

INSPECTION REPORT

VICTORIA COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Burton-on-Trent

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124040

Headteacher: Mrs V E Warrington

Reporting inspector: Mr P Dennison
17736

Dates of inspection: 18 –21 February 2002

Inspection number: 244341

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Victoria Road
Burton on Trent
Staffordshire

Postcode: DE14 2LU

Telephone number: 01283 239146

Fax number: 01283 239153

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Symons

Date of previous inspection: 6 October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17736	P Dennison	Registered inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English Art and design Physical education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19669	F Kennedy	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?
21893	V Brittain	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography The work of the Speech and Language Centre	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21066	B Bowen	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Mathematics History Music Religious education	

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services

Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	17
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	22
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	24
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	26
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	29
THE WORK OF THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE CENTRE	29
THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE	30
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	32
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is in Burton-upon-Trent, Staffordshire. It serves an area of considerable social disadvantage. Eighty per cent of pupils are of Pakistani heritage. The majority of children enter the nursery only able to communicate in their home language which is usually a Mirpur dialect of Punjabi that does not have a written form. At the time of the inspection there were 211 on roll, taught in 7 classes. In addition, 26 children attend the nursery class part time. There is a centre for pupils with speech and language difficulties. The number of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is above the national average. Eight pupils in the main school have a statement of special educational need. In addition, there are 13 pupils with statements attending the speech and language centre. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The number of pupils for whom English is an additional language (81%) is very high. Many pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. The attainment of pupils when they enter the school is well below that expected for the age group. The school is admitting increasing numbers of pupils at times other than the normal admission point. Often, these newcomers have low prior attainment and no experience of the English school system.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school which provides a good quality of education. Standards of attainment have improved since the previous inspection, although they are below the national average in English, mathematics and science they reflect good learning. The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She is well supported by senior staff and the school is managed very well. Much of the teaching is very good and this helps pupils to achieve well. Very effective support ensures that all pupils are able to take a full part in all aspects of school life. The pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and their behaviour is very good. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher and senior staff provide excellent leadership and the school is very well managed.
- Standards are improving and pupils make good progress.
- Attainment in art and design and religious education is good.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and much is very good.
- The provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is very good.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and they make good progress.
- Teaching assistants are used very effectively to support learning and bilingual staff play a very important role in ensuring that all pupils have full access to the curriculum.
- The school keeps parents fully informed about their children's progress and works hard to involve parents in supporting their children's education.

What could be improved

- There is room for further improvement in pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils' attendance is well below the national average.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

As a result of the excellent leadership provided by the headteacher and senior staff, improvement since the last inspection in 1997 has been good. The school has taken positive and effective steps to address the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have risen at a higher rate than the national trend. Attainment in information and communication technology has improved and is now in line with national expectations. Assessment procedures have been improved and are used effectively to track pupils' progress and support curriculum planning. All statutory requirements regarding the school prospectus and the governors' annual report are now met. The school is in a strong position to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	E	E	E
Science	E*	D	E	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

Pupils' performance in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2001 was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, the performance was well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science.

Standards of attainment are improving. The school's test results between 1997 and 2001 have improved at a rate above the national trend. On the evidence of the inspection, attainment by Year 6 is below the national average in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and most achieve well. A number of pupils arrive at school at a relatively late stage. Many of them have very limited English and no experience of the English school system. Although they make good progress from a very low base, their test performance reduces the overall test results of the school. The number of pupils who have extended absence to visit their home country also adversely affects attainment.

Standards by Year 2 are below the national average in reading, writing and science. Standards in mathematics are average.

There is a very wide range of attainment on entry to the nursery but overall, standards are well below those expected of this age group. Pupils make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. However, many children do not attain the early learning goals expected for children of this age by the end of the reception Year in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Attainment in art and design and religious education is good. Attainment in all other National Curriculum subjects is satisfactory.

Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, make good progress.

The school agrees realistic but challenging targets for each year's tests at Year 6. It did not achieve its targets for English and mathematics in 2001 because of changes of pupils in the year group after the target had been agreed.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They work hard, concentrate well and show good levels of interest.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond in a positive manner.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils co-operate well with each other and their teachers.
Attendance	Attendance in the last school year was well below the national average. This is primarily due to the number of pupils taking extended family holidays during term time and days for the celebration of Eid.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 - 2	Years 3 - 6
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good overall and much is very good. It effectively promotes the progress and attainment of all pupils. No teaching was less than satisfactory. In the nursery and reception classes, all staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and of the importance of play and first hand experiences. Children are provided with many interesting practical activities and they respond very positively, making good progress. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is good overall and much is very good. Relationships are very positive and pupils respond well to teachers' expectations of good behaviour and show good levels of concentration. Teachers have high expectations and take great trouble to present learning in ways which challenge and motivate pupils. Lessons usually proceed at a lively pace and pupils work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, they make good progress. Classroom support staff are used very effectively to support pupils' learning and make a very positive contribution to the progress made.

On the few occasions where teaching is less than good, it is usually because the work provided is not accurately matched to pupils' targets or the pace of the lesson slows.

Teaching of English and mathematics is very good. Good use is made of the frameworks provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. This high quality teaching has a very positive impact on maintaining and raising the standards of attainment.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and the planning of appropriate work by well-trained staff contributes positively to their learning. The school's provision for teaching pupils with English as an additional language is very good. The school ensures that the pupils receive the support that they need to be included in all classroom and other activities. This is mainly achieved through the very effective work of the teaching assistants, many of whom are bi-lingual.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is good. There is an appropriately wide range of learning opportunities to support pupils' academic and personal development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is very good. The class teachers and support staff ensure that pupils receive good support and are able to have good access to the curriculum. The bilingual support is particularly effective.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for personal development. There are very clear expectations of behaviour and the positive values promoted in assemblies and lessons help to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. Staff know their pupils well as individuals and work hard to ensure their welfare.

The school encourages parents to support their children's learning and works hard to establish a good partnership with them.

Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored very effectively. There are very good systems in place to analyse the results of assessments, set clear targets for improvement and to track progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and senior staff provide excellent leadership and have established a very positive climate for learning in the school. The school is managed very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are very supportive. They are aware of the needs and priorities facing the school and contribute very effectively to its success. All statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are very effective systems in place to monitor the quality of planning and teaching. Assessment results are analysed to monitor standards of attainment and the progress of pupils. This evaluation is used to inform the planning of further improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Effective use is made of the school budget and additional grants for the benefit of pupils' learning. Financial planning is very good and resources are used well to support the school's educational priorities.

The school has ample, suitably qualified teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and cater for the needs of all the pupils. The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll, although the school has no playing field. There is a good range of resources to support learning. The new computer suite has helped to improve standards.

Collectively the headteacher, staff and governors contribute very effectively to the quality of education provided and to the standards achieved by the pupils. The school development plan has been produced in consultation with staff and governors. This is based on an analysis of the school's needs. It clearly identifies the school's priorities and is reviewed regularly to evaluate progress. The school makes good use of the principles of best value to make effective use of the financial resources available. These are used effectively to support the priorities identified in the plan.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school• Their children make good progress• The behaviour in school is good• The teaching is good• The staff are approachable• Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best• The school helps their children to become mature	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A small minority of parents would like a wider range of activities outside lessons

Through the questionnaire and in discussions with inspectors, parents expressed much satisfaction with the school's provision. They have a high regard for the school and appreciate the fact that their children are happy, behave well in school and make good progress, both academically and personally. They respect the teachers and find them approachable. The inspection team agree with their positive comments. A few parents have reservations about the provision of extra-curricular activities but evidence from the inspection indicates that there is a good range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspectors also received a letter from a group of parents expressing concerns, mainly about the amount of bilingual teaching. The inspectors found that this is in fact a strength of the school. It enables children who are at an early stage of acquiring English to take a full part in the activities, increases their understanding and supports their learning. All teaching takes place in English but children with limited English require the additional support provided by bilingual assistants.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The great majority of children are at an early stage in the acquisition of English when they start school. Staff provide very good support to develop their speaking and listening skills. Additional support, including bi-lingual support, is also used very effectively to develop communication, language and literacy. However, the children's limited knowledge and understanding of spoken English does have an adverse impact on their attainment. Their knowledge, skills and understanding are generally very much lower than expected for their age. Careful assessment of the new entrants soon after they start nursery indicates that their skills, particularly in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are well below those expected. The children's progress is tracked through continuous teacher assessment and by further formal tests on entry to the reception class. Assessment data confirms that, by the time they start in Year 1, almost all children achieve well. This is due to the suitable curriculum and the good quality teaching. Despite the good progress made, overall standards on entry to Year 1 are below the expected level. Many children do not attain the early learning goals expected for children of this age by the end of the Reception Year in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Most will achieve the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development; creative development and physical development.
- 2 Pupils' performance in the 2001 National Curriculum assessments in Year 2 was well below the national average in reading and writing. The results in mathematics were in line with the national average. Teacher assessments indicate that attainment was well below the national average in science. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the results in reading and writing were below average. The results in mathematics were above average. The results in all three subjects were higher in 2001 than at the time of the last inspection and there has been a clear improvement since 1999. Evidence from the inspection indicates that attainment in reading, writing, and science is below average in Year 2. Attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average. Most pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well and progress was often good in the lessons observed.
- 3 Pupils' performance in the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, the school's performance was well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. Girls performed better than boys in 2001, although boys did better than girls in the previous year. The school results between 1997 and 2001 have improved at a rate above the national trend. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. In 1997 the number of pupils achieving National Curriculum Level 4 or above was 37 per cent in English, 13 per cent in mathematics and 20 per cent in science. In 2001, the number achieving Level 4 or above had increased to 54 per cent in English, 50 per cent in mathematics and 67 per cent in science. On the evidence of the inspection, attainment by Year 6 is below the national average in English, mathematics and science.

- 4 Standards of attainment are improving. These improvements are the result of an increased proportion of teaching which is good or very good and the implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy which have provided a framework for planning and led to a clear focus in lessons. The school has also developed clear strategies to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning. Improvements in the assessment of pupils' attainment and the tracking of their progress have also helped to raise standards. The school has effective systems in place to monitor progress and set clear targets for improvement. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and most achieve well. A number of pupils arrive at school at a relatively late stage. Many of them have very limited English and no experience of the English school system. Although they make good progress from a very low base, their test performance reduces the overall test results of the school. The number of pupils who have extended absence to visit their home country also adversely affects attainment.
- 5 Overall, the standards of speaking and listening are below those found in most schools. When pupils start school, many are still at an early stage in the acquisition of English and lack confidence in speaking. Their vocabulary is limited and their listening skills are poor. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of language and communication skills. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers use their secure knowledge and understanding to plan a curriculum, which appropriately emphasises the development of speaking and listening skills. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate the ability to listen attentively and contribute to class discussion. They give explanations and ask questions with confidence. Others however, have difficulty in understanding. By Year 2, pupils have made good progress in relation to their previous attainment. Most listen carefully to questions and instructions. However many still have a more limited range of vocabulary than is expected at that age. By Year 6, many pupils attain the levels expected for their age in speaking and listening, although overall, standards are below those expected for the age group. Most pupils listen attentively and take turns to contribute to discussions. However, some pupils are not confident in expressing their ideas. Lower attaining pupils find it difficult to find the range of words or express their ideas at length.
- 6 Standards in reading are below average. By the end of Year 2, higher attaining pupils are able to read simple texts with some accuracy and the more fluent readers are successfully enjoying short stories. They have a good understanding of what they have read, provide detailed accounts of the story and are able to predict likely outcomes. However, many pupils are still unable to read a range of texts with accuracy, fluency and expression. Their reading development is hampered by their limited knowledge of English. Some pupils, especially those who are at an early stage of learning English, lack strategies, such as using meaning, to support their reading. Lack of general knowledge, and limited vocabulary sometimes prevents lower attaining pupils from fully understanding the text they have read. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 develop a growing confidence in tackling reading and by Year 6, higher attaining pupils read independently from a range of texts and other material. They are able to discuss books they have read and express opinions about them. However, a number of pupils, especially those who have recently arrived at the school with more limited English, find reading difficult. They are hesitant when reading aloud and do not have a clear understanding of what they have read.

- 7 Standards in writing are below the national average. By Year 2, most pupils form their letters correctly and write simple sentences using full stops and capital letters. However, some pupils have difficulty in sequencing and developing ideas of their own. Lower attaining pupils are aware of capital letters and full stops although they do not use them reliably. Writing improves and progresses in quality and quantity as they gain confidence and skill in working in English. By Year 6, higher attainers use spelling and punctuation rules accurately. They structure their work using imaginative and descriptive words and phrases. Pupils are able to write descriptions, instructions and reports. They learn to plan, draft and improve their work. However, less able pupils still require considerable input from teachers and support staff to enable them to complete a piece of written work.
- 8 In mathematics, pupils in Year 2 are achieving overall standards that are in line with the national expectations. They are beginning to develop a mathematical vocabulary, knowing, for instance, the meanings of more than, double, take away and halve. They are encouraged to use and develop their skills of mental arithmetic. They develop skills of simple data handling and can construct and interpret graphs. The higher attaining pupils have a clear understanding of the value of numbers and they carry out simple calculations accurately. Lower attaining pupils have a limited ability to recall number facts mentally but they are able to use apparatus effectively to aid calculations. The majority of pupils have a satisfactory understanding of shape, space and simple measures.
- 9 By the end of Year 6, standards are below the national expectation. The higher attaining pupils carry out written calculations accurately and have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of number facts. They have an understanding and appreciation of number pattern and measures and knowledge of shapes and solids and their properties. They know about decimal numbers to two places and can describe the relationships of decimals to fractions and percentages. Lower attaining pupils often have difficulty with interpreting the questions and knowing which mathematical skills are required to produce a solution. Some pupils still have a poor knowledge and recall of multiplication tables and addition and subtraction facts and this affects the speed at which they can work.
- 10 In science, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop a secure fund of knowledge about the world around them and how it functions. Pupils are developing their scientific skills well because their knowledge and understanding is developed mainly through investigation. By Year 6, many pupils can both talk confidently about different areas of science they have studied and show satisfactory, and sometimes good, understanding. They have acquired a good scientific vocabulary which the majority use accurately in appropriate contexts. Others find it difficult to express their ideas orally or in writing because of their limited vocabulary of 'everyday' English. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils make predictions based on their own experiences and show an understanding of how to structure a fair test. However, they have not had the opportunity to use their own ideas to plan and carry out their own investigations.
- 11 At the time of the last inspection, standards in information and communication technology were well below average for all pupils and this was a key issue in the report. Since then the school has worked hard to improve provision by creating a suite for information and communication technology, by providing training for all staff and by introducing a scheme of work to widen the range of pupils' skills. As a result standards are now in line with those expected for the pupils' age. By Year 2 pupils are confident in word processing. Most can log on and open the appropriate programme

for themselves and are learning to save their work and log off. They demonstrate good skills with the mouse as they click and drag shapes, filling them with colour. With support they have entered information into a database and created a block graph to show food preferences. Older pupils build on these experiences. Year 6 pupils use publisher programmes to make multi-media displays incorporating sound. Pupils use the Internet and CD ROMs regularly to carry out research. They can use a search engine to find appropriate websites, saving the required information on a word processing program. They can use spreadsheets confidently, putting in information and re-ordering it.

- 12 Attainment in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is broadly in line with the national expectation. Attainment in art and religious education is above expectations.
- 13 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual education plans many of which are focused on improvements in language development. Progress in lessons is good as a result of the high quality of support and the good match of work to pupils' needs and abilities.
- 14 Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils who have been in the school for a significant period of time have developed a sufficient grasp of spoken and written English to cope with all aspects of the taught curriculum. Their natural form of communication with adults and with each other when talking about their activities in school is English. This progress is reflected in the improved standards in many subjects as pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the language.
- 15 The school analyses test results and uses that information to track pupils' progress and to set individual targets for improvement. It also agrees targets for the Year 6 National Curriculum tests. The targets for 2001 were not met because of changes in the cohort after the target had been agreed.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 16 The pupils demonstrate very positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour is very good. They enjoy school and are enthusiastic about all school activities. These are important factors in the good progress pupils make during their time in the school. There have been two fixed-period exclusions during the past year, for persistent misbehaviour which the school considered to be unacceptable.
- 17 Relationships throughout the school are very good. The pupils play together amicably in the playground and they readily support one another in class, for example when working with a partner on the computer or when engaged in practical work. The many opportunities they are given to work as part of a group, for example in science lessons, help to promote their social development and enable them to learn from one another.
- 18 Very good foundations for positive attitudes and behaviour are set down in the Nursery and the Reception class, where the children are encouraged gently but firmly to follow the class code of conduct, to share and take turns and to be polite. During 'circle time' in the Nursery, the children waited patiently until it was their turn to tell the group what made them feel happy. All the children listened with sustained concentration and most were able to share their feelings, if only with just one word. The Reception children worked remarkably well as a team to control the up and down movements of a

parachute, during a lesson in the physical area of learning. A sense of excitement and wonder was created then they were 'found', in an observation game which involved individual children hiding under the parachute.

- 19 In Years 1 to 6, behaviour in lessons is very good. The pupils are polite to their teachers and to all the adults who work with them in class. They listen attentively and are eager to answer questions, although usually they give only short answers and are not confident when giving extended explanations or talking at length on a given topic. However, the pupils in the Speech and Language Centre were very confident in acting out the story of Rama and Sita, during a religious education lesson about Divali. They played their parts convincingly and with real enjoyment, and applauded the main characters enthusiastically at the end of the play. The pupils behave sensibly during practical work. In a Year 4 art lesson, the pupils produced some lovely paintings based on the work of the surrealist artists. Their knowledge and understanding of surrealism was reflected in their work, an example of how the pupils are developing a strong cultural awareness. At the end of the lesson they were given time to evaluate one another's paintings and they did this appreciatively and sensitively, mindful of other pupils' feelings.
- 20 Pupils who have English as an additional language have good attitudes to school. They want to learn, and respect their teachers and other adults in school. They play a full part in activities such as the choir and school council. Their behaviour in class is very good. Some of the girls are a little reticent in class discussions, but skilful teaching ensures that they are involved in answering questions and responding with their own point of view. The school's programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHE) ensures that they become increasingly aware of the issues that they will meet as they grow up in the local community and beyond. These include the need for conservation of natural resources and tolerance of the views and feelings of others.
- 21 Behaviour is good in the dining room, in assembly and in the playground. The pupils respect the playground zones which are allocated to the various year groups, for different activities, on different days of the week. During the inspection the Year 6 monitors were playing with the Year 1 pupils in the gymnasium, one of the play zones for morning break. They were helping the younger pupils to gain maximum benefit from the excellent play equipment which had been provided for them.
- 22 School and class monitors make a good contribution to the smooth running of school routines and to the strong sense of community which exists in the school. Their duties are wide and varied, and include collecting and distributing registers and lunch boxes, running the school tuck shop and setting up the hall for assembly. The way in which older pupils help to care for younger children is a very good feature of the school. All classes, from Year 1 to Year 6, including the Speech and Language Centre, are represented on the School Council. The council is well organised and provides a useful forum for the pupils to put forward their ideas for school improvement in a democratic way. The pupils contribute to the wider community by raising money for local and national charities.

- 23 The pupils develop very good moral values. They have a good understanding of how unkind words and actions can make people unhappy. During the inspection the Year 6 pupils talked about their enjoyment of lessons and extra-curricular activities and spoke very positively of the way the pupils behave towards one another. They said that incidents of bullying are rare but that they would not hesitate to tell their teachers if they had any concerns. They are confident that the school would deal promptly with any bad behaviour. The pupils show respect for their own and the school's property. They handle books, musical instruments and other learning resources with care. The school building is very clean and tidy and the playground is free from litter. The many colourful and interesting items on display in classrooms and open areas of the building are treated with respect and not damaged in any way.
- 24 Attendance in the school is improving steadily but remains well below the national average. Illness, visits to countries of origin and Eid holidays are the main reasons for absence. Overseas visits are also a contributory factor to a level of unauthorised absence which is above the national average for primary schools. Punctuality is good. The vast majority of the pupils arrive on time in the mornings and lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 25 The quality of teaching is good overall and effectively promotes the progress and attainment of all pupils. During the inspection, 92 per cent of the teaching observed was good or better, including 49 per cent that was very good. No teaching was less than satisfactory. The good quality of teaching reported at the time of the last inspection has been improved with much more teaching that is very good.
- 26 Teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good overall and much is very good. It was good or better in all of the lessons observed. Teamwork between teachers and support staff is especially effective and has a considerably beneficial effect on children's learning. All staff have a secure understanding of how young children learn and of the importance of play and first hand experiences. This has a very positive effect on the good progress children make towards the early learning goals and provides a firm foundation for learning in Year 1. Praise and encouragement are very effective in promoting positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. All activities are planned carefully to enable children of all abilities to build on their previous knowledge and understanding. Children are provided with many interesting practical activities and they respond very positively, making good progress.
- 27 In Years 1 to 6, teaching is good overall and much is very good. Good use is made of the resources available to provide interesting tasks which motivate pupils. Pupils are encouraged to be responsible about their work, and are given opportunities to work independently and in pairs or groups. Relationships are very positive and pupils respond well to teachers' expectations of good behaviour and show good levels of concentration. Group work is organised skilfully to enable some groups to work independently thus enabling the teacher to give more intensive support to others.
- 28 Teachers have high expectations and take great trouble to present learning in ways which challenge and motivate pupils, as when setting problems in mathematics, encouraging pupils to undertake scientific investigations or providing a wide range of experiences in English. At the beginning of each lesson they set clear objectives and also identify what they will be looking for in written work. Lessons usually proceed at a lively pace and pupils work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, they make good progress.

- 29 Teachers have good subject knowledge. They make effective use of questioning to develop and assess pupils' understanding and they give clear explanations. They build on pupils' earlier learning and use the opportunities of whole class sessions to review and assess pupils' understanding of previous work. Teachers make good use of review sessions to reinforce and evaluate learning. Many lessons end with a general discussion about what has been learned. Pupils' work is assessed and marked constructively on a day-to-day basis. Classroom support staff are used very effectively to support pupils' learning and make a very positive contribution to the progress made.
- 30 On the few occasions where teaching is less than good, it is usually because the work provided is not accurately matched to pupils' targets or the pace of the lesson slows.
- 31 Teaching of English and mathematics is very good Teachers generally have high expectations and provide work which is well matched to pupils' needs and abilities. Pupils respond well and make good progress. Good use is made of the frameworks provided by the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies. This high quality teaching has a very positive impact on maintaining and raising the standards of attainment. Pupils work hard, showing good levels of concentration and developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- 32 The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and the planning of appropriate work by well-trained staff contributes positively to their learning. For those pupils with individual education plans, work is well matched to their targets, especially for literacy. All staff have received training in setting targets and these have improved; most are short term, realistic and measurable. They are reviewed regularly. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all subjects and activities and there are high but realistic expectations of what these pupils can achieve. The impact of good teaching is evident in the interest which the pupils show in their work and in their behaviour, which is very good. Special needs teachers, special teaching assistants and class teachers have excellent working relationships and they plan, teach and assess pupils' learning together.
- 33 The school's provision for teaching pupils with English as an additional language is very good. From the earliest age, the school ensures that the pupils receive the support that they need to be included in all classroom and other activities. This is mainly achieved through the very effective work of the teaching assistants, many of whom are bi-lingual. The everyday medium of teaching is English, but the teachers are very skilful in presenting the pupils' work in a clear and understandable form. When pupils who are at the early stages of language acquisition show that they have not understood sufficiently to make a response, the teaching assistants give prompts in the home language in a very quiet unobtrusive way that does not disturb the flow of the lesson. These hints are then always repeated in English. When lessons move into small group work, teaching assistants work alongside the pupils and ensure that they are able to complete their tasks satisfactorily. The teaching assistants are very well prepared for this in preparatory briefing sessions. This was particularly evident during the inspection in literacy, numeracy and music lessons, among others.
- 34 Homework is used effectively to support learning. The amount of homework given to pupils is increased as they progress through the school. This takes a variety of forms including reading activities, learning multiplication tables and spellings and work which reinforces or extends learning in class.

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

- 35 At the time of the last inspection the school's curriculum and planning was satisfactory overall with some weaknesses. These have now been addressed. The school provides a wide and varied curriculum. The quality and range of learning opportunities in the nursery and reception classes is good. Detailed planning ensures that the curriculum is securely based on the nationally recommended six areas of learning for pre-school and reception children.
- 36 The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is broad and balanced and there is a good range of learning opportunities. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully in place and are being used effectively to raise standards. There are policies in place for all subjects which give teachers adequate guidance about how a subject should be taught. The school has adopted nationally agreed guidelines for all National Curriculum subjects and these have been used to produce schemes of work. In science there are now good, planned opportunities for pupils to carry out investigational work in order to develop skills as well as knowledge. There has been a very good improvement in the provision for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and planning for all subjects ensures that ICT is used to enrich learning. Weekly planning has been improved and is now good. A common format is used across the school and plans are detailed. Homework is used well throughout the school to consolidate learning especially, for English and mathematics.
- 37 Provision for all pupils with special educational needs is very good. Their needs are very well met both in class and in withdrawal groups by appropriate work and support. The excellent working relationships between staff supporting these pupils are a strength of the provision. Pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum, including extra-curricular activities. Where relevant, pupils have detailed individual educational plans which are well implemented by class teachers and specialist staff. Targets for pupils are short term and achievable and they relate to both learning needs and to personal and social development. Pupils who have been identified as having low self-esteem and confidence in large group situations are receiving help in weekly *Nurturing* groups. The high adult to pupil ratio is enabling pupils to have close attention and this is helping to develop their confidence.
- 38 The principle of inclusion is a very strong factor in the organisation of schoolwork. Pupils with English as an additional language enjoy full access to all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils take full advantage of extra-curricular opportunities such as musical tuition and visits out of school. One very positive example of this is the arrangement of separate swimming sessions for the older girls to avoid a clash with religious sensitivities.

- 39 There is good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE). A detailed scheme of work enables lessons to be planned which allow pupils, for example, to explore feelings and relationships. They have opportunities to discuss moral issues such as the need for rules in school. Pupils are taught from an early age about healthy eating and care of the body, including drug awareness. Older pupils receive sex education in line with the school's policy. Assemblies make a good contribution to the sustaining of good behaviour and personal development. The school's very positive and inclusive atmosphere reflects the good provision in this area.
- 40 A good range of activities is provided outside lessons to enhance the curriculum. A specific part of the curriculum budget is designated for enrichment activities to enhance work in the classroom. At present there are after school clubs for Urdu, football, netball, fitness, art, chess, singing and traditional games. Thirty-eight pupils enrolled for a new lunchtime signing club recently and this has given pupils from the language centre the opportunity to show off their skills. Clubs are organised for all age groups. Over thirty pupils now receive instrumental music tuition from the Staffordshire Music Service.
- 41 The local and wider community make a good contribution to the pupils' learning and to their personal development. There are links with local religious groups and pupils have visited mosques and churches. Good use is made of the locality in the teaching of geography and field trips are organised regularly, for example to Rosliston Forest Centre and Coven Outdoor Educational centre. Visits are made regularly to consolidate learning in other subjects. For example, last term older pupils visited a science and technology exhibition at Derby University, whilst younger pupils visited Burton Fire Station. Last term, visitors to the school included a brass orchestra, a Tudor dance group and a fire fighter from the local station.
- 42 Good links are maintained with local schools. Sporting fixtures are organised regularly with other local primary schools. The school has a close relationship with a school in Tamworth, keeping in contact by e-mail and meetings to share outdoor pursuits together. Visits are made to local high schools and teachers from these schools come to talk to Year 6 pupils. This ensures that pupils are prepared well for the transition to the secondary phase. Students from local colleges and universities are welcomed as part of their work experience.
- 43 The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The religious education curriculum offers pupils an insight into the beliefs and practices of the major world faith communities. This includes the Islamic, Christian, Hindu and Jewish traditions. Studies are carried out in progressively more breadth and depth as the pupils become more mature. For instance, in Year 1, pupils look at religious buildings, while in Year 6, they investigate the rituals and symbols of important days in religious observance such as the Jewish Sabbath. Many of the pupils come from homes where religious observance is an important aspect of home life. The school ensures through liaison with parents and members of staff that religious education is carried out in a suitably non-doctrinal and sensitive manner. School assemblies concentrate on developing the pupils' awareness of the non-physical world such as concepts of friendship and responsibility. These are related to sacred texts and stories from a variety of religions. They contain opportunities for pupils to consider their personal response to the issues raised. The school has developed a wide ranging programme of assembly themes, linking them to pupils' social and moral responsibilities. The assemblies are carried out in an appropriate atmosphere of respect and pride in the achievement of others. In many class lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to develop an appreciation of the wonders of the world, for

instance in a Year 2 study of the patterns that occur in nature. Music and art lessons give pupils an insight into the feeling and emotions that can come from artistic performances, as in a Year 6 lesson on contrasting peaceful and frightening passages in musical compositions.

- 44 There is very good provision for pupils' social and moral development. Each week, pupils have lessons in PSHE. These are based on published schemes of work, but are often linked to other areas of study, such as the need to conserve natural resources in geography. Often a class will engage in 'circle time' where pupils engage in extended discussions about moral issues, such as what to do when someone is bullied, with special rules that are designed to ensure that everyone's contribution is given equal respect. The PSHE programme includes issues of citizenship and drugs education. This has been assisted by a visit to the school by the local Life Education Centre. Sex education is taught as a discrete subject designed to ensure that religious sensibilities are not compromised. The school has a very clear behaviour policy, in which pupils are given the responsibility, with the teachers, of drawing up codes of conduct for the classrooms, dining hall and playground. A school council is active in giving pupils a voice in the management of school matters such as playground equipment and tuck shop opening times. The school has joined with the LEA in promoting a healthy eating project. A fun and fitness club takes place each week. A weekly school assembly is held to celebrate the achievements of pupils through a 'golden star' award scheme. The school supports a number of charities, including helping a child in Egypt to receive education. The school holds a Charity Week each year.
- 45 In lessons, when teachers identify learning objectives, these are often to do with pupils' social development. For instance they may involve giving pupils the responsibility to co-operate in pairs to research material for topics. Teachers mark the pupils' work conscientiously, and often identify when the activity has been designed to develop pupils' independent learning skills. Positive behaviour is always praised first, and teachers act as good role models by giving pupils respect while insisting on high standards of behaviour.
- 46 The school has devoted a great deal of time and effort to supporting the community. Nurturing programmes has been set up to promote pre-school activities so that children will enter the school with the ability to play together and give parents experience in the activities that children need to get them ready for school, such as dressing themselves and learning to follow instructions. Teaching assistants have all taken part in a voluntary mentoring programme where pupils with behavioural or emotional difficulties know that they have someone whom they can turn to when they face times of stress.
- 47 There is also very good provision for the pupils' cultural development. A very significant element of the school budget is devoted to an arts enrichment programme. All Year 3 - 6 pupils have an opportunity to visit a professional theatre production. The majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 take advantage of residential visits to LEA field study centres, where they have a variety of sporting and cultural activities. The school provides a series of specialist sports coaching sessions. Brass and string instrumental tuition is available to pupils free of charge in the first year. Visiting artists have visited the school to provide pupils with a wide variety of artistic experiences. The end product of these can be seen in the school entrance where mosaics based on Islamic art and a Millennium quilt are displayed. Groups of musicians and dancers have visited the school from a variety of cultures. The school has developed links with nearby schools to give pupils an insight into the different communities that exist

locally. The school has a range of multicultural resources including musical instruments, examples of the work of famous artists, and even a pack of multicultural mathematics display material. Studies in history and religious education contain a programme of regular visits for all year groups to local buildings and museums. The school conscientiously monitors all books and teaching materials to ensure that nothing is included that may be offensive to pupils of different race, belief or gender. A games club has been established to ensure that pupils do not lose elements of traditional play. Pupils learn, for example, to play chess, and at play, pupils of different ethnic background were seen co-operating well in the traditional pastime of hopscotch.

- 48 Pupils respond very well to this wide-ranging and very effective provision. As they move through the school, they show themselves in the main to be mature, aware of themselves and of others. They are tolerant of one another's beliefs and are developing an understanding of the value of education and of creative expression.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 49 The school has successfully maintained the very caring ethos evident at the time of the last inspection. A friendly, happy atmosphere exists in the school and relationships between pupils and staff and between the pupils themselves are very good. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and is highly effective in providing equality of access and opportunity for all its pupils, irrespective of gender, race, background or ability. A very high percentage of the pupils speak English as an additional language, and these pupils receive strong support from the bi-lingual teaching assistants who work with them in lessons. Where pupils are withdrawn from class, for learning or language support, great care is taken to ensure that this does not adversely affect their entitlement to the full curriculum.
- 50 Particular attention is paid to ensuring the pupils' welfare, health and safety. The school building is very clean, fire exits are marked clearly and pupils are properly supervised throughout the school day. Child protection procedures are thorough, adhering to guidelines provided by the local education authority. The school nurse and the school dental service contribute very effectively to the pupils' health and general well-being.
- 51 The school has set up a very good mentoring system for those pupils who are identified as having social or emotional difficulties. There are also two nurturing groups, the 'Busy Bees' for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, and the 'Busy Beavers' for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6. Both these groups are well organised and highly effective in supporting the groups of pupils involved, in terms of their learning and their personal, social and emotional development. All the pupils who have special educational needs, including those in the speech and language centre, are fully integrated into the life of the school and have equal access to playtime activities, lunchtime and after-school clubs and educational visits.

- 52 The assessment co-ordinators have worked hard and successfully to improve the assessment procedures. Good systems are in place throughout the school for each pupil, with appropriate focus on English, mathematics and science. Careful records of each pupil's test results are kept from entry to the school and are passed on from year to year. Information gathered from the various formal and optional tests is used to target pupils for additional learning support and booster classes where necessary. Procedures are particularly well-developed for English and mathematics where teachers throughout the school set clear individual targets for improvement for each pupil. Teachers have formulated easily manageable systems for assessing progress in the remaining subjects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are identified at an early stage and where necessary, they are provided with individual education plans. Great care is taken to ensure that these are learning needs and not associated with the acquisition of English as an additional language. The progress of all pupils is reviewed regularly against the targets they have been set. Pupils requiring specialist help, for example for physical or for specific learning difficulties, are provided with the necessary support and guidance from outside agencies.
- 53 Pupils who come to the school with English as an additional language are well cared for. Their competence in understanding and using the language is quickly assessed and, if necessary, a high level of support is provided. As they progress through the school, the normal pattern of assessment through tests and reviews of completed work is used to measure their progress. The majority quickly become able to use English as their main means of communication in school. However, the school does not monitor carefully enough the pupils' speaking and listening skills to ensure that they can make extended answers to the teachers' questions. Many of their responses are limited to one or two words. Teachers need to be more consistent in asking questions that require pupils to respond with their own interpretations.
- 54 Procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' personal development are very good. The very favourable pupil to adult ratio and very good communications between teaching and non teaching staff ensure that the academic, social and emotional needs of all the pupils are known and catered for. Particular emphasis is given to encouraging the pupils to eat healthily and to take regular exercise. Only healthy snacks are sold in the tuck shop and pupils are not allowed to bring sweets to school. Children in the nursery and reception classes always have fruit for their mid-morning snack. Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility through the class monitor system. The Year 6 pupils are given appropriate additional responsibilities, relative to their age. They distribute class registers before school, organise the school tuck shop, set out the hall for assembly and help to supervise younger children at playtime and lunchtime. A school council has been set up since the last inspection, providing valuable opportunities for the pupils, through their class representatives, to contribute to school improvement.
- 55 The school's arrangements for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good. Each class has its own code of conduct, which is displayed prominently in the classroom and in the school foyer. Codes are well thought out and relevant to the ages of the pupils. The emphasis is very much on accentuating the positive, and teachers consistently praise and reward hard work and caring, helpful attitudes. All the adults in the school community provide good role models for the pupils and speak to them politely at all times. The pupils respond very positively and behaviour throughout the school is of a high standard in lessons, in assembly and in the playground. Arrangements for playtime and lunchtime are very good and have a marked impact on the quality of play, the pupils' enjoyment of playtimes and the standard of behaviour. The equipment which is provided is of the highest quality and

the zoning system ensures that all the pupils have equal access, on a rota basis, to the various areas and activities, for example the quiet area, the basketball zone, the football zone and the gymnasium.

- 56 Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good, although the attendance rate is well below the national average for primary schools. Rewards for regular attendance include individual and class awards, recognition in assembly and 'Good News' letters to parents. The school keeps very detailed attendance records and this is helpful in identifying poor or erratic attendance which is sometimes due to difficult home circumstances. In such cases the school liaises very closely with the family concerned and gives help where it is needed, often with support from the educational welfare service. The school makes strenuous efforts to raise parental awareness of the importance of regular attendance, in relation to their children's attainment and progress. Through notice boards, the governing body's annual report and the prospectus the parents are kept fully informed as to the negative impact extended visits to countries of origin are likely to have on the children's achievement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 57 The school has successfully built upon the many strengths identified in the last inspection report. Home-school communications are now very good. The vast majority of parents and carers speak English as an additional language and some, who have only recently arrived from abroad, speak hardly any English at all. The school is extremely supportive to parents, and ensures that bi-lingual support is available to them on a day-to-day basis and for formal meetings. Numerous English language courses are arranged inside school, in conjunction with the local college of further education. The home-school learning support co-ordinator manages a family nurturing project which is of great benefit to families with young children in the local community, particularly those newly arrived from Pakistan. The project involves visiting families in their homes and providing advice, general support and play facilities for the children. The families are also encouraged to bring their young children into school for play sessions, which are held every week in the school hall and the Nursery. These provide ideal opportunities for parents to get to know one another, to get to know the staff and to learn how young children develop through play. The home school co-ordinator and the bi-lingual senior teaching assistant assigned to the project are always available to support families in need, either by visiting them in their homes or by giving them help and advice inside school. Families experiencing difficulties have access to Social Services personnel who have a surgery inside school every week.
- 58 The parents and carers have positive views about the school. The questionnaire, prior to the inspection, revealed that they feel comfortable in approaching the school with problems or questions concerning their children. Most parents consider teaching to be good and feel their children are making good progress. They are of the view that their children like school and are expected to work hard and achieve of their best. The great majority are of the opinion that behaviour in the school is good. The inspection findings support these positive views.

- 59 A significant minority of parents and carers feel the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside the classroom. The inspection finds that extra curricular provision is good. A wide range of activities, after school and at lunch time, includes 'Fit and Fun' for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, football and netball for older pupils, an art club, a board games club, Urdu classes and a 'Learning Sign Language' club.
- 60 Since the last inspection, the school has improved the quality of pupils' annual written reports. They now provide very detailed information about individual pupils' strengths and weaknesses across the whole curriculum. They also give parents and carers very useful information in relation to their children's attitudes to their work, their approach to homework, their personal development and their attendance. A very good feature of the reports is that they give parents helpful advice as to how they can support their children's learning and progress. The annual reports provide the basis for discussion at the July parents' evening. A mid-year progress report complements the annual report and can be discussed with the class teacher at the parents' evening in the spring term.
- 61 The overall quality of the information provided for parents and carers is very good. The school prospectus, the governing body's annual report, school notice boards and regular newsletters help to keep parents fully informed with regard to the aims of the school, school procedures and events and the curriculum. Numerous posters and leaflets emphasise the importance of regular attendance and explain how extended visits overseas can disrupt learning and adversely affect attainment and progress. Parents of children under five are given a useful 'Welcome' booklet, with lots of good advice on how to prepare their children for starting in the nursery or the reception class. An 'activities' book, for practising writing and number skills, and a nursery lending library are good examples of how the school helps parents to help their children settle into the Foundation Stage of their education. The school makes good use of the local education authority's translation service to translate school documents into Urdu.
- 62 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about the needs and the progress of their children. Pupils are not placed on the special needs register until discussions have taken place with parents. Parents are involved in regular reviews and receive copies of all documentation.
- 63 The school works well with the parents of pupils with English as an additional language. School reports give details of their provision and progress. The school ensures that there are members of staff who can, whenever necessary interpret information for parents who are not competent in the language themselves. The school organises an impressive range of group meetings which include toddler activities and liaison sessions for Asian mothers. A small number of parents have expressed some worries about the high number of bi-lingual support staff in school, concerned that they might be holding back their children's development in English. These fears are groundless. The bi-lingual classroom teachers and assistants intervene in the pupils' home language only when necessary to further the pupils' understanding of English. They are also very competent, accurate and clear in their use of spoken English, presenting very good role models to the pupils of how they themselves can become very able users of both languages.

- 64 The school gives high priority to empowering parents to contribute to their children's education. Numerous workshops are held inside school, for example the Family Numeracy course which is currently proving popular with Year 4 pupils and their parents. Other successful courses have included 'Learning Together' for nursery and reception children and their parents and 'Parenting and Childminding Skills' for parents and the local community. Parents and carers are invited to the Friday assembly each week and to school concerts and celebrations, for example at Christmas, Harvest time and Eid.
- 65 Since the last inspection the school has introduced a Home-school Agreement and a homework policy, both of which are designed to encourage parental involvement in their children's all-round education. A Home-school Partnership operates successfully to enhance the social life of the pupils and their families, to generate ideas for school improvement and to raise valuable additional funds for the benefit of the pupils. The Home-school Partnership organises regular coffee mornings for parents and these were praised by those parents and carers who attended the pre-inspection meeting, as being useful forums for parents to air their views.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 66 The school is very well managed. The headteacher provides excellent leadership, promoting and sustaining a clear sense of direction for the work of the school. The senior managers set good examples in the work they undertake and consequently there is an enthusiastic and committed staff team, including those in non-teaching positions. The very positive and supportive atmosphere and the sense of commitment displayed by all who work in the school reflect the quality of this leadership. Governors, teachers and support staff work well together to support the headteacher in promoting the school's aims. There has been a high level of attention to raising standards. This has been promoted through the detailed analysis of pupils' attainment and the establishment of very clear targets for improvement. The quality of teaching and learning has been monitored and evaluated and the systems of curriculum planning have been successfully developed.
- 67 The school has taken positive and effective steps to address the areas for improvement identified in the last inspection report. Standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science have risen at a higher rate than the national trend. Attainment in information and communication technology has improved and is now in line with national expectations. Assessment procedures have been improved and are used effectively to track pupils' progress and support curriculum planning. All statutory requirements regarding the school prospectus and the governors' annual report are now met.
- 68 The governors are regular visitors to the school and they are kept well informed about issues. This enables them to make a positive contribution to supporting the work of the school. They provide effective support for the school and are actively involved in decisions about finance and the curriculum. Individual governors have links with curriculum areas and special educational needs. They have established a very effective structure of committees to oversee and meet the requirements of their statutory responsibilities.

- 69 The school development plan has been produced in consultation with staff and governors. This is based on an analysis of the school's needs. It clearly identifies the school's priorities and is a useful and effective management tool. It is linked to the school budget and is reviewed regularly to evaluate progress. It is supplemented with clear and effective action plans for each area of development.
- 70 The leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. The new co-ordinator has only been in post for six months but she has been very well supported by the previous post holder, who is still in school, and by specialist help from the Staffordshire Support Service. The school has a strong commitment to the provision of special educational needs and the budget is used well to provide very good classroom support. For example, one group, currently in Year 5, with a large number of pupils with special educational needs has been targeted for extra support since they were in Year 2. Since last year these pupils have received literacy and numeracy lessons as a group led by a support teacher and an assistant. As a result, because of this intensive support, five of the thirteen pupils identified last year are now able to work within the main class. The progress of all pupils with special educational needs is monitored and tracked. The co-ordinator liaises closely with the class teachers, