

INSPECTION REPORT

THE OAKS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103165

Headteacher: Mrs C Buckley

Reporting inspector: Mrs Christine Field
9479

Dates of inspection: 5 – 8 February 2001

Inspection number: 230803

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bells Lane Druids Heath Birmingham B14 5RY
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Ann Howard
Date of previous inspection:	November 1997

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2818	Mr G Warner	Team inspector	Provision for children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs Science Music	Pupils' welfare, health and safety
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in Druids Heath on the southern boundary of Birmingham. It is currently part of a small education action zone set up to raise educational standards in the area. There are 205 pupils on roll: 113 boys and 92 girls, aged between four and eleven years, with a further 33 children attending the nursery part time. The school serves a local community where unemployment is high and there is a very significant amount of social and economic deprivation that is worsening. Most children's attainment on entry into nursery is well below average. Over fifty per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is very high compared to the national average. Around 10 per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds. There are no pupils in school who receive support to learn English as an additional language. Fifty-one pupils have special educational needs. Four of these pupils have a statement of special educational need in place. The proportion of pupils in school with special educational needs is broadly average. The school's main aim is to provide for pupils' emotional, social and academic development so that they achieve their full potential.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The Oaks is an improving school that serves its community well and is striving to meet its aims. Academic standards are not yet as high as they should be but are rising because of the very strong and determined leadership provided by the headteacher. Good subject management in English, mathematics and science is positively supporting school improvement. The impact of the work of the senior management team is not as apparent. Teaching is generally good, although not an easy task at the school, owing to the many demands that a significant number of pupils make because of their special needs. Younger pupils are making good progress in learning because of the improved quality of education they receive. The school draws well on various national and local initiatives to support older pupils who in the past have underachieved and are now catching up steadily. A minority of pupils has poor rates of attendance and this is limiting their achievements. Staff place emphasis on developing pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem, and this effort is rewarded by the good relationships that underpin the successful learning taking place in most classes. However, shortcomings in curriculum planning and assessment systems are hampering the very best rates of progress being made in lessons, particularly for high-attaining pupils. The school no longer has serious weaknesses, is effective and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has boosted staff morale, established a culture in which everyone in school is determined to make results better, and has a clear plan of action to sustain continuous improvement.
- The school makes good provision in the nursery for children who get off to a very good start in their education.
- The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational and behavioural needs who do well against their personal targets in literacy, numeracy and behaviour.
- Generally good teaching enables most pupils to achieve their personal best in learning.
- The school provides a safe and caring place in which behaviour is good, relationships are harmonious and pupils show respect for one another and adults. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Well-chosen strategies help develop pupils' self-confidence and self-determination to succeed academically and socially.
- The school targets its resources effectively and uses specific grants very well to increase the opportunities for pupils to achieve.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics, science and English, particularly in writing, are still too low, especially in Key Stage 2.
- Assessment practice is weak and this limits the impact of its use in planning lessons that provide sufficient challenge for potentially high-attaining pupils.
- Monitoring and evaluation of curriculum planning are not sufficiently rigorous and this leaves too much to teachers' own interpretation of what is to be taught and how much time is allocated.
- The role of senior management is not well defined and its impact on leading improvement is weak.
- Attendance levels are unsatisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

In 1997 the school became subject to special measures. In March 1999 Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI) removed the school from special measures but found serious weaknesses, specifically in pupils' attainment and in management. On-going monitoring by HMI has continued to flag the low level of many pupils' achievements as the major issue facing senior management in particular and school staff as a whole. Periods of absence due to the serious illness of the headteacher and deputy have slowed progress in some areas. During this time the local education authority has provided support that has kept the school on track with making steady improvement. Since last September, and the return to school of the headteacher to full health, there has been renewed impetus to forging ahead with improving the number one priority of raising academic standards. The impact of her very good leadership is clearly evident in the good progress that has been made in improving many areas of the school's work in the last six months. Overall the school has made sound progress in improving the main weaknesses. Today, the school is providing a satisfactory standard of education for all of its pupils and is well placed to continue to improve.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests (known by parents as the SATs)

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	E*	E*	E	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Mathematics	E*	D	E*	E	
Science	E*	D	E*	E	

Similar schools are those with between 20-35% of pupils eligible for free school meals.

The above table shows that the school's results in the SATs in 2000 were well below average overall when compared to all schools and to similar ones. The results in science and mathematics were amongst the lowest five per cent in the country when compared to all schools. Results in the whole of the table to a large extent reflect the legacy of the past when the school was providing an unsatisfactory standard of education. The inspection findings indicate that standards are improving in English, mathematics and science and that good strategies are supporting older pupils in filling in the gaps in their learning and also targeting their future achievements. The successful implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategies is having a good impact on enabling pupils to develop the basic skills they need for life-long learning. Pupils make good progress in information and communication technology (ICT), art and design, physical education (PE) and religious education (RE) throughout the school. Progress is good in all other subjects at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory at Key Stage 2.

Children enter nursery with well below average skills for their age but are enabled to learn very successfully so that, by the time they are seven, most achieve standards that are average for their age. The standards being achieved by the current eleven-year-olds are below average but are acceptable for most of the pupils given their starting point. Good quality education is now in place throughout the school, though some improvement is required in teachers' planning and assessment practice if all pupils' achievements are to be at the best levels. The school has set realistic targets for improving standards but these are insufficiently challenging. The school has made a useful start in tracking pupils' progress and is now in a position to use the information gathered to assist in target setting.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are keen to come to school and eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good and improving due to the good attention the school is giving to raising pupils' confidence and self-esteem. The headteacher involves parents in attending school with pupils who have been excluded for a fixed term so that they do not miss out on lessons. The high level of exclusion at lunchtimes reflects the problems that some pupils have in managing their own behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils are encouraged to be thoughtful and helpful. They relate well to each other and to adults in school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory but improving because of the good support from welfare services and the school's reward system. A handful of pupils are missing out at school because of their poor attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Aged up to five years refers to the Foundation Stage

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

Teaching is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons; this is a major improvement since the previous inspection. The teaching of pupils with special educational and behavioural needs is good. Teaching is consistently of good or better quality in the nursery and Years 2, 3 and 6 and this leads to pupils' making accelerated progress in these classes. Here teachers are very focused on what pupils need to learn rather than what they want to teach. This results in lessons where everyone is challenged to achieve to the best of their ability. However, shortcomings in planning and assessment systems are hampering the very best rates of progress being made in all lessons, especially where teaching is not good enough and particularly in the 6 per cent of lessons that were judged to be unsatisfactory or poor (one lesson). The teaching of literacy, numeracy, ICT, PE, RE and art and design is good and so pupils throughout school are learning successfully. Pupils enjoy learning at school, they are keen to attend and work productively when tasks are set up to challenge their intellectual, creative or physical skills. Less effective is teaching and learning in geography and history as too little time is given to these subjects in the timetable and insufficient work is undertaken.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school gives due emphasis to literacy, numeracy and personal and social development aspects. This ensures a relevant curriculum for the pupils but limits the time available for other subjects. Very good links with partner schools, and the community at large, enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school draws well on the expertise of a range of specialist services to assist pupils' learning. Support staff are very effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good attention is paid to pupils' moral and cultural development and satisfactory attention paid to their spiritual growth. Very good provision for pupils' social development is enabling most pupils to be well prepared for future citizenship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good support is given to aid pupils' personal and educational development. The Oaks is successful in keeping some very challenging pupils in mainstream education. Assessment practice is weak and this limits its use to aid planning and target setting.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	Good. The school has good strategies for involving parents in their children's learning, for example the well-attended family literacy sessions that are supporting the rising standards.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher gives very good leadership and management. Other senior staff do not have the same insights into school effectiveness matters; they are not sufficiently involved in the identification of priorities and ensuring that they are pursued rigorously. Subject managers are leading improvement in English, mathematics, science and ICT well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory overall. The governing body has an improving grasp of what matters for the school, though it is not yet demanding enough of information and data to help it assess how well the school is doing. Some required information from the annual report for parents is missing, and this is unsatisfactory.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher knows and understands what needs to be done next to improve but other senior staff and the governors are not yet up to the mark on this. Principles of best value are not yet consistently applied.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Finance is well managed and controlled. The headteacher has secured substantial additional funding from various sources to support educational inclusion strategies, for example the 'good days-bad days' project set up to support pupils who have behaviour problems. The school serves its community effectively and efficiently, and gives satisfactory value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. • The school is helping pupils to become mature and responsible. • Parents find the school approachable. • The school is well managed and led. • The school is improving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The behaviour of some pupils is unacceptable and stops others from learning. • Homework is not set consistently through the school. • Parents receive too little information about how their children are doing at school and some feel insufficiently involved.

Twenty-three per cent of parents responded to the questionnaire and 11 attended a meeting with the Registered Inspector. The inspection team agrees with all but one of the views expressed by parents. Behaviour in school is good and, although some pupils do have very challenging behaviour, it is well managed and does not stop others from learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Since the previous full inspection when the school was subject to special measures, it has made steady progress in making improvements to the quality of education provided. Frequent monitoring by Her Majesty's Inspectors has tracked this improving picture in their reports up to a year ago. Today, inspectors judge standards at Key Stage 1 to be significantly better than they were, and are now average in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and religious education. Standards show signs of lifting in Key Stage 2, although they are currently below average overall in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Standards in writing are well below average. The standards being achieved by eleven-year-olds are average in art and design, design and technology, ICT, and in religious education. Standards are good in physical education, especially dance where high quality experiences are provided for all pupils weekly by a professional dance instructor. History and geography are the only non-core subjects at both key stages where standards are below those expected. This is because insufficient time is given to enabling pupils to systematically develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in these subjects. The school has rightly given emphasis to enabling pupils to improve their basic skills and is currently giving extra time for them to develop their writing skills, as these remain a weakness. National literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully implemented and are having a positive impact on both teaching and learning. The school's rate of improvement in standards over the last four years mirrors the rate seen nationally. The school continues to work towards raising academic standards as its number one priority.
2. The school draws well on various national and local initiatives to support older pupils who in the past have underachieved and are now catching up steadily. For example, *Excellence in Cities* funds are used to provide additional support for a few pupils who have missed a lot of schooling in the past because of their home circumstances. A minority of pupils have poor rates of attendance and this is limiting their achievements. The school is working in conjunction with social services to help twelve pupils develop the skills they need to cope with stressful situations. Staff place emphasis on developing pupils' self-confidence and self-esteem and this effort is rewarded by the good relationships that underpin the successful learning taking place in most classes. The introduction of target groups in each class has increased the drive towards improvement. Underachieving pupils have been given specific targets to support their learning and this is a positive feature. However, shortcomings in planning and assessment systems are hampering the very best rates of progress being made in lessons, especially where teaching quality is not good enough.
3. The results in the Key Stage 1 SATs in 2000 were below average in reading, above average in writing and average in mathematics when compared to all schools. When compared to those schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, they were well above average and were amongst the top five per cent of similar schools in writing. Teachers' assessments in science indicated above average results when compared to all schools.
4. Results in the Key Stage 2 SATs in 2000 were well below average overall when compared to all schools and those with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. The results in science and mathematics were amongst the lowest five per cent in the country when compared to all schools. Results in recent years, to a large extent, reflect the legacy of the past when the school was providing an unsatisfactory standard of education. Over the last few years, boys have not done as well as the girls. As they move through the school their standards slip behind even more, so that in 2000, boys did significantly worse than the girls in mathematics in the Year 6 SATs. The headteacher and mathematics co-ordinator have tracked this trend carefully and the school has taken some effective measures to stem the difference. During the inspection, inspectors noticed no significant difference in the attitudes and motivation of boys and girls, although occasionally where teaching failed to appropriately challenge all pupils, the boys tended

to become distracted and displayed disinterest in their studies. This was noticed in group work tasks in literacy and numeracy hours in the middle years of both key stages.

5. On entry into the nursery, the profile of children is well below average. Children receive a good education in the nursery with the focus firmly on each individual. Learning needs are assessed early on, and good support ensures the children make good progress and are successful in what they achieve. When children move into the reception class the term in which they become five, their attainment is below average and the provision here enables the children to make steady progress. By the time they reach their fifth birthday, most have made good progress overall, and in some cases very good progress in learning, even though standards are below the level expected by the Early Learning Goals. Throughout Key Stage 1 most pupils make good progress overall, though it accelerates considerably in Year 2. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainments are average. The progress of most pupils is good throughout Key Stage 2 though it tends to plateau in Year 4 and to a lesser extent in Year 5. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good because good attention is paid to their individual learning needs. The progress of higher-attaining pupils is steady but they could achieve better in some lessons if more were demanded of them. Consistently good teaching with some very good features in Year 3 ensures that pupils get off to a good start in the junior phase of learning. The current Year 3 has an average profile with pupils' attainment covering a wide spread of ability. The involvement of parents in family literacy sessions is proving beneficial to supporting the pupils' reading skills. Good and often very good teaching in Year 6 results in pupils being well prepared for the next stage of education.
6. The literacy hour has been introduced successfully and benefit is beginning to be seen in standards of reading and writing, especially in Key Stage 1. Pupils develop appropriate skills in reading and the overall level of attainment in reading is average at the end of both key stages. Many older pupils read fluently and with expression but few are able to get below the surface of the text to gain greater understanding beyond the literal. Pupils' reading skills develop systematically as they move through the school but they do not have enough opportunities to use library books for researching topics from an early age. Pupils have satisfactory speaking and listening skills and are confident in discussion. The use of Standard English is a weakness however and often pupils use only limited vocabulary when putting forward their ideas. Writing skills are sound in Key Stage 1 but are not yet developed satisfactorily in Key Stage 2. Pupils do not all have the key skills of planning and structuring their work accurately. The development of extended writing is unsatisfactory. For these reasons, attainment in writing is well below average by the time pupils leave at eleven. The improvement in writing has been a key focus of management; and various initiatives have been introduced successfully. Approaches are clearly not yet working well enough in Key Stage 2 but there are encouraging signs of good quality writing in religious education, for example.
7. Pupils achieve well below average standards overall in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, largely because the progress they have made from a good start up to the age of seven has not been consistently maintained in Key Stage 2. There is evidence that the numeracy strategy is improving the way in which the numeracy element of mathematics is taught and learnt throughout the school. Standards in numeracy are broadly average at the end of both key stages. Good attention is paid to developing pupils' counting, number and arithmetical competence but older pupils are often still too slow to work out the answer. Many do not have a secure grasp of multiplication tables to assist them with mental-maths work. Inspectors observed a number of occasions when the highest-attaining pupils could have quite easily been taken one step further in their learning. There is good use of numeracy to support work in other subjects such as ICT, for example. The co-ordinator has good insights into what improvements are needed. Although there are signs that the school is moving in the direction of good educational provision in mathematics, the pace of change needs to be quickened if standards are to get the required boost.
8. Attainment in science is average at the end of Key Stage 1, and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. In many respects this picture reflects past shortcomings in both teaching and learning in science. Teachers are now confident in teaching the range of science and in particular are emphasising practical work as much as possible. Pupils are rising well to the challenges that

'learning by doing' brings. Teachers provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to choose their own resources, organise their work and to discuss what they observe. In Years 5 and 6 pupils confidently hypothesise the outcome of investigations and compare these with the actual results, writing up appropriately their scientific discovery. The level of pupils' basic scientific general knowledge is broadly satisfactory and pupils have a secure command of scientific vocabulary in discussion, but do not use this consistently in personal writing. The use of worksheets is limiting the opportunities for older pupils to write at length about their own scientific discoveries.

9. Pupils achieve average standards in ICT at the end of both key stages. Pupils use computers with confidence to process simple text and to produce pictures using various software packages. Younger pupils handle the Roamer with good control and application. In geography older pupils were observed to access the Internet to find out in depth about banana growing in St Lucia. The school has added to its computer hardware stock, and opened a new ICT suite since the time of the previous inspection. Key Stage 2 pupils have benefited well from regular time-tabled sessions to build on skills, knowledge and application of ICT. The enthusiasm of the co-ordinator has introduced new and very good software to support basic skills development and to extend the use of ICT across the curriculum. The school has a sound platform on which to build future improvement at a good rate.
10. At the end of both key stages pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with that expected by the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding about aspects of religion and apply learning well to their own lives. Pupils learn about Christianity together with other major world faiths such as Hinduism and Judaism. Older pupils discuss, with thoughtfulness, some of the views people from different religions hold, and consider similarities between them. Good use is made of pupils' own experiences to support learning in religious education. Younger pupils have good knowledge about stories from the Bible. Older pupils explore the meaning of the Apostles' Creed and then create their own code to live by. Pupils show respect and tolerance for the beliefs of others.
11. The school has published targets for the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics. Approaches to analysing data and using information to project likely achievements have been fairly ad hoc to date. The targets for English and mathematics for next year are projected to be 55 per cent of pupils expected to achieve average or above standards. These targets are easily within reach if the quality of teaching and learning is at least sustained at the level observed during the week of inspection. As they stand the targets take insufficient account of the improving educational provision and are not set high enough. The school is aware that monitoring and evaluation have not been given the concerted attention required and curriculum planning, whilst successful on a broad front, has lacked clarity in identifying what different pupils, especially higher attainers, need to learn. Teachers' evaluations of how well different pupils are learning are not yet sharp enough and this leads to some over-consolidation of learning. These shortcomings are limiting the very best rates of progress being made. Management has been successful in making improvements to a number of aspects of school life and is well placed to carry on with the necessary action to enable standards at Key Stage 2 to improve, to compare more favourably with benchmark schools.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. There has been a considerable improvement in this aspect of the school's standards since the last full inspection. The headteacher and staff have worked hard with pupils and their parents to create a very positive ethos where pupils are keen to come to school, eager to learn and proud of their achievements. Pupils' attitudes to school are generally good. A small number of older pupils who show signs of becoming disaffected with school are usefully being supported by a range of strategies geared to helping their motivation. They speak with pride about their school, and like their new identity and new school badge. They demonstrate an enthusiasm for learning right from their first days in nursery, and they maintain this sense of interest as they grow older. They listen well, speak with confidence, and work well together, sharing their ideas and their

problems. This was well illustrated in a mathematics lesson in Year 6, when the pairing of a 'worker' with a 'checker' helped both pupils to make good progress.

13. Behaviour is good, both in lessons and during break-times. Although there are still a few boys, particularly at the top end of Key Stage 2, who sometimes have difficulty in exercising self-control, their behaviour is very well managed by the teaching and support staff to avoid disruption to lessons. In this respect the team felt that some parents were unduly concerned. The great majority of pupils behave well, are courteous and considerate, and like to do their very best for their teachers. In many lessons the pupils are so engrossed in their activities, or in listening to the teacher, that misbehaviour simply is not an issue. When pupils in Year 2 were learning about halves through a story about a block of chocolate, their sense of awe and anticipation was palpable, and you could have heard a pin drop! All pupils respond well to the frequent use of praise and rewards, and simply glow with pride when they achieve the ultimate accolade of an entry in the Gold Book. The use of sanctions is understood and respected. Although there is still a fairly high level of fixed-term exclusions for a primary school, the school is making good progress in the inclusive treatment of some pupils with extreme behavioural difficulties. Through co-operation with their parents, these pupils remain in school with parental supervision when they are under stress.
14. The personal development of pupils is good. This is an area which has been a focus for improvement through an increase in the opportunities provided for pupils. In the nursery, they learn how to take responsibility for their actions and their work through initiatives like self-registration for dinners, and selecting their own resources. This sense of responsibility develops as they go through the school, and older pupils undertake roles like office assistant, assembly monitor and infant play leader with care and reliability. Pupils are encouraged to think of others, and show a willingness to apologise for mistakes, as well as to care for people and property. They develop confidence and high self-esteem whilst also respecting the efforts of their peers. Some pupils with considerable emotional problems show an admirable level of social integration and ability to look to the future with confidence.
15. Relationships in the school are good. There is racial harmony at work and at play, and no evidence of any tensions between different ethnic groups or genders. Pupils and adults show mutual respect and the oldest pupils accept that younger children look up to them as an example. There were no instances of bullying or oppressive behaviour seen during the inspection.
16. The school has a level of attendance (92%) which is well below the national average and this is unsatisfactory. Unauthorised absence is low, but there are still a handful of pupils whose poor attendance is a major factor in their poor rates of progress and consequent low standards of attainment. The school draws well on specialist support to assist in its work to improve attendance but recognises that this aspect is an on-going priority. One of the school's successes is the introduction of *best-attending class rewards* that are awarded weekly in assembly and are motivating improved attendance and punctuality. Nevertheless attendance is a key issue for the school to continue to address.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. During the week of inspection, teaching was of satisfactory or better quality in 93 per cent of lessons. Teaching quality was good in 44 per cent of lessons, very good in 25 per cent and in one per cent excellent. It was unsatisfactory in seven per cent (3 lessons) and poor in one per cent (one lesson). The quality of teaching is judged to be good overall. This is a significant improvement since the time of the previous full inspection in 1997 when some 67 per cent of lessons were judged to be of satisfactory or better quality. Teaching is consistently good or better in the nursery and Years 2, 3 and 6. The investment in staff development has been productive and this is reflected in the good levels of subject knowledge and confidence to teach the National Curriculum and religious education that teachers now have. Weaknesses in the provision for pupils with special educational needs have been sorted out. Very effective support has been provided by the local education authority to establish good quality provision for those pupils with special educational and behavioural needs. The time available for teaching has been

increased and is used more efficiently than it was. However, too much discretion is given to teachers about how often they teach subjects, and some subjects, for example geography, receive too little time in some years. Staff absences flagged as a severe problem in 1997 have been reduced dramatically. Both headteacher and deputy headteacher returned to the school fully fit in September following serious illness. Today, staff morale is very positive – staff are hardworking and committed. The school will always be a challenging place to teach in because of its social setting, but teachers are determined to give of their best to the pupils and this is a major reason why so many pupils achieve as well as they do.

18. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. The nursery is currently separate from the reception class but plans are well advanced for the nursery to be located in the main school very soon. There is very good team work in the nursery that enables the youngest children in school to get off to a flying start in their education. Activities are well chosen to make learning fun as well as productive. The nursery environment is very stimulating, for example the area set up as a bear's cave attracts all explorers, however intrepid, to go on a bear hunt with torches or cameras through forest and swamp. As they move into reception the quality of teaching maintains most children's progress at a steady rate but is not challenging higher-attaining children to make the advances in learning that they should. One observation of group activities in the literacy hour revealed unsatisfactory teaching largely because higher-attaining children did not make sufficient progress with the task they had been set. Planning, based mainly on the Early Learning Goals, is not as well focused on individual learning in the latter part of the Foundation Stage as it is for the youngest children. Teaching overall is confident and lessons are well structured to engage the children's interest and make learning enjoyable. Good attention is paid to promoting the children's self-esteem and self-worth whilst they are effectively guided onto the National Curriculum programmes of study when ready.
19. Teaching is good overall in Key Stages 1 and 2. Literacy and numeracy hours are well established in all classes and are effective in helping pupils develop basic skills securely. Some teaching, although satisfactory for most pupils, is not enabling the higher-attaining pupils to reach their potential. This is because lesson planning is too general and does not state explicitly what the range of pupils in the class or group should learn. All teaching suffers from this shortcoming but in the best lessons the actual practice observed supplemented the weakness in the written planning. Teachers' assessment of the learning therefore is also too general and is not providing reliable information for targeting future work. So, targets for attainment are often vague, not supported well by marking of work and the pupils and their parents do not always know how well things are progressing. The monitoring of teaching across the school to identify strengths and weaknesses has been ad hoc to date. English and mathematics are the exceptions and here good evaluation of teaching and learning has led to sustained improvements. Other co-ordinators have yet to have opportunities to see others teach the subject on which they lead. The features which make the best quality teaching in the school are currently insufficiently shared. Homework consists mostly of reading and spelling but practice is variable. The headteacher recognises the need to make requirements more explicit to teachers, pupils and parents.
20. The most effective teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 enabling pupils to make good progress was most apparent in Years 2 and 3 and in Year 6 classes. This is because teachers here have high expectations of what the range of pupils are capable of achieving by the end of the lesson. Teaching in these classes is very focused on what pupils need to learn next to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in each subject. This was well demonstrated in an English lesson in Year 3 where each pupil had different key words to learn. The lesson was well prepared and an innovative method involving the production of a board game was used to engage pupils' attention and this sustained application in learning key vocabulary. By the end of the lesson all pupils were well advanced in the design of a board game that involved landing on squares and moving forward only if the key word were spelt correctly. Higher-attaining pupils learned words such as *especially*, *adorable* and *successfully* whilst lower-attaining pupils reinforced their learning of less complex words such as *because*, *said* and *went*. Pupils spoke animatedly about the game, how to play it, and made gains in the words they knew and could use.

21. The six per cent of unsatisfactory and poor teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2 was observed in Year 1 and Year 4. Shortcomings were largely due to ineffective teaching methods and organisation, a lack of clarity of purpose and unsatisfactory match of tasks to ability. The quality of short-term planning throughout the school although satisfactory overall is variable. In some lessons teachers set class objectives for learning but do not give sufficient attention to the individual needs and capabilities within the class or group, nor do they set down specific targets in their short-term planning. In the classes where teaching has shortcomings this weakness is exacerbated and results in unsatisfactory conditions for learning. Assessment of learning outcomes is too informal and is not used sufficiently well to assist the planning of future lessons. All of these slow down rates of learning especially in English and mathematics and are therefore key issues for the school to address.
22. Teaching of the pupils with special educational needs is good and is having a beneficial impact on the progress these pupils make in meeting their individual targets. Teaching and support staff have a very good understanding of the needs of pupils with limited English language. Work is well planned and, through effective support, these pupils make good progress. Additional provision secured through *Excellence in Cities* funding and monies from the *Small Education Action Zone* is proving very effective, as temporary additional teachers and nursery nurses are working beneficially with target groups of pupils to help them catch up on learning they have missed in the past.

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

23. In the previous inspection report the curricular opportunities offered to pupils lacked continuity for the under-fives and were unsatisfactory at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Provision for pupils with special educational needs was also unsatisfactory. Findings from this inspection show that the quality and range of learning opportunities for all pupils is now good and statutory requirements are fully met.
24. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is planned appropriately on the basis of the recommended Early Learning Goals and now provides continuity. Plans to relocate the nursery adjacent to the reception in the main school building are well in hand and will enable joint curriculum planning and the sharing of expertise to be more easily undertaken.
25. The school has worked hard to put in place a curriculum in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 which has satisfactory breadth and is relevant to its pupils. The national literacy and numeracy strategies and the ICT strategy have been implemented successfully and pupils are clearly benefiting from these initiatives. Personal and social education is given very good emphasis in the curriculum and the school's approaches are supporting academic learning very effectively. There are satisfactory arrangements for sex education and drugs education. Religious education is taught according to the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus. However, there is still some imbalance in the time allocated to particular National Curriculum non-core subjects, for example history and geography. The school has quite rightly given priority to the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and timetables reflect this. The improved performance of pupils in Key Stage 1 shows that the teaching and learning of basic skills is secure. In Key Stage 2 pupils are also benefiting significantly from a stable curriculum but the effect is not yet showing in the standards achieved by older pupils.
26. Current curriculum planning provides pupils with worthwhile experiences of all except three National Curriculum subjects. These are history, geography and music. Further revision and adjustments are necessary to time allocations in order to provide pupils with appropriate experience of these subjects. It is timely, now that the numeracy and literacy strategies are established, to consider ways in which pupils can have further opportunities to consolidate and apply their basic skills through all subjects. The curriculum planning systems in the school are satisfactory but vary in levels of detail and quality of implementation. Cross-curricular planning alleviates some of the timetable constraints and can be effective, but there is too much flexibility. Learning objectives are not clearly identified in all subjects and time allocations are not always adhered to. Lessons are often moved around on the timetable. These practices make rigorous

monitoring and evaluation difficult. The juxta positioning of some subjects has a detrimental effect on learning; for example literacy following swimming causes time slippage and physical education following art and design has practical constraints.

27. The school provides good support for extracurricular learning through numerous initiatives such as the homework club, the dance club, the computer club, the day-enders club, the family literacy group and the lunchtime sports which are ably provided by Baverstock sixth-formers. A few parents raised concerns about the small amount of homework that pupils receive. The inspection team agrees with this concern. There is a good homework policy in place but it is inconsistently applied.
28. The previous inspection found that the school made satisfactory provision overall for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This inspection finds that provision is good overall. There is evidence that the values and attitudes promoted reflect the aims of the school well. The very good provision for social development prepares pupils very well for their future life in school and society. Pupils' spiritual development is fostered appropriately through the acts of collective worship, religious education lessons and through poetry, drama and art. These experiences encourage pupils to think about others and grow in their spiritual development. Moral development is promoted very well through the school's code of behaviour. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and know what is right and what is wrong. Good behaviour is consistently rewarded and celebrated in assemblies. Staff model very well values such as courtesy and respect in day-to-day relationships with each other and with pupils. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to develop social skills and take responsibility for tasks in the classroom and around the school. In Year 6, for example, some pupils choose to be infant play leaders at dinner-times. Their role involves teaching the younger children new games and explaining how to behave well. Assembly monitors take responsibility for the overhead projector and lights, and carry out their tasks efficiently. The school promotes pupils' cultural development in numerous ways but particularly through the programme of events, visits and visitors to the school. Visitors from other cultures have included Chilean artists and a Taiwanese student. Pupils are being given appropriate experiences to enable them to take their place in a culturally diverse world. Year 6 pupils valued their five-day residential visit to Bellheath environmental centre where they said they learned how to respect animals and work together as a team. A number of visits are made to Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery to study history topics such as the Egyptians. Learning resources are carefully chosen and include a growing collection of framed prints; these contribute very well to pupils' cultural development. There are though some missed opportunities for promoting cultural development in music lessons.
29. The school takes carefully thought out and innovative steps to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities and equal access to the curriculum. The organisation of group work is complex but is very well targeted to meet the specific academic or behavioural needs of pupils. This is well managed but needs continual monitoring to ensure that absence from class lessons is not detrimental to some pupils' progress over time. Provision is enriched by the very good support drawn from a wide range of personnel including parents, pupils from the local secondary school and social services. Rather than exclude pupils, parents are offered the opportunity to attend school for part of the day to support the learning of their child. During the inspection week the two examples of this arrangement were working very well. The mother of a Year 6 pupil made a positive difference to her son's behaviour and said she enjoyed supporting him in the lesson. Teaching and learning resources such as books, posters, prints, and music in dance lessons are successfully selected to appeal to pupils and therefore increase their motivation to learn. They reflect pupils' experience of our multi-ethnic society.
30. The relationship with the local secondary school to which most pupils transfer is well established. Pupils in Year 6 say they are being well prepared for the move into secondary education. The very strong links with the community generally significantly enhance the quality of pupils' learning. For example a local chocolate manufacturer donated a significant amount of money to provide the school with new nameplate, prospectus and other marketing materials when it changed its name to The Oaks.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school has improved the way in which it cares for its pupils in most respects since its last full inspection in 1997. The school is harnessing a variety of local and national initiatives to help break down some of the barriers to learning that a significant number of pupils face. For example, the involvement of social services in the *Good Days – Bad Days* initiative based on exploring family issues, such as crime, racism and drugs are helping pupils cope with personal problems and deal with personal conflicts. Good strategies for improving attendance are being pursued even though the level of attendance remains well below that seen nationally. A rewards system has been introduced that is having a positive impact on the attendance rate of pupils who have not been regular attenders in the past. However, there is a small number of pupils whose irregular attendance still has a negative impact upon their learning. The invaluable help of the local authority by on-going monitoring of the attendance levels of all groups of pupils is being very supportive. Registration is undertaken efficiently and sets the scene effectively for a good day's work by pupils. The few pupils who arrive late for the beginning of the day are quickly settled into school so that their learning can be maximised.
32. The ethos of the school is warm and caring. It places the needs of all of its pupils at the centre of its aims. Good attention is being paid to the health, safety and welfare of pupils throughout the school. All adults involved with the children in the nursery and reception classes sensitively ensure that children are quickly settled into school routines. This helps the children feel safe and secure. Throughout the school adults are very aware of the emotional needs of pupils and give very good support to them. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. It is a major force in impacting upon the progress being made by pupils, as they are more settled in their learning. It has particularly supported better behaviour, as this is now good throughout the school. All adults are equally vigilant about the pupils' personal needs. In consequence, the pupils' personal development is good.
33. Support from a wide range of outside agencies is sought and successfully given. There is effective use made of educational psychologists to give support to pupils with special educational needs. Students from the 6th form of the local comprehensive school come into school on a weekly basis. They effectively support the pupils in developing physical skills in lessons and at lunchtime. Lunchtime supervisors make a very valid contribution to the pupils' personal development through the comprehensive range of activities that they successfully promote. Child protection procedures are now securely in place with the deputy headteacher being the nominated member of staff. He has been trained to carry out this role effectively. Procedures are well known to teachers. They follow the locally agreed guidelines. These positive features of a caring school's response to issues identified at the previous inspection confirms the commitment of the headteacher and other adults working in school to school improvement. Health and safety aspects are attended to well. Written procedures are followed very thoroughly and with great care. Pupils are taught safe practice. For example, thoughtful attention is given to being appropriately dressed for physical education lessons.
34. The most recent inspection report indicated that, although procedures met requirements, assessment was insufficiently developed. This remains the case and is a significant weakness to be addressed. Staff rely too heavily on informal assessment based upon their good knowledge of pupils but this leads to ad hoc and inconsistent practice in what is formally recorded and used to assist planning. There is no agreed whole-school approach to what should be assessed nor a schedule identifying assessment opportunities across the curriculum. A useful policy for assessing pupils' attainment and progress has recently been written but has not yet been implemented. There are positive features in practice such as the profiles being compiled of pupils' individual achievements in English and mathematics. However, there is no whole school approach to their use. The lack of monitoring by the assessment co-ordinator is not helping to move practice forward. There is limited regular testing to support target setting work. There is too much reliance upon the information obtained from the national tests as the only evidence upon which to inject further input into learning. Pupils are given little opportunity to become involved in reviewing their own progress so that they are clear about what they need to do to improve. One exception to this is the involvement of pupils with special educational needs who are involved in

their own reviews. Parents have identified that they would like more information about how well their children are doing at school. The inspection team agrees that more detail on individual progress and the identification of targets for improvement in all subjects could usefully be shared with parents.

35. Pupils with special educational needs have their needs reviewed regularly. Their well-written individual education plans are reviewed systematically. They are effective because teachers and support staff are jointly involved in their writing. This is following the system that was put into place by the local authority support teacher in response to the issue raised in the last inspection report. The headteacher keeps a very careful overview of the provision being made to meet pupils' special educational and behavioural needs. The deputy headteacher as the special needs co-ordinator has monthly meetings with support staff to check on how well needs are being met. All in all, the school is very responsive to pupils' special educational needs and is harnessing additional support to assist pupils who in other circumstances may not be kept in mainstream schooling.
36. The headteacher and staff know the pupils and their families well. The rewards system that the headteacher has introduced is well liked by pupils of all ages and is motivating many to achieve well. The pupils are given recognition for their good work and behaviour and conduct by having it written up in the *Gold Book*. The fortnightly assembly held to celebrate this is attended by parents and carers. It plays a significant part in raising pupils' self-esteem. It makes it clear to parents and carers that the school gives recognition when it is deserved. This successfully promotes the secure development of improving both academic and behaviour standards throughout the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The school has adopted a totally new approach to the partnership with parents since the last full inspection in 1997 when it was made a key issue. Parents and carers are now actively encouraged to become involved in their children's education, and the value of strong home-school links is recognised and pursued. In response to this new open approach parents and carers now have confidence in the school, and are happy with the provision it makes for their children. They recognise the significant improvements that have been made in the last few years.
38. The headteacher and staff are aware that good communication is essential in developing this partnership. They are readily accessible on a daily basis, and provide plenty of regular newsletters and topic information to supplement the user-friendly prospectus and nursery handbook. The governors' annual report is also well produced and interesting to read but it does lack a few legally required details. Some parents felt that they did not receive sufficient notice of meetings and events. The team felt that the only evidence for this was regarding the weekly *Gold Book* assembly, when decisions about which parents might have children directly involved were inevitably made only a day or two beforehand. In fact all parents are welcome to attend this event. Overall, the information provided by the school is good. There are three parents' information evenings held each year, at which targets for improvement in mathematics and English are shared. Written annual progress reports are reasonably detailed but lack a consistent approach and thus do not always make clear statements about attainment, progress and areas for improvement. Parents and carers of children with special educational needs are well served by the good quality of detail about their children's development contained in the individual education plans, and many attend review meetings to discuss progress on a regular basis.

39. The school community is benefiting from several initiatives designed to encourage and enable parental involvement in their children's learning. A family literacy project run in conjunction with a further education college is a very popular session this term, and its effects on standards is being monitored. More than half the pupils in Year 3 were joined by a parent or grandparent for an *Inspire Workshop* during the inspection week. This session was very effective in demonstrating how parents can help children to practice and learn key words at home, through playing games with them. The school is to be congratulated for making this such an inclusive activity in which even those pupils who were not accompanied by an adult made a set of literacy resources to take home. A home-school reading scheme is working well and, in response to parental suggestion, a homework club has been set up. However, evidence supports those parents who feel that the school's homework policy is not followed consistently.
40. Overall the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good but there is still room for improvement. Several parents give volunteer help in school, for example in running the crèche. The staff are hoping to encourage more to help within classes, and are planning to run a second course on supporting children at home. The improved attendance levels reflect the higher regard for education being encouraged in the community but, unfortunately, there are still some parents who do not recognise that poor attendance has a very detrimental effect on their children's progress, despite the good strategies being pursued by the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The Oaks Primary School has had a chequered past but, thanks to the hard work, foresight and determination of the headteacher, it has turned from being subject to special measures to being an effective school where the pupils are given a good deal. This is mostly seen in rising standards and the good quality of education provided. In 1997, when the school was first inspected, numerous serious weaknesses were identified, not least in management. During the following years, Her Majesty's Inspectors charted a slowly improving situation in their follow-up reports. Repeated staff absence in this period slowed the course of improvement but, by March 1999, the school was taken out of special measures, though a smaller number of serious weaknesses remained. Today, although some aspects of management still require continued improvement, serious weaknesses no longer exist. The school is building well for success and has a bright future.
42. When the headteacher joined the school it had turned the corner, but there was a long, uphill task ahead to make all the necessary improvements. Single handedly, for key personnel were absent, she injected aspiration and expectation into the school community and worked hard with the staff to draw them into the centre of management. In the past, staff had been marginalised in many ways and the process of broadening the base of management took time because of the general lack of confidence and low morale. Nonetheless, staff accepted the need for change, and showed their commitment by joining with the headteacher in making improvements to teaching, learning and the co-ordination of subjects.
43. Emphasis was placed on enabling pupils to develop their skills in English and mathematics and rising results in these subjects are testament to the approach taken. The unsatisfactory provision for special educational needs, reported then, has been much improved with expertise from the local education authority used well to support the good improvement. A significant number of pupils in school were reported as becoming disaffected and this has changed completely. Very good attention is paid to enabling pupils to develop confidence and positive self-images and this is enabling some to cope with very stressful lives and keep on track with their academic learning. Now, there is a cheerfulness to the place and all visitors are welcomed, and valued, for the contributions they can make to the success of the school. There is also an openness that invites evaluation of systems and procedures to ensure they work effectively.
44. The chief agent for improvement in school, in addition to the headteacher, is the growing sense of teamwork. Staff are still adjusting to change, but they take great succour from sharing, exchanging and sometimes just talking about the things that challenge them. The staff room is

where determination is revitalised and anxiety is quelled. The headteacher gives not only fine leadership but very good counsel too, as do some of the key managers. However, up to now, senior managers have not had a well-defined role in influencing the direction of the school and they have not led improvement effectively enough. There is no clear identification of the individual responsibilities of members of the senior management team nor a remit that sets out exactly what role they must take in the strategic management of the school. Because of the history of absence of key staff, management systems tend to operate on a collegiate basis. This ensures that where absence continues, or there is weakness in individual contribution, this can be bypassed so management remains effective and efficient. This means that the management of some aspects of the school, such as special educational needs, is different here compared to the usual pattern.

45. Subject co-ordinators are a central piece of the jigsaw that is management at The Oaks school. Together, they ensure that subjects are generally well managed and that, as in the case of English, mathematics, science and ICT, substantial improvement has been made. Some co-ordinators are actively involved in monitoring the strengths and weaknesses of the school; for example, the mathematics co-ordinator has visited lessons throughout the school and has good command of what is successful and what needs enhancing. She has, therefore, been able to exert considerable influence to bring change and improvement to mathematics, and standards are rising as a result. Not all parts of the management jigsaw are interlocked completely. The process of monitoring and evaluation does not apply to every co-ordinator; so they do not all have the insights of their colleague who leads mathematics. Co-ordinators as a whole do not monitor planning and this leads to some inconsistency in the interpretation of the curriculum from class to class. There is willingness amongst co-ordinators to slot into the picture and the headteacher accepts the need to strengthen the inter-related roles of separate co-ordinators in this way.
46. Some pieces of the jigsaw remain unattached. Progress in introducing a well-focused system of assessment has not been as slick as other changes. The system of assessment that is emerging has its merits but it is not sufficiently focused on individual pupils or at the exact level at which they are working. So, targets for attainment are often vague, not supported well by marking of work and the pupils and their parents do not always know how well things are progressing. The effects of this are to be seen particularly in the level of challenge provided for higher-attaining pupils; their work does not always go as far as it could to tax their knowledge and skill level. In addition, it is not yet evident that the targets for overall improvement to standards in the school are challenging enough. Staff are anxious to get assessment *right*, but not everyone has clear understanding of how this may be achieved. A policy has recently been written that provides a useful basis on which improved practice can be built.
47. The governors generally give satisfactory support and encouragement to the school. They play an increasing role in shaping its future but they do not ensure that all statutory requirements are met, and their understanding and application of the principles of *best value* are in their infancy. Governors are not yet demanding enough of information to help them evaluate critically how well the school is doing. It is evident that, like most other things in school, the role of governors is improved compared to 1997, not least because the governing body is now up to full strength. However, in some important respects, for example curriculum monitoring, there are still things for them to advance.
48. The school has tackled with determination and direction the chief task it faced in 1997, that of improving standards. The headteacher makes good checks to ensure standards are at the predicted level and she has introduced good and workable systems to set intermediate targets as pupils progress towards the SATs at the end of Years 2 and 6. She tracks the improvements made and shares this with staff. Other staff have some involvement in the active implementation of these procedures, but not everyone has a full role in tracking, checking and evaluating the things that are done in school. Targets currently set in English and mathematics are realistic but do not take sufficient account of the improving educational provision. Last year the school exceeded its targets. To some extent there is a nervousness that if targets are set too high and not met, then this will be seen as failure. The school should take heart that it is on the right track to raise standards and should be more ambitious in the targets set. There are no targets set for

science and this is a missed opportunity.

49. There are no shortages of staff, accommodation or learning resources. Indeed, the accommodation is spacious and the service given by the support and integration assistants, administrative staff, caretaker and cleaning team is good. Governors and managers ensure that there is prudent management of the budget. For example, the considerable extra funding for pupils with special educational needs is devoted entirely to their support and is money very well spent. The school spends a very high amount on each pupil, but they get a good and improving deal from this. Accordingly, the school gives satisfactory value for money.
50. In talking to inspectors, a Year 6 pupil summed up the achievements of the school as she saw them. She said: *Since (the headteacher) came to the school, things have got better. She makes us more confident.* She added that the school badges that pupils wear gave them pride that they attended The Oaks Primary School.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. In their work to further raise standards and improve the quality of education at the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1. Improve the standards pupils attain in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2 by:

- Continuing to build on the effective strategies in place.
- Developing pupils' use of language, particularly in writing across all subjects of the curriculum.
- Promoting more widely features of the best teaching and learning in these subjects to be found in school.
- Setting demanding targets for the school to attain in these subjects annually, to close the gap between the school's performance and that of similar schools.
- Setting challenging targets for every year group that are regularly reviewed and adjusted upwards as necessary.
- Ensuring that all teachers pay sufficient attention to setting clear learning objectives in lesson planning for the range of pupils they teach.
- Evaluating how well different pupils achieve in their lessons and using this information consistently to set suitably challenging future work, especially for high-attaining pupils.
- Sharing individual targets with pupils and their parents so that they can play a full part in assessing and reviewing individual progress.

Paragraphs: 1,5,6,7,8,11,19,21,38,46,48,62,64,67,69,71,76,80,84,87

2. Improve management by:

- Setting out explicitly what the role and remit of the senior management team is in influencing and shaping the educational direction of the school.
- Identifying the individual responsibilities of members of the senior management team in taking the lead on the school's key priorities for improvement.
- Setting out a plan that clearly shows what monitoring is to take place and what it is expected to achieve.
- Identifying, developing and utilising to best advantage staff strengths.
- Giving time and opportunity for subject co-ordinators to observe lessons being taught in the subjects they lead on so that they have better insights into planning future improvements.
- Involving governors more in monitoring the school's strengths and weaknesses so that they can develop their role as 'critical friend'.

Paragraphs: 11,19,21,29,44,45,47,87,92,108

3. Establish rigorous monitoring and on-going evaluation of the strengths and

weaknesses in the curriculum planning by:

- Establishing a consistent format to planning at all levels throughout the school.
- Reviewing the time allocation to subjects to make sure that the key elements can be taught and learnt.
- Ensuring that curriculum planning is focused on enabling pupils to build their knowledge, skills and understanding of all subjects systematically, and with appropriate extension for potentially high-attaining pupils.
- Identifying opportunities in subjects that can support pupils' skills development in literacy and numeracy.

Paragraphs: 11,17,18,19,21,25,26,64,92,102,108,119

4. Develop assessment procedures specifically to ensure that there are regular opportunities for teachers and managers to assess pupils' progress in all subjects by:

- Ensuring that the recently written policy on assessment is implemented fully throughout the school.
- Sharpening up the ways in which assessment data is used to track individual progress and set new targets that can be measured and used to assist with planning suitably challenging work for the range of pupils.

Paragraphs: 2,5,11,19,21,26,34,46,64,69,74,78,87,92,108,114

5. Improve pupils' attendance by:

- Developing assessment practice to check what impact absence is having on some pupils' ability to achieve to potential and to share this information with parents.
- Setting targets for pupils' individual attendance and rewarding sustained improvement.
- Researching and drawing on good practice models in use nationally.

Paragraphs: 2,16,31,40

Although not identified as separate issues, in preparing their action plan the Governing Body should also pay attention to the following:

- ◆ Ensure that the annual report they provide for parents contains all of the required information.

Paragraphs: 38,47

- ◆ Ensure that homework is set consistently and in line with agreed policy.

Paragraphs: 19,27,39

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	25	44	23	6	1	0

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

Information about the school’s pupils

Pupils on the school’s roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school’s roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	205
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		103

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school’s special educational needs register	2	51

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	19	10	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	16	18
	Girls	-	-	10
	Total	23	24	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (62)	83 (62)	97 (61)
	National	83(82)	84 (83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	16	18	18
	Girls	-	-	10
	Total	24	26	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (67)	90 (61)	97 (74)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	15	14	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	12	13	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (46)	61 (53)	74 (84)
	National	75(71)	72(69)	85(78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	-	-	-
	Girls	-	-	-
	Total	12	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	45 (43)	54 (39)	50 (79)
	National	70(68)	73(69)	79 (75)

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

Please note that numbers of pupils below ten are not reported.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	14
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	177
Any other minority ethnic group	13

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	107

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	2	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	7	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	645624
Total expenditure	616220
Expenditure per pupil	2484
Balance brought forward from previous year	16647
Balance carried forward to next year	35943

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	205
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	43	40	9	4	4
My child is making good progress in school.	45	36	13	2	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	40	30	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	36	26	13	4
The teaching is good.	43	45	6	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	34	23	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	36	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	45	9	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	34	43	21	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	43	38	13	2	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	53	6	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	36	43	13	4	4

NB The rows may not total 100% due to rounding.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

52. Since the previous inspection in 1997 the nursery and reception classes have addressed the need to provide an appropriate curriculum based on the Early Learning Goals. The curriculum is securely in place in the nursery, and is beginning to be implemented in reception. There is now a cohesive Foundation Stage with joint planning based on the Early Learning Goals. As yet there is no one in school with management oversight of the Foundation Stage to ensure continuity and progression in its work other than the headteacher. Plans to re-locate the currently separate nursery into the main school building are well advanced, as are plans to allocate the Foundation Stage management role to an available member of staff.
53. A baseline assessment based on the local authority *Signposts* scheme is carried out in both nursery and reception classes. This gives clear information on the children's levels of attainment on entry to the nursery, reception and infant classes. It shows low levels of skills in all areas of learning on entry to nursery. Boys generally have a significantly lower level of skill than girls in all areas except physical development when they first start. The nursery is a particularly well-organised place of learning. It is also an enriching experience for the children. A good range of activities is provided to develop the children's skills from a low base. Some good teaching, with very good features, in the nursery gives the children a very good start to their learning. This means they make good progress. The children's standards are still below those expected by the time they enter the reception class. The mainly satisfactory teaching in the reception class helps to sustain these standards, although progress is sustained at a slower pace. Only a small proportion of children have reached the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the reception class.
54. There are 47 children currently in the nursery class. The arrangements enable all children to attend three and a half days in total over the course of a week. There are 30 children in the reception class, most of whom attend full time. There are three support adults who give invaluable support to the children and teachers. Two are in the nursery class and one is in the reception class. Their work is augmented by a group of voluntary helpers and students who assist well. These adults all add enrichment to the experiences that the children are given in the Foundation Stage.
55. There is good provision made for children who have special educational needs. Early identification of learning and/or behavioural needs takes place in the nursery and is responded to appropriately. The majority of the children transfer from the nursery into reception and then into infant classes. However, as a result of some movement of families in the area, this does not always happen to plan. There is also irregular attendance by a small group of children that prevents consistent progress being made by all of them.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. The children's personal, social and emotional skills are low on entry to the nursery. Many are still at an immature stage of development. They are not used to sharing with others. Consequently, teacher and support staff give appropriate emphasis to developing these skills so that the children make good progress even though few attain the Early Learning Goals. A well-balanced number of activities are thoroughly planned. Teaching is good. The children move around the nursery to work with a number of adults. They sometimes do this in pairs and sometimes in small groups. This gives them enjoyment and ensures that they are happy to come to school. They show good levels of involvement in activities, for example in the way that they support one another as they go on a hunt to the bear cave. At the same time they learn appropriately about direction, counting to five and experience light and dark. They help one another to fasten difficult buttons when they are getting ready to go outside for physical activities. Their social independence is enhanced as they eat snacks and drink milk in their cafe. They are confident enough to invite visiting adults to join them. They begin to talk in their cafe, but this shows the limitations of their speaking skills. The

teacher and support staff work hard to develop these so that the children's self esteem is raised. These skills are more formally developed in the reception class when they learn initial sounds of words. This sensitively supports them in becoming clearer, more competent speakers and listeners whilst also developing emotional skills. In reception they find spaces readily so that they can all enjoy movement sessions in the hall to show their developing respect for the needs of others.

Communication, language and literacy

57. These skills are low when children enter the nursery. Consequently staff pay particular attention to providing activities to develop children's skills. These activities are often interrelated with other areas of learning. Good planning and teaching ensure maximum benefit is gained by the children. Good progress is made in the nursery and then sustained in the reception class. Most children are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals by the time that they begin in infant classes. Adults who work with the children sensitively extend one-word answers into phrases and eventually sentences. The children are encouraged by all staff in nursery as they either work individually or in pairs in a carousel of activities. The carousel ensures all children get the same opportunity to develop their skills. When they are finding out about shapes by cutting them out or tracing them they gradually build up lists of words through adults perceptive questioning. This is further supported effectively in reception class when they show good listening skills by playing different levels of sounds on instruments. In both classes they enjoy books together in the book corners. They are able to move through a book in sequential order. They begin to recognise pictures that support story telling. In reception class they begin to recognise words and are well on the way to becoming competent in the first stages of reading. They have reading diaries to share between home and school but these are not always completed consistently. The writing area in the nursery helps children to understand the use of paper and pencils meaningfully. This is well developed in the reception class where the children begin to write with a purpose. They confidently record sentences about the story they have shared with their teacher.

Mathematical development

58. The children have low levels of numeracy when they begin in the nursery. Staff plan very conscientiously to give children a good range of mathematical experiences. They provide the visual resources that make ideas meaningful for the children. This good teaching strategy helps the children to move on in their learning at a steady pace. Good progress ensues. For example, in reception they find out about shapes by tracing them, cutting them out and colouring within the lines. At the same time they count them and put them in order according to size. The interrelated nature of this learning supports the way that learning is constantly being built upon learning in the nursery. All the while the children's confidence in dealing with number, shape and space is being thoughtfully developed. These experiences are built upon in the reception class where the children use resources to reinforce knowledge and understanding of numbers up to 20. This ambitious expectation of the teacher is met through the resourcing. Counting as a group is done as they fill bottles in the water tray and count as they are then emptied. Another group use tiles to order to 10 and then extend learning as they find out about odd and even numbers. All are being well supported by teacher and support staff who talk to the children throughout the activities in accurate mathematical language. This often needs great patience and the pace slows. Staff are rewarded eventually as the children confirm their growth of knowledge and understanding. The children are near to achieving the Early Learning Goals by the time they enter Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59. When they enter the nursery the children's world is often a confined one that focuses upon their immediate environment. This limited knowledge is quickly built upon by nursery staff so that pupils make good progress as they move along the stepping stones towards the Early Learning Goals. They plan a range of useful activities that extend children's experiences appropriately. Teaching needs to be, and is, very good in order to develop the children's skills. As they go on the bear hunt with one another in their role play area they find out about direction as they travel from one place to another. They use torches as they go through the tunnel to find out about the

usefulness of light. They step over the water on the five stepping stones that are numbered for them to count in sequence. All of these activities are well supervised. The use of accurate language is being encouraged. The children, even the lower attainers, are able to talk about their experience with a reasonable vocabulary because their imagination has been stimulated. In a carousel of activities they move on to making biscuits with a voluntary helper. The helper has been well briefed by the teacher to get the maximum benefit from children working in a group of three. The language of cooking is well developed. The biscuits are then eaten at snack time so that the purposefulness of making them is clear to the children. They use building materials in small groups to make models of aeroplanes and vehicles. A child is then able to proudly show the model of an aeroplane in the weekly good work assembly. This model receives appropriate praise from the headteacher and enhances the child's self esteem. Individually, or in pairs, they use the computer. They discover the need to control the mouse if they are to accurately dress teddy. This is completed by most with good levels of control. The children's knowledge of their immediate community is further developed in the reception class when they build upon their previous knowledge before the school nurse visits them. Their language, literacy and communication skills have been enhanced as they have compiled very sensible questions to ask her about her work. The children listen carefully because the nurse is someone who is familiar to them. They see her as someone who supports them and their families positively.

Physical development

60. The continuous process of development is very clear in this area of learning. The children come into the nursery with limited skills. They are given appropriate opportunities to enhance these skills as a result of thoughtful teacher planning and subsequent good teaching. The finer physical skills are comprehensively developed by the range of cutting activities such as when they are making paper shapes. The larger physical skills are built in different settings. Outdoors they have a good area immediately outside the nursery where they are able to ride scooters and bikes, use slides and find their way around a small house. They use all of these resources with care and safety. At the same time their ability to move around using their bodies in different ways supports their knowledge and understanding of body strength. This is reinforced for them when they move along lines in the hall. At first they bunch together but as the lesson progresses they become better aware of space. They move with attention and growing confidence. Although they are not completely co-ordinated they are moving along the stepping stones of the Early Learning Goals with growing competence. The finer skills are often developed well in the reception class as they cut and stick the words together that form their written sentences. In the hall their larger skills are shown as they move around adeptly. They move around small plastic circles with growing awareness of space. They begin to sequence their movements and show much better control as they balance the circle on their heads whilst holding out their arms. They achieve good standards and make good progress as they have a go at tapping tummies and jumping on the circle at the same time. Most children make good progress in their physical development and achieve what is expected by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Creative development

61. The children's creative skills are often underdeveloped when they start in the nursery class. Consequently they are given a wide range of opportunities to paint, use materials and make music together that ensures they make good progress. When they paint they often do so just for their own individual pleasure. This appropriate opportunity is then well balanced by the chances that they get to create things together. They make effective black and white paintings to complement their understanding of light and dark. They make music together successfully in small groups. They find out about loud and soft sounds as they use instruments such as the drum, tambourine and triangle. They pass the instruments around a circle so that everyone has a turn at playing them. This not only develops their skills but also gives them pleasure and enjoyment. In the reception class their opportunities to create large collages about favourite story characters also support their social skills as well as their creative ones. Their musical skills are further developed satisfactorily as they use instruments to produce effective sounds whilst at the same time having to justify why they have made such a sound. The children are patiently prepared to assess one another's performances and do so positively. These opportunities are

created as a result of the good planning and teaching. This supports the children in coming close to achieving the Early Learning Goals before they leave the reception class.

ENGLISH

62. The results of the 2000 standardised assessment tests (SATs) for eleven-year-olds were well below the national average and below average in comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The inspection findings confirm this picture for writing but standards in reading and speaking and listening are broadly average. The ability of pupils to plan written work well and write extensively is the chief weakness in English and as a result standards are not as high in other subjects such as history and geography as they could be. Although overall standards are below average for eleven-year-olds they are about right for most Year 6 pupils when their prior attainment is taken into account. However, to some extent the standards also reflect the negative impact that inadequacies in teaching in the past have had on some pupils' achievements, particularly higher attainers, who could potentially achieve more. Inspection evidence indicates that standards overall are improving because the school has put in place a range of imaginative strategies to help plug the gaps in older pupils' learning. The picture is much brighter for younger pupils. At the end of Key Stage 1 in the 2000 SATs, standards in reading were below average, in writing they were above the national average and in both reading and writing they were much higher than those achieved by pupils from similar backgrounds. These positive results are also seen in Year 3 and to a lesser extent in Year 5.
63. The school has improved the quality of teaching and raised standards since the last time that it was inspected. There are good strategies in place for teaching literacy skills, which enable most pupils to make good progress in lessons. Over time progress is less even, with the most gains taking place in Years 2, 3 and 6. The pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in relation to their prior attainment in English due to the well-planned support they receive and the clear targets they are set for improvement. A strength in the provision for English is its success in retaining in school a number of pupils with challenging behaviour through a combination of effective pupil management, imaginative resources and open dialogue with pupils.
64. One reason for the improvement in English is the effective use of information gathered as a result of the systematic monitoring of teaching and learning and the analysis of assessment data. The school is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses in English and has begun to tackle them energetically, for example improving the quality of written work is being addressed throughout the school. The overall quality of English teaching is good and staff are deployed well to maximise learning opportunities for most pupils. For example, additional literacy support in Years 3 and 4, setting in Year 6, a very successful family literacy project in Year 4 and writing groups of more-able pupils from each age group taught by the co-ordinator are highly effective. But there are some concerns teaching is less effective when planning is weak, pupil management is not effective and the work lacks challenge. The use and application of research skills in the library are not as effective as they should be. Most teachers plan appropriate use of ICT to support literacy, for example in some lessons pupils with special educational needs were observed to make good progress in creative writing because they could use the computer to write more quickly than using a pen. The use of ICT as a tool for research was less in evidence. Although there are good opportunities for pupils to improve their oral skills in lessons, the use of drama and role-play is limited. The school is, however, very successfully motivating and engaging the full attention of most pupils. They listen to their teachers and work hard at acquiring new skills, knowledge and understanding throughout the school day. The next steps in English are to improve lesson planning by making learning objectives sharper for pupils of different abilities. This will support improvement in marking and target setting for individual pupils throughout the school. As a result pupils and their parents will have a better understanding of how well they are achieving.
65. At the end of both key stages standards of attainment in speaking and listening skills are average. This is the result of much effort by teachers and pupils because standards on entry to the reception class are below average. Year 2 pupils listen well to their teacher and make confident and relevant contributions in class discussions. In a history lesson based upon the life

and work of Scott of the Antarctic, pupils demonstrated the ability to talk about what they observed in photographs and provided sensible reasons why Scott did not look well. Good oral sessions were observed in Year 3 when pupils discussed the rain forest and in Year 6 when they explored dramatic tension, plot, setting and archaic language when discussing the novel, *Moonfleet*. However one weakness was apparent in a number of lessons. Some pupils, often boys, are so anxious to contribute they launch into speech before they have heard and understood the question. This is inhibiting progress because it leads to misunderstanding. Generally, pupils use appropriate language and tone, and communicate clearly when answering their teachers' questions. Progress is good throughout the school though opportunities for challenging pupils to explore ideas and justify choices are often missed. In some lessons in Key Stage 2, pupils were encouraged to comment on each others' work and debate points of interest, for example 'Whether children should be evacuated or not', but such opportunities do not happen frequently enough. The use of Standard English is a weakness and often pupils use only limited vocabulary when putting forward their ideas.

66. Attainment in reading at the end of both key stages is in line with expectations. In Year 2 most pupils obviously enjoy reading and read their books accurately and with improving expression. Some technically competent readers do not have the skills to explore below the surface of the text to seek meanings beyond the literal. Most have developed a good range of strategies to deal with new and unfamiliar words. Pupils can talk fluently about the parts of stories that they enjoy most and the types of books they prefer. Animal books and funny stories and poems are very popular. All pupils know where the school library is and some can use the content page of non-fiction books to find information with confidence. About half of Year 6 pupils are skilful in analysing texts. This was demonstrated well in a good lesson when they read and explored *Moonfleet* and showed a good understanding of how a historical text differs from a contemporary one. In discussion older pupils are able to discuss a wide range of texts, genre and authors. Pupils' reading skills develop systematically as they move through the school but they do not have enough opportunities to use library books for researching topics from an early age. This is being addressed in Year 6 but contributes to weaknesses in other subjects such as history and geography.
67. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in writing was above average by the age of seven in the 2000 Sats but well below average by the age of eleven years. The variation in standards reflects the pupils' prior learning and also the improvement which has taken place in teaching since the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. The school has identified the need to improve writing as its top priority. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are able to write short stories, with basic punctuation and simple spellings reasonably correct, without help from adults. They write stories, poems and record facts in science but few pupils include extended vocabulary and interesting ideas. They know how to label diagrams and complete charts but are not producing a sufficient range of creative writing using their own imagination. The picture in Year 6 owes much to the inadequacies of the past but the school is making strenuous efforts to improve standards at the top of the school. Only a minority of Year 6 pupils were able to plan their writing and structure it in a logical manner. It became evident during an extended writing lesson that many did not understand the difference between preparing a plan and writing the actual story. Neither can most pupils complete the expected amount of work for pupils of their age in a given amount of time. This is one reason why many pupils do not achieve as well as they could in SATs. Most pupils by the age of eleven have an appropriate understanding of grammar, spelling and punctuation because these are taught systematically from an early age. Handwriting and presentation is very variable and much work is untidy with poorly formed letters, size and spacing. Pupils do not have enough experience of sustained creative work or research for real purposes. The school is employing a range of strategies to address these shortcomings. More time is being given to writing, skills such as planning are now being taught specifically, and the English co-ordinator is working with groups of more-able pupils to raise attainment.
68. Pupils' attitudes to language and literacy are good throughout the school. In both key stages pupils have very positive attitudes to developing their skills and extending their knowledge and understanding of English. The majority of pupils are attentive; they concentrate well and stay on task and work hard. Pupils show respect for each other and for the staff and they care for

materials and classroom equipment well. Many pupils have good co-operation skills and good relationships with each other.

69. The quality of English teaching is good overall but there is some unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2 and some just adequate teaching in Key Stage 1. These weaknesses in teaching occur because planning is inadequate, pupil management is not secure and activities for some pupils are not demanding enough. Teaching is good or better in a quarter of lessons at Key Stage 1 and over three-quarters of lessons at Key Stage 2. These good lessons are characterised by careful teaching of basic skills, imaginative materials and methods which capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm, and work which consolidates and extends learning well. Lesson planning and the marking of pupils' work are weaknesses in many lessons because learning objectives are too general. This sometimes leads to going back over things that pupils already understand well and as a result the high-attaining pupils do not always make as much progress as they should. Planning does not identify enough opportunities for pupils to use their literacy skills in other subjects. Teachers in both key stages have high expectations of pupils but this is particularly so in Years 2, 3, and 6. In most lessons learning objectives are shared with pupils so that they know what their teacher expects them to achieve in the lesson. In the best lessons they are referred to consistently by the teacher, the pace is brisk, and progress is reviewed at the end of the lesson. In class lessons teachers provide appropriate support for pupils in the lowest-attaining group and make very effective use of support staff to improve provision for these pupils. The use of specific targets for individual pupils is at an early stage of development. Marking can be very effective at helping pupils improve their work but this is not generally the case. Most teachers give clear instructions to their class, use resources effectively, and have very good relationships with pupils.
70. The English co-ordinator provides clear leadership and direction for the subject. The analysis of national assessment data is used well to monitor the subject and target resources to remedy areas of concern. But the school does not undertake any whole-school assessment of reading, for example and has no way of recording year-on-year improvement across the school. Individual pupil profiles were introduced in 1999 and contain samples of marked and levelled work from Year R to Year 6. Additional resources are deployed very efficiently, supporting pupils in Years 3 and 4 with additional literacy work and the family literacy project in Year 4 is also helping raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

71. In 1997, inspectors judged that mathematics, like many other subjects in school, was riddled with weakness and that standards were not good enough. After that inspection, methods of teaching and learning were changed and, coupled with the introduction of the numeracy strategy, this led to steady improvement. Mathematics is given good prominence in class displays and the use of ICT to support pupils' work for example in data analysis, is a positive feature. The oldest pupils in school have been affected much more by past weaknesses than the younger ones. Improvement has begun to bite in the first few years of school and the standards attained by seven-year-old pupils are at the expected level. However, standards reached by eleven-year-old pupils lag behind others of the same age, and are well below average. That these lower standards are being eliminated is clear from the scrutiny of work, but it will take more time for improvement to show up so strongly at the end of the key stage.
72. In the 2000 SATs, the standards of seven-year-old pupils matched those found in most schools. When these results are compared with those in schools where between 20 and 35 percent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, pupils at The Oaks did very well indeed. Standards of eleven-year-old pupils were very low last year. They were amongst the bottom five per cent of primary schools nationally. Set against the results in similar schools, standards were well below average. Inspectors judge that a similar pattern will occur in the 2001 SATs, but that after this year, standards will point up the improvements that are filtering through from the earlier years. It is expected that standards in 2004 will be in line with those seen nationally.
73. The school places great emphasis on the inclusion of pupils from all types of social and academic

backgrounds and so there is an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs, for example. These pupils are well supported in mathematics and their individual education plans are well focused on appropriate mathematical targets for them. Pupils with special educational or behavioural needs make good progress in general because class teachers and integration assistants give them good support. This ensures that they attain standards that are good given their starting point.

74. The school is not yet as successful in meeting the needs of higher attaining pupils in mathematics. There has been some improvement however, and last year, an average proportion of pupils reached level 3 in the infants and level 5 in the juniors. Inspectors observed a number of occasions when the highest attaining pupils could have quite easily been taken one step further in their learning. This also showed up in the scrutiny of work completed in books and folders. This aspect of mathematics remains a priority for the school.
75. Over the last few years, boys have not done as well as the girls and as they move through the school their standards slip behind even more, so that in 2000, boys did significantly worse than the girls in the Year 6 SATs. The headteacher and mathematics co-ordinator have tracked this trend carefully and the school has taken some effective measures to stem the difference. In the infant SATs last year, boys and girls attained very similar standards. Managers are determined to hold on to this more positive picture and are using the results of periodic testing to check that boys do as well as the girls.
76. There was ample evidence during the inspection to show that standards are similar in all four aspects of mathematics, although in the case of using and applying mathematics they could be better still if more opportunity were given to problem solving and investigation activities. The level of basic skills and knowledge is much improved over that of 1997. This is due to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, which is bedding in well. It is also due to improvements in teaching and learning; these are now more firmly focused on the knowledge, skills and understanding to be learned in lessons, though planning and assessment could be more usefully matched to these targets. Also, such targets for learning could be more successfully shared with the pupils and reviewed with them at the end of lessons.
77. The pattern of attainment and progress in mathematics still shows too much variation though overall pupils move ahead well. They start with below average levels of skill and knowledge and this rises to average levels in Years 2 and 3. As shown earlier, the older pupils do not do as well. Some have insecure grasp of basic number facts, particularly multiplication tables that require constant reinforcement. However, when their attainment is traced back through the years, it is still evident that the school has helped them improve and that their current level of attainment is respectable, given their original platform.
78. The improvements emerging in mathematics are due to generally good teaching and learning and committed and successful subject management. In one mathematics lesson observed during inspection in lower Key Stage 1 teaching was poor. This was mainly because of a lack of preparation and planning. Too little time was given to the pupils to carry out the tasks introduced at length by the teacher and so not much learning took place. Worksheets given out were the same for all pupils and the highest attaining pupils simply coasted through the money problem-solving tasks they were set. Expectations, planning and ongoing assessment can all stand further improvement, but subject knowledge, the teaching of basic skills, the methods used by teachers and the management of the pupils all stand out as clear strengths in virtually all lessons. Because teachers generally make lessons involving and motivating, the pupils learn well. They work hard and build skills and knowledge at good rates in lessons. Most pupils show good levels of independence and maturity in their learning, behaviour is good and relationships are strong.
79. A Year 2 mathematics lesson demonstrated all the successes of the best teaching and learning. Here, the inspector observed the pupils to settle very well to their tasks and to try really hard to succeed. When they were asked to double numbers they did this with enthusiasm. During the lesson they used dice to create the values to be added together and then doubled them, higher attainers extended such problems as $(5+6) \times 2$ to $(50+60) \times 2$. When the class came together again

at the end of the lesson each pupil answered a doubling problem that was carefully matched to their level of attainment. All pupils, the teacher and the support assistant all joined in the joy when one special needs pupil slowly, but surely, worked out his problem and answered 'twelve'. The pupils progressed well and several attained good standards. Regardless of the finished result, all pupils went out to play, talking about the fun they had had and the mathematics they had learned.

SCIENCE

80. Since the previous inspection, standards in science have remained below the national average at best. They have mirrored the results achieved in English and mathematics. In many respects these results were a clear confirmation of the difficulties that the school had been facing in raising its standards. These difficulties are now steadily being overcome. The school now finds itself in a better position as far as science teaching and learning is concerned. Teachers are confident in teaching the range of science and in particular are emphasising practical work as much as possible. Pupils are rising well to the challenges that 'learning by doing' brings. Whole-school targets have been established in English and mathematics but have not been established for science. This is a missed opportunity in for raising standards.
81. Teacher assessments last year showed that pupils attained high standards at the end of Key Stage 1. They also showed standards well above the national benchmarks for similar schools at this key stage. This assessment of where the standards in science had reached at that time was very much higher than the standards reached in English and mathematics. This was a generous assessment of where the standards had reached at that time. Results in SATs in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 2 were very low when compared with national benchmarks.
82. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in science are improving. The scrutiny of pupils' recent past work shows that, at Key Stage 1, teachers are setting tasks for them that result in their achieving to an average standard. Work in science books indicates that the range of science strands required by the National Curriculum are being adequately covered. Pupils make particularly positive responses when given opportunities to experiment and investigate. There is a growing provision for this. The school recognises the need to make this a focus for science work at this key stage. Observation of a lesson in Year 1 showed that pupils were able to set up an experiment using metals to feel the magnetic pull. Through practical investigation pupils learned at first hand about one of the forces around us. As one pupil said, 'When you pull it (the magnetic strip), it goes bump' clearly showing that magnetism is beginning to be understood. Observation of a lesson in Year 2 showed pupils beginning to understand some of the differences and similarities between living things. They used accurate scientific language to describe features, helped by the fact that they had a live bird and fish brought in for them to study. Those pupils who needed extra support to write about their findings were assisted well by both teacher and support staff. Such effective help is making a useful contribution to the development of their literacy skills.
83. The impact of giving 'real life' investigative experiences continues in Key Stage 2 classes. This is particularly true at the beginning and end of the key stage where learning is being boosted. In an observation in Year 3, pupils found out a great deal about the properties of materials. They tested those that have different qualities and, as one pupil said,] 'That is rigid and is the opposite of flexible.' This conclusion is arrived at because of effective experimenting being carried out. In an observation in Year 6, pupils investigated the factors affecting dissolving by planning their own fair test. They found out that there has to be an equal starting point. They predicted and drew conclusions accurately and recorded results on a bar chart. This technique supports well their developing numeracy skills.
84. Pupils have good opportunities to learn in science lessons. Higher-attaining pupils are challenged by the different tasks that they are given. Lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported by teacher and support staff. Learning objectives are generally shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons that thoughtfully support their practical investigations. Too often opportunities were missed to return to objectives in plenary sessions to

check what actual learning had taken place. Nevertheless science lessons are well structured so that pupils have plentiful opportunities to find out for themselves. The level of pupils' basic scientific general knowledge is broadly satisfactory and pupils have secure command of scientific vocabulary in discussion, but do not always use this consistently in personal writing. The use of worksheets is limiting the opportunities for some pupils to write at length about their own scientific discoveries.

85. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. As a result, pupils at Key Stage 1 now make good progress. Progress at Key Stage 2 is only satisfactory because the more recent focus upon investigative learning is not yet fully embedded in the pupils' methods of approaching their tasks. In the best teaching, perceptive questioning together with the good overview of learning promotes appropriate progress being made. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, the teacher constantly checked with pupils as they investigated dissolving materials that their understanding was secure. The on-going dialogue sustained learning at a brisk pace. The pupils existing knowledge was used to help them to learn effectively. The learning was not successfully completed, however, as the end of the lesson was rushed and pupils did not have time to reflect upon their new learning.
86. Throughout the school, pupils are enthusiastic learners. They have positive attitudes and in consequence their behaviour is good. These factors impact strongly upon the progress they make. They co-operate fully with one another in group activities. They share learning with one another readily. They take responsibility for their own work and work well with others. Their personal development is strongly built upon the very good relationships between themselves and with the adults who give them effective support.
87. The co-ordinator has made a positive start to the role. As yet she has not had release time for her class teaching commitments to monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school to help her plan for improvement. The provision of an appropriate scheme of work has supported other staff effectively. An efficient audit of resources has been made. Insufficient attention has yet been given to assessing progress or in targeting individual or whole-class expected achievements. The school development plan gives appropriate priority to science and as such it is a subject on the move.

ART AND DESIGN

88. Standards in art and design have been maintained in both Key Stages since the last full inspection. Attainment meets the national expectation but some pupils in Key Stage 2 achieve higher than this standard. Progress is good throughout the school because pupils in all classes respond well to the wide range of activities provided for them. Pupils have frequent opportunities to develop their abilities to draw, crayon, paint, print and make collages as they move through the school. They gain increasing confidence as they experiment with a variety of materials and techniques.
89. Key Stage 1 pupils learn how to create their own colours by mixing paint and blending pastels; for example in the Reception class pupils have produced portraits of a friend using oil pastels. Pupils are also learning to observe very carefully. In Year 2 pupils have worked skilfully to show detail on their drawings of plants and have confidently experimented with charcoal to make action drawings. In Key Stage 2 pupils successfully develop their own ideas through examining the work of well-known artists. In a Year 6 class, for example, pupils observe that L.S. Lowry did not produce complicated drawings of people and buildings and used a limited range of colours. They extend their knowledge and understanding of art considerably by talking about their observations together and then working on studies of their own. Some pupils show a high level of skill. Pupils are also exploring specific techniques such as montage. Working in pairs, some Year 6 pupils began to understand how to create a sense of perspective by graduating size or colour as they manipulated images to create a scene from the blitz, which links to their work in history.
90. Most pupils are enthusiastic about art and design lessons. They work carefully and show pride in their achievements. Materials and equipment are treated with respect and pupils share resources

fairly. Art lessons make a very positive contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development.

91. The quality of teaching in art and design is good overall with some very good teaching at the end of Key Stage 2. In these lessons expectations of pupils are high and very good quality resources are provided which clearly stimulate pupils. Teachers explain techniques and terms simply but effectively and experimental work is valued. Pupils are encouraged to talk in pairs and in groups about what they are observing and what they are doing. Some opportunities are provided to comment on each other's work but teachers could take a stronger role in probing pupils' views and responses.
92. The new co-ordinator for art and design has made a good start in gaining an overview of the subject. The scheme of work produced by the previous co-ordinator is implemented in all classes and the link between art and design and other subjects is a positive feature of the school's provision. However, the monitoring of lesson delivery and the recording of individual pupils' development are areas for improvement. Currently teachers' short-term planning does not identify learning objectives and no assessment of pupils' progress is made. Art portfolios are not meticulously maintained with dated pieces of work, and sketch books have not yet been introduced. However, pupils' finished work from all classes is prominently displayed throughout the school. The co-ordinator has high standards and there is a very high standard of display in the many public areas of the school building. A strength of the school is the very high value placed upon pupils' work which contributes very positively to their sense of self-esteem. Links with local businesses and visiting artists to the school have significantly enhanced the provision that the school makes.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Good progress has been made in this subject since the last inspection. Standards at the end of each key stage are now average and pupils across the school make satisfactory progress in developing their skills. Only a small number of design and technology lessons were observed during the inspection. Further evidence was gained by looking at examples of pupils' work on display and in a photograph portfolio, teachers' planning and through discussions with pupils.
94. In Key Stage 1 pupils design and make products using a wide variety of materials. In a Year 1 lesson for example, pupils decided what they would like to make from junk materials. They followed their ideas through by choosing materials and producing models which included a fire-engine and an elephant. They were able to assemble and join in a different ways with the help of a learning assistant. Pupils talk simply about their ideas and can say why they have made particular choices. New vocabulary such as 'metal, cylinder and pipe-cleaner' support their language development. In Year 2, carefully made plates of favourite foods show that individual ideas have been interpreted and materials combined imaginatively.
95. Key Stage 2 pupils also experience a range of activities. They have opportunities to develop their ideas and steadily improve their measuring, cutting and combining skills. In Year 5, pupils show that they know how to create a design for a pneumatic toy. Some produce detailed design briefs and are able to build models without significant alteration. Others discover problems when they try to carry out their plans and are completely absorbed as they make modifications. Pupils show developing awareness of the practical constraints of some materials as they work. It was found, for example, that polystyrene would not take powder paint and one pupil suggested adding a dash of washing up liquid to solve the problem. Pupils work safely and share resources responsibly. In these lessons pupils make good progress because they are encouraged to be innovative and to learn from continual evaluation of their work.
96. Many pupils say they enjoy this subject and are keen to explain how they completed previous design and technology tasks. They are pleased with their finished products.
97. There is sound management of this subject. The co-ordinator for design and technology has ensured that a scheme of work is in place and appropriate guidance is available for colleagues.

Suitable resources are accessible. The subject has a secure place in the curriculum; time limitations are sometimes overcome by linking activities to art and design and to school events such as the recent play. Pupils have a worthwhile experience of design and technology as they move through the school.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

98. Standards overall remain below the expected level but the quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection and is satisfactory overall. There are two main reasons why standards are not as good as they should be. Firstly, because many pupils show limited ability to write well, little work of quality is produced. Secondly, subject time and lesson planning are left too much to teachers' discretion and this sometimes leads to a lack of balance between the content of lessons and the development of skills. There are some examples of very effective oral work when teaching is good or better. This was amply demonstrated in a Year 2 lesson on the life and work of Scott of the Antarctic and a Year 3 lesson on the rain forest. In a Year 6 lesson pupils were led very effectively by the teacher to a good understanding of what it was like to be an evacuee during World War II. Each of these lessons provided pupils with a good deal of factual information but also promoted good levels of understanding through the use of high quality questions and well chosen resources. Teaching was confident, learning proceeded at a good pace and pupils were fully engaged in the lesson. In the one unsatisfactory lesson seen in Key Stage 2 the main problem arose from a lack of skill in developing knowledge and understanding which contributed to restlessness and lack of attention by pupils.
99. In geography only very limited samples of work were seen at each key stage; in history, work was available only at Key Stage 2. This is because the school does not systematically retain any work from previous years and this is a weakness in subject management. As a result there is no previous work for teachers and pupils (or inspectors) to refer to. Discussions with pupils, mainly in Year 4 and Year 6, reveal some areas of strength in history knowledge but weaknesses in skills in both subjects.
100. By the age of eleven, pupils have studied the required number of history units and can talk knowledgeably about the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Tudors, life in Britain since the thirties and in Victorian Britain. However when asked to order these different periods of history many pupils found this difficult to do correctly, although time lines are a feature in a number of classrooms. They had studied Shakespeare in English but struggled to say how long ago he lived and to which period of history he belonged. Visits to the Black Country Museum have provided pupils with some good insights into life in Victorian times. But many pupils have only a limited understanding of how we know about the past and do not appear to have addressed issues of bias, the reliability of evidence or the difference between fact and opinion.
101. In geography pupils make maps of the school in Year 2, study the rain forest in Year 3 and undertake a comparative study of St Lucia in Year 5. Some work of a good standard is produced in these lessons. A strength seen in the Year 5 lesson was the good use of games to engage the interest and enthusiasm of lower-attaining pupils. However, the use of the Internet by two pupils was a distraction to a group of higher attainers who sat near to the computer and were more interested in what was going on on screen than in their own work. In discussion pupils in Year 4 struggled to say what work is covered in geography, did not understand what a capital city is and could not name London as the capital of England, although they do know that Birmingham where they live is a city. Pupils in Year 6 also have gaps in their knowledge and some confused discussion took place about a residential visit to a farm. There are some good links with art and design. Pupils in Year 3 made thumb pots they had seen in a video on the rain forest and Year 6 pupils produced some high quality drawings of Greek pots which demonstrate a good understanding of daily life.
102. Understandably, given the low standards in literacy and numeracy, geography and history have been low priorities for improvement since the previous inspection. Both subjects however have much to contribute to improving standards in literacy because they provide interesting and challenging topics for speaking, reading and writing. Some good work is being achieved orally but

this owes more to the interest and enthusiasm of individual teachers than to lesson planning or the scheme of work. Time available for geography and history is not secure because much is left to the discretion of individual teachers. These issues need to be reviewed to provide more effective support for teachers' planning and pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

103. ICT was one of the chief weaknesses at the time of the 1997 inspection. Very little use was made of computers, standards were well below average and pupils made little progress. The subject has been turned around because of the spirited leadership of the co-ordinator and the determination of staff to improve their own knowledge of the subject.
104. Standards in ICT are at the expected level for seven and eleven-year-old pupils. There is firm evidence that in some work, standards are better than this. The display of ICT work in the computer suite shows the good standard of work in communicating information, and a lesson observed with Year 5 pupils demonstrated their prowess in creating an almost professional layout for their text. Pupils now have far more opportunities to use the computers in their classrooms, in the infant computer cluster and in the ICT suite. This enhanced practice has resulted in good progress being made from a very low base when pupils start school.
105. Unlike some subjects, such as English and mathematics, the higher attaining pupils are consistently well challenged by the work. They explore more advanced features of the software and incorporate additional elements to make the presentation of their work of high quality. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress; the school has specific software for their use and this assists them effectively to learn more about ICT and to extend the key skills and knowledge included in their individual education plans.
106. ICT is popular amongst the pupils. They often enjoy their work and show enthusiasm for their studies. The pupils develop well as mature and responsible learners and they show they can be trusted to work independently. Behaviour and relationships are strengths and the pupils put in good effort, produce good amounts of work and build knowledge and skills at a good rate in lessons.
107. These successes of learning are a reflection of the good teaching found in infant and junior ICT sessions. Teachers' subject knowledge and confidence are much improved and, like their teaching methods, class management techniques and basic skills instruction, are put to effective use in providing stimulating learning opportunities. Everyday assessment based on the precise identification in planning of skills and knowledge to be learned are the relative weaknesses in teaching.
108. The co-ordinator has worked hard to bring these improvements. She has not yet had opportunities to monitor planning or the work in other classes, though she is ready for these tasks. Assessment of ICT knowledge and skills is at a very early stage of readiness and is a weakness that the co-ordinator knows has to be tackled with some urgency. On the other hand, she has ensured that the curriculum includes all the aspects of ICT it should and that skills and knowledge are built systematically as pupils move from class to class. In addition she has successfully encouraged teachers to promote ICT skills in other subjects and to use ICT to extend pupils' capabilities in English, mathematics and science. The use of the Internet has been recognised by the school as having great potential in these matters and a good start has been made to giving pupils the necessary experience on a regular basis.

MUSIC

109. It was not possible to report on music during the three days of inspection as most lessons take place on Fridays. Singing observed in assembly was joyous, sweet and tuneful and contributed successfully to the ethos of 'working together' so apparent in school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. When physical education (PE) was inspected in 1997 it was one of the few successes of the school. The subject was given a generous amount of time, pupils made good progress and standards were above average at the end of both key stages. The school has held on to these strengths, and in some respects has improved the sporting experiences of pupils.
111. This sustaining of the good qualities reported in that inspection is the more remarkable because most of the school's energies have gone into securing the removal of special measures and in improving skills and knowledge in the core subjects of English and mathematics especially. Two secrets of success are the enjoyment that both pupils and staff gain from the lessons and the sense of togetherness in learning that was evident in several dance and games lessons observed.
112. Attainment in PE is above average by the age of eleven and pupils make good progress in the development of physical skills. These standards apply to all elements of the subject, including games, gymnastics, dance and swimming. A good proportion of the pupils can swim the desired length of 25 metres before they leave school. Teachers concentrate well on skills tuition in lessons and this is further advanced by the excellent links with a local comprehensive school. A group of about ten sixth form students and their PE teacher from this school regularly coach Year 5 and 6 pupils in a range of games, including netball and soccer. This contributes much to the standards achieved, but these lessons are enjoyable in their own right and both Oaks pupils and the sixth formers gain many valuable insights into sport and people in general.
113. Teaching and learning are both good. Lessons have brisk pace, basic skills are taught well and they are built at a good rate. There is some good specialist teaching of dance. Behaviour and relationships are very good and pupils grow in maturity, stamina and fitness as they grow older. This was shown in a Year 6 games lesson where pupils learned more about sending and receiving the ball, passing, intercepting and catching in a hybrid game devised by the school to benefit football, netball, rugby, basketball and volleyball skills. This lesson moved briskly, activity was sustained and healthy competition promoted. The teacher directed all this well and the general exclamation *phew!* was heard frequently – the teacher included - when the action stopped at the lesson end.
114. School managers accept the need to introduce a system of assessment of PE skills and knowledge and to give pupils more opportunities to talk about and evaluate their own work in a bid to improve. The curriculum for the subject is well developed and the good range of sporting activities outside lessons makes a valuable contribution to the quality of learning and the standards achieved.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. At the end of both key stages standards in religious education are in line with national expectation and pupils make good progress. This indicates good improvement since the last inspection. A range of evidence was taken into account, including lessons, and talking with children about their previous work.
116. The school follows the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus, which sets out a foundation for religious education that is essentially Christian. It includes examples of other faiths and human experience. Guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority informs planning which enhances provision. The planned themes on which assemblies are based contribute positively to all pupils' development in this subject.
117. Key Stage 1 pupils know why certain Christian festivals such as Christmas are important. Year 2 pupils show good progress in understanding that not everyone shares the same festivals. A visitor from Taiwan led a very successful lesson about how she and others celebrate the Chinese New Year. All pupils were very attentive and showed interest and respect. They asked numerous relevant questions which improved their knowledge and understanding of the similarities and differences between some traditions. At Key Stage 2 pupils are also accumulating factual

information and gaining insights into other faiths. They enthusiastically recall working with an artist in residence last year on the large panels in the school hall which represent Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, and Judaism. Year 4 pupils can recall the story of Jesus in the garden at Gethsemane with appropriate detail. In a Year 6 lesson pupils reflect upon what is really valuable to them in their lives. They consider possible items that they could put in a box to bring to school and share with the class. These included 'a little teddy given by mum after baptism', 'a crystal' and 'a picture of my grandad before he died'. Pupils show good progress in understanding the concept of intangible valuables.

118. Only a small number of religious education lessons were seen during the inspection week. In each one, pupils' attitudes to the subject were positive and behaviour was good. In both key stages pupils engage readily in discussions and this supports their personal development. In the best lessons teachers were very clear about what they wanted pupils to learn, although weekly plans lack sufficient detail about learning objectives. In the good lessons opportunities were created for pupils to express their thoughts and feelings. Pupils also need to be encouraged to reflect and respond to each other's views as well as those of their teachers. Staff have good relationships with pupils in both key stages and good use is made of opportunities to promote a sense of right and wrong.
119. The subject is managed satisfactorily by the co-ordinator. The curriculum is appropriate but the inconsistency in the school's medium-term planning system makes careful monitoring difficult.