

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DONNINGTON WOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Telford, Shropshire

LEA area: The Wrekin

Unique reference number: 123473

Headteacher: Mr J Gould

Reporting inspector: Mr L Garner  
25507

Dates of inspection: 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> February 2002

Inspection number: 243963

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



## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior  
School category: Voluntary controlled  
Age range of pupils: 7 to 11 years  
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Leonard Close  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Reverend D Wright

Date of previous inspection: September 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25507	Mr L Garner	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should do the school do to improve further?
19567	Ms M Malin	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23610	Ms J Denton	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs	
3692	Mr D Hill	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
28106	Ms M Majid	Team inspector		

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Donnington Wood is an average sized school with 262 pupils on roll. It is situated on an estate on the outskirts of Telford that has a significant level of social and economic disadvantage. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, at 37 per cent, is above the national average. Only one pupil comes from a home where English is spoken as an additional language. Almost 39 per cent of the pupils in school have been identified as having special educational needs and this is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is also well above the national average, but this is because of the ten pupils with statements of special education needs who attend the special needs unit, which is incorporated into the school population. Nearly 20 per cent of pupils join or leave the school during the school year. This is a high figure and gives the school an additional challenge with which they cope well. The attainment of pupils when they enter school is generally below, and often well below, that seen nationally.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a good school with some outstanding features. The excellent leadership of the headteacher has created an ethos in which the contribution of all members of the school community are valued and all feel they have an important role to play in the academic and personal development of pupils. The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good in the lessons seen taught by the permanent teachers. Pupils are cared for very well. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher ensures that all members of the school community feel valued and work well together.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good or excellent. This enables pupils to make good progress in most lessons.
- The provision for pupils' social, moral and cultural development is very good and pupils are cared for very well.
- There is very good provision made for the education of pupils who have special educational needs.
- Relationships between adults and children are very good so that, usually, behaviour and pupils' attitudes to work are good.
- The school provides an excellent range of activities for pupils outside the usual teaching time.

#### **What could be improved**

- Standards in English, mathematics and science to bring them nearer to the national average.
- The level of pupils' attendance, in particular a reduction in the amount of unauthorised absence.

*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 last inspected in September 1997. There has been good improvement overall since then. Teaching standards were reported as being good or better in half the lessons seen. In this inspection, the quality of teaching was good or better in over three-quarters of lessons. The curriculum for information and communication technology is now fully covered. The provision for extra-curricular activities, clubs and sport after school has improved and is now outstanding. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is now very good. The provision to assist pupils' personal development is now very good. In the previous report the school's partnership with parents was reported as unsatisfactory; it is now good. However, pupils' attendance is lower than it was.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	D	E	E	C
mathematics	E	E*	E	C
science	D	E*	E	C

**Key**

well above average      A

above average          B

average                    C

below average          D

well below average      E

very low                  E\*

The chart shows that for the last three years the school results in the National Curriculum tests, (SATs), in English, mathematics and science, have been below, or well below the national average. In the results for the Year 6 pupils in 2000 the results in mathematics and science were in the bottom five per cent in the country. Standards are also compared to those of 'similar' schools; that is, schools who have between 35 per cent and 50 per cent of their pupils eligible for a free school meal, and when compared with these schools, the pupils achieve at average levels.

However, these statistics do not show the full picture! Ten pupils in school are members of a special needs unit and all have statements of special educational needs. In 2001 six of these pupils were in the Year 6 group who took the SATs tests. Their test results are included in the comparisons above. Although the school makes very good provision for these pupils and they make good progress, their attainment when they leave school is still well below the national average. It also has affected the comparisons with similar schools. The school has analysed test results for pupils who were not in the special needs unit in the Year 6 of 2001 and this analysis shows that they achieved results that, while not achieving the national average, were above those achieved by similar schools.

Scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations confirm that pupils are achieving well, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. They are generally doing well from the levels they have started from.

Standards in information and communication technology (which includes the use of computers), meet the expected levels and some of the work being done by the present Year 6 exceeds expectations. Standards in religious education meet those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. The school, despite the extra time required for literacy and numeracy, has maintained a good coverage of the other subjects of the curriculum and this means that standards in all the other subjects, such as history and art and design, meet those expected by the National Curriculum. Standards in physical education are above expectations.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils enjoy school and try hard with their work in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall and frequently very good in lessons. The small amount of unsatisfactory behaviour was linked to problems a few pupils bring into school from outside or temporary teachers not managing pupils well enough.
Personal development and relationships	Very good and a strength of the school. Pupils, often with low self-esteem, are encouraged by all adults in school to express their feelings

	and ideas and to become more confident.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, well below the national average.

The school provides a safe caring environment which, for some pupils, is the most secure time of their daily life. The unsatisfactory attendance, despite the very good provision the school makes to encourage pupils to come to school, is the result of the very poor attendance of a small minority of pupils.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils in:</b>	<b>Years 3 – 6</b>
Quality of teaching	Good

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

The judgement of the quality of teaching during the inspection is based on the 48 lessons observed. Three-quarters of lessons had good or better teaching, and almost a quarter of lessons had very good teaching. In two lessons observed teaching was outstanding. Scrutiny of pupils' work also contributed to the overall judgement on the quality of teaching.

The strengths of the teaching and therefore pupils' effective learning, are the very good relationships between teachers and pupils in most classes, teachers' very good subject knowledge, and the management of pupils. The most successful lessons had good pace, so no time was wasted, and good planning with continuous assessment of what pupils have learned, giving a clear focus to what pupils are expected to do.

Three temporary teachers were in class during the inspection. They have all given good support to the school by stepping in at this difficult time. Looking at pupils' work in one of these classes, it is clear that the quality of teaching has improved since the beginning of the school year. However, the relative weaknesses in teaching were linked to these classes and concerned occasional faults in the management and overlong introductions to lessons so pupils became restless and their learning suffered.

The literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented well and effective teaching in these sessions mean that pupils are making progress in raising their achievement.

Support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Their work is planned well, they know pupils well and are committed to raising standards.

Largely because of this good quality, pupils are learning well and making good progress from their starting point.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. All pupils have equal access to activities. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of out-of-school visits and excellent extra-curricular provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good, a large number of pupils benefit from the clear planning and the well-organised teaching groups.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	Very good overall. Good provision for spiritual development is often linked to the caring atmosphere of the school. The very good provision for moral and social development means that pupils are quite clear about



development	what is 'right' or 'wrong' and are given many opportunities to decide how the school community is organised. Pupils have many opportunities to understand the culture of the local community largely through visits, and gain a good understanding of world cultures not only from religious education lessons but art and music.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. Personal and academic development is monitored carefully and pupils are given good guidance.

The school works very well with those parents with whom they have contact. They are considered to be part of the school community and make good contributions to school life. However, a significant minority of parents are reluctant to be involved in the education of their children and this has an adverse effect on aspects of the school, such as homework and attendance.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent leadership and very good management of the school. He is very clear about the sort of school he wants and has the support of all members of the school community. His skills are complemented well by those of the assistant headteacher and senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfil their responsibilities well. Their well thought-out committee system helps their efficient leadership.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school evaluates its performance very well with the monitoring of the quality of teaching being a particular strength.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are managed very well, and governors have a very good understanding of how to get best value for money in the contracts they enter into.

The school accommodation is good. Good-sized classrooms with areas for group work mean that all pupils are taught in appropriate bases. Resources are generally good with those for information and communication technology now particularly strong. Staffing, teaching and support staff provision is good. The major achievement of the leadership of the school has been to establish a commitment for improvement in all staff members. When the school has re-established its permanent staffing in all classes the capacity to improve will be very strong.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most children like coming to school.</li> <li>Parents consider that their children are making good progress in their work.</li> <li>Parents think that their children are taught well.</li> <li>Parents consider that their children are well cared for when they are at school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents think they are not well informed about how their children are doing in school.</li> <li>Some parents do not consider that their children get the right amount of homework.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with all the positive views of parents. Only a minority of parents expressed concern about the two issues for improvement; the majority were happy with the school provision. The view of the inspection team is that the information provided by the school gives parents a very clear picture of

how the children are performing. The amount of homework provided is similar to that provided in most schools. The inspection team therefore disagrees with the negative views of a minority of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. The year 2001 national tests (SATs) are the latest to have been reported and these are the ones that the inspection report includes. The eleven-year-olds achieved results that were well below the national average in all three subjects tested; English, mathematics and science. Standards are in line with those achieved by pupils in similar schools.
2. However, these statistics are affected by circumstances unique to the school. There is a high turnover of pupils so many do not benefit from the good quality teaching for the full four years and a few have a poor record of attendance. The major aspect affecting the comparisons is the effect of the test results of pupils who are in the unit for children with special educational needs. The school makes very good provision for these pupils and they make good progress during their time in school; however, their attainment is, naturally, well below most pupils of their age. In 2001 six pupils from this unit took the national tests. When the results of the tests of the pupils in the unit are taken away, the results from the remaining pupils show that they perform better than pupils from similar schools. When these circumstances are taken into account it is clear that pupils are achieving well for them and are usually meeting the targets set for them.
3. In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities when they enter school. The national strategies to teach literacy and numeracy have been well implemented and this has had a positive effect on pupils' progress. They attain levels below those seen nationally but are making good progress. Standards in information and communication technology meet the expectations of the National Curriculum and some work being done by the present Year 6 is better than that expected. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
4. Standards in the other subjects of the curriculum, such as history, geography, art and design, design and technology and music meet expectations. Standards in physical education exceed expectations. This is because the school has continued to cover all the areas required despite the national emphasis on English and mathematics.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall throughout the school. This includes the pupils placed in the special unit for pupils with special educational needs. These pupils are fully integrated into the work of the school and benefit from the daily contact with all pupils. This is because of the good attention given to match work and support to pupils' needs. Although no pupils are identified as gifted or talented, good attention is given to the highest attainers to achieve above the national averages in National Curriculum tests in English and mathematics.

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

6. Pupils' attitudes to school are good and their personal development is very good. These attributes contribute well to their learning. This maintains the standard of the previous inspection.
7. A number of pupils with limited articulation and several with special educational needs join the school each year. Despite these disadvantages most pupils develop into well-behaved members of the school community, eager to participate fully in all

activities. Pupils enjoy coming to school. They show they are comfortable and secure within the environment created by members of staff and this contributes well to their learning. Pupils are well motivated towards school and their work. They are happy to talk about what they are doing and take great pride in showing their work. These positive attitudes encourage pupils' learning. The school has an inclusive approach to pupils with special educational needs, and sees all pupils as an integral part of the school community.

8. In those classes where management is strong pupils' attitudes to school are good and often very good. However, in those classes where management is weak, behaviour often deteriorated. Generally pupils are well motivated towards school and their work, and parents state that their children like school and are happy attending.
9. Overall, attendance is unsatisfactory because of the high level of unauthorised attendance. This is a decline since the previous inspection. The majority of pupils arrive on time and are ready to start the day with enthusiasm. A number of families take children on holiday during term time and this reduces the overall rate of attendance. There are also a few families whose children barely manage to attend for half a year and this is the main reason why attendance is unsatisfactory overall.
10. Pupils usually behave well in class and around the school, contributing well to the strong learning ethos and raising pupils' achievement. Pupils move very quietly through corridors; they are friendly and polite to visitors and to each other. They work well together in small groups or pairs and share resources and equipment well. They are also happy to help each other when they can. Pupils show great respect for their environment and the school is free of graffiti and litter. Behaviour in class for the most part is good but where there is poor behaviour this can be linked to weakness in class management.
11. Pupils' personal development is very good. They are given a wide range of responsibilities in school; for example, Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to be elected as tribal captains for their 'tribe'. Pupils in all year groups are elected onto the school council. There are litter picking teams and various responsibilities within each class.
12. Relationships throughout the school between pupils and with staff are very good. Staff are very good role models and this encourages pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes. As a result, pupils respect each other and their environment. The strong relationships observed in the school contribute well to pupils' learning and the standards they achieve.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

13. The quality of teaching seen was good. Forty-eight lessons were seen during the inspection. All but one had teaching which was satisfactory or better. Three-quarters of lessons had good or better teaching; almost a quarter of lessons had very good teaching. In two lessons observed teaching was outstanding. The strength of the quality of teaching and the capacity of the school to continue to improve is shown when the work of the permanent members of the teaching staff is analysed. These teachers almost always produce a standard of teaching which is above that normally expected. This is the main reason why the pupils are making good progress. These children have to overcome many problems and need good and very good teaching to enable them to achieve as well as they do.

14. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is generally good. The national documents provided for these strategies give teachers a clear structure in which to plan their lessons and this means that pupils benefit and make progress.
15. The overall ethos of the school in which pupils and teachers relate so well to each other is a major factor in the good quality of teaching. Teachers want their pupils to do well and most pupils, most of the time, want to benefit from lessons. Teachers have generally very good knowledge of their subjects and present work imaginatively so that pupils' interest is captured and sustained. Teachers, in the best lessons, help pupils to see the purpose of the work they are doing. They explain clearly how the work is linked to that which has gone before and what will be covered in future lessons. Good questioning deepens and refines pupils' understanding. There is a good pace to the most successful lessons so that pupils cover a good range of work and learn well.
16. In the small number of lessons where aspects of teaching were less than satisfactory, two faults were identified. When class management was inadequate, as in one physical education lesson, behaviour worsened and pupils made no progress. Sometimes pupils spend too much time listening to an overlong introduction to a lesson and become restless and gain little from the experience.
17. Teachers plan effectively for pupils with special educational needs, both in the classroom and in smaller withdrawal groups or individual tuition. This includes the pupils from the special needs unit as well as those from the general school population. Work is well matched to targets set for them, resulting in pupils generally making good progress over time and also in most lessons. This is because of the good co-operation of all adults and the support given by well-qualified or knowledgeable learning support assistants, such as in aiding pupils to have computer skills in literacy. All staff focus questioning precisely in language pupils understand, so that pupils with special educational needs have full access to all lessons, both academic and practical. Sets in mathematics have enabled the most able to have more focused teaching to match their abilities and gain greater achievement in numeracy.
18. A strength of the school is the contribution made to pupils' learning by the additional adults helping in the classroom. These might be trained special educational needs assistants, learning assistants or parent volunteers. All are fully committed to the school, know pupils well and have clear planning documents provided by the class teacher. They make a significant contribution to pupils' progress.
19. There is good day-to-day assessment and teachers' marking often indicates how individual pupils might improve or develop their skills. Resources are well used and chosen carefully in most lessons to attract and maintain pupils' interest and attention.

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

20. The school provides its pupils with a broad and relevant curriculum. Every effort is made to meet the particular needs of all pupils through a range of worthwhile opportunities, which relate well to the interests and aptitudes of the pupils, including those having special educational needs. The National Curriculum requirements, and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education, are fully met.
21. At the time of the last inspection there was a lack of balance in both design and technology and information and communication technology, where some strands of the National Curriculum were not being taught. During the intervening period, the

school has made strenuous efforts to improve the curriculum, especially in these two areas. There is now, for example, a good scheme of work for information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are rising rapidly, with pupils in Year 6 working to levels expected for their age.

