision for the pupils' moral development is very good. The school achieves high standards in this area due in no small part to the excellence of the school's provision for personal, social and health education. It sustains an extremely supportive atmosphere in which mutual respect between the adults and pupils is most successfully cultivated. Those in the school community value honesty and fairness. Throughout school, the pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and to consider others less fortunate than themselves. In lessons, the school fosters self-awareness and open-mindedness by offering pupils many opportunities for moral and social responsibility. They are encouraged to think through a difference of opinion and accept that it is possible to have different points of view. The school rules reinforce the values laid down in the school's aims and raise the pupils' awareness of their importance in achieving a calm, orderly environment where everyone is valued.
31. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. They are encouraged to work together purposefully and to be responsible. For example, they act as monitors, members of the school council and behave responsibly when working with the school's computerised library system. Their social awareness is further developed through participation in local ward meetings when they speak in support of the regeneration of a local park. The pupils work and play very well together and their social skills and awareness are further enhanced through the many visitors they receive and meet both in and out of school. Good work and good behaviour are valued and rewarded through the school's 'Five Star' scheme and all the adults provide very good role models for the pupils.
32. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The pupils benefit from numerous opportunities to celebrate their own culture whilst widening their knowledge of English

traditions because of the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities offered throughout school. Older pupils are developing an understanding of different locations and customs in England as they develop links with a school in the contrasting locality of the Peak District. The school nurtures the pupils' aesthetic development well through the appreciation of stories and poetry as well as through numerous visits to parks, museums and places of historic and cultural interest. The curriculum provides opportunities for the pupils to compare customs, traditions and beliefs from different cultures and religions and provides opportunities for the pupils to appreciate and understand the cultural diversity of the society in which we all live. For example, at the time of the inspection, many of the pupils were fasting for the Holy Month of Ramadan and this was discussed in assembly. However, opportunities to raise cultural awareness through subjects such as art and music are frequently missed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school has very good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the health and safety and welfare of its pupils. It is a caring school and looks after its pupils very well.
34. The staff know the pupils very well and look after their needs at the school. Child Protection procedures are well understood and the designated teacher and headteacher have received appropriate training and staff awareness is kept at a high level by regular training.
35. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. First day monitoring is undertaken by the Home School Link Worker and the school does all it can to encourage good attendance. There are competitions for the best class attendance, which is rewarded with the Attendance Cup. Individual awards are also given with a bronze certificate being awarded for 100% attendance for a whole term, silver for two terms and a gold certificate for three terms.
36. There are well-established procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and all staff, including the lunchtime supervisors, have had appropriate training. The pupils respond very positively to these expectations. Reports of any bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively and staff are alert to any indications of bullying behaviour.
37. The school has very good procedures for monitoring the pupils' attainments and tracking the progress they make in English, mathematics and science. The senior management team use these assessments well to identify groups of pupils who might benefit from additional support. The headteacher also makes effective use of this data to identify pupils who might not be doing as well as expected. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs usually receive extra support, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons. These pupils' individual education plans and language plans are kept well up-to-date and used effectively to determine future work. They achieve well and make good progress. However, the needs of the more able pupils are not always addressed as successfully within lessons.
38. The school has recently introduced a means of assessing what the pupils should achieve in English, mathematics and science each term, but it is not yet implemented with equal success by all staff. The marking of pupil's work is also inconsistent across the school. Some teachers provide comments in the pupils' books that help to clarify their misunderstandings. Others do not give the pupils' sufficient guidance on how to improve the quality of their work.
39. In the past the school's targets for attainment in English and mathematics by the age of 11 have been too low. The assessment co-ordinator has analysed the attainment of the pupils on entry at age seven and predicted what they might be expected to achieve at age 11. This is having a significant and positive impact on the targets the school has set for attainment in English and mathematics in 2003. Expectations of achievement are now much higher.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school has very good links with the parents and these have improved considerably since the last inspection. The parents express strong support for the school and have a high level of confidence in the teaching and the school's management. The parents feel welcome in the school and are comfortable to approach the staff if they have questions or concerns. The appointment of a Home/School Link Worker has contributed considerably to the links that the school has with parents. She is readily available for parents each day to deal with their questions and concerns. Regular home visits are made about attendance, illness and other home and school issues. Parents work closely with her and help to raise funds to support the pupils' learning. The majority of parents have signed the home-school agreement.
41. The quality of information for parents is very good and has improved since the last inspection. The parents are provided with very good information about their children's progress and their contribution to their children's learning at school and at home is good. Annual pupil reports for parents, are of a good standard. There are regular and frequent newsletters and the School Prospectus is a very comprehensive and helpful document. The parents appreciate the way they are consulted over the priorities that are to be included in the school improvement plan. The parents of those pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their child's progress.
42. Workshops and courses are organised for parents to enable them to help to support their children's learning at home. The school is committed to promoting an interesting and varied programme of community education, mostly aimed at parents, in order to develop their skills in English and ICT. Basic and advanced computer courses are organised for the parents and are well attended. These initiatives have strengthened the partnership between home and school.
43. The school regards its links with parents as of paramount importance in the learning process and strives to ensure that communication with parents is effective. The success of this approach is supported by the inspection evidence.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher is very good. She has a very clear vision of what sort of school she wants Marlborough to be and, with the support of a very able deputy headteacher, the staff and governors, she has created an ethos that strongly supports achievement and learning. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The drive to raise standards is working and although they still need to rise further, the results have risen year-on-year. With almost all of the pupils in the school learning English as an additional language a key area for improvement was to raise the awareness of all of the staff to the pupils' English language acquisition. This has been addressed very successfully through an extensive programme of training for staff in addressing the needs of bilingual learners. Culturally relevant displays, resources and visual aids are well used throughout school. Many other resources are tailor-made by the staff according to the topic focus or for the specific language needs of pupils. This practice has a significant impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the good progress made throughout school in the acquisition of English language. The school now needs to ensure that greater emphasis is placed on the spoken and written language used in mathematics and science. Significant measures have been taken to improve the provision for ICT and to raise standards and the links with parents have been strengthened. More opportunities are now offered to pupils to develop their personal independence in reading and research skills. There has been a great improvement in the rate of attendance and the links with parents have been strengthened significantly.
45. The school adopts flexible arrangements for grouping pupils and has a mixture of setting arrangements across the school for English and mathematics. In Year 6 the classes are grouped for all lessons according to the pupils' prior attainment. In Years 4 and 5 the pupils

are grouped according to prior attainment for mathematics. In Year 3 the pupils are taught in a variety of groupings in their own classroom. These arrangements are evaluated carefully and are changed to meet the needs of the pupils. The arrangements are generally working well, although the work provided for the more able pupils in mathematics in some of the classes is not sufficiently challenging.

46. Monitoring procedures are thorough and the staff and governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school analyses data from national tests and other sources very effectively. The information provided is used carefully to target the pupils' learning and this has been particularly effective in raising standards in English. The quality of teaching is monitored frequently and is a regular feature of the school's work. It has underpinned the improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. The monitoring process is viewed by the staff as being supportive and developmental and it identifies individual training needs. Performance management systems are working well. The governing body fulfils all of its statutory duties and the governors are clear about how the school can be improved. They monitor the school's performance effectively through the work of their committees and the work of the headteacher is appraised carefully. The chair of governors is particularly supportive and leads assemblies on a regular basis.
47. The teachers with responsibilities for managing subjects and other aspects of the school's work are effective, although the leadership of mathematics is not as effective as it might be, particularly in supporting teaching and learning across the school. The work of the co-ordinators for English and information and communication technology has made a significant contribution to improving the curriculum and raising standards in these subjects. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages the provision well. She ensures that the pupils' needs are met through the careful deployment of support assistants and the good quality individual learning plans for the pupils who need them. The co-ordinator for English as an additional language and the headteacher oversee very effectively the work of the teachers and other staff who support the pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.
48. A very good school improvement plan has been put in place that contains a comprehensive evaluation of the previous year's achievements and sets out the priorities for the year. These priorities are shared with parents and they are informed of how their contribution is vital in the drive to raise standards. The pupils' work is scrutinised by the Headteacher and by subject co-ordinators and is monitored for consistency and progression. It is a key factor in the rising standards.
49. The school's financial planning is very good and the governors monitor the budget very carefully. All of the recommendations in the last audit report have been implemented. Educational targets are appropriately linked to the budget and the monitoring of the effectiveness of expenditure on standards and progress is very good. The school makes a thorough analysis of the contracts and service level agreements and decisions are made to best value principles. The school has been very successful in obtaining additional funds for the school by bidding for a range of grants. These are used very effectively in providing additional staff and resources in, for example, the development of pupil's thinking skills and the provision of additional computers. Funds allocated for the provision and support of the pupils with special educational needs are used very effectively and many of the pupils benefit from being part of the additional literacy and numeracy strategy groups as well as the Catch-up programme. The school's systems for day-to-day financial controls are good and very effective use is made of new technology in managing the school's financial systems. The headteacher has established very good procedures and routines.
50. The school has a good match of suitably qualified staff to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and to meet the needs of the pupils with the exception of music. Staff training is well organised and is linked to the School Improvement Plan. A significant strength is that all of the staff are included in the training programme including the classroom assistants,

lunchtime supervisors and office staff. The increased expertise of the support staff has had a very positive impact on the progress that the pupils' make particularly in the way in which they support the acquisition of English language. Induction procedures are good and a tailored induction programme is prepared for each new member of staff.

51. The accommodation at the school is adequate, but tight. All classrooms are of a suitable size for the number of pupils using them. The premises are suitable for delivering the the National Curriculum, but there is no playing field. The school playground is well equipped but it is small and is shared with the Infant School. The school has overcome difficulties in this shared use by adopting a three sitting system for lunch. Since the last inspection, the school has improved the accommodation by installing a computer suite. The library has been re-sited into a secure room and the computerised library system that has been installed. This has contributed to the pupils' improved research skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the quality of education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should

(1) Continue the drive to raise standards in English and literacy by:

- ensuring that there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading across the school;
- ensuring that there is better monitoring by the teachers of what the pupils are required to read at home;
- ensuring that more attention is given to the pupils' understanding of what they read.

(Paragraphs 2, 3, 19, 55 and 59)

(2) Continue the drive to raise standards in mathematics and science by:

- ensuring that all of the pupils have effective models of the spoken and written language used in these subjects;
- that all of the teaching helps the pupils to use and apply the new subject-specific language to their work;
- ensuring that the co-ordination of mathematics is improved.

(Paragraphs 3, 16, 19, 44, 45, 47, 67, 77)

(3) Raise the quality of the teaching to the level of the best by:

- ensuring a better match of work to the pupils' abilities and interests;
- ensuring that the marking of the pupils' work gives them a clear view of how to improve.

(Paragraphs 16, 19, 23, 61, 69, 71 and 77)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	9	32	19	4		
Percentage	2	14	49	29	6		

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	357
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	153
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	142
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	347
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	48
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	36

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	52	37	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	28	33
	Girls	27	19	32
	Total	55	47	65
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	62 (57)	53 (42)	73 (61)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	30	31
	Girls	20	20	27
	Total	37	50	58
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	42 (35)	56 (36)	65 (43)
	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	1
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	
Indian	2
Pakistani	320
Bangladeshi	25
Chinese	
White	1
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	29.8

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	197

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.4
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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani	2	
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	859858
Total expenditure	854997
Expenditure per pupil	2375
Balance brought forward from previous year	51212

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	357
Number of questionnaires returned	112

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	2		1
My child is making good progress in school.	51	33	7	3	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	35	6	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	36	9	6	5
The teaching is good.	55	38	2	1	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	31	7	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	36	6		6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	25	1	1	
The school works closely with parents.	55	36	7	1	
The school is well led and managed.	61	33	1	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	35	3		6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	31	3	3	12

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

52. The standards of English seen during the inspection were well below average and similar to the results of the national tests in 2001. However, pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and this includes the pupils with special educational needs and those who need additional support with learning English. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
53. The good progress made by the pupils is because their particular needs are identified promptly and appropriate work is provided for them. The pupils' individual education and language plans set out targets to improve their skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing. The targets are reviewed regularly and the pupils' progress towards them is monitored consistently.
54. In all of the classes, much hard work is done to encourage the pupils to speak fluently and to listen carefully and most of them make good and sometimes very good progress. This good progress is generally sustained for most pupils. However, although the majority of the pupils listen well, standards of spoken language remain well below average. The school acknowledges this and particular emphasis is given to providing opportunities in lessons for the pupils to speak out and to perform to an audience. In a targeted small group session some Year 3 pupils read a scene from a play about the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Through rehearsal and good support from the teacher, they showed they could speak out confidently and with good expression when they had prepared what they were going to say. In the shared text work of the Literacy Hour, the teachers work hard to extend and broaden the pupils' knowledge of spoken language but too many lack the breadth of vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas clearly and by the end of Year 6, and despite the school's best efforts, a significant minority of the pupils still do not have the skills required to express their thoughts in an articulate manner.
55. By the time they are eleven the pupils' standards in reading are well below average. Reading has been identified by the school as a specific area for improvement and much intensive work on word attack and sound recognition is being carried out through the Additional Literacy Strategy, the Catch-up programme and by specifically targeting small groups of pupils. These groups include pupils with special educational needs and those who require particular help with learning English. Many of the pupils have sound word attack skills and they make good use of these when reading independently. Pupils of all ability levels are able to use their knowledge of letter sounds to sound out words and some of the older, higher attaining pupils can read fluently and with good expression. These pupils can talk about their preferences for popular authors such as Jacqueline Wilson, J. K. Rowling or Roald Dahl and almost all of the Year 6 pupils spoke of their enjoyment of the work of Bob Hartman who visited the school to share his stories and poems. However, although many of the pupils read fluently, their comprehension and inferential skills are still developing and their understanding of what they read is limited. The pupils' individual progress in reading is not monitored carefully or rigorously enough and there is no consistent approach to recording what they read. This adversely affects standards in this aspect of the subject. The school has identified raising the standards of reading as a key area for development. Until recently there has been no uniform approach across the school that ensures the pupils extend their vocabulary using a range of progressive reading schemes. This is now being addressed. Appropriate reading materials have been purchased and the literacy co-ordinator is to monitor how they are used.
56. Improving standards in writing has been a recent school priority and the school's success is shown in the steadily increasing number of pupils who are reaching the required level (level 4) and the higher level (level 5). Nonetheless, standards overall remain well below average. The majority of pupils make good progress as they learn to write and spell. They generally have a

satisfactory knowledge of letter sounds and blends and many pupils can use this when trying to spell unfamiliar words. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used very effectively to improve the pupils' spelling skills. All the pupils use a computer program which enables them to progressively practise the spelling of key words and groups of words with similar sounds. The pupils work through the program independently, checking and assessing their learning before moving on to the next stage. The pupils with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of language acquisition have supplementary support using the 'Jolly Phonics' scheme and in this way, the pupils of all abilities are able to progress well and make a good attempt at spelling correctly as they write independently. As the pupils move through the school, spelling and punctuation become more accurate and the Year 5 and Year 6 pupils understand and can use connectives effectively to produce longer and more complex sentences. All of the pupils are taught research skills and they know how to find information from books. Several of the older, higher attaining pupils make good progress in their ability to self-correct their work using dictionaries and a thesaurus.

57. The pupils are able to write for a range of purposes and audiences but they have a limited knowledge of rich and stimulating vocabulary. This affects the overall quality of their writing so that, although they can write poems, descriptions, play scripts, diaries and stories, all but the most able pupils have some difficulty in developing their writing using interesting vocabulary. For example, the higher ability Year 6 pupils show a good understanding of how language can be used to paint a picture of the conditions of an Antarctic expedition when they read authentic letters and diaries. Many of the pupils are successful in their own efforts at writing letters from Antarctica, but the vocabulary used, and consequently the finished writing, is not of a sufficiently mature quality and style. Furthermore, in many of the classes, the content of the pupils' writing relies heavily on significant input from the class teacher or the learning support assistants. Across the school, the pupils use their writing skills in topic work as they write notes as well as accounts and instructions. The pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning to write and speak English as a foreign language are well supported by teachers and the classroom assistants. They are able to make good use of prompts and writing frames as a basis for their writing. Most of the Year 6 pupils write in a joined and legible hand, and this reflects the consistent teaching of handwriting skills across the school.
58. The quality of teaching in English is good. Of the fifteen lessons observed, the quality of the teaching was excellent in one of them and in ten lessons the teaching was good or very good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. In all the lessons the objectives are clearly explained to the pupils so that they are quite clear about what they are going to learn. The teachers use the text very effectively to encourage the less confident readers and to draw attention to the use of punctuation as well as to the use of the past and present tense. In doing this the teachers make very good use of the overhead projector. Questions are used very well to move the pupils' thinking forward and to encourage closer observation of the text. For example, in a very good lesson with a group of Year 3 pupils, answers to questions such as, 'What is it telling you?' and 'How do you think they might speak?' move the pupils to use their literal and their inferential understanding and to think more deeply about the scene. In the good and very good lessons the class teachers' confidence, enthusiasm and the good relationships that exist motivate the pupils so that they work eagerly and purposefully. In these lessons, the teachers have high expectations that the pupils will complete the activities successfully and they generally do. In an excellent lesson with the Year 4 pupils, the teacher's strategy of asking for 'help' with finding alternative vocabulary was very successful. It encouraged pupils of all abilities to participate and to learn from each other as they used a thesaurus and shared ideas. This excellent lesson was carefully and thoroughly planned with clearly differentiated tasks for the different ability groups. The teachers' high expectations of success and the appropriately challenging tasks resulted in good learning for all the pupils.
59. Where the teaching is less successful, lesson planning contains fewer details of how pupils of different abilities will learn and all pupils are frequently expected to complete the same task.

In these lessons more could be expected of the higher attaining pupils and additional support with writing, such as story frames, sentence starts and word banks would better support the learning of the lower attaining pupils. This was the case in a lesson with a class of Year 3 pupils. The teaching of reading is inconsistent across the school and there is a need, in some classes, to place a greater emphasis on improving the pupils' comprehension skills.

60. Planning and teaching in English is firmly based on the National Framework for Literacy. The co-ordinator oversees the long-term planning for each of the year groups who then plan together for the medium and short term in order to share resources such as group reading materials. Regular assessments of the pupils' attainment in reading and writing are carried out and books are scrutinised as part of the assessment and monitoring process. The test results and data are carefully analysed and used well to set whole-school targets for improvement and, together with the improved quality of the teaching, this has led to the steady rise in standards since the time of the last inspection. In a further drive to raise standards the school has successfully involved parents as part of the Family Literacy Strategy and the co-ordinator actively encourages the pupils to take part in local and national competitions such as the Young Writers and the Young Letter Writers.
61. The quality of the marking is variable across the school and does not always show the pupils how they can improve their work. A more rigorous and consistent approach to on-going assessment, where the best practice is shared, would allow some pupils to make even better progress and for standards to rise at a faster rate.
62. The school's resources for English are good and there has been heavy investment in a range of texts to encourage reading. The school library is a stimulating and very well organised area and the older pupils have been trained to run the computerised system for borrowing books. The library is well used by all classes and makes a valuable contribution to their good progress and learning in library and research skills.

MATHEMATICS

63. By the age of eleven pupils are achieving standards which are well below the national average for their age group, but in relation to their prior attainment the pupils achieve well. The quality of teaching is satisfactory but, overall, too much of the teaching is unsatisfactory or only just satisfactory and this limits the progress that the pupils make. The school has made too little progress in improving the quality of teaching in mathematics since the last inspection.
64. The inspection findings indicate that over their four years in the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress overall although the progress made by the more able pupils in many classes is slower than it should be. The pupils who have special educational needs achieve well in mathematics and are well supported by classroom assistants. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys.
65. The standards on entry to the school are well below average. In Year 3 the pupils are able to accurately record numbers to 10 in words and figures; the most able pupils have a good understanding of place value and can accurately record numbers in hundreds, tens and units. However, nearly a half of the pupils have difficulty in identifying odd and even numbers. Most pupils are able to recognise and name the regular 2 dimensional shapes and they can describe these shapes with reference to the numbers of sides and vertices. The most able pupils can also describe 3 dimensional shapes such as a cube with reference to the number of faces, edges and vertices. Pupils are developing a greater understanding of graphs and, during the inspection, they learnt how to construct a frequency table. The most able pupils were able to use the information they had collected to answer simple questions such as 'how many more children like blue than like red? However, a number of these pupils struggled with some of the more difficult mathematical vocabulary such as 'fewer than'.

66. In Year 6 the pupils are becoming more confident with handling numbers, although the majority still revert to more formal methods of recording rather than trying to calculate mentally. Most pupils when asked to find the difference between 4008 and 2995 chose to carry out a formal written procedure. In a discussion with a group of middle ability year 6 pupils, none were able to give an estimate of the product of 51 and 47, but all tried to complete the calculation using pencil and paper methods. The reinforcement of mental calculation strategies is not a common feature in lessons. The majority of pupils know their multiplication tables but they are less confident when doubling numbers, particularly decimal numbers or those containing fractions. Pupils are not confident in applying their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. For example, pupils were confident in their knowledge of units of measurement, but when asked to solve a problem that required them to interpret a question involving calculations in metres and centimetres they were unable to do so.
67. Whilst the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, it could be better. In the lessons observed in Years 5 and 6 the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better. In Years 3 and 4 the quality of teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to good. The pace of learning for the more able pupils is too slow. In the majority of lessons seen the work was not sufficiently challenging for these pupils and their progress was limited. In the unsatisfactory lessons the teachers had not planned the lesson carefully enough and had not taken sufficient account of the pupils' prior learning.
68. Where the teaching was good the teachers developed the pupils' understanding by getting them to explain why and how they had arrived at their answers and were skilled at clarifying the pupils' misconceptions. In one middle ability set in Year 6, the teacher referred to the marking of pupils' work and highlighted a common error. He explained clearly how and why time is recorded in hours and minutes and not as a decimal; this enabled the pupils to be successful in achieving the learning objective for this lesson. In a good lesson in Year 3, the different ability groups were given appropriately demanding work to do on constructing and interpreting a tally chart and frequency table. The most able pupils were asked to sort pre-collected data and then answer a range of questions from it; the pupils of middle ability were asked to construct a frequency table showing the distribution of a sample of coins, and the least able pupils had to sort a pile of cubes according to their colour and record their findings on a prepared worksheet. All of the pupils in this lesson were given work that was well matched to their abilities and made good progress.
69. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and the Framework for Teaching, but some teachers make better use of the guidance to plan their lessons than others. It is a weakness that the teaching of mental calculation is not consistent throughout the school. Most of the lessons follow the three-part lesson structure, but the mental and oral introduction and the plenary frequently had weaknesses in the lessons observed. The teaching of mathematical vocabulary featured in most lessons, but the pupils' ability to use and understand it was not always checked.
70. Information and communication technology is used well in other subjects and outside the daily mathematics lesson to reinforce the pupils' knowledge and understanding. The pupils can use spreadsheets to collect data about their local community and to represent it graphically. The school has identified the need for a more structured approach to the teaching of how and when to use a calculator.
71. Teachers assess the pupils' attainment regularly. In Years 5 and 6 teachers marking is clearly focused on whether the learning objective has been achieved. However, the quality of the teachers' marking varies between classes and some teachers do not use their assessment to set sufficiently challenging targets for all pupils. The school uses non-statutory test materials and the results from these are used by the assessment co-ordinators to track pupils' progress. Through this tracking groups of underachieving pupils are identified and additional support is provided. The additional support is of high quality and targeted pupils make good progress.

72. The leadership of mathematics by the subject co-ordinator is a weakness. The teaching and learning of mathematics has not been monitored with enough rigour to ensure that all teachers plan their lessons in sufficient detail and are clear about the intended learning outcomes for groups of pupils within their lessons.

SCIENCE

73. The standards achieved by the pupils at age eleven are well below the national average, but they are improving and are better than at the time of the last inspection. The school's national test results have improved significantly over recent years in terms of the proportion achieving level 4 and above, the school's own analysis of the data provides good evidence of movement towards level 4. For example, the proportion of pupils with raw scores just below those needed to attain level 4 has risen year-on-year. This improvement is the result of improvements in the quality of teaching.
74. When pupils enter the school their level of attainment in science is well below average. As they move through the school they achieve well and many pupils are beginning to make good progress. Most pupils are given good opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of science. However, some pupils who are learning English find the new vocabulary in science difficult to understand and, as a result, their progress and achievement is affected. There are also occasions when the lack of challenging work for the most able pupils limits their progress. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from the learning assistants and make good progress.
75. Each year group is taught a wide range of scientific topics. Year 3 learn which materials are magnetic. They can construct electrical circuits with a bulb and a switch and understand how to break a circuit. Many Year 4 pupils understand shadows and the basic concepts of sound and vibration. They recognise the need for a fair test and record their work using appropriate scientific vocabulary. However many pupils do not draw good conclusions and give clear explanations from their findings. Year 5 pupils understand gravity and can compare the earth's gravitational force with that of the moon. Many understand the relationship between the moon and the tides. Pupils learn how materials can be transparent, opaque or translucent. Their level of learning is, however, not developed sufficiently from the previous year when the same work was covered. Many Year 6 pupils can create food chains and know the difference between vertebrates and invertebrates. They understand how exercise affects pulse rate, temperature and breathing rate. They measure and record their results accurately. However, some Year 6 pupils have little opportunity to plan their own work, and groups of more able pupils are occasionally given work that is less challenging than that set for pupils of lesser ability.
76. The quality of teaching is generally good. Of the ten lessons observed the teaching was good or better in six of them. There were no lessons in which the teaching was unsatisfactory. The teaching has a number of strengths: the teachers plan lessons well, have clear learning objectives for the pupils to follow, use explanation and discussion effectively, show good scientific knowledge and establish good relations with the pupils from whom they demand high standards of behaviour. The work prepared for the pupils is interesting and varied. It includes discussion work, clear explanations and tasks suited to all abilities. All of these features were present in a Year 6 lesson in which the pupils were learning that heart rate, breathing patterns and temperature are related to exercise. The pupils became quickly interested in the clear and enthusiastic teacher explanation and instructions. They were asked to continually review their work and to suggest ways of accurately measuring and recording their findings. In a Year 5 lesson on the relationship between the tides and the moon's gravitational pull, the teacher's good knowledge and enthusiastic practical demonstration of the concept encouraged the pupils to complete their work successfully. The teachers establish good levels of class control

because they have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and work hard to maintain good relationships with them. As a result, the pupils waste little time and work sensibly in groups.

77. In order to raise the quality of the teaching to the level of the best, all lessons need to ensure that the work is sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils. There is a need to provide more opportunities for the pupils to plan their own investigations and the teaching of scientific vocabulary requires greater emphasis.
78. There is an effective scheme of work to guide the teachers' planning. The pupils are assessed at the end of each year and are also involved in making judgements about their own progress. However, the results of these assessments are not being used by all teachers to inform the planning of appropriately differentiated work, particularly for the more able pupils. The co-ordinator has built up a good range of quality resources that are well used by the teachers. Information and communication technology is now being used well to support science teaching. For example, in Year 5, the pupils plot their results on thermal insulation on a line graph using a data program.

ART AND DESIGN

79. Only one art lesson was observed but from the scrutiny of the pupils' past and present work, together with discussions with staff and pupils, it is possible to judge that standards in art are in line with those expected. The majority of the pupils make satisfactory progress and this includes those pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. All of the pupils are enthusiastic when discussing their drawings and show pride in their work on display.
80. The Year 3 pupils learn how to mix colours to create different shades and they use their skills to good effect after a visit to a local country park when they paint using a range of autumn tints. They extend their learning about colour as they use 'hot' and 'cold' colours and a computer program to produce designs in the style of Mondrian. By the end of Year 6, the pupils have developed sound drawing and designing skills and they use their sketchbooks to draw moving figures as well as some observational drawings of ancient Egyptian figures. Some of the lower attaining Year 6 pupils make close observations of the school buildings and use pastels and smudging techniques to produce sketches in the style of J. S. Lowry.
81. As they move through the school, the pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge, skills and techniques. They are provided with experiences that allow them to draw, model and print using a variety of media and a good range of resources. There are also opportunities for them to create three-dimensional models and items such as decorative boxes and wall tiles. From the scrutiny of work and the work on display it is evident that there are fewer planned sessions where the pupils have the opportunity to paint. Consequently, by the time they leave the school, their brush control and painting skills are less well developed.
82. In the one lesson observed, the quality of teaching was good. The teacher enjoyed a good relationship with the class, the lesson progressed at a brisk pace and she had high expectations of what the pupils could accomplish. This had a significant impact on how well the pupils learned during the lesson and the standards they achieved. As a result, all the pupils succeeded in producing part of a repeating pattern similar to those designed by William Morris. Their learning was further extended as the teacher made links with the pupils' knowledge of symmetry, tracing and mirroring.
83. Art has had a lower profile in the school curriculum over recent years and it is for this reason that standards in the subject are lower than they were at the time of the previous inspection. Whilst an appropriate amount of time is given to the subject, the way the time is organised means that lessons are usually short. This frequently inhibits the development of skills because, through lack of time, some activities do not progress beyond planning and drawings in

the sketchbook. The co-ordinator is an accomplished artist and is enthusiastic in sharing her talent and expertise. She arranges for the pupils to work with visiting artists and organises visits to art galleries in Birmingham. During the inspection, a group of Year 5 pupils enjoyed a theatre visit to see their artistic contribution to parts of the scenery. As yet, the co-ordinator has had few opportunities to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and there is no formal assessment of the standards attained.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

84. Only three lessons in design and technology were observed during the inspection. However, from the scrutiny of the pupils' past and present work, together with discussions with staff and pupils, it is possible to judge that standards by the time the pupils leave the school are in line with those expected. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards. The pupils' experiences of food technology work and the opportunities to assemble products are a strength of the subject. There are weaknesses in the provision for designing and making mechanisms that make things move in different ways and too few opportunities for the pupils to design and evaluate their own ideas.
85. Pupils in Year 3 make cardboard fish tanks for their magnetic fish tank games. They work with the teacher and learn skills of accurate measuring, cutting and sticking. Year 4 pupils develop their skills of cutting, joining and assembling with their work on making shadow puppets. Many of these pupils, however, have difficulty selecting appropriate tools and techniques and this affects their progress. Many Year 5 pupils can join wheels together with a cam and make them turn. They also have opportunities to make pencil cases. During the inspection all Year 6 pupils visited a local pizza restaurant and made their own pizza. On returning to school the pupils had opportunities to design and make a suitable container for their pizzas.
86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers work effectively with the pupils as a class and as individuals. In a good lesson in Year 6 the pupils are encouraged to think and talk thoughtfully about what they are trying to do. In this lesson the teacher asks probing questions to establish the most effective ideas for designing the pizza containers. In some lessons tasks are very teacher directed and pupils do not have the opportunity develop their own ideas. A lack of time to complete activities also restricts progress in some classes.
87. There is a subject policy and scheme of work that gives good guidance to teachers. Resources are good and the curriculum offers opportunity for pupils to work with a suitable range of materials. Currently the use of Information communication technology to support the curriculum is limited.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

88. By the age of eleven, the pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. The pupils have a good knowledge of local places which is due to the wide variety of excursions and field trips that the school arranges. The pupils have a good knowledge of their local environment and are able to discuss ways in which they would like to see it improved. Pupils' knowledge of other countries and contrasting localities within the UK is less well developed. When pupils have taken part in the residential visit to Dorset, they are able to discuss the differences between a city and a countryside town. Other pupils are less confident in this aspect of geographical knowledge.
89. All of the teaching seen in Geography was either good or very good. The teachers used a variety of teaching styles within a lesson to capture pupils' interest. In one very good lesson in year 4 the teacher used a video of a weather forecast to motivate pupils to produce their own weather report. They showed a good understanding of the weather symbols used and learnt about warm and cold fronts. In a good lesson in year 5, the pupils learnt about scale, the lesson

provided very good reinforcement of pupils' mathematical skills and pupils made good progress with understanding how to read scale on a map. By the end of the lesson the more able pupils were able to estimate the distance between England and Pakistan.

90. The subject is co-ordinated by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator who has ensured that the school is well resourced to deliver Geography. The scheme of work has been recently updated to deliver the new National Curriculum. Teachers assess pupils' progress at the end of each unit of work and the co-ordinator has brought together a portfolio of assessed pupils' work, which supports teachers in doing this. However the school has not looked closely at the overall standards achieved. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' medium term planning and advises teachers on possible areas for development. Overall the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection.
91. By the age of eleven the pupils attain standards in history that are broadly in line with those expected nationally. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The pupils make good progress over the four years at Marlborough and by year 6 they can talk confidently about historical events and have a well developed understanding about how we can find out about the past from a variety of sources.
92. By the time they leave the school the pupils have developed their knowledge and understanding of the lives of people in the past. They have a good sense of chronology. They confidently describe the life of Henry VIII, and can discuss the reason that Henry married six times and the split from the Roman Catholic Church. They have a good knowledge of life in Victorian times and are able to describe the differences between the lives of the rich and poor. Pupils reflect on how things changed and the reasons behind some of these changes.
93. The teaching in history is satisfactory overall, a strong feature of the good lessons observed was the way the teacher cleverly questioned pupils to develop the understanding of why Ancient Egyptians painted their houses white.
94. The school is currently reviewing its curriculum provision in history. However, one very strong feature is the wide variety of visits that support the development of pupils historical awareness. These visits obviously bring history to life with the result that pupils talk animatedly about their historical knowledge. These visits have included trips to the Black Country Museum, an Egyptian trail at a local museum and a residential visit to Dorset.
95. The subject has a new co-ordinator who has recently begun to audit provision for history throughout the school. She has begun the process of collecting samples of work, however currently, there are no formal procedures for assessing pupils learning. There has been no recent monitoring of the quality of planning or teaching. The co-ordinator feels a need to develop her own subject knowledge in order to provide advise and guidance to other teachers.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

96. Information and communication technology (ICT) was judged to be a weakness at the last inspection. The equipment was limited and the staff lacked confidence and subject knowledge. The school has responded admirably to these shortcomings. A new co-ordinator was appointed and he has a clear vision for how the ICT should be developed across the school. A key aim was *to give teachers, pupils and support staff the skills required to access and contribute to a rich diversity of learning opportunities*. The school is well on the way to achieving this aim. The school now has sufficient equipment to meet curriculum needs and time for the co-ordinator to support and monitor the development of the subject. Funding from local and European Community grants has been used well. Staff training has been intensive and all staff now have an appropriate ICT qualification and the confidence and knowledge to teach the subject effectively. A classroom has been converted into a computer suite and

equipped with sixteen computers that are connected to the internet. There are also computers in every class and additional computers elsewhere in the school.

97. The school has made great strides in using computers to develop the pupils' use of English. Every pupil in the school has been placed on an individual spelling program. The school has arranged for classroom assistants to be trained to support the pupils in their learning. All pupils have time allocated to them to improve the proficiency of their spelling. The arrangements are working well. Computers are also used effectively to support improvements in the pupils' writing. An example of this is the *newspaper* produced by pupils using a desktop publishing program. On a few occasions, however, the pupils download blocks of text using internet sources that are put into their own work with no amending or editing. This does little to improve their reading or writing.
98. The standards that the pupils attain by the time they leave the school are now in line with national expectations. All classes use the computer suite twice each week and skills are taught progressively year-on-year. By the time they leave the school, the pupils have well developed word processing skills. These skills are assessed as the pupils move through the school. The quality of teaching is very good. In the lessons observed during the inspection, the teachers invariably made very good use of the projector in the computer suite to display on a white-board the image of the program being used. This helped the pupils to quickly acquire the skills they needed to use the program successfully. In a good Year 4 lesson the teacher had planned work to meet the varying levels of ability in the class. Some pupils were taught how to make use of *bullet points* in their work; others were taught how to import pictures into their *word* document and type a story around the picture. A good feature of the work in ICT is the way it is used to support the work in other subjects. This was evident in the work that Year 6 pupils were covering in science when they used a spreadsheet in *Excel* to present and analyse information about the nutritional values in food. The pupils were taught how to make best use of the program in presenting their findings. In a Year 5 lesson, the pupils' downloaded a selection of maps from a CD ROM data base and after cutting and re-sizing them they skilfully incorporated them into their own work.
99. By the time they leave the school most pupils are able to retrieve text and pictures from the internet and other software and integrate it into their own work. Their skills in using and representing data improve over time with Year 3 pupils creating graphs of their favourite cars and Year 6 pupils using computer software to plot graphs of athletic performances. Overall, the pupils' progress in the use of information technology to solve problems, to research information, to communicate information or to support their work in other subjects is appropriately developed by the time they leave the school.
100. The co-ordinator has very good subject expertise. The scheme of work that he has put in place and the bank of lesson plans that he has devised ensures that the teachers plan progressively more demanding work and are able to make the best use of the equipment available to them.

MUSIC

101. Standards in music are broadly in line with those expected nationally. This is an improvement on the judgement at the time of the previous inspection when standards in music were below national expectations. The school has made satisfactory improvement since that time, although improvement in the area of composing has been limited and work still needs to be done to develop this aspect.
102. From the lessons observed and from discussions with staff and pupils it is evident that all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

103. The majority of the pupils enjoy singing and know a range of songs. In a lesson in Year 6 the pupils quickly learned a new Christmas song, sustaining the melody and singing with clear diction, satisfactory timing and sound voice control. The pupils also showed their awareness of the importance of good posture for singing. The pupils sing in music lessons and during special assemblies such as at Christmas, Easter and Harvest. However, as a direct response to the previous inspection report, there is no whole school singing as part of regular, daily assemblies and this lessens the impact music has on the pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
104. The Year 6 pupils showed that they were able to listen with good attention to detail as they responded well to an Arabian song. Many of the pupils were able to express how they felt about the music and the feelings it evoked. For example, 'It sounds like a wedding' or 'It makes me want to dance.' In a lesson with the Year 5 pupils they were able to use pitched and unpitched percussion instruments in a composition demonstrating a mechanical beat. This activity was linked to previous work based on Stravinsky's Petrushka. The pupils used chime bars effectively and showed a sound understanding of tempo. However, their knowledge and use of structure, texture and dynamics in their compositions was limited.
105. The quality of teaching in music is satisfactory overall and in two of the four lessons observed during the inspection the teaching was good. The best lessons are well planned and ensure that the elements of appraising, composing and performing are included. The teachers generally make good use of visual aids to stimulate the pupils' interest and to reinforce their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a lesson with the Year 3 pupils, where they were learning about the brass section of the orchestra, the teacher used a recording of the Young Person's Guide to the Orchestra very effectively. Together with a selection of brass instruments that the pupils could touch and see, this had a positive impact on their learning. Praise and encouragement are used well by teachers in order to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Less successful aspects of some of the lessons are the lack of clear guidelines as to what is required from the finished performance and too short a time allowed for the pupils to practise and refine their performance.
106. The teachers plan for music using a structured scheme of work which includes themed lesson plans together with tape and CD accompaniments for singing and a range of music for listening. The school acknowledges that there is some lack of musical expertise and staff confidence and in an effort to address this, there has been some exchange of skills. However, in the absence of a permanent co-ordinator, provision for music is not currently adequately monitored to ensure that all the elements of the music curriculum are being delivered fully.
107. The pupils' musical experiences are enriched through a range of visits and visitors to the school. They take part in local musical events such as song festivals, and the pupils have enjoyed performances and participation with dancers and musicians from Africa and South America as well as musicians from the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. Pupils are provided with a broad and balanced physical education curriculum that includes dance, gymnastics and games. Pupils also have swimming lessons and every pupil has the opportunity to swim on a weekly basis for at least a term and a half during their stay at the school. The pupils make satisfactory progress, as they did at the time of the last inspection. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are given equal opportunities to take part in all aspects of the physical education curriculum.
109. The youngest pupils develop and consolidate skills needed for simple team games such as skittle ball. Year 4 pupils gain skills of how to throw accurately in different ways. They also develop the skills of long jump and have opportunities to record and evaluate their own performance. Many Year 5 pupils can control a moving ball with their hands. They make good progress in learning the technical skills of basketball dribbling. In dance, older pupils in Year 6

show controlled movements. They use music appropriately to link their movements with their emotional feelings.

110. The quality of teaching is generally good. In the most successful lessons the teachers monitor the progress of individuals and groups and use assessment to plan for the pupil's needs. For example in a Year 4 lesson pupils measure their own long jumps, evaluate their results and make efforts to further improve their performance. In a Year 3 lesson the clear instructions and crisp pace set by the teacher enables the pupils to learn new team game skills effectively and quickly. Occasionally in some lessons, not enough time is given for pupils to reflect and offer views on their own and others performance.
111. The pupils learn to swim in a nearby pool. They respond well to effective teaching and instruction that enables them to be confident and safe in the water. By the time they leave the school most pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres. Many do much more and attain distance and personal survival certificates.
112. The school has very limited outdoor provision. The small playground and the lack of a field restricts the range of games and athletics activities that can be covered. Resources for gymnastics and games within the school are good and used effectively by the teachers. The curriculum is enriched by extra curricular activities such as keep fit classes, rounders and ball skills. Visiting coaches from the local basketball and football clubs further promote the skills and enjoyment of games.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. The pupils make good progress in religious education and by the time they leave the school their attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Similar judgements were made during the last inspection. The school's scheme of work enables the required areas of study to be covered throughout the key stage. There is a good balance in the time allocated for each topic to allow for major religions of the world to be studied in sufficient detail.
114. Throughout the key stage the pupils have a good appreciation of the importance of faith and ritual across a number of different religions and are beginning to make comparisons between them and their own lives. Alongside Christianity, pupils study Islam, Judaism and Hinduism. Pupils are encouraged to discuss moral and social issues as part of the religious education curriculum. Year 3 pupils discuss and record their feelings on why we give presents to relations and friends at Christmas. They learn the Christmas story and are given opportunities to extend their learning through drama and role play. Year 4 pupils gain knowledge of places of worship. They learn the names of furniture and artefacts in Christian churches and can explain their purposes. Year 5 pupils learn about the journeys undertaken by religious leaders of different faiths. For example, the journey by Mohammed to Mecca is given particular focus. Year 6 pupils study the different religious views of the Creation. They explore their thoughts on the probability of life after death. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given equal opportunities and overall they make satisfactory progress.
115. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the scheme of work for religious education. They make good use of questioning to extend and assess the pupils' understanding of stories and of the moral and social issues surrounding them. In one good lesson the teacher's enthusiasm, effective planning and clear explanations resulted in particularly good learning. The pupils were able to understand and record how a stained glass window can tell a story and how the font, pew and pulpit have different purposes in a church. Occasionally, where the teaching is less successful, there is too much sitting on the carpet for a lengthy period and the teacher has difficulty in ensuring that pupils remain interested and on task.

116. The school policy and scheme of work are based on the locally Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator supports colleagues in the planning and evaluating of topics. There is a good range of resources including books, posters and artefacts that are used to promote the pupils' knowledge of different faiths. Information and communication technology is, however, not used to support teaching and learning in the subject. There are well established links with local places of worship and the teachers use the expertise of religious leaders in the community very well. Opportunities for spiritual development and reflection are available in whole school assemblies. For example the pupils are given time to focus on the lit candle and concentrate their thoughts on homeless people.