

INSPECTION REPORT

OXLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wolverhampton

LEA area: Wolverhampton

Unique reference number: 104295

Headteacher: Miss C Gray

Reporting inspector: Michael Best
10413

Dates of inspection: 21 - 24 May 2001

Inspection number: 230836

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Ripon Road
off Bushbury Lane
Wolverhampton

Postcode: WV10 9TR

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Paul Allen

Date of previous inspection: December 1977

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Dr Michael Best 10413	Registered Inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Physical education Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils How well the school is led and managed What the school should do to improve further
Mrs Pat Edwards 10965	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values & personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the schools work in partnership with parents
Mrs Trudy Cotton 3751	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography History Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equality of opportunity	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Oxley Primary School lies just over a mile from the centre of Wolverhampton. The school draws its pupils from the local area, mainly from rented homes in the private and public sectors. There are currently 168 pupils on roll, 87 girls and 115 boys aged between 4 and 11 years of age, who attend on a full-time basis. In addition, 34 pupils attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The school is similar in size to most other primary schools in England and, at present, is experiencing a fall in numbers as the area is redeveloped. The school is in an Education Action Zone and receives additional support.

At the time of the inspection, there were 24 pupils in the reception year. The school's own assessments show that attainment on entry to the school is below that found nationally. Several of the present pupils joined the school after the age of five years, reflecting the mobility in the area. Fifty-nine pupils (32 per cent) have free school meals, which is above the national average. Half the pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds and a quarter speak English as an additional language. Sixty-six pupils (35 per cent) are on the school's register of special educational need, which is above the national average. Of these, 13 pupils (7 per cent) on the register are on Stage 3 of the Code of Practice; they have differing learning needs. No pupil has a statement¹, which is below the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a much improved school. It is well supported by its governors and the staff are working hard to raise standards. Compared with similar schools the standards achieved by 11 year olds are well above average in mathematics and science and average in English. From when they start school to when they leave, pupils make good progress. The leadership and management provided by key staff are good and are driving up standards. The overall quality of both teaching and learning are good. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are, overall, good. The school provides a purposeful learning environment. Its capacity for further improvement is good. Considering all factors, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of achievement are good in mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good, with a high proportion of good or better teaching.
- The school is a most caring community in which all pupils are valued.
- Procedures for promoting good attendance are excellent.
- The school's partnership with parents and the community is developing well.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing.
- The creative, imaginative and 'hands on' activities in the nursery.
- Pupils' confidence and competence as speakers in discussions and debates.
- Pupils' capacity for independent learning and personal study.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in December 1997 and found to require special measures. Following an HMI inspection in June 1999, the special measures were lifted. The school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified in the 1997 inspection. Standards are rising and pupils make good progress over time. Assessment procedures are much improved and help to ensure that work is well matched to pupils' needs.

Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils for whom English is an additional language. The curriculum is broad and focuses well on the development of skills and understanding. The quality of teaching has risen substantially and two of the present staff are identified as Advanced Skills Teachers. Teachers' planning sets clear objectives for pupils to achieve in their learning.

¹ The Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

Good analysis and evaluation of test results and the setting of individual pupil targets now helps to identify more accurately pupils' learning needs. The school sets informed yet realistic targets for pupils to achieve by the age of 11 in English and mathematics.

There have been a number of changes in personnel since the 1997 inspection. A new management team is in place and responsibilities are appropriately shared among staff and in-service training is being undertaken. Monitoring of teaching and pupil achievement in literacy, numeracy and science are now being extended to other subject areas. The governing body is now more closely involved in the forward planning for the school. The school's improvement plan, although still developing, points the way forward for the school.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	D	C
Mathematics	D	C	C	A
Science	E	C	C	A

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

The table shows that in 2000, compared with all schools, standards at the age of 11 were below average in English and average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Provisional results in the 2001 statutory tests indicate that standards have improved further. The rate of progress exceeds that found nationally.

At the age of 7, results in reading, writing and mathematics in the 2000 statutory tests and assessments were well below average in comparison with all other primary schools. When compared with schools in similar contexts, results were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. Teacher assessments in science were well below average compared with all schools.

These results represent a gradual improvement in each subject over time. Provisional results for 2001 indicate that the rate of improvement has increased, but results in writing remain below average. In the other subjects of the National Curriculum, standards are broadly similar to those expected nationally at the ages of 7 and 11 years. In religious education, standards are similar to those outlined in the locally agreed syllabus.

Children enter the nursery with skills and experiences that are below those expected for their ages. By the end of the Foundation Stage², most children come close to achieving the Early Learning Goals³ in each of the six areas of learning. Overall, children make good progress and this continues as they move through the school. Although satisfactory, it is less consistent in Years 3 and 4, but accelerates in Year 5 and through into Year 6.

² The Foundation Stage begins at the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class year.

³ The early learning goals are the expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. The six areas of learning are communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Attitudes are good in a high proportion of lessons across the school. The pupils enjoy school. They concentrate well and are committed to their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The school has high expectations of behaviour and the pupils respond well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils show high levels of care for one another and have a good sense of responsibility. Relationships are good.
Attendance	Although the school has excellent procedures in place to monitor absences, attendance is below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching in the school is good. It is good or better in 69 per cent of the lessons seen and very good in 13 per cent of lessons. One excellent lesson and one unsatisfactory lesson were seen (2 per cent) during the inspection. The quality of teaching has risen significantly since the last inspection.

The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently sound with some good teaching observed. Children develop basic skills well, but independent working habits are less developed as activities tend to be over-directed, especially in the nursery. The learning atmosphere is calm, but effective. Adults and children work well together and children's learning is enhanced by the contribution of support staff.

Good teaching was observed in all the infant and junior classes during the inspection. There are particular strengths in teaching in Year 2 and in Years 5 and 6. A common feature of the lessons seen at both key stages during the inspection is the close attention teachers give to planning for pupils' individual needs. Both teachers and pupils value the contributions made by others. Teachers' use of questioning to test and develop skills and understanding is good. Pupils are keen to answer, but their capacity to discuss and debate issues is underdeveloped.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the curriculum for pupils aged 6 to 11 years is good. A sound curriculum, with a good focus on basic skills, is provided for children aged five and under in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported by adults. Teachers plan carefully to meet pupils' individual needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils are given good support. This enables them to participate fully in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for moral and social development of pupils is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Across the school pupils' welfare has a high priority. The school's procedures are good.

The school's partnership with parents is good. Parents feel that the school gives them a clear picture of what is happening in the school and how their children are progressing.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is working purposefully to sustain the momentum of improvement achieved in the past three years. She is well supported by a strong and capable management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors know the school well. They successfully fulfil their statutory duties and follow proper procedures.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Areas for development are carefully monitored and evaluated. Test results are analysed. Teaching and learning are monitored.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school makes careful use of the resources available to it. The school applies the principles of best value to its purchases.

The school is adequately staffed. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory. The derelict demountable classrooms on the school site pose a health and safety hazard.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Forty-six parents returned the parents' questionnaire. Twenty-three attended a meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school and make good progress.• The teaching and behaviour are good.• They feel comfortable to approach the school with questions or problems.• The school helps their children to become mature and responsible.• The school is well led and managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A minority of parents think that their children do not get the right amount of homework.• A small number think the school does not work closely with parents.• Some parents think the school does not keep them well informed about progress.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments and views of the school, but disagree with their criticisms. Children have an appropriate amount of homework to do and the school makes strong efforts to work closely with parents and involve them in their children's learning. Parents are kept well informed regarding their children's progress through detailed annual reports, formal parent-teacher consultation meetings and informal meetings before and after school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with skills and experiences that are below those expected for their ages, and for some, well below. Although the number of children from different ethnic groups is rising, most children speak and understand at least some words in English. From this low starting point, they made good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, in their mathematical development and with the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress in physical development and creative development is satisfactory.
2. Simple tests given to children when they first enter the reception class show that their attainment in all six areas of learning experience is below the average expected for their age. Nevertheless, they continue to make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, in their mathematical development and with the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress in physical development and creative development is satisfactory.
3. The findings of this inspection indicate that by the end of the Foundation Stage⁴, most children in the reception class (aged five years and under) come close to achieving the early learning goals⁵ by the start of Year 1 in each of the six areas of learning. Children make good progress in the development of their reading and mathematical skills and in their personal, social and emotional development. This is directly a result of the strong emphasis and attention to detail in the development of these basic skills by staff.
4. Inspection evidence shows that by the age of seven years, most pupils achieve close to national levels in speaking and reading, but that standards in writing are not yet up to national averages. Standards in English by 11 are broadly in line with those attained nationally, but few pupils reach the higher levels. Pupils make good progress in English. The school's records show that more pupils are achieving average and higher levels in their speaking and reading skills in the infant classes⁶ and that more pupils reach higher levels in their reading and writing in the junior classes⁷. This is because there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching. The basic skills in English are taught well in each year group. Very good teaching is raising standards at the end of the infants and juniors.
5. Standards in literacy are rising. Pupils speak clearly and listen carefully. They read with growing accuracy and expression. In their writing in English lessons, they pay improving attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. Standards in writing are rising, but pupils are often not given enough time to write independently in group work in the literacy hour. Invariably, teachers provide the model for writing for younger pupils to copy and this takes away the opportunity for them to write and record their own ideas. Pupils' skills in using word-processing for drafting, editing and revising their work are developing slowly. Pupils

⁴ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and finishes at the end of the reception class year. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

⁵ Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer to achievements children make in the six areas of learning (see previous footnote). There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

⁶ The infant classes are Years 1 and 2 at Key Stage 1.

⁷ The junior classes are Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 at Key Stage 2.

do not have sufficient opportunities to use computers to the full to build upon and develop the skills they have acquired.

6. In mathematics, standards are broadly in line with national levels at the age of 7 and above these at the age of 11 years because a number of pupils are reaching the higher levels. Pupils' numeracy skills are developing well. Pupils are very enthusiastic about mental mathematics, particularly in the older classes. Their speed and accuracy with pencil and paper calculations are developing. Their skills in problem solving are more variable. Some pupils find it difficult to organise and process their thoughts without support whilst some of the oldest pupils address these challenges with speed and accuracy.
7. In science, standards are similar to those found nationally at the age of 7 years. At 11, the majority of pupils achieve the national average and a number achieve higher levels. A more rigorous approach to the development of pupils' practical and thinking skills is helping pupils to apply their knowledge and thus develop their understanding. However, there is limited recording in pupils' note books of individual preliminary work in planning their experiments and in making predictions as to the likely outcome of their investigative work.
8. In the 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the age of 7 years (the end of Key Stage 1⁸) results in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average in comparison with all other primary schools. When compared with schools in similar contexts, results were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. Teacher assessments in science 2000 were well below average compared with all schools. These results represent a gradual improvement in each subject over time.
9. In 2000 National Curriculum statutory tests taken by pupils at the age of 11 years (the end of Key Stage 2⁹) results, in comparison with all schools, were below average in English and average in mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools these results were well above average in English and very high in mathematics and science. Comparison of these results with those obtained by the same year group at the end of Key Stage 1 indicates that pupils made good, and often very good, progress. In mathematics, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher level was similar to the national average; in science, this proportion was above the national average. Compared with similar schools, the proportions of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above average. The school reports that although some pupils did not reach the level expected for their age, they nevertheless achieved well in relation to their prior attainment. These results represent a considerable improvement in standards over time. Results in mathematics and science have risen sharply; those in English have risen at a slower but steady rate. The improvement has been faster than the national trend.
10. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Years 2 and 6 had just completed the 2001 National Curriculum tests and assessments. Provisional results indicate that at the age of seven standards have risen. Provisional results for pupils in Year 6, at the age of 11, indicate that standards have also improved with some pupils likely to gain results in mathematics well above those expected nationally for their ages. These provisional results are borne out by inspection evidence.

⁸ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils, by the end of Key Stage 1, are expected to reach Level 2. If a pupil is attaining Level 3 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

⁹ At Key Stage 2 the nationally expected level for pupils to reach by the end of Year 6 is Level 4. If a pupil is attaining Level 5 then he or she is reaching standards above that expected for a child of his or her age.

11. At the time of the last inspection, progress was satisfactory in the early years and in Years 1 and 2. It slowed in Years 3, 4 and 5 and was unsatisfactory in all aspects of English, information technology, design technology and art, before improving in Year 6. The results of the 1997 national tests showed that the attainment of pupils at the age of 11 years was below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils for whom English is an additional language made satisfactory progress. Those with special educational needs made uncertain and irregular progress. The school has worked hard to address and resolve these weaknesses. Pupils are now much better prepared for the next stage of their education.
12. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is similar to that expected nationally at the ages of 7 and 11. Pupils in the infant classes are familiar with a range of programs and most are able to follow instructions without sustained adult support. Pupils in the junior classes use CD-ROMs to find out information and they use programs for modelling. Their word-processing skills are developing, but opportunities for them to practise and use these regularly are underdeveloped.
13. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, standards are in the line with those expected for pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Progress in these areas of the curriculum is at least satisfactory. Standards have improved since the last inspection. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the Wolverhampton Agreed Syllabus at the ages of 7 and 11 years. Pupils make satisfactory progress.
14. The school has a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN)¹⁰ who mainly have difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics. There are no pupils with statements for their special educational needs. Provision is good and this enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. Help in the classroom is well focused and teachers and classroom assistants use the pupils' individual learning targets to guide learning in lessons. Everyday work matches the different ability levels in classes well and pupils with special educational needs make the best progress possible. Pupils achieve well in relation to the targets set for their learning. Their progress is good, regularly reviewed and findings shared with parents. Pupils with difficulties with their behaviour benefit from the help of outside experts in order to work alongside others in the classroom.
15. Pupils from minority ethnic groups make good progress. They achieve as well as other pupils in their class. The school monitors their progress regularly and provides any necessary extra support or further challenge. A good proportion of dual heritage and Afro-Caribbean pupils is in the higher groups for reading and mathematics. Many achieve higher levels in mathematics tests at the end of Year 6. The school is very clear about the difference between having special educational needs and learning an additional language and works hard to suitably challenge all its pupils.
16. The school recognises that more able pupils may also have learning needs and is developing ways of supporting them to achieve the best they can. The progress made by talented pupils as they near the end of the junior age range is good.
17. Pupils make good progress as they move through Years 1 and 2. This momentum continues at a satisfactory level in Years 3 and 4, but it does not increase consistently for

¹⁰ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act. Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.

all pupils until Year 5. Here it accelerates and continues into Year 6 where the pace of progress is maintained and increased until pupils leave the school. This impetus is the result of teachers' exacting expectations of their pupils. The evidence for this is evident in pupils' work and the improved standards achieved at the ages of 7 and 11.

18. Inspection evidence indicates that boys and girls make broadly similar progress. Analyses of statutory tests show that boys have traditionally outperformed girls. One explanation for this is the imbalance of boys and girls in classes. The deputy headteacher's analysis and evaluation of test results and the setting of individual pupil targets is helping to identify more accurately pupils' learning needs. In conjunction with the local education authority, the school sets targets for pupils to achieve by the age of 11 in English and mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates that these targets are realistic and the school is on course to meet and, if possible, exceed them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good. This makes a good contribution to raising standards. Pupils' attitudes and values have improved since the previous inspection. Parents feel that the school gives 'good messages' to their children by encouraging them to behave well and grow in maturity. The school has a higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups. Relationships in the school are harmonious. This is something about which parents are particularly pleased. The majority of parents agree that their children enjoy coming to school and feel welcome in the school community.
20. Children in the nursery and reception age groups make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They enjoy school and behave well. Pupils in the infant and junior classes talk about school enthusiastically. Most work hard in lessons and try to do their best. This was seen in a Year 5 history lesson where the teacher's enthusiasm encouraged all to participate fully in a discussion of 1960's pop idols, thereby bringing the lesson alive. Pupils describe with interest and enjoyment what they have done in lessons, for instance, children in the reception class talking about their mini-beasts and pupils in Year 6 undertaking investigations on the senses.
21. Pupils with special educational needs work hard in lessons. Consistent support and suitably challenging work, which matches their individual needs well, motivates them to learn and succeed. They are keen to join in with all activities and do so confidently.
22. Pupils for whom English is an additional language feel part of the school. They are well settled and keen to learn. They enjoy sharing cultural traditions and interests. For example, one pupil shone in a religious education lesson because of her family links with the church and her knowledge and understanding of religious stories.
23. The school has high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. In a significant number of lessons, it is very good. However, in some classes, the strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour are not always applied consistently. These lapses, and the interruptions caused to learning, affect the progress made by pupils.
24. Playtime and lunchtime are pleasant social occasions when the pupils play well together. They speak warmly of the lunchtime supervisors who encourage them to play together without arguments.
25. The majority of pupils are courteous and polite. They are friendly towards visitors and seek to put them at their ease. Pupils treat their own and other people's property with respect. No incidents of bullying or racism were seen during the inspection. The majority

of parents and pupils agree that the school deals effectively with any incidents of bullying and racism that occur. There were five fixed period exclusions and two permanent exclusions involving two pupils during the last reporting year.

26. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. The majority of pupils know that all the adults want what is best for them. This has a positive impact on the way the pupils treat other people. They willingly accept responsibility when given the opportunity. They enjoy helping with the routines of both class and school such as classroom helpers and register monitors. Some members of Years 5 and 6 have volunteered to undertake training for peer mentoring. Pupils' ability to use their own initiative and take responsibility for their own learning both at home and in lessons is limited by the range of opportunities provided.
27. The level of attendance has improved since the previous inspection. However, at 92 per cent for the last half term, it is still below the national average. A contributing factor to this low attendance level is a local education authority regulation that insists the names of pupils remain on roll until confirmation of transfer is received from the next school. A further factor is the number of extended visits abroad made by some pupils for family and cultural reasons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

28. Taking all the available evidence into account, the quality of teaching in the school is good. This is making a significant contribution to the school's drive to raise standards.
29. Teaching is good or better in 69 per cent of the lessons seen and very good in 13 per cent of lessons. One excellent lesson and one unsatisfactory lesson were seen (2 per cent) during the inspection. At the time of the last inspection, teaching was satisfactory, overall, and good in 30 per cent of lessons. However, there were marked variations in the quality of teaching and teaching was unsatisfactory or poor in 20 per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching has risen significantly since then.
30. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently sound with some good teaching observed. Children are keen to learn and work at a good pace. They develop basic skills well, but independent working habits are less developed as activities tend to be over-directed, especially in the nursery. The learning atmosphere is calm but effective. Adults and children work well together. Relationships are good. Children readily help each other to find what they need to complete their tasks. Children's learning is enhanced by the contribution of support staff.
31. Good teaching was observed in all the infant and junior classes during the inspection. There are particular strengths in teaching in Year 2 and in Years 5 and 6. Two members of the teaching staff are identified as Advanced Skills Teachers. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in both the infant and junior classes.
32. A common feature of the lessons seen during the inspection is the close attention teachers give to planning for pupils' individual needs. Pupils' capacity to co-operate and collaborate is fostered by teachers, but many pupils lack the confidence to 'have a go'. Both teachers and pupils value the contributions made by other pupils and this helps to raise pupils' feelings of self-worth and success. Because teachers share learning objectives, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is good. The vast majority of pupils, including those who have difficulty in learning, are keen to work hard.
33. In the best lessons, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are high and there is a mature and industrious approach to learning as pupils apply themselves to the

challenging tasks they are given. In these lessons, pupils work hard to meet the demands placed upon them.

34. This was particularly evident in a numeracy lesson in Year 6 where pupils were plotting algebraic equations on line graphs. Good questioning by the teacher served to focus pupils' thinking and successfully led pupils, step by step, through the process. This enabled a group of girls, in particular, who were finding some difficulty with organising their ideas, to work more systematically. The class discussion at the end of the lesson indicated that learning was successful and gave scope for more able pupils to extend their thinking. It is this high quality of teaching that promotes high learning and enables pupils to achieve high standards.
35. Teachers' use of questioning to test and develop skills and understanding is good. Pupils are keen to answer, but their capacity to discuss and debate issues is limited. They are not confident in working independently or in undertaking personal study.
36. The vast majority of pupils are conscious of the routines of the class and the high expectations their teachers have of their behaviour. In consequence, they conduct themselves appropriately. There are some inconsistencies in the application of the school's behaviour policy in the younger junior classes. Much of this comes about because of the interruptions of a small number of pupils who have short concentration spans. Frequent stops to deal with the few disrupt learning for the majority as the flow of lessons is impeded.
37. The unsatisfactory lesson seen in the junior classes was carefully planned. However, in delivering it, time was not well used and the pace of learning slowed. The teacher's questioning did not move the majority of pupils' thinking on far enough and much time was spent in trying to gain the attention of distracted pupils.
38. The quality of teaching of pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. Pupils who do not speak English at home have their language needs carefully assessed. There is a small minority of pupils at the early stages of learning English and they are given extra support by teachers with the expertise to develop speaking and writing skills (EMAG teachers). The expertise of these teachers is also used to provide help for pupils from dual heritage and Afro-Caribbean homes so that they can learn with greater confidence and competence.
39. English as an Additional Language (EAL) lessons provide equality of opportunity for all groups. Teachers include pupils from minority ethnic groups in discussions and review the make up of groups to ensure the best possible match of work to need. EMAG teachers have expertise and when supporting different groups ensure that the work reflects the structure of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Support is also effective when EMAG teachers work alongside pupils in lessons.
40. The deployment of support staff is good. Teachers systematically involve support staff in the planning of what they are to do to support pupils' learning. Support staff are, for the most part, fully engaged throughout lessons, for example, in helping to interpret and reinforce to a group of pupils what the teacher is explaining to the whole class. Support staff have a clear picture of their role and, consequently, pupils' learning is enhanced.
41. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Relationships with pupils are good and staff encourage them to participate in lessons. Lessons have work planned at different levels and this ensures that pupils understand their learning. The special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) has expertise in this field and plans clear small steps for their learning in pupils' individual education plans. All staff make

- good use of these plans in lessons.
42. The use of specialist staff, such as the very good contribution made to the music curriculum, makes a valued contribution to pupils' learning.
 43. Overall, the standard of teaching in English and mathematics is good with some very good practice seen. Literacy and numeracy skills are well planned for and, in the vast majority of lessons, well taught. The school follows the national strategies, making appropriate adjustments where considered necessary. The recommended planning formats are used at both key stages. The strength of teaching and learning in these areas of the curriculum in the school is that teachers use the clear guidance as to what they should be teaching at a given time to plan the next steps in learning for their pupils.
 44. Teachers' planning for other areas of the curriculum is also good. Clear and detailed planning is evident throughout the school, but in the nursery it is not always clear as to how pupils' independent skills will be developed. The link between the longer term and shorter term planning is secure.
 45. Most teachers systematically share learning objectives, that is, what they expect pupils to learn by the end of the lesson, with their pupils and return to these at the end of the lesson to check that they have been covered. This is good practice as it identifies for pupils what they are expected to learn and provides teachers with a clear indication of the next steps in learning.
 46. Overall, classroom organisation and management are good. Teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high. Resources are well prepared and used. Most teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach are secure.
 47. Homework is set regularly and the majority of pupils and parents are satisfied with the amount of work that is done at home. Reading and spellings are regular features for the majority of pupils.
 48. Pupils' work is regularly marked and most comments help pupils to develop their work further. A comprehensive assessment policy is in place. Assessment information is routinely gathered and detailed written records are maintained. All teachers know their pupils well. It is the systematic use of this information that is helping to drive up standards.

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

49. The school provides a sound curriculum for children aged five and under in the Foundation Stage. A good emphasis in the nursery on the acquisition of basic skills, particularly in children's listening and speaking and their social skills, enables children to make good progress. However, although there are opportunities provided for children to develop their creative and imaginative skills, these tend to be over-directed by adults. Opportunities for children to make choices and develop a greater capacity for independence in their work are under developed.
50. The curriculum in the reception class builds on the foundations established in the nursery. All areas of learning are included in the planned curriculum. However, although appropriate provision is made for children's physical development through planned activities in the hall and in the playground, there is no access to activities with large equipment such as climbing frames or wheeled toys such as bicycles. The space available in the reception class is broadly adequate for the delivery of the rest of Foundation Stage curriculum because of the small class size.

51. The quality and range of the curriculum for pupils aged 6 to 11 years in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good. All the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught. The curriculum offered is broad, balanced and relevant and meets statutory requirements.
52. The school has brought its curriculum into line with the new curricular requirements implemented from September 2000. There are detailed plans for all the subjects of the National Curriculum and for religious education. Planning for English and for mathematics is based around the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy documents respectively. The curriculum in religious education is based on the locally agreed syllabus. Planning for the other curriculum areas is based on national guidance, which has been appropriately adapted to the particular requirements of the school.
53. The school systematically plans for the development of pupils' thinking and practical skills as well as their subject knowledge as they move through the school. It is aware, however, that much more work is necessary in order to develop pupils' confidence and competency in discussing and debating their ideas and findings as they develop their independent and personal study skills.
54. The school has implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy well. These make a significant contribution to the improved quality of teaching and learning in both subjects. Both strategies are being successfully adapted and developed to meet the needs of the pupils. Lessons are carefully planned and the routines are well known to pupils. Little time is wasted and pupils make good progress, as demonstrated by the latest statutory test results.
55. The curriculum is socially inclusive. All pupils have equal access to opportunities for learning inside and outside lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class. They mainly follow the same curriculum as other pupils. Suitably modified activities help pupils to learn and to make good progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are also well supported in the work provided for them and in the opportunities they have to develop their language skills. Although more able pupils are supported, the level of challenge provided for them is not always consistent.
56. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities for its size. A successful breakfast club provides opportunities for pupils to socialise and play games. Organised activities during lunchtime and after school include football, cricket, netball, French club and with choir and recorder groups planned. Younger pupils have an overnight visit at the nearby Kingswood centre. Older pupils undertake annual residential visits. As Year 6 pupils demonstrated in their discussion with inspectors and their written work, their recent visit to mid Wales provided good opportunities for boosting work in curriculum areas such as science, geography and history. It also contributed to their social development as they learned to live together in a group outside their immediate family.
57. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education, including sex and drugs education. These are delivered within aspects of the curriculum such as science topics about healthy eating and growth. The school has identified this area as one for further development. Arrangements for older pupils in Key Stage 2 to receive specific teaching on sex education have been agreed in consultation with local religious leaders and parents. The school has made a conscious decision that sex education is taught to boys and girls separately. The school nurse and the police provide support. A drug awareness road show, which visits the school annually, provides all pupils with an awareness of dangerous substances and the effects of tobacco.

58. There are satisfactory links with other schools and partner institutions in the area. The school is developing links with other primary schools in the locality through the Education Action Zone. Joint curriculum development activities are being developed in, for example, music and physical education. In these, co-ordinators meet to exchange ideas and funding is provided to introduce initiatives in school.
59. The school has sound links with associated secondary schools and there are appropriate arrangements in place for ensuring the smooth transfer of pupils at the end of Year 6. Pupils attend induction days at their receiving comprehensive schools and teachers have attended joint staff development with teachers from other schools. The school has established links with a local teacher training institution. It also offers placements to nursery nurse and work experience students.
60. With the help of specialist support and training funded through the Education Action Zone, the school is developing opportunities for pupils' personal development to take place. 'Circle Time'¹¹ takes place in all classes. This provides pupils with opportunities to speak about matters that concern them and are of common interest. These discussions support pupils' spiritual development in that they learn to listen to and respect the ideas and beliefs of others. Their oral development is addressed in that pupils are helped to understand the effects of their actions upon others together with an appreciation of 'right' and 'wrong'. Their social development is enhanced in that their self-confidence and self-esteem are boosted.
61. The school's links with the local community contribute well to pupils' learning. Pupils visit local museums, theatres and places of worship. The school has established good links with local businesses through the Education Action Zone Industry Day. It has been adopted by TimKen Aerospace UK Ltd, which has provided funds for the school gym club, a proposed building project and has allowed an employee to assist on the Year 6 residential visit to Wales. Preparations are in hand for the company to provide regular reading partners for pupils. Pupils take part in fund raising for charities such as UNICEF. The local parish priest leads collective worship fortnightly and has joined the governing body. These visits and visitors make an important and valued contribution to widening pupils' horizons and helping them to develop as members of a community.
62. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. The school makes satisfactory provision for the development of spiritual awareness. However, many good examples occur. For example, pupils in Year 6 talk about their experiences on the residential trip to Wales, describing their feelings on seeing the lovely scenery. In Year 1, pupils thoughtfully write their own prayers thanking God for things that are important to them. In school assemblies, an atmosphere of calm is created by the music playing as pupils come into the hall. However, collective worship during assemblies is sometimes routine and opportunities to develop spiritual awareness are missed, for example, by not having a focal point such as a candle during periods of reflection.
63. Provision for moral development is good. The behaviour policy is clear and well understood and the rewards and sanctions promote a positive approach. There is a clear and well-understood set of values which underpin all school activities. Pupils respect and take care of the school's resources and environment. From the time they enter school, children are made aware of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Staff on duty at lunchtimes supervise pupils with care and respect and ensure that the school's behaviour policy is well used and in so doing foster values of honesty, fairness and

¹¹ During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

respect for others. Parents feel that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children.

64. Provision for social development through the daily life of the school is good. Adults working in the school provide good role models in their relationship with pupils. Playground games are effective in encouraging pupils to share and co-operate with each other. The residential visits made by pupils in Year 6 and Year 2 gives them an effective experience of living and working with others in a different setting. Pupils are encouraged to help one another and members of Year 5 and Year 6 have trained as peer mentors to enable them to befriend others at lunchtime.
65. The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school places appropriate emphasis on local culture and this aspect is explored well with, for example, visits to Willenhall Lock Museum. Opportunities for wider cultural experiences through visits to places of interest and to see and listen to performances are satisfactory. There are planned opportunities for pupils to appreciate the wider diversity of cultures within Great Britain and the influence of other cultures on modern day living as seen in displays on religions, festivals and artefacts from other countries.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

66. The school has maintained its effective care of pupils reported at the time of the previous inspection. The school is a very caring community, where different groups of pupils work harmoniously. Teachers know the pupils well and value them as individuals. Most parents are happy with the care and guidance offered to their children. They feel their children are happy in school and able to concentrate on their work because teachers are fully aware of pupils' needs. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are pleased with the extra help their children receive. Parents of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties say they can see improvement in their children's behaviour.
67. Procedures for supporting and monitoring pupils' personal development are good. In some instances they are very good, especially where best practice includes pupils setting their own weekly targets for development. They are encouraged to judge their own improvement against these targets. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour. The school's behaviour policy is effective. The majority of staff apply it consistently.
68. Pupils and parents are aware of the school rules, which are supported through the home-school agreement. The school carefully monitors issues related to bullying and unacceptable behaviour through activities such as 'Circle Time'. The supervisory arrangements in and around the school both during playtime and lunchtime are very good. The measures adopted clearly work very well as during the inspection no instances were observed of any individuals or groups being unfairly treated or disadvantaged.
69. The procedures for monitoring attendance are excellent. Daily monitoring is undertaken and weekly figures are produced for absence by gender and ethnicity. Registers are marked regularly and accurately at the beginning of every session. Parents are constantly reminded of the need to inform the school of the reason for absence or lateness. The education welfare officer visits the school weekly and works closely with families where there is perceived to be a problem with attendance.
70. All staff are aware of the procedures relating to child protection and the policy fully complies with that laid down by the area child protection committee. The member of staff designated as having responsibility for child protection has recently undertaken training.

71. Pupils' health, safety and general well-being are effectively looked after. Lessons on sex education and drug awareness form part of the school's health education programme. The school maintains an accident book for recording incidents. First aid boxes are appropriately sited and stocked. Parents are informed of accidents involving their children and of any treatment given. The governors have approved a comprehensive health and safety policy and regularly risk assessments are undertaken. The school is already aware of the health and safety issues relating to the site and, in particular, the disused demountable classrooms.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

72. The school's partnership with parents is good. This has improved since the previous inspection. The majority of parents indicate that they are pleased with what the school provides and achieves.
73. The quality of information provided by the school is good. Parents feel that the school's regular newsletters keep them well informed about developments. Consultation meetings for parents are held in the autumn and summer terms with a meeting for parents of children with special educational needs being held in the spring term. Parents feel that the school gives them a clear picture of what is happening in the school and how their children are progressing.
74. Pupils' annual progress reports are clear and informative regarding their achievements and highlight areas for improvement. The prospectus is detailed. It provides parents and carers with a useful, practical guide to the school. The school also provides a booklet for parents explaining its policies on homework, attendance, punctuality, behaviour and discipline. Parents were able to attend open afternoons explaining the literacy and numeracy initiatives when these were first introduced in the school. The school provides information each half term on the curriculum for each class.
75. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is limited. The school does all it can, for instance, by organising a parent support group to encourage parents to help in school. However, many parents are reluctant to commit themselves on a regular basis. Some parents attend special assemblies, help with drama activities and on trips. The school much appreciates these contributions. Although support given by some parents to their children's schoolwork at home is inconsistent, other parents make good use of reading diaries to communicate with class teachers. Parents are supportive of the school's fundraising activities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

76. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher is working purposefully to sustain the momentum of improvement achieved in the past three years. She is well supported by a strong and capable management team. All the teaching and non-teaching staff are committed to the effective and efficient organisation of the school. The day-to-day routines of the school are smooth.
77. The aims of the school are clear and are evident in all aspects of the work of the school. The good relationships between members of the school community are at the root of the school's ethos. Individual achievements are both valued and celebrated. This has a positive impact in raising pupils' feelings of self-worth and the standards they achieve.

78. At the time of the last inspection, the leadership and management of the school were unsatisfactory. The headteacher, governors, senior management team and curriculum co-ordinators lacked direction and effectiveness. The ethos did not inspire quality learning or teaching. The school was placed in special measures. There has been significant improvement in the intervening period.
79. The headteacher has been in post since the beginning of this academic year and the deputy headteacher since the start of the calendar year. Responsibilities are clearly and equitably delegated. The contribution made by senior members of the management team is very good. The leadership provides clear direction for the school.
80. An emerging strength of the school is the quality of the documentation and planning that supports its aspirations. The school analyses statutory and non-statutory test results carefully. These are particularly helpful in setting challenging, but achievable, targets for pupils. The school has put appropriate systems in place to track pupils' academic progress and personal development. This information helps teachers to plan more specifically to meet pupils' needs. This is making an important contribution to raising teachers' expectations and the standards achieved by pupils.
81. The school has made good progress in the areas identified for action at the time of the last inspection. Improvements have been focused on raising the standards of teaching and the progress made by pupils. The success of this strategy is still to be fully realised, but the provisional results in the statutory tests for the present Year 2 and Year 6 pupils show that significant strides have been made. The school recognises that there are still areas to work on, particularly about the development of pupils' capacity to think and work independently. There is a positive, shared commitment in the school to succeed. The school's capacity to achieve is good. The improved standards achieved at the end of Years 2 and 6 bear clear testimony to the school's resolve to raise standards.
82. Each member of staff has responsibility for more than one curriculum area. Responsibilities for the non-core subjects¹² and religious education have recently been reviewed and allocated. The good development of the literacy and numeracy strategies in the school demonstrates the potential in other subject areas. The school is developing a rigorous approach to planning and monitoring the curriculum, which provides a firm basis curriculum for co-ordinators to develop their management role.
83. Standards are rising as a result of developments brought about by the rigorous monitoring of teaching and pupils' achievement in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. This good practice is about to be introduced to the non-core subjects of the curriculum.
84. Governors make a valued contribution to the work of the school. They are well involved in shaping the direction of the school. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Their experience in industry and the community benefits the school well. There is a secure working relationship evident between parents, governors and staff. The governing body successfully fulfils its statutory duties and follows proper procedures. The school is successfully implementing its performance management policy. All key dates have been met.
85. Plans for the future development of the school are identified in the school's improvement plan. Its structure pays appropriate attention to identifying costings, time scales, responsibilities and success criteria. Provision is made for initiatives to be monitored and for the governing body to evaluate the outcomes. The plan for the current year is in draft

¹² National Curriculum core subjects are English, mathematics and science. The non-core subjects are art and design, design an technology, information and communications technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

form. In its present form, it covers a large number of initiatives. The headteacher is aware that key priorities need to be identified and is committed to focusing more specifically on these in subsequent drafts.

86. The school faces considerable challenges in managing the recent reductions in pupil numbers. The quality of financial planning is satisfactory. The school is currently licensed to operate a negative budget as it adjusts its spending commitments to its reduced income. The school has very little leeway with its budget at present. Spending decisions are costed and the school makes good use of the specific grants and provision available to it.
87. Financial management is sound. Appropriate procedures are in place. The school keeps careful track of its income and expenditure. It successfully applies the principles of 'best value' to its purchases. Pupils benefit from carefully targeted spending. The school is supported by parents' fund raising efforts and values the contribution this makes to the provision of learning resources. The latest audit report has only recently arrived in the school and the school is considering its response to the recommendations.
88. Satisfactory use is made of new technologies in supporting the administration and management of the school. The school uses a computerised accounting system and appropriate safeguards are in place to protect data.
89. There are sufficient qualified teachers and support staff to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum and the curriculum for children aged five and under. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. This has a positive impact on the standards achieved by pupils.
90. The school site is clean, tidy and well maintained by a hard working staff. Some rotten woodwork is apparent on the outside of the main building. The playgrounds, nature area and field are spacious, but the hard surface play area is very uneven in places causing a trip hazard. The dilapidated demountable classrooms are unsightly and a health and safety hazard as pupils can gain access to the space beneath them. There is a loose window and rotten woodwork in evidence.
91. For the number of pupils on roll, the majority of classrooms are of a satisfactory size. There is adequate storage space. The separate outdoor playground area for the under fives is well fenced and secure, but there is no direct access to this from the reception classroom. The size of the nursery classroom is barely adequate especially in inclement weather when all the activities need to take place inside.
92. Learning resources are satisfactory. The school recognises that there are gaps in its provision, particularly in terms of the outdoor facilities for children aged five and under. The library provides appropriate facilities for pupils to undertake independent study and research.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

93. This is a much-improved school. To consolidate and improve further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- raise standards in writing by:
 - developing pupils' skills in creating, shaping and evaluating their own writing;
 - ensuring that pupils are given enough time to write independently in literacy sessions;
 - providing younger pupils with more opportunities to write and record their own ideas and findings;
 - providing older pupils with more opportunities to write independently and in different styles across the whole curriculum;
 - improving the pace of writing and amount of work produced by pupils, especially for those who learn at faster rates.

(paragraphs 115-130)

- improve pupils' capacity for independent learning and personal study by:
 - enriching the creative, imaginative and 'hands on' activities in the nursery by planning more specifically what is taught and learnt in child-chosen activities;

and, across the curriculum, throughout the school
 - systematically developing pupils' skills in planning, organising, investigating, recording and evaluating their work;
 - providing different experiences to widen and develop pupils' confidence and competence as speakers in discussions and debates.

(paragraphs 26, 32, 49, 53, 97, 113, 126, 137, 147-9, 157, 164, 182 and 199)

94. In addition, the governing body should (in consultation with the local education authority) take immediate steps to address the health and safety issues relating to the derelict classroom block in the middle of the school site.

(paragraph 71)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	65
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	11	56	29	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	168
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	66

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	48

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	29
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	38

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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	16	14	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	11	12
	Girls	10	11	10
	Total	23	22	22
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	77 (66)	73 (69)	73 (72)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	10	10	9
	Total	20	22	21
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	67 (62)	73 (62)	70 (66)
	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	17	14	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	12	11
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	21	24	24
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	68 (63)	77 (83)	77 (79)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	9	9
	Girls	12	11	12
	Total	18	20	21
Percentage of pupils At NC level 4 or above	School	58 (58)	65 (54)	68 (75)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	35
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	71
Any other minority ethnic group	24

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)	8.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	24

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	138

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	5	2
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	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	386,223
Total expenditure	398,107
Expenditure per pupil	1,869
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,721
Balance carried forward to next year	2,837

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 40.4%

Number of questionnaires sent out	114
Number of questionnaires returned	46

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	39	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	54	4	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	39	4	2	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	37	7	10	10
The teaching is good.	43	48	0	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	39	22	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	35	7	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	46	37	7	0	10
The school works closely with parents.	26	52	17	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	39	52	2	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	33	54	2	0	11
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	22	9	4	15

Other issues raised by parents

No other major issues were raised by parents.

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

95. At the time of the inspection, there were 37 part-time children in the nursery and 24 full-time children in the reception class. Provision and progress have remained broadly the same since the last inspection. The nursery and reception classes provide a safe and caring environment where children are happy to learn. Through home visits and daily contact, good links have been established with parents, who are encouraged to help with learning. Parents are pleased with the good start to school life the nursery provides.
96. Children enter the nursery with a wide range of experiences. For most, attainment is below average for their age. Skills with speaking, reading, writing and mathematics are below, and for some children well below, average. Although the number of children from different ethnic groups is rising, most children speak and understand some English.
97. The nursery staff have a clear understanding of how young children grow and learn and use ongoing checks to build up a clear picture of children's achievement. This in turn ensures that individual needs are well met and that progress is good for all children. The staff plan a balanced range of experiences, including class and group activities. However, in creative and imaginative 'hands on' experiences, when children choose to experiment, planning does not show specifically enough how language and creativity are to be developed.
98. Children are given simple tests when they first start in the reception class. Results show that attainment in all six areas of experience is below the expected average for their age. Nevertheless, they make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, in their mathematical development and with the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress in physical development and creative development is satisfactory. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children come close to achieving the early learning goals in these six areas of experience.
99. The quality of teaching is sound overall in the Foundation Stage. Some aspects are good. For instance, basic skills are taught well, especially in reading and mathematics. This is helping children to make good progress with their learning. In the reception year, children recognise words and read simple sentences in books, whilst nursery children share stories and point out numbers and letters readily. Planning shows progression through the steps of learning and provides children capable of doing so with the opportunity to work at higher levels. Teachers are very positive in their encouragement and, as a result, children respond to learning in a confident way.
100. The accommodation for the Foundation Stage is somewhat cramped. In the nursery it is barely adequate to support learning, particularly when poor weather limits the use of outdoor space for structured play experiences, such as sand and water play. In classrooms, displays of children's work and imaginative role-play areas such as 'ants' nests' and a 'dinosaur's den' create stimulating areas for exploration. Since the last inspection, the provision for large apparatus and outdoor toys has improved, providing children with wider experiences to develop their physical skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

101. Children make good progress and by the time they come to the end of the Foundation Stage their attainment is close to the expectations of the early learning goals. Teaching is good. Teachers' relationships with the children and their care of them are very good.
102. In the nursery, children begin to establish friendships, learn to work with each other and care for their environment. They help tidy away after activities and take turns in serving drinks and biscuits. The children are encouraged to behave well and enjoy the praise and reward of 'a marble in the jar' awarded for trying hard. They listen with attentively to their teacher and to each other and are developing good social skills as they act as performers or an audience for a puppet play or take turns in role play in the 'dinosaur's den'. These skills are further developed in the reception class. Here, children discuss the need to care for living things. They learn to know what is right and wrong as they suggest ways to be kind to animals.

Communication, language and literary development

103. On entry to the nursery, the children's communication, language and literacy skills are below those expected for their age. Nevertheless, they make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage because of the clear planning and teaching of the basic skills. Most children are likely to achieve close to the early learning goals in speaking and listening and reading.
104. Progress in writing is sound. In the nursery, children make marks that hold meaning as writing whilst children in the reception class are beginning to form their letters well and write their name freely. There are fewer writing experiences where children regularly write and record their own ideas and findings in everyday lessons. For instance, in the reception class, children writing their own 'reference books' use the model sentence provided and in doing do limit their own experimentation with letters and words.
105. Teachers plan successfully from the steps in learning use aspects of the literacy strategy well. A strength is the way teachers explore a range of different types of books with the children. They teach reading skills by using pictures to help with the story line and letters and sounds to find out unknown words. More capable children can read simple stories on their own. They enjoy talking about favourite characters such as 'Biff and Chip' and their adventures with the magic key.
106. Children from different ethnic groups are progressing as well as others in the class with their literacy skills. Those at the early stages of learning English are well supported and make good progress. Teachers make good use of questioning to encourage class discussion and develop speaking skills. For instance, when finding out about 'where' mini beasts live and 'what' they eat, children are keen to answer questions. With encouragement from their teacher, they try to explain the roles of the queen ant and the workers.

Mathematical development

107. By the end of the Foundation Stage children are well on the way to achieving the early learning goals. They make good progress with number. They count onwards and backwards and recognise numbers to 20. When sharing the 'Dinosaur book', children recognise numbers, predict which one comes next and count and match numbers to different dinosaurs. They order small toys in size and use mathematical language such as 'one more', 'bigger and smaller than'. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers use opportunities in other lessons, such as studying living things and counting legs and wings, to practise and develop counting and basic number skills.
108. In the nursery, planning clearly shows what is to be taught and learnt and is good. Good

use is made of ongoing checks to help with the next step in learning. Lessons in the reception year draw aspects from the numeracy hour and hold pace and challenge. Effective classroom support is focused on the less capable learners, who make good progress and contribute confidently in the feedback (plenary) sessions.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

109. Both the provision and the teaching for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world are good. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are on the way to achieving the early learning goals. They make good progress because of the wide range of interesting experiences planned for them and the clear focus teachers give to developing discussion. Children use books to find out about different mini beasts and share their knowledge of the animal world by producing their own non-fiction books. They talk about their own community and people who help them. They also visit different places, such as parks and shops, as they widen their geographical knowledge.
110. Skills with the computer are developing well. Children in the nursery enjoy using the mouse and can click on and off icons in simple 'reading' programmes. Teaching is good. Teachers build upon the children's natural curiosity well. Displays effectively bring together learning from different experiences: for example, a role-play area reflecting an ant's nest is enlivened by the children's writing and art work. This also shows that they are developing their observational skills well.

Physical development

111. Teaching and progress in this area of experience are sound. The provision of wheeled toys and large apparatus for the outside play area has improved since the last inspection. This is enabling the children to experiment and to practise and develop their physical skills. Most guide and peddle scooters and bikes and climb, jump and land safely from frames and slides. Nursery children have a growing awareness of moving in large spaces and the need for safety and awareness of others as they work. In the hall, in dance, they enact animal characters and experiment with moving like a little duck or a wolf. They follow instructions and stop and start promptly.
112. Good teaching focuses on developing confidence and imagination, as these younger children are encouraged to respond to different pieces of music. Dexterity is developing through handling objects such as threading, working in sand and water and rolling and cutting. These skills are built upon in the reception class where, for example, children work with construction kits and make models of snails in clay. By the end of the reception year, children are expected to achieve just below the early learning goals.

Creative development

113. Teaching and progress are sound. The range of experiences and resources provided is appropriate to meet the children's learning needs. Nursery children experiment readily with paint, collage and play dough and reception year children develop skills with using and applying paint, drawing, cutting and constructing. Creative, imaginative and 'hands on' experiences sometimes lack richness because teachers are not planning specifically enough for what is to be taught and learned in these child-chosen activities. Teaching in the reception year provides good links with puppetry and the development of literacy skills.
114. Children enjoy experimenting with different printing techniques and decorate a puppet theatre they have made. Displays also provide a focus for creative work in the Foundation Stage. Work with creating collage animals, moving dinosaurs and observational drawings and paintings is good. Staff create good role-play opportunities for children in different animal dens. Children enjoy singing their favourite songs and

rhymes. Teaching by a visiting specialist enhances children's learning in music in the reception year. Here, experiments with a range of untuned and tuned instruments are imaginatively linked to the children's own musical creation of a 'walk in the jungle'. Most children are working well towards the early learning goals.

ENGLISH

115. English has improved greatly since the last inspection in 1997. The key learning skills of speaking and listening and reading are no longer serious concerns. Some important aspects of writing, such as writing independently in group work in the literacy hour, reading through and improving original personal writing, and writing for different purposes in different subjects, still require greater focus if attainment is to be raised.
116. Although standards in the national tests remained well below those achieved nationally for 7 year olds and below average for 11 year olds in 2000, there is evidence that pupils now are making good progress. Teachers' assessments in English for 2001 give weight to this. More pupils are achieving average and higher levels with their speaking and reading skills in the infants, whilst more pupils are expected to reach higher levels with their reading and writing in the juniors. This is because there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching, with some very good teaching raising standards at the end of the infants and juniors.
117. The basic skills in English are taught well in each year group. As a result, pupils read and spell words and organise their ideas in sentences that make sense. Pupils' behaviour is good - much better now than at the time of the previous report. Lessons are no longer interrupted and learning moves on at a pace. The present inspection findings show that by the age of seven, most pupils achieve close to national levels in speaking and reading, but fewer achieve higher levels with their writing. Standards in English by 11 are broadly in line with those attained nationally.
118. When pupils start school their speaking, reading and writing skills are below average. Nevertheless, throughout the school, they make good progress with their learning because teachers plan work in lessons at different levels and effectively meet the pupils' individual and different needs. The school has a higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups, including dual-heritage and Afro-Caribbean pupils. Some pupils are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language and most understand and speak English.
119. The school assesses language needs well and provides specific expert (EMAG) help, if needed. The number of children with special educational needs with reading and writing difficulties is higher than average. Trained assistants support pupils well in the classroom and enable them to make good progress with their learning. In some year groups, such as Years 5 and 6, there are more boys than girls. There is no significantly marked difference in their learning. The different groups of pupils within the school are keen to learn and work together harmoniously.
120. Only a few pupils enter school as confident speakers with the skills to ask and answer questions readily. Pupils' responses are valued and so they talk more readily and make good progress. The main thrust for developing speaking skills is through questioning, which teachers do well. Younger pupils respond well to 'what' and 'why' questions in their study of small animals. For example, they explain to the class in feedback (plenary) sessions in literacy time that, 'The queen ant doesn't do much work. She just sits there and lays eggs'.

121. Older pupils in the junior classes are developing greater competency with the spoken word. They are beginning to be more precise about their choice of vocabulary and descriptive language. When giving their point of view about the character of the 'demon headmaster' they show an understanding and use of similes such as 'haunched like some great bird of prey' in their talk. However, opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills in English and in other subjects through work in groups, enabling pupils to act as experts and initiating talk, are missed in lessons. For instance, in Year 6, when pupils co-operate in groups in history they still work as individuals and find it hard to hold a discussion, give their point of view and come to a group agreement. A lively dramatic performance of 'The Creation', in assembly by Year 5, is an example of how well pupils can perform for a wider range of audience when given the chance.
122. Standards in reading are broadly average by the age of 7 years. By 11, more capable pupils are reading at higher levels, whilst most other readers achieve similar levels to those found nationally. Pupils' enthusiasm for reading has improved since the last monitoring visit by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI). The exploration of a wide range of books from children's literature, such as 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' and the 'Lottie Project', together with the study of different characters and plots, is whetting the pupils' appetite as readers. Pupils read with pleasure and choose to read at home. As older readers, they develop preferences for different authors. In all year groups, good teaching is developing an interest and knowledge of different types of books. An example is a lesson in Year 1 when younger pupils make their own non-fiction books about 'mini beasts' and understand the importance of a contents page when finding information.
123. By the age of seven, most pupils read accurately and fluently and with understanding. By 11, reading is fluent and expressive. Most of the average and more capable readers are able to read 'between the lines' and understand deeper meaning. For instance, the underlying danger in the images portrayed in 'The Demon Headmaster', or the persuasive language used in advertisements. The basic skills in reading, such as recalling words by sight, linking letters and sounds and making good guesses of unknown words, are built upon year on year. Skills with skimming and scanning for information are evident when pupils study in the library or use reading and research programmes on the computer.
124. Over time, throughout the school, standards in writing have remained stubbornly below average. There are now signs of improvement, particularly in Years 5 and 6. By Year 6, more pupils are achieving at higher levels with their writing. However, too many Year 2 pupils are 'just about' reaching average levels with their writing and few pupils reach higher levels. Often teachers provide the model for writing for younger pupils to copy and this takes away the opportunity for them to write and record their own ideas.
125. In all classes, pupils' writing is well presented and handwriting is neat and tidy. Teachers plan for extra time for writing and this is used well to explore models of good writing. Identifying different purposes for writing, such as creating 'flyers' for a new restaurant or studying and creating different forms of poetry, such as Haiku, provide a range of relevant experiences in English for older pupils. Good teaching of the basic skills is ensuring that pupils use a range of different strategies to spell and read correctly and to construct sentences that are grammatically correct.
126. Pupils are not given enough time to write independently in group work in the literacy hour. This limits the pace and amount of work produced. This also has an effect on the amount of writing undertaken in other subjects. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to build upon and develop the skills they already have both in English and across the curriculum.
127. In the juniors, pupils achieving at average and higher levels are not creating enough longer pieces of original writing, nor shaping, reading through and improving their work.

Although some use is made of information and communication technology in literacy, the application of word-processing skills to help pupils develop their independent writing is underdeveloped.

128. The quality of teaching is good in English and this is supporting the good progress pupils make in speaking and listening, reading and spelling. All teachers use the guidelines of the literacy hour well and plan lessons at different levels to meet individual needs. Learning moves on at a pace, encouraged by the pupils' keenness as learners and their good behaviour. Teachers have expertise in teaching reading and the basic skills in general and this is supporting good progress with learning. However, teachers are not taking up the opportunities offered in other subjects, such as history and science, to develop different forms of writing.
129. A contributory factor to the improved standards is that the management of English is good. The literacy co-ordinator has the expertise and commitment to help improve standards. She encourages initiatives such as the use of modelling in 'extended writing' lessons. The co-ordinator and senior staff check the progress of pupils from different groups in the school and this in turn influences the provision of extra challenge or support.
130. A wide range of reading resources offers a structure to reading for pupils who need extra help and a challenge for more able readers. The library is well used and newly installed computers enhance facilities for research and study skills.

MATHEMATICS

131. At the time of the last inspection, standards in mathematics were judged to be unsatisfactory. The presentation of work was poor. Pupils' attitudes to the subject were variable and the support for pupils with special educational needs was not well matched to their needs, resulting in poor progress.
132. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests, pupils' results at the age of 7 years were well below the average for all schools and below the average for similar schools. However, nearly three-quarters of pupils reached the expected or higher levels. The school's results at this age show a small improvement from the low point in 1997 to 1999 and then a greater improvement between 1999 and 2000.
133. At 11 years of age, results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests were similar to those found in all schools and well above the average for similar schools. The number of pupils gaining the higher levels was similar to that found in all schools and well above that found in similar schools. These results represent a significant improvement. Standards rose from below average to above average between 1998 and 1999 and improvement between 1999 and 2000 has been faster than that found nationally.
134. Provisional results for 2001 indicate that standards have risen at the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence indicates that the majority of pupils are working at levels similar to those expected for pupils of this age. Although there are some pupils working at higher levels, there are a number of pupils with special educational needs who are working at lower levels.
135. The school is successfully implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. In the infant classes, pupils' calculating skills in mental mathematics are developing well and the majority of pupils offer quick and accurate responses to questions. Pupils are keen to learn and enthusiastic to take part. More able pupils benefit from the alternative ways of approaching a calculation suggested by their teacher and many are able to give

immediate responses to familiar number patterns. Less able pupils are given good quality adult support to help them achieve the correct answers.

136. In the infant classes, teachers' questions match pupils' differing abilities well. Good use of praise encourages pupils. The 'good listener' award in Year 2 helps to maintain the concentration of pupils. Good use is made of incidental mathematics; for example, in asking pupils to estimate how long each round took. Teachers successfully use different strategies to consolidate, extend and test what they teach. Good progress is being made by pupils in developing skills and understanding across the mathematics curriculum. Teachers make good links between topics; for example, work on fractions relates to telling the time, using halves and quarters, and shape and space.
137. Evidence from teachers' planning and pupils' work indicates that teachers pay appropriate attention to developing pupils' investigative and enquiry skills in numeracy and across the mathematics curriculum as pupils move through the junior classes. These skills are developing and pupils are increasingly willing to 'have a go' as they get older. However, a significant number of pupils in Years 3 and 4 are reluctant to apply their thinking and identify alternative ways of getting a correct answer. They make satisfactory progress.
138. The mathematics co-ordinator teaches mathematics to pupils in Years 5 and 6. Pupils make good progress in all areas of the mathematics curriculum. They apply themselves well to their work and try hard to succeed. Their confidence is increased by the careful checks undertaken by the teacher in order to ensure that they understand what they are doing before moving on to the next stage. By Year 6, pupils are prepared to try different approaches and take risks because they have a very solid grounding in numeracy skills and the different ways of applying what they know to different mathematical situations. A feature of their learning is the calm and systematic way they approach problems. This is making an important contribution to standards they achieve.
139. Nearly all pupils in the present Year 6 are expected to achieve the national standard (Level 4) in the 2001 National Curriculum tests. Three pupils are expected to achieve Level 6, which is achieved by less than 1 per cent of pupils of this age across the country. Comparison with these pupils' results at the end of Year 2, when the school's results reached their lowest point, shows that pupils in this year group have made very good progress. There are a number of contributory factors to this, but two stand out. Firstly, teachers' expectations of what pupils can and will achieve are very high. Secondly, consistently high quality teaching has inspired pupils' confidence and self-worth.
140. Teachers give the majority of pupils work that matches their capabilities, but in some infant and junior classes targets for more able pupils are not clearly outlined. Younger pupils of all abilities lack confidence in trying their own methods and thinking through different approaches without adult help and support. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are given good support to help them succeed. By Year 6, pupils explain the processes they follow and correct mistakes without prompting. The most able are well stretched by the tasks set for them and a particular feature of their work is the high standard of presentation. The lack of needless repetition is also noticeable in the work of these more able mathematicians.
141. The quality of teaching is good in the infants and very good in the older junior classes. High expectations, good subject knowledge, good management and clear planning are key features of the teaching in these classes. Lessons are conducted at a good pace and pupils' progress is continually assessed.

142. Teaching in the lower junior classes is satisfactory. Subject knowledge is mainly sound and teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils' behaviour. However, in both these classes pupils' learning slows because of interruptions by a small, but vocal minority of pupils, mainly boys. This has an adverse effect on the rate at which all pupils, and particularly girls, learn.
143. Information and communication technology is used to support teaching and learning in mathematics. The expansion of the school's computer suite offers increased opportunities for pupils to extend and develop their mathematical thinking and understanding.

SCIENCE

144. In the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2000, the proportion of 7 year old pupils in Year 2 reaching the standard expected at this age was well below that expected nationally and no pupil reached the higher levels. In the National Curriculum statutory tests taken by 11 year olds in Year 6 in May 2000, standards were similar to those found in all schools and well above those found in similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was above the national average and well above that found in similar schools.
145. Since the last inspection, statutory assessments at the age of 7 have kept pace with the national trend from 1997 to 2000. At the age of 11, test results shot up in 1999 and in 2000 improved slightly ahead of the national trend. Based on pupils' prior attainment at the age of 7 years, pupils make good progress in this subject by the time they reach 11 years of age.
146. Provisional results in the 2001 National Curriculum tests and assessments indicate that in Year 2 the majority of pupils are achieving the expected standard. In Year 6 most are achieving the standard expected nationally and a good proportion are achieving higher levels. The findings of this inspection reflect these results. Standards are similar in all aspects of the science curriculum. There are no significant differences in standards between boys and girls. However, in the present Year 6 class, there are nearly twice as many boys as there are girls.
147. A criticism of the 1997 inspection report was that activities were over-directed by teachers and that pupils had little opportunity to make choices and plan their investigations. Evidence from this inspection indicates satisfactory improvement in this area. Much of this work is undertaken through discussion. Infant pupils keep records of what they have done using charts and pictures, but independent recording is only developing slowly. In the junior classes, there is limited recording in pupils' note books of individual preliminary work in planning their experiments and in making predictions as to the likely outcome of their investigative work.
148. There are two contributory factors to this. One is that pupils' thinking and independent working skills across the curriculum are not systematically developed as the move through the school. Another is that pupils' writing skills are not sufficiently developed to enable them to express their ideas and results freely. Teachers identify ways to incorporate literacy and numeracy skills into learning in science. However, particularly in literacy, pupils' independent writing skills are less developed and teachers tend to model pupils' writing and shape their thinking. Opportunities for pupils to apply and extend their thinking in order to draw their own reasoned conclusions tend to be guided and there is sometimes a tendency to over-direct pupils in the younger junior classes.

149. In the infant classes, teachers closely question pupils about their previous learning to re-enforce current work and try to link and extend their thinking. With adult prompting, pupils pay close attention to similarities and differences when, for example, studying leaves and roots of plants. This helps them to predict the outcome of an investigation. Many pupils have genuine difficulty in putting their ideas and thoughts into words, but they have a growing understanding that a test must be fair.
150. Despite these difficulties, pupils in the infant classes make good progress. There is an appropriate balance achieved between increasing pupils' knowledge and working to develop their thinking and practical skills in order to improve understanding across the science curriculum. By adopting a step-by-step approach, teachers help pupils to consolidate their understanding about what they have done and what they have found out before moving on to the next stage. This was evident in Year 2 where the teacher was helping pupils to plan an investigation into the type of food birds prefer. This is making a valuable contribution to raising standards.
151. Progress in the younger junior classes is satisfactory. It is good in the older classes. By the age of 11 pupils have a good recall of scientific knowledge. Year 6 pupils successfully record what they have done in their notebooks by way of a summary, using charts and tables to organise their findings. Pupils have a secure understanding of what makes for a fair test. They are aware that they should only change one variable at a time in order to maintain the validity of the test. They also appreciate that personal preferences and responses which arise, for example, when the test is about recording reactions to sweet and sour substances are an appropriate part of the testing process. Standards are good because the teacher guides pupils systematically through their work and checks regularly, through the good use of questions, that they understand what they have to do.
152. Scrutiny of pupils' work in both the infant and junior classes shows that, over time, they cover a range of topics that successfully reflects the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school's plans are based on nationally available guidance. In the junior classes topics, such as light and sound, are covered in the younger classes and revisited at a higher level in the older classes. Pupils undertake investigative work across the science curriculum.
153. Another criticism in the previous inspection was that teachers gave pupils insufficient opportunities or guidance to develop their understanding. A more rigorous approach to the development of pupils' practical and thinking skills is evident in teachers' planning, which helps pupils to apply their knowledge and thus develop their understanding. For example, pupils in Year 4, discussing their findings as to how muscles work, draw on their learning in physical education lessons to suggest ways in which muscles strengthen through exercise. Year 5 pupils use CD-ROMs and reference books to gather background information about the relationship of the earth, the sun and the moon. They apply their acquired knowledge to make informed observations about the sequence of events and predict what will happen next.
154. Pupils are enthusiastic and willing to participate in practical work. The majority work together amicably and answer the questions posed to them by their teacher sensibly. In most lessons, there is a good working relationship evident between pupils and their teacher and this underpins successful learning. The standard of presentation of work varies but in Year 6, pupils achieve high standards.
155. The quality of teaching is good in the infant classes. In the younger junior classes it is satisfactory with good teaching evident in the older groups. Teachers plan lessons carefully and, overall, make appropriate provision for those who learn at different rates.

They use assessment information well to plan the next stages in learning. They make correct use of technical terms and encourage pupils to use these to help express their ideas clearly. This helps pupils to make progress. Teachers capture pupils' interest and curiosity through practical work.

156. In the best lessons, pupils know exactly what they have to do and what is expected of them. Learning proceeds at a good pace and the level of work challenges pupils of differing abilities. In such lessons, the final discussion draws together the main points, applies them to the next steps in learning and poses questions for the pupils to reflect upon. This was particularly evident in the Year 6 lesson where the tasting experiment was extended by introducing a new variable; in this, pupils tasted different samples with their eyes shut and their noses pinched. They found that sight and smell are important factors in recognising different samples. This is helping the more able pupils to organise their thoughts and, by explaining not only how, but why, attain the higher standards.
157. Again, in the best lessons, teachers help pupils to develop their observational and thinking skills by using open-ended questions. In other lessons, questions are sometimes closed and this inhibits opportunities for pupils to expand their ideas. Most teachers are fully aware of the needs of individual pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Teachers provide appropriate support and activities and, where available, support staff successfully help pupils to make progress.
158. Teachers pay appropriate attention to pupils' safety and pupils heed instructions well. Teachers value and promote pupils' responsible attitudes to their work and praise them for it. This encourages pupils to work hard and to develop their ideas. However, in some lessons in the younger junior age groups, the management of pupils is less consistent. In these, strategies for focusing pupils' attention and enthusiasm vary in their application effectiveness. This interrupts the flow of lessons and fragments pupils' learning.
159. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language have full access to the science curriculum and progress at a similar rate as other pupils. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. The use of information and communication technology for research and for presenting information in science is developing at a satisfactory rate. Resources are well prepared and provide a good range of samples for the experiment.

ART AND DESIGN

160. Only a few lessons were observed in art and so evidence from pupils' previous work, displays and teachers' planning, has been used to help make judgements.
161. In both the infant and junior classes, standards in art are broadly in line with those expected nationally. Pupils make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average.
162. In the infant classes, pupils imaginatively use paint, collage and printing to create images. They experiment with mixing different colours and create bold patterns with paint as they decorate the class puppet theatre.
163. Teachers use art as a way of enabling pupils to express their ideas and through a wide range of experiences. For instance, they create role-play areas, such as the 'ants' nest', which provide a focus for paintings and drawings of small insects and larger scale butterfly collages and animal models which enhance the classroom environment. Work with texture develops through printing by using polystyrene tiles to produce stark black

and white designs or by weaving simple patterns in coloured paper. Teachers develop appropriate links with literacy and numeracy, but the use of information and communication technology is more limited.

164. A criticism in the previous report was that pupils' knowledge of other artists was limited. Whilst pupils are studying the work of different artists, such as Matisse, few older pupils in the junior classes can reflect the different skills and techniques used by these artists in their own, original work. Pupils still do not use sketchbooks freely enough for such experimentation and development of ideas. However, skills such as accuracy and detail in drawing and greater dexterity in painting are developing in older pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Year 4 pupils make some good links between art and design and design technology where their studies of everyday furniture in pastel and paint enhance the construction of three-dimensional models of chairs.
165. Teaching in art has improved and is now satisfactory. Teachers plan for coverage of a range of experiences. Resources are accessible and appropriate to support the pupils' learning. Lessons are lively and hold the pupils' enthusiasm. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs are well supported and make similar progress to other pupils.
166. Behaviour has improved and so pupils are more focused on their work. This is evident in Year 6 where pupils give their full concentration to recreating in detail the missing half of a painting by Constable. Portfolios of work are developing. These help to ensure more consistency in teachers' expectations of standards and skills development in each year group.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

167. At the time of the last inspection, overall standards were unsatisfactory. There was little evidence of pupils developing skills and experience in this area of the curriculum. The findings of this inspection show a much-improved picture. At the ages of 7 and 11 years, standards are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils of all ages and capabilities are making satisfactory progress. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls.
168. It was not possible to see any lessons in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection and, therefore, judgements are based on teachers' planning and a scrutiny of pupils' work. Pupils in Year 1 make satisfactory progress in the development of their design and making skills. In designing a fruit salad, they plan for a variety of different fruits, colours and textures. They look at the different properties of each component and describe them as 'rough', 'shiny', 'smooth', 'hard' and 'soft'. This work complements further designs using materials where pupils look at the different properties of a range of materials before deciding which one to use. Pupils are learning to make choices and to give reasons why one is preferable to others.
169. Scrutiny of pupils' earlier work on a range of projects indicates that by the age of 11 they have a clear understanding of how things are designed and made. In Year 6, pupils' work on shelters has involved them in working with a range of materials. They understand how structures have strength. Year 4 pupils have studied torches in detail, taking a torch apart to look at its features, drawn diagrams to demonstrate how it works and made their own designs. In designing and making money containers, pupils use a range of materials including paper, card and textiles. They develop skills in cutting and joining materials as pupils transform their designs into finished articles. Accurate measurement, drawing on numeracy skills, is also developing appropriately. Pupils take a critical approach to their work and understand the role of evaluation in helping them judge the quality of their work and how they can improve it.

170. Pupils are developing sound practical skills. In Year 3 they acquire the skills to construct strong shapes from card and learn that structures need a wide base in order to be stable. In applying these to a practical task they handle tools and materials safely and follow instructions carefully. However, many pupils stray from their original designs and, when testing the finished product, find that it is not as strong as they thought. Pupils in Year 4 show that they are prepared to alter their designs as a result of discussion and new information, although many still prefer to work to a known template. By Year 6, pupils develop greater accuracy and understanding in designing and making a vehicle to carry an electric motor. They measure, cut and join materials with care. In all the lessons seen, good attention is paid to health and safety matters.
171. Pupils are enthusiastic and maintain their concentration and application well during practical activities. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported by adults who provide appropriate help and guidance. Appropriate opportunities are taken to develop and reinforce literacy skills in developing descriptive language, following instructions and writing descriptions and evaluations.
172. The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are carefully planned and materials are well prepared. Teachers work with pupils who learn at different rates to help them get the most out of the activities provided. Overall, teachers successfully maintain the interest of the small minority of pupils who find it difficult to concentrate on any task and manage their behaviour appropriately. This enables the whole class to make progress with the minimum of interruption. At present, the use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped in this area of the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

173. Only a limited number of lessons were observed in geography and so pupils' previous work, work from displays and discussions with pupils have helped to make judgements. Standards in geography by the ages of 7 and 11 years are in line with those achieved nationally. Pupils make steady progress in their learning.
174. Geography has improved in three major areas since the previous inspection in 1997. Teaching quality has improved. Pupils behave well in lessons and do not distract others from learning. There are now clear guidelines for teaching and learning in each year. This is helping to improve the quality of learning and improve achievement.
175. Pupils in the infants learn about their local environment. They visit local shops and parks and begin to make simple plans of where they live. Teachers encourage close observation of the school environment and help with locating specific places, such as classrooms and the nature garden. Pupils in the junior classes build on these skills and teachers' good questioning develops pupils' ideas for the improvement of their locality.
176. Pupils successfully present results from traffic surveys on simple charts and use them to make recommendations. Numeracy skills are appropriately applied. Skills with map work are developing well in each year group. Pupils move on from using simple grids and keys in Year 3, to using a range of scales to plot routes and find distances on large-scale maps in Year 6.
177. Pupils benefit from learning linked to fieldtrips, in particular to Fairbourne in Wales. Year 6 pupils call upon a range of literacy, numeracy and geographical skills as they confidently discuss the differences between urban and rural land use. They accurately describe physical features of mountainous landscape and touch on important

environmental issues, such as the spread of disease in cattle and the effect on the local communities.

178. In the few lessons observed, teaching is sound. Lessons are well managed and resourced. Planning is clear and lesson targets are shared with pupils, who are given opportunity to share their learning in feedback (plenary) time. The expertise of the teachers is evident, particularly with teaching skills with map work, where work is at a challenging level. Appropriate provision is made for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language to participate fully in lessons.
179. Resources, particularly maps and atlases, are accessible in lessons. Assessment is built into the guidelines for geography and shows coverage and the progress pupils make. This is helping to improve the standards achieved by pupils. At present, pupils have only limited opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their work in geography.

HISTORY

180. Since the last inspection, standards have improved in history in both the infants and juniors. Pupils at 7 and 11 years are attaining levels similar to those expected of pupils of their ages. Progress is consistent across the school and is sound.
181. There is good coverage of the National Curriculum requirements and no longer an over-emphasis on learning facts. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from first-hand experiences and visits to places of historical interest, which enlivens their learning. For example, younger pupils visit a local Lock Museum and learn how local people lived and worked in the past. Pupils enjoy making their own nails and hooks and experiencing how workers lived. They are keen to record and illustrate their findings.
182. Planning for the comparison of different periods of time has improved since the last inspection and this is giving pupils a clearer picture of the passing of time and the changes that take place over time. In Year 2, pupils use some very good historical resources to help with their study of holidays - past and at present. They listen with interest to taped recollections of holidays in the 1930s, identifying what is similar to or different from their own holidays. Working in groups, pupils compare photographs of seaside activities, clothes and means of transport in Victorian times with those of the present day. Pupils communicate their findings clearly to the whole class and show knowledge of historical language such as 'in the past' and 'fifty years ago'. Appropriate use is made of literacy and numeracy skills but few, however, ask 'how' and 'why' questions independently as they focus on aspects that interest them.
183. In the junior classes, pupils in Year 5 study specific periods of time in greater depth. Teachers creatively use a 'musical' time-line of the 1960s to show how changes in society are reflected in styles in clothing and tastes in music. Pockets of work related to invaders and settlers draw from archaeological findings such as the treasures of Sutton Hoo. Pupils use different sources of evidence and information to find out about the past, but the communication of their ideas in collaborative group work and through different forms of writing is less evident in lessons.
184. Teachers have good subject knowledge and often draw from their own enthusiasm and resources, such as family photographs or memorabilia from the turn of the last century. Lessons are well paced and well managed and pupils' behaviour is good. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are appropriately supported in taking a full part in lessons. This helps them to achieve similar standards to other pupils.

185. Teachers are aware of the potential of information and communication technology in supporting the development of pupils' skills and knowledge but, as yet, the use of this is underdeveloped.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

186. At the ages of 7 and 11 years, standards are similar to those expected nationally. This represents some improvement on the situation reported at the time of the last inspection in the younger junior classes where standards were below the national expectation. Pupils of all ages enjoy working with information and communication technology equipment. They are enthusiastic and keen to demonstrate their developing skills.
187. Pupils in the infant classes are familiar with the computer. They know how to load and run a program and their skills in using the keyboard and controlling the mouse are sound. Pupils are familiar with a range of programs and most are able to follow instructions without sustained adult support.
188. Pupils in the junior classes further develop their use of computer technology. They handle equipment confidently. They use CD-ROMs to find out information about, for example, the earth and the sun. They successfully use programs for modelling and learning how to flip and rotate objects. Their word-processing skills are developing, but the lack of equipment impedes the opportunities for them to practise these regularly and for pupils to draft, edit and present their work across the curriculum and particularly in English writing. Pupils develop an understanding of how computers work by learning to program a wheeled vehicle. In discussion, many demonstrate that they have appropriate experience in using equipment other than computers.
189. In the majority of lessons, the learning of skills is incidental to the main subject focus. Support staff make a valuable contribution to teaching skills and providing small group support to enable pupils to develop and apply their skills. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. One class lesson was seen during the inspection. In Year 6, pupils are developing their understanding and use of control technology as part of their work in design and technology. They learn how to use a monitoring thermometer, which instructs the associated computer to collect information at regular intervals, to measure the changing temperature of a liquid. They learn how to process and display this data in various ways. Teaching in this lesson was very good. Good opportunities for all pupils to handle the equipment and test it out strengthen pupils' learning. Clear explanations and good use of technical language successfully paved the way for this to take place.
190. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. A contributory factor to this judgement is the limited access to appropriate computer facilities. Until the week of the inspection, when seven new computers arrived in school, the ratio of pupils to computers was low. With the arrival of these new machines, all linked to a network, the ratio of computers to pupils has improved.

MUSIC

191. Standards in music are similar to those found nationally at the ages of 7 and 11. These are similar to the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. During this inspection, a number of class lessons throughout the school were led by a visiting specialist who is working this term with pupils and teachers using tuned and untuned percussion instruments for composing and performing. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in these sessions. They are very enthusiastic and throw themselves into

the work they are given.

192. Pupils respond well to instructions to play and sing and they follow the lead given by adults carefully. They are curious to know how sounds alter by playing the instruments in different ways and try these out enthusiastically. Some are initially reluctant to perform in public in case they make mistake, but feel safer playing together. A feature of all the lessons is the way in which all pupils have the opportunity to choose and take part.
193. Pupils recall the names of the instruments correctly and understand the correct way to play them. They compose short phrases and perform these accurately. Pupils in Year 4 working on ostinati phrases and drones concentrate hard and maintain a firm rhythm. They are starting to listen to others and respond to suggestions to vary the speed and volume of their playing.
194. The quality of this specialist teaching is very good. The considerable knowledge and skill of the teacher makes a very significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and to the good progress they make in these sessions. Lessons move at a good pace and there is appropriate challenge to meet the differing needs of pupils. By capturing their interest and helping them focus their creative efforts in performance, good quality learning takes place. The presence of class teachers and support staff in music lessons provides help for pupils and provides a good basis for further work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

195. Pupils achieve nationally expected standards at the age of 11 years in physical education. In swimming, the school reports that just over two-thirds of 11 year olds reach the standard expected at this age. It was not possible to see any lessons in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection but on the basis of teachers' planning and evaluations, pupils achieve nationally expected standards by the age of 7 years.
196. Pupils in Year 3 are developing their ball skills in defending and tackling situations. The majority pass the ball and move with it with appropriate co-ordination and control. They are improving the fluency of their movements in their own performance together with their ability to work and co-operate as part of a team. Those in Year 4 are developing their catching and throwing skills. The majority propel the ball successfully, but a number have difficulty in catching direct a direct throw. They are more adept at catching a bounced ball.
197. Year 6 pupils are working on improving their skills in athletics. They are working to develop the amount of thrust with which they throw a ball. They measure and mark their efforts, seeking to improve the distance they cover. They also develop their skills in hop, skip and jump sequences. They apply similar measuring routines in order to improve their performances.
198. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in the younger junior classes and good in the older ones. All lessons begin with a warm-up session and provide time at the close for cooling down. All provide opportunities for all pupils to take a full and active part. However, there is much greater opportunity in the older junior classes for pupils to take responsibility for their learning, in particular by evaluating and improving their own performance. Pupils have positive attitudes and work well together.
199. In the younger classes, teachers model skills appropriately and give good guidance on how to apply these. However, they do not give pupils sufficient opportunities to take responsibility for their learning and the teacher misses opportunities for pupils to use their initiative. Sometimes the pedestrian pace of the lesson prevents pupils achieving any

better than satisfactory progress in developing skills. When this happens, some pupils lose their concentration and become inattentive. In general, however, pupils' attitudes are positive and they take part in activities with enthusiasm.

200. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities during lunchtime and after school, including football, cricket and netball. Infant and junior pupils have opportunities to undertake residential visits.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

201. The findings of this inspection indicate that standards are similar to those expected of pupils in the Wolverhampton Agreed Syllabus at the ages of 7 and 11 years. This is similar to the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. There were limited opportunities to observe religious education lessons during this inspection. Judgements draw on the available evidence, including a scrutiny of pupils' written work and through discussions with pupils.
202. Younger pupils make good progress in widening their understanding of religious practices. They recognise similarities and differences and show that they have original ideas. In one lesson seen, pupils compared the Christian story of the creation with the Hindu version. One pupil wrote, as a prayer of thanks, 'Thank you God for the world; I hope you enjoy your job'. Pupils study the different clothes and colours as symbols of belonging to a particular group. They successfully draw on their own experience of belonging to a Judo club and the Brownies in looking at artefacts from Christian, Buddhist and Sikh groups.
203. With the support of their teachers, pupils pursue deeper lines of thinking, for example, why a Buddhist monk wears orange clothes and carries a bowl. They also draw on their earlier work in studying the importance of the five Ks in the Sikh faith. In both these lessons, pupils made good progress because their teachers have clear objectives of what they want pupils to know and learn and they encourage pupils to ask questions and share what they already know.
204. Older pupils successfully make comparisons between three world religions. Working in groups, pupils share and discuss their ideas. They understand that the type of relationship with 'neighbours' and 'friends' can differ, but that there is a common strand of help and support in both. Through careful preparation and well-structured support to pupils' discussion, the teacher is able to draw out pupils' opinions and reactions and provide good opportunities for them to reflect on their feelings and emotions. As a result, pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of differing beliefs and traditions. They also increase their ability to appreciate and reflect upon the sort of issues that they will increasingly meet in their daily lives.
205. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are able to take a full part. Good preparation and organisation ensure that pupils make good progress. Lessons move along at a good pace. As a result of this good teaching, pupils approach their work sensibly and with enthusiasm. They work well together and listen carefully to each other's contributions, which they clearly value.
206. The school has good access to religious artefacts through parents and the community to support the teaching of religious education. The locally agreed syllabus is in the process of revision and the school awaits the outcome before bringing about changes to its curriculum.