22. An important element of the formal curriculum is the provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. The policy covers areas of child protection, sex education, bullying, equal opportunities and pupils' personal development. It is detailed and makes provision for pupils to be involved in their own self-assessment. In order to make sure this curriculum is relevant to the needs of all pupils, the work of teaching staff is implemented by visits from the local safety team, the local police beat officer, the school nurse and by other outside experts. Pupils also make visits to public utilities in order to increase their learning. In caring for the environment, the school has a team of pupils who are 'litter pickers' as part of work relating to good citizenship. Pupils enjoy all these activities and speak knowledgeably about the areas they have studied. PSHE has enhanced the formal curriculum and is instrumental in affecting positively the values, attitudes and beliefs of the pupils.
23. The school makes good efforts to ensure there is an appropriate balance between subjects. This has led to the adoption of a humanities curriculum, which combines history and geography. The school has been concentrating on raising standards of literacy and numeracy and much time is devoted to these two areas.
24. The school has implemented the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy effectively, with the result that standards in English and mathematics are rising more quickly than they are nationally, although they are still below the national average. An important element is the way in which these basic skills are being extended through other subjects and activities. Year 6 pupils provide copy for the school newspaper, which includes interviews, articles and photographs on a wide range of subjects, and the newspaper is being produced using their expertise in ICT. In history, pupils have written accounts of life in Roman times, which are of good quality, not only on the presentation of facts but also in style. The good provision in literacy and numeracy has been a major contributing factor in improving standards since the last inspection.
25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The teaching of these pupils is effective, especially in the setting arrangements for mathematics and in the withdrawal of pupils with special literacy requirements. Many pupils enter the school with poor speaking, listening, reading and writing skills and they make good progress.
26. The range of extra-curricular activities to support the curriculum is excellent. The physical education curriculum is enhanced considerably by pupils' opportunities to participate in a wide range of sporting activities, some additional funding being provided by the local authority and government grants. The music curriculum is also broadened through the school choir and recorder groups. There is also an ICT club for Year 5 pupils who, on a weekly basis, visit a city technology college to further their ICT skills. For those pupils who prefer to complete their homework assignments in school, there is a homework club. In order to meet the physical needs of the pupils, plans are well in hand to provide a breakfast club which, it is felt, will be instrumental in improving attendance. In order to assist with healthy living, there is a most successful 'healthy eating club' in which pupils prepare attractive meals, which are then shared with parents and friends. The environmental club works hard to improve the environment and to keep the school free from litter and graffiti. The curriculum is also extended by field visits to places of local interest, for example the Ironbridge Gorge. Older pupils are taken on an extended residential weekend visit to the Wealden area, which not only extends their cultural horizons through a visit to the capital, but also incorporates opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities.

Extra-curricular activities make a major contribution to the life of the school and the curriculum it offers.

27. The school's links with the community are good. Trained adults from the local Volunteer Reading Help organisation help pupils on a regular basis, not only towards meeting the reading needs of these pupils, but also acting as a friend meeting a social need. Links have been established with local supermarkets that support the school with some financial aid, but also encourage the school to visit for special events, such as providing musical entertainment. Links with the local church are strong, the clergy taking a weekly act of collective worship and also being on hand in school to help any pupil with a personal problem. Within the PSHE programme, there is a wide use of personnel from the public utilities.
28. The majority of pupils leave the school to continue their secondary education at two local comprehensive schools. Good links have been established with these schools. There are also good links with the feeder infant school and progress is being made on providing curriculum links between the two schools.
29. The school's provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good and it is good for their spiritual development. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' cultural development was unsatisfactory.
30. The personal, social and health education curriculum and that for religious education provide opportunities for pupils to explore their own feelings, but spiritual awareness is most powerful during the collective act of worship. The ceremony of lighting and later extinguishing a candle helps pupils' awareness that this is a special time when they reflect on the meaning and value of life and actions. Pupils expressed delight and wonder when, during an assembly, dark spots on a napkin were made to disappear. On other occasions, in lessons, special events in pupils' lives are celebrated and pupils are taught to think about themselves as someone special with special talents to share with others. This belief runs powerfully through the whole life of the school. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on these experiences, especially during the act of worship and school assembly.
31. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong. They are taught principles and values to guide their development into responsible young adults who care for others and who are able to resist temptation. This is achieved through example, by stories such as that of 'Jonah and the Whale' and how Jonah overcame temptation, and by words and music. For example, during the inspection week, the music selected contained the refrain 'You can do it'. The behaviour policy adds strongly to the notion of reward for good behaviour, with stickers and certificates when actions of particular merit are noted. An example of the care and attention the school places on this aspect is the way pupils are asked to appraise the behaviour of others after playtime. Pupils are set targets on issues, such as 'friendship' and what makes a good friend. Most of the work is forming an important part of the citizenship curriculum. Pupils work and play co-operatively, take initiative and compete fairly.
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development for them to take responsibility for developments within the school through the school council, which meets on a monthly basis. Each class has a nominated pupil voted for by the others in a secret ballot. The agenda is prepared from ideas generated at group time, known as circle time. A particularly important feature is that the council has its own budget of £4500 for this academic year. A recent council meeting invited an expert to talk to the meeting about the school environment and ways of improving the playgrounds. Minutes are taken and recorded in a minute book. A nominated teacher, usually the headteacher, normally attends these meetings. In addition, there are pupils nominated

to take registers to the office after registration. Each class nominates a student of the week and month, this being expanded to mathematics and literacy student of the week. The school makes every effort to encourage pupils to develop their self-esteem. Pupils' social development is very good.

33. The school takes a strong lead in teaching pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions, as well as the richness and diversity of other cultures, the emphasis being on similarities between religions and cultures, rather than differences. As part of their history topic, pupils visit Blists Hill and Ironbridge Gorge and in this way learn something about their own cultural heritage. Through their work in geography, they have made paisley designs and clay tiles as part of their work on an Indian village. Pupils from Year 6 participate in dance from other lands and music is used to introduce pupils to a wide range of compositions. Art is a powerful influence in helping pupils' understanding of art from different cultures, with some very good artwork executed by pupils in the style of artists from across the world. As part of their work on understanding different cultures, visits have been made to the Gudwara and a Buddhist temple, to gain an insight into religious beliefs and customs. The pupils show their responsibility to others through their sponsorship of the education of a child in Togo and of their regular support of UNICEF.
34. The provision for special educational needs is very good. It permeates thinking throughout the school to allow maximum access to all areas of the curriculum and extra-curricular activities. All procedures are in place which meet the Code of Practice requirements, which is under revision to new statutory guidelines. Individual education plans are very clear and show how to provide activities for pupils to meet targets. These are reviewed termly and updated. Further precise guidance is developed from targets by dividing them into weekly and daily targets for a very specific guidance that contributes to pupils' good progress in meeting literacy targets. Support from other agencies, including the visual impairment service, together with trained and knowledgeable staff contribute to a very good provision for these pupils. Where withdrawal teaching in small groups takes place outside of numeracy and literacy hours, there is a rotation of times to ensure pupils do not always miss lessons in the same subject.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

35. This is a very caring school in which pupils' wellbeing is of equal priority to their academic success. Pupils feel valued and protected.
36. The school's arrangements and procedures for the protection and welfare of pupils are very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher and staff are knowledgeable in the requirements of the local education authority's guidelines for child protection, and deal promptly and sensitively with issues that arise.
37. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Prompt and efficient registration at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions complies with statutory requirements. The school is quick to follow up unexplained absences, which helps to reduce unauthorised absence. However, there are a number of pupils who are taken on holiday during term-time and this reduces the overall rate of attendance in most classes. This, plus a few families who have a very poor attendance rate, is the reason for the overall rate of attendance being well below the national average. The school works very closely with the education welfare officer who does home visits when necessary, and together they try to work closely with families to improve attendance.



38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are good. Most staff consistently apply the very clear and concise behaviour policy. This policy emphasises positive reinforcement as the preferred means of improving behaviour and pupils know what is expected of them. The consistent implementation of the school's procedures by the majority of teaching staff minimises the effect of the challenging behaviour of a small number of pupils throughout the school and contributes to pupils' learning and the standards they achieve. There are good procedures for dealing with the small number of incidents of harassment or bullying.
39. Procedures to promote the health, welfare and safety of pupils are very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are helped to develop a very good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle through the personal, social and health education and citizenship programmes, with talks on healthy foods and vegetables, and extra-curricular lessons where they cook healthy foods and invite their families to try them out. This is also followed through with science and physical education.
40. All adults know the pupils well. Relationships throughout the school are very good and teachers and learning support assistants demonstrate a genuine concern for pupils' care support and guidance. Staff treat pupils with respect and set good examples of how to behave appropriately. For example, when talking to pupils, adults wait their turn to speak, are courteous and genuinely interested in what pupils have to say.
41. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. Staff work hard to raise pupils' self-esteem and successfully support pupils in developing a more mature attitude to their work, play and life at school. However, there are no formal systems for monitoring this valuable work. This means that although staff are aware of the progress made by pupils there is limited written evidence. There is a record of achievement in place but there is no evidence of pupils reviewing their own learning or personal successes.
42. The school works extremely hard to successfully ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and equal opportunity to succeed in learning. The school's determination to meet the needs of all its pupils is reflected very clearly in its policies and practices. All staff provide very good role models for pupils to follow and lessons proceed in a harmonious atmosphere where all pupils' efforts are appreciated and respected. Pupils' achievements during their four years in this school demonstrate the effectiveness of the school's procedures and the quality of care and dedication of all staff.

## **ASSESSMENT**

43. At the time of the last inspection, the school's procedures for recording assessments were not systematic. These procedures are now very good and assessments are used well by teachers when planning the next stage of teaching to pupils of different abilities. Very good use is made of 'evidence days' held each month in which assessments are made of pupils' progress and their coverage of the curriculum. Assessments are recorded in pupils' evidence books, which provide valuable insights into progress being made. Good use is made of photographic evidence in subjects such as physical education. The school has introduced non-statutory testing for Years 3, 4 and 5 to assist teaching and target setting for individual pupils, particularly in English and mathematics. The use of already stated objectives, shared with pupils at the beginning of a lesson and revisited at the end, is proving to be a valuable tool in assessing what progress pupils have made in a lesson.

44. The national test results at the end of Year 6 are analysed carefully, with factors of mobility, gender and special educational needs taken into account. The analysis is used to determine the school's priorities. Monitoring of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is undertaken regularly by the headteacher and curriculum co-ordinators and this is gradually being extended to all subjects.
45. There is an increasing expectation that pupils will monitor and make self-assessments of their own work. Where this is in operation, for example with some pupils in Year 6, it is working well in developing pupils' critical awareness and their own knowledge of their learning.
46. The school plans to introduce an ICT system to help class teachers quickly and more effectively monitor pupils' progress during an academic year. This will be a most useful development.
47. Provision made for pupils with special educational needs is of high quality. Individual education plans are up to date and regularly reviewed. All pupils receive their full entitlement to support from both school based and agency sources, who are fully trained to meet their needs.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

48. Parents' view of the school from the parent questionnaire and the parents' meeting is overall satisfactory. The questionnaire showed that a minority of parents have concerns over the school's handling of complaints, what is taught, children's progress, homework, the school's values and the school's achievement of behaviour. However, parents who know the school well through their participation in the life of the school and all the events, have a very positive view of the school and are very supportive of the staff and the school's vision and ethos. They believe that the school encourages parents to communicate with them and is working hard towards a committed partnership.
49. The quality of information provided for parents, especially regarding their child's progress, is very good. This has improved since the previous inspection when it was considered unsatisfactory. Reports are very detailed and clearly state what pupils know, understand and can do. There are three parents' evenings and they receive their child's report on the last one of the year. Parents receive a letter detailing what their child will cover in the academic year and a calendar of dates and events to keep them informed. The detailed prospectus and regular and detailed letters are helpful and keep parents well informed about school events.
50. There is a very active Friends of School Association whose brief is to raise funds, which are used to provide activities and equipment for pupils, and this supports the school very well. Many parents support the events organised by this group.
51. The contribution of parents and carers to their children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. Some parents have little positive effect on their children's work, and their commitment to helping their children achieve regular attendance and complete homework when asked, would help to improve standards all round. Parents do need to help with both of these areas.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

52. The excellent leadership and very good management of the headteacher is the key to the effectiveness of the school. He leads by example involving all in the life of the school community. He has created an 'inclusive' environment in which all staff, including temporary teachers, feel they have an important role to play in school life.
53. The assistant headteacher works effectively with the headteacher, complementing his skills well. Curriculum co-ordinators manage their subjects well and give valuable guidance to new or temporary staff in planning the work pupils are to cover.
54. The monitoring of teaching has been a particular strength of the management. Frank and open discussion has meant that areas for development in individual teacher's work have been identified and improvement made. The school development plan is a clear and useful document which reflects the school's aims and ethos. There is a high pupil turnover and management ensures that pupils coming into school during the school year have their needs quickly assessed and appropriate work provided.
55. The governing body supports the school well. Governors have created a system of committees which makes their work more effective than seen in many schools. The 'governance' committee is particularly effective because of the way it involves governors who are able to commit skills or time to the school. This committee directs much of the work of other committees ensuring that all are focused on school improvement. They fulfil their statutory requirements.
56. The leadership uses the principles of best value very well. Expertise within the governing body means that comparisons are made whenever a decision on spending or hiring support services are made. Considering the standards achieved as pupils enter and leave school, and the high quality of care provided, the school gives good value for money.
57. There is very good leadership and management of special educational needs by an experienced and well-qualified co-ordinator. She is fully involved in checking pupils' progress and works well with staff to set new targets. She meets parents, other agency professionals and brings new knowledge, information or expertise to the notice of staff and governors. Her involvement in behaviour management strategies both in school and the wider schools' group is contributing positively to the development of pupils' understanding of responsibility. She is ably supported in her role by a special educational needs teacher and special support assistants, committed to raising standards and ensuring the inclusiveness of the unit in raising standards.
58. The match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum is good, enabling extra attention to be given to pupils with special educational needs. However, where temporary arrangements are unavoidably in place, some pupils have suffered a lack of stability in their education. Teachers are appropriately qualified and pursue further regular development, so there is a range of experience to match the needs of the curriculum. Support staff are suitably deployed and are well qualified and trained for their role, particularly in relation to special educational needs. This contributes to pupils' achievement. All staff have appropriate job descriptions. Newly qualified teachers are well supported through an external and school arranged support system.
59. The accommodation is good. It enables the curriculum to be taught effectively. The school has extra rooms to allow for small group teaching and a computer suite. It has a good-sized hall, allowing for good space for physical education, gatherings and performances. Outdoor facilities are good.
60. The school has sufficient learning resources to deliver the curriculum and has much improved provision for delivering the design and technology and information and

communication technology curriculum. It has a very good quality computer suite that is regularly used for skills instruction and to support learning in other subjects, and to facilitate work for pupils with special educational needs. It has improved the quantity, quality and storage of resources for mathematics since the last inspection. The library is adequately sited in the computer base, but lacks areas for group or private study. There is a sufficient range of books and the school is aware of the need to increase these, but also needs to extend the numbers in sets of group readers. Since the last inspection, the school has improved well its own range of resources for religious education, including some new artefacts.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

- (1) Continue to improve standards in English, mathematics and science to bring them nearer to the national average. (paragraphs 61-73, 74-78, 79-82)
- (2) Improve the level of pupils' attendance in particular by making parents aware of the effect on pupils' standards of work when their children's absence is unauthorised. (paragraphs 9, 37)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	23	11	0	1	0
Percentage	4	23	48	23	0	2	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	262
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	99

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	100

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	20	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	17	23
	Girls	16	13	15
	Total	33	30	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (55)	60 (43)	76 (58)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	12	17
	Girls	13	11	13
	Total	27	23	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (48)	46 (44)	60 (58)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	259
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.2
Average class size	33

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	280

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	497,053
Total expenditure	510,867
Expenditure per pupil	2,053
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,627
Balance carried forward to next year	29,813

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	3
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	263
Number of questionnaires returned	166

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	44	6	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	39	52	5	2	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	28	54	10	5	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	50	16	5	1
The teaching is good.	43	49	3	2	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	45	15	5	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	43	7	2	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	44	4	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	33	47	13	2	5
The school is well led and managed.	41	48	7	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	39	51	8	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	43	10	1	5

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

All parents seen during the inspection, including the parents' meeting, were very impressed with the way the school was helping their children to develop academically and socially. The responses from the parents' questionnaires, while very positive, show a small minority less satisfied. However, these would appear to be parents who have little contact with the school.



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

### **ENGLISH**

61. The standards reached by eleven-year-olds in last year's National Curriculum tests were well below the national average and similar to those in mathematics and science. When compared with schools with similar intakes, results are at an average level. Since the time of the last report, results have improved at a greater rate than the national trend, apart from 2000 when there was a decline, largely due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs. In 2001, the results recovered to the 1999 level. The number of pupils achieving higher levels is below the national average but, when compared with similar schools, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above was higher. In 2001, boys and girls achieved similar levels but, taken over the last three years, boys have achieved higher levels than girls. Test results also indicate that the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 or below, is greater than that normally found, 34 per cent as against the national average of 25 per cent.
62. The attainment when pupils start school is currently well below the national average in reading but is at the national average in writing. However, there is high pupil mobility, with only 60 per cent of pupils attending the junior school for the full four years. Other factors to take into account are the relatively low attendance rate and that homework does not feature prominently in the lives of a significant number of pupils. Despite these factors, standards in English are rising.
63. Over the academic year, pupils in Year 6 are making good progress in English. Standards in writing are improving rapidly and, while standards in reading are improving, there is an urgent need to improve these further throughout the school.
64. Standards in speaking and listening are at average levels by the time pupils are aged eleven. This is an improvement from the previous report when standards in speaking were described as being weak. Through good open-ended questioning techniques, pupils are increasingly precise in the spoken vocabulary, being able to speak with clarity and to modulate the voice to hold the interest of the listener. In a 'good work' assembly, pupils from both Years 3 and 6 were able to communicate to the whole school in a most satisfactory way. In a debate on the merits of homework, Year 6 pupils gave convincing arguments both for and against, although predictably the vote went against homework! This was a good strategy to develop speaking skills as well as in assembling an argument.
65. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to other pupils. Those with special educational needs gain skills through the use of listening centres, their skills being carefully monitored by adults working with them. In this way, spans of concentration are improving. In the best literacy lessons, teachers have an expectation for pupils to model their oral answers on the examples set by staff, but this is not universally applied by all teachers.
66. Reading standards overall are below those expected of eleven-year-olds, with too many pupils reading at low levels. In the sample of readers heard during the inspection, many read without much enthusiasm. All were able to decode unfamiliar words adequately and most were heard to read regularly in school. However, some pupils were reading texts which were not sufficiently demanding while some had lost their reading record book. On the other hand, the most able read with fluency and could cope comfortably with words, such as 'immutability'. Evidence is that in Year 6 there is a wide gap between those who read fluently and with understanding and those who are continuing to find reading difficult.

67. This gap is also seen in Year 3, although evidence is that there is an increasing percentage of pupils who are able to read with increasing fluency and expression. Pupils read with expression and most clearly enjoy stories they are reading. In this example, one boy was reading to the average level for Year 6 pupils and there were fewer who were reading at levels lower than expected for their age.
68. Throughout the school, the best readers are those who read regularly in school and at home. Many of these pupils visit the local public library. Those who are not making sufficient progress find reading difficult, have poor visual retention skills and are unsure about letter sounds and how to split a word up into syllables. The school is aware of these difficulties and is increasing the range of reading books and times when pupils read to an adult. Reading at home is not given sufficient prominence in home learning. The use of the Volunteer Reading Help service is improving the reading of a limited number of pupils, often through improving pupils' self-image. Group reading in some classes is not especially successful, owing to the limited number of texts available. The range of texts is good. Monitoring of the organisation of group reading and evaluating its success is not sufficiently sharp enough to show the benefits of this strategy. Pupils with special educational needs are usually withdrawn from literacy lessons for extra tuition. Knowledgeable support assistants give extra help, both in withdrawal sessions and in the classroom, especially for reading. This contributes well to the good progress these pupils make.
69. Standards in writing are below average but improving. A great deal of emphasis is placed on grammar and punctuation and most pupils are learning to write in a range of styles within writing frames. Attention is being given to spelling, but too often pupils are writing without recourse to their wordbooks or dictionaries and some simple words are carelessly mis-spelt. Pupils are not reminded often enough to read through their work when they have finished to make sure writing is fluent and simple errors are corrected. Pupils in Year 6 write for a range of purposes, including play scripts and writing expressively in stories. Good attention is paid to poetry reading and writing in all classes. A pupil in Year 5 wrote the following, largely unaided, poem:  
*The moon shines  
Like a bright light in a dark room  
Glistens  
Like a diamond necklace shimmering around a ladies neck  
Dazzles  
Like a tube of silver glitter sparkling on a Christmas card  
Glow  
Like a gold star gently tiptoeing around the sun  
Flies  
Like a firework gleaming in the night sky  
Glowing  
Like a candle glowing in space.*  
This shows a good example of poetic form.
70. Presentation and handwriting are of a good standard. Handwriting is taught well and almost all pupils write legibly with a good hand. The school places a strong emphasis on good presentational skills, these being aided through the opportunities created by using information and communication technology, especially wordprocessing skills. What can be achieved is clearly demonstrated in the school newspaper, written and collated by Year 6 pupils. This is of a very good standard.
71. The good progress made by pupils resulting in improving achievement is because the teaching is generally good, especially that of the permanent staff. Teachers have adopted to good effect the National Literacy Strategy and there is a consistent approach throughout the school. Sometimes the introduction to lessons is overlong

resulting in the concluding part of the lesson being too brief. In most classes, the text is used well by pupils as a model on which to base their own English. Teachers enthuse about language development and, as their relationship with pupils is good, this has a positive effect on pupils' writing. Potentially disruptive pupils are managed well by both teachers and learning support assistants. The level of questioning by teachers is good, aiding pupils' thinking, listening and speaking skills. Whenever possible, teachers use overhead projectors and individual whiteboards to support the teaching and good use is made of computer-assisted learning. Teachers set realistic targets for pupils, which will extend their learning and, in Year 6, there is an increasing use of pupil self-evaluation resulting in pupils gaining some self-knowledge of their learning. Marking of English work is of a good standard with helpful comments made on ways in which further improvement could occur.

72. Monitoring of teaching and learning is also good. The use of statutory tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 is instrumental in helping to keep a careful check on progress. Resources are adequate, although the need to extend reading materials is acknowledged by the school. The school library is situated in a developing learning centre along with the computer suite. This is a sensible arrangement, although at present there is insufficient space for study tables and chairs to be used by pupils using book research.

## **MATHEMATICS**

73. The overall attainment by pupils at age eleven is below the national average expected for their age. However, over a period of time their achievement is good because of the progress they make from attainment on entry to the school. Their attainment is closer to national averages than at the last inspection. Good progress is promoted through good teaching overall for all ability levels and very good analysis of pupils' achievements, which promotes focused learning for all pupils. Additionally, pupils with special educational needs are successfully helped by knowledgeable support staff. Effective action has been taken since the last inspection to produce a scheme of work that is based on national guidelines and matches the needs of pupils.
74. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils have achieved effective skills in mental calculations, which allows them to calculate whole numbers and fractions or decimal proportions of numbers to fifty or one hundred accurately, as well as multiply numbers up to ten times ten. The lower attaining pupils are more secure with numbers twenty to thirty. Pupils of average ability order numbers to five and six digits and calculate with numbers to three and four figures. Highest attaining pupils use higher numbers securely and solve more complex problems, using mathematical language and explanation. When sorting calculations with fractions and decimals, they ably use more difficult fractions than other pupils and decimals to two and three places. Average pupils confidently multiply to two decimal places and recognise negative numbers to fifty. They use these to plot co-ordinates in two quadrants, while the most able securely plot shapes in all four quadrants, which is above the level expected for their age group. Pupils of lower ability have achieved a similar range of work, but use lower numbers and multiply mentally with the five times table, but are less secure with higher numbers. They recognise numbers to one thousand, but only calculate with numbers to one hundred, and struggle with solving problems using words. This represents good achievement over time from calculations only to ten at the beginning of the year. A greater proportion of pupils are more confident in their achievements in knowing names of shapes, finding areas and measuring perimeters. The highest attainers have a secure knowledge of names of angles and measure with a protractor from a range of shapes, whose properties they confidently name. Lower attainers name properties of simple shapes and measure in degrees, but are less secure in their knowledge of more complex shapes or names of angles. Lower attainers are

more secure in using measures of length than they are in measuring time. Whilst the highest attainers collect data and analyse it through a series of different graphs, the lowest attainers use tally charts, but struggle to organise their information into a simple graph without support. Overall, pupils have the expected knowledge of using a computer program to present information in graph form or tables and enjoy the use of computer-based programs to support their skills in mental arithmetic.

75. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and in one Year 6 booster group it was very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged satisfactory overall. Where temporary staff are used, the teaching is not always as effective, because management of pupils, key resources or match of work is not so precisely organised as in other classes. This is mainly in Year 4 and a Year 5 class. The setting of groups of pupils by ability has enabled teachers to focus challenges more precisely to the highest attaining pupils and ensure good support for the lowest attaining pupils, and provide booster groups to the middle range of pupils, so they become more confident in their ability and achievement. Teachers generally know the subject well and confidently teach skills in learnable parts due to their good planning, which covers three ability levels within each select group. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and use methods appropriate to achieving maximum learning for pupils, such as the use of real life advertisements and food boxes in a Years 5/6 lesson on percentages. Management of pupils is generally good, so allowing a good pace to lessons, and pupils being able to complete a task within the given time, resulting in the majority working and concentrating hard and enjoying mathematical challenges, such as when Year 5 pupils had to solve problems in 20 minutes. They are interested in their work, but lowest attainers need much support and are less independent in their work. This is overcome very well by the very good use of learning support staff and resources very well matched to the needs of pupils. Pupils make good progress in most lessons because of the very good analysis of how well pupils are learning throughout the lesson and they use this information well to focus questions precisely to develop understanding or to adapt the next lesson for better understanding.
76. In a very good lesson in a Year 6 booster group, where good relationships with pupils are established, the teacher quickly analysed pupils' errors and asked very well focused questions. This allowed pupils to clarify their thinking and enabled most pupils to convert fractions to decimals and achieve new learning very quickly. Pupils are given weekly homework, which is not always completed or returned to school, but teachers take steps to help pupils to rectify this situation at lunchtimes. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in having help with reading and comprehending an activity task or having questions rephrased or simplified. They make good gains in their learning because of the individual attention given to them. In a Year 5 lesson, where they did not make as much progress, the clock faces used were too small to match pupil ability. Almost all work throughout the school is well presented and regularly marked with supportive advice and suggestions to improve learning. Numeracy is developed satisfactorily in geography and history, is well developed in design and technology through measurement and weighing, and in science and information and communication technology through a range of graphs and calculations. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well developed throughout the school, adapted to meet pupils' needs and is supporting the raising of standards.
77. The leadership and management of mathematics are very good. Time and energy have been deployed effectively to interpret the National Numeracy Strategy into a scheme of work that matches the needs of pupils. Analysis of pupil attainment from a range of tests is very good. This has led to consideration of how pupils are taught and has resulted in ability sets within a two-year age range and also consideration of the

curriculum planning. Teaching is observed by the co-ordinator and feedback is given. All planning is checked by the co-ordinator and headteacher to ensure progression and equality of opportunity, which is seen to be raising standards. However, a system needs to be introduced for checking the delivery of this curriculum when temporary teachers are employed, to maintain the otherwise reliable system. The good tracking of pupils and predictions of grades has ensured extra help for children in the middle range of ability, as well as the challenge given to higher attainers and support given to lowest attainers and those with special educational needs. Improvements in the quality and range of storage of resources has improved since the last inspection and teachers now have all essential equipment listed and there is a policy of continual renewal and enhancement of quality items. These have been further enhanced by the use of good quality computer programs that match the needs of the curriculum. All pupils have targets to meet and a good feature of the organisation is that pupils know when they have met a target that promotes eagerness for new learning.

## **SCIENCE**

78. Pupils' attainment, compared with schools nationally, is well below average. However, the results of the national tests do not give the full picture. Pupils are achieving well and making generally good progress from a low base. This is because of good quality teaching and good planning which encourages pupils to plan their own investigations. In lessons seen during the inspection some classes were working at levels at least in line with expectations of the National Curriculum. This confirms the improvement in standards which are gradually moving nearer to the national average.
79. Pupils in Year 3 are looking at materials which are conductors of electricity. Well-planned lessons and very good teaching enables them to successfully set up a circuit which includes a battery, a switch and a light bulb. They experiment with materials that will complete the circuit and light up the bulb. Pupils in all year groups study a wide range of scientific topics matching the requirements of the National Curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 4 have looked at the way materials can be altered by bending or twisting them. They are working at a level very close to that expected nationally. They have used the forces of pushing and pulling to move wheeled vehicles. When working with magnets they have learned that each magnet has a 'north' and 'south' pole and that a north and south pole will attract each other but two north poles will repel.
80. Year 5 pupils are preparing to investigate how liquids will evaporate in different circumstances. They recognise that to make a fair test they can only change one aspect of the experiment. They work well together in groups about how they are going to do this and then present their findings to the rest of the class. This helps to develop their social development as they learn how to elect for the group, present their findings and then listen carefully to the presentations from the other groups. Pupils in Year 6 are also looking at how to make a scientific experiment fair. They are planning how to test the effect of exercise on their pulse rate. The good planning sheets provided by the teacher helps them to focus carefully on how they will measure the result of exercise during a physical education lesson. They recognise that they will need to measure their pulse rate before exercise to measure the effect of the activity they are going to attempt.
81. The subject co-ordinator has effectively worked to improve standards. She monitors teachers' planning well. She is looking to improve standards further by using the analysis of test results to identify those areas of the curriculum where pupils need more experience.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

82. Evidence of standards in art and design was obtained largely from displays in school and pupils' sketchbooks. Little direct teaching was seen during the inspection. However, it is clear that the standards pupils achieve are generally in line with those expected.
83. Pupils experience a wide range of art activities because of the well-planned programmes of work. They produce good quality work using pencils, crayons, pastels and paint. They also use materials such as clay to good effect to produce three-dimensional work. Artwork is often produced with links to other subjects such as information and communication technology and history. This means that curricular time is well used and pupils see the purpose of the work they are doing. The subject also contributes well to pupils' cultural development as they study the work of many European artists as well as art from other cultures, such as the Australian aborigines.
84. Pupils from Year 3 achieve good standards as they work in the style of William Morris after looking at his wallpaper designs. The very well taught lesson was one of a series which enabled pupils to experience a good range of artistic techniques as they worked in groups. Pupils develop their drawing and colouring skills successfully as they choose a flower from a wallpaper pattern and enlarge it in their sketchbooks. They move onto other groups to develop this work as they use paper and glue to make three-dimensional flowers which are later painted to produce good quality models. An outstanding example of the way art and design is linked to other subjects was seen in an ICT lesson with a Year 6 class. Pupils look at portraits created by David Hockney. They use their artistic skills to use a digital camera and computers to produce high quality portraits of themselves.
85. Those pupils with special educational needs benefit from the good provision and make good progress in their artistic skills.
86. The subject is managed very well with the co-ordinator supporting staff well by providing a good range of resources and suggesting ways in which topics might be tackled.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

87. The standard of work at Year 6 is similar to that expected nationally for the age group. They achieve particularly well in the making aspect of the subject and pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the support given to them.
88. By Year 6, pupils can design and amend their drawings and list resources for making a fairground roundabout. The highest attainers independently evaluate the resources for purpose and discuss alterations and how to attach motors for movement. The lowest attainers accomplish well the making of their designs but with limited written work to guide them. Their written evaluations are simple but they are better in oral form when speaking about them. Other Year 6 pupils in a new project show good achievement over time in how to evaluate materials used for a specific purpose, when they used this knowledge to investigate a range of slippers. Through the use of guidance sheets, all pupils are able to make a design drawing, list the resources and write an evaluation, such as that seen in a Year 4 evaluation of fabrics, decoration and fasteners for purses. Pupils know how to use a range of tools safely and independently and are aware of hygiene and safety when working with food. Throughout the school, pupils have achieved knowledge of a range of joining techniques with glue, paper clips, and tape and using different materials such as card, wood and fabrics, as well as strengthening of structures, such as bridges and corners.

89. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In the Year 6 and Year 3 lessons observed, teaching was very good, resulting in the Year 3 class achieving standards above that expected for their age, in joining a strong structure to support a photograph frame. In these lessons, pupils were challenged to make investigations of materials after being given good guidance, asked well-focused questions by worksheet or class teacher and then given the opportunity to test their thinking. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well to ensure full participation in this aspect. Teachers show a good knowledge of how to promote the skills needed for designing, making and evaluating a piece of work, such as the range seen of using textiles for purses, food in sandwiches and wood, string and card in musical instruments. For example, a Year 5 class, through good questioning and guidance, was able to suggest improvements to their bread, such as making it bigger, adding glaze to make it more attractive, or adding more ingredients to make it tastier. As a result, all pupils make good gains overall in their learning and take pride in the finished product. This was clearly seen in a Year 3 class, when pupils used a digital camera to record their finished work. As a result of guidance given, higher attaining pupils are becoming more independent in their learning and work hard, while lower attainers and pupils with special educational needs concentrate well and persevere to succeed in a task because of the good co-operation and support of adults. Discussions at the end of lessons are used well by teachers to assess pupils' learning and in a Year 3 lesson, the pupils were given good opportunity to speak about their designs and listen to others describe their efforts.
90. The leadership and management of design and technology is good. Since the last inspection, a new scheme of work has been devised, based on the latest national guidelines. This incorporates the recommended system of assessment, which is used to identify pupils' skills at the end of each project and plan the next project by using this information. Teacher assessment of the whole project informs this, but is also kept as guidance for future adaptations to the curriculum. The co-ordinator checks all planning and keeps a bank of work for evidence of skills, but has not yet had the opportunity to monitor lessons. The school has improved its resources since the last inspection, especially in construction kits. It has a good quality food technology room that is also used for extra-curricular activities such as a healthy eating club.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

91. Compared with national expectations, standards at age eleven are at the expected level in both geography and history. All pupils in these subjects, including those with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language, make good progress.
92. As geography and history are taught within a topic framework, it was only possible to observe history lessons in Years 3 and 4 and geography lessons in Years 5 and 6. Further evidence was taken from a scrutiny of teachers' planning and of pupils' work and discussion with staff and pupils.
93. Pupils have an increasing knowledge of the lives of people in different periods of time. The curriculum is organised so that the youngest pupils begin with studies of the recent past, eventually in Year 6 studying the Roman era and life in Ancient Greece. History is successfully brought alive through the use of a variety of sources, including the collection of replica artefacts, which the school is currently purchasing, visitors to the school and objects obtained from the locality, especially from the Ironbridge Gorge. Pupils speak enthusiastically and knowledgeably about their history topics. For example, Year 3 pupils, dressed as evacuees, visited the Severn Valley Railway to experience thoughts and feelings of children sent away from their homes during the

last war. When studying the Tudor period, pupils were introduced to the concept of the family tree, which they described accurately. Older pupils are gaining a firm idea of the chronological sequence of events and of the concept of cause and consequence. In their study on the Romans, pupils tried to answer the question 'Why have people invaded Britain in the past?' This they did well, beginning to understand the importance of Britain to the rest of the world.

94. Some very exciting work was observed in geography relating to rivers. Through excellent teaching by demonstration using a sand tray and water, pupils quickly made very good progress in understanding the effects of erosion by rain on river valleys. By the end of the lesson, most pupils were able to name parts of a river, using terms such as confluence, delta and tributary with accuracy. They understood why settlements were established at the confluence of two rivers. In this lesson, very good use was made of information and communication technology.
95. Year 5 pupils, studying village life in Chembakolli, used photographic evidence to reach conclusions about life in this region of India and why houses were built with certain materials and in a particular style, for example why they have overhanging roofs. However, when set the task of describing a house as an estate agent might, they found this difficult.
96. Overall teaching is good. Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. Both geography and history are taught through units from national guidance, the unit for geography being further supplemented through a commercial scheme. Important features in the work of both subjects are the inclusion of fieldwork whenever possible, increasing pupils' knowledge of their locality and understanding of environmental issues and show that the pupils themselves are able to improve the environment. In these ways, pupils' interest is maintained, resulting in work of good quality. Geographical studies play an important role for pupils in Year 6 who participate in a geography-bridging project with their next school.
97. The subjects are effectively led by a very knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. Good quality policies have been produced and resources are satisfactory. Topic assessment sheets have been introduced to assess pupils at the end of each topic unit, thus checking on whether pupils' needs are being met. Assessment sheets are used as a basis for future planning and are used to make sure progress is being made. The use of literacy and numeracy in history and geography is satisfactory but is limited and could be further extended to increase the rate of learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

98. Standards seen in this subject are now at least in line with those seen in most schools. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. This is largely because the computer suite, after initial problems, is now working well and pupils are benefiting from the opportunities provided. The suite allows all pupils in a class to have 'hands on' experience and learn skills which benefit them when they use the computers in the classrooms in other subjects. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator has provided support and training for all staff which has made them more confident in teaching this subject.
99. Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the very good provision. The wordprocessing aspect of the computer is often used by those pupils who find writing difficult. More able pupils are also able to work at their own high level and also make good progress.



100. Another strength of the subject is the way it is used in most other subjects of the curriculum. Year 3 pupils have used the computer to write poems with different letter styles and decorative borders. They have also produced work for a history topic about the wartime evacuation in a well-planned printed form. Year 4 pupils have developed these skills and produced printed poems with include a computer-generated drawing. In art and design they have used a computer to produce good quality patterns using geometric shapes. Year 6 pupils have created interesting Christmas cards and produced designs in the style of Paul Klee.
101. Most pupils are able to set up the computer programs independently, use the 'mouse' effectively to choose the programs they want to use and move items around the screen.
102. Only two full lessons were observed in which classes used the computer suite but almost all classroom lessons included some pupils using computers. Pupils in Year 3 are learning how to put information onto a spreadsheet. Because of the good planning, brisk teaching and good resources this was a successful lesson. The 'smart board' in the suite enables the teacher to demonstrate clearly what pupils need to do. Pupils 'log on' to the program independently and use their own password to access information. Most pupils effectively enter words and numbers into the chart and then convert the information in the chart to a graph of their choosing. Year 6 pupils are successfully linking their technology skills to their artwork. They use a digital camera correctly and then load the images onto a computer publishing program. They 'chop' the images of their self-portraits to produce very effective images in the style of the artist David Hockney.

## MUSIC

103. The standard of pupils' work in music meets that expected nationally at Year 6. This includes those pupils with special educational needs who are supported to progress in line with other pupils. All pupils make good progress through Years 3 to 6, particularly in singing and the range and styles of songs which they sing. Whilst overall standards are similar to those recorded at the last inspection the progress pupils make in a broader aspect of the curriculum is better as well as the provision of musical instruments.
104. By Year 6 pupils have achieved a good awareness of rhythm, dynamics and volume in singing as demonstrated when they sing 'Africa'. They maintain their own parts well when singing a two-part song. They are not afraid to harmonise when exploring how jazz songs were composed and changed. They have a good understanding of the cultural background to different kinds of music such as jazz and blues and can imitate the mood produced by songs in this style. They have developed a good ear and appreciation of listening to music so that they can identify key changes such as that heard in a Peggy Lee song and identify when music repeats a phrase pattern. Over time they have developed a good sense of rhythm and tempo in playing musical patterns with body parts and unpitched and pitched instruments. They have explored these well through graphic and standard notation. Through links with other subjects they have explored their own compositions, for example those based on an artist's picture or linked to a theme such as the Victorians. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well in performances both for the school and for parents. A good example of this was seen when the choir performed a song 'Going to Telford Town' that was composed by a pupil as a response to previous work. This was ably accompanied on the piano by a fellow pupil.
105. No judgement was made on teaching in the last inspection for comparison with this one. In the two lessons seen teaching and learning are good. Planning for lessons shows good subject knowledge and sequence of teaching on the chosen theme.

Songs chosen for both upper- and lower-school lessons reflected well the traditions of Jazz and the Victorian music hall songs. As a result pupils were enthusiastic in Years 5 and 6 as they developed a range of singing skills to match the different jazz moods and patterns. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 derived enjoyment as well as skill in singing tongue twisters or reflecting on the thoughts of the composer of a Cockney song about houses with no view. Pupils are generally well managed. Support teachers help with new skills so that most pupils try their best in lessons. The recorder is taught to an older and younger group as an extra activity. They are effectively taught rhythm and notation to standard notes for descant and tenor recorder and will take part in a workshop hosted by the school later in the term. Aspects of other parts of the music curriculum are adequately covered throughout the term.

106. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Lessons are generally taken by the co-ordinator with the support of other year group teachers. There is a clear scheme of work based on national guidelines, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school also takes the opportunity to participate in a range of workshops and performances with local schools, which broadens and enriches the curriculum. There are good procedures to guide teachers in analysing pupils' acquisition of music skills and these are satisfactorily used to develop planning. Resources have improved since the last inspection so that some non-western instruments have been acquired. This has been extended through links with art and design, design and technology and science to explore sound and beat through the making of Indian drums. There are good links throughout the curriculum for music, enabling pupils to understand the subject in a wider context.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

107. At the time of the last inspection, standards were reported as being above the national expectation. This continues to be the case, standards being above average with pupils making good progress throughout the four years they are in school. There are no differences between the attainments of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, working alongside other pupils in physical education lessons. Pupils with physical disabilities are helped to participate as fully as possible, support and guidance being given by learning support assistants in an unobtrusive manner.
108. During the time pupils are in school they have access to the full range of physical activities as laid down in the National Curriculum. Curriculum time of two sessions totalling one and a half hours per week is adequate for development of physical skills. At the time of the inspection it was possible to observe only a limited range of lessons, but from talking to pupils and examining photographic evidence, it is clear that they particularly enjoy their physical education lessons.
109. By the time pupils are in their final year in the school, they have achieved very good standards in gymnastics and dance. They work hard co-operatively with partners in sequences of movement, which show confidence, poise and control. Pupils are expected to critically appraise each other's work, which they carry out confidently, while stressing points for further development. This shows a mature approach and a regard for the feelings of others. In games lessons they enjoy a variety of team games, including football, cricket, hockey, netball, rugby and rounders. All team games are open to both boys and girls equally to participate in. Athletics is usually taught in the summer months, but the indoor track at the local leisure centre is used occasionally at other times. Orienteering is taught as part of the programme for outdoor and adventurous activities. Although swimming is taught only during the summer months to pupils from Years 5 and 6, pupils from Years 3 and 4 have the

opportunity to join the extra-curricular swimming club, which meets weekly. On leaving school, the majority of pupils are able to swim a minimum of 25 metres.

110. The most successful teaching occurs when the teacher has a good knowledge of the subject, is able to develop learning activities at a good pace and has high expectations of behaviour and discipline so that there is no threat to pupils' health and safety. Teachers emphasise the importance of warming up and cooling down activities and are careful to explain to pupils why these are important. When lessons are not so successful, the teacher does not have a firm hold on discipline and the behaviour of pupils becomes challenging.
111. Guidance on teaching and learning is currently taken from the advisory services of two local authorities. The school is reassessing the scheme in use, feeling that more guidance is necessary. The co-ordinator is well versed in correct teaching techniques for further pupil development and gives sound advice to staff.
112. A considerable strength in physical education provision is the large number of extra-curricular sports activities. There is a good link between the sports development team at the local authority who funds some of these. Pupils enjoy playing for the school against other schools in various tournaments, maintaining a healthy attitude to competition.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

113. Standards in religious education are in line with the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make good progress in their knowledge of religious rites and significant stories from other cultures. The links with personal and social education in reflection on stories they hear has a good impact on behaviour and responsibility towards others.
114. By Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the main beliefs of four religions, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam. The majority of pupils achieve well in the understanding of rules derived from these religions and recognises them as the Ten Commandments, five vows, five pillars of Islam and the five Ks. The least able list these and give good illustrations of the five Ks, while the most able reflect well on these and how they affect lifestyles, then think of rules they may introduce for a better world. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported to discuss their knowledge and report in a suitable form to match other pupils. Year 6 pupils achieve very well in comparing leaders of two religions such as Jesus and Guru Nanak. Visits to places such as Shrewsbury Abbey have allowed pupils to achieve well in reflection through activities on the Christian way of life, so that they recognise a spiritual dimension to life which links to assembly.
115. The quality of teaching is good overall. There is good commitment through all staff to promote pupils' achievement and they have high expectations of pupils' response. Teaching in lessons was never less than good and two lessons were very good. In a lesson by a Year 6 teacher, the good use of video and other visual and activity resources, combined with the well-timed and very focused questions, contributed to the good achievement of all pupils when comparing two leaders. This was because well-focused worksheets guided the least able to achieve similar knowledge and understanding to the majority of the class, while higher attainers received the challenge to think beyond the basic information. In a very good lesson in a Year 5 class, conducted by the local vicar, all pupils gained much new knowledge about communion routines. It was very well developed from daily routines and pupils had opportunity to ask and have answered the thought provoking questions, such as 'How do you feel when someone has died?' or 'How are adults baptised?' Teachers make good use of pupils' recall of previous learning and analyse the learning very well

during lessons, in order to effectively develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. This was demonstrated well in opportunities for pupils to work in pairs in a Year 3 class, to discuss 'What makes a good friend?' This enabled pupils to make good links between Jesus as a friend and personal friendship, while the teacher assessed their development. Lessons are all conducted at a good pace, resulting in pupils working hard to achieve the completion of a task and be able to review their learning from the objective communicated to them earlier. Pupils with special educational need are always sensitively helped in discussion activities and research or recorded activities.

116. The management of religious education is good. The co-ordinator attends all available training courses to keep up to date. She is very diligent in checking all planning, giving advice and ensuring all resources needed are available. She further promotes understanding in religious education by the organisation of visits and visitors to enrich the school's teaching. The link with music and art and design contributes to the promotion of cultural traditions of different faiths. The scheme of work meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The school has satisfactorily improved its religious artefacts since the last inspection, and made good improvement in the acquisition of a range of books and videos to support the curriculum, as well as visits to Christian and non-Christian venues.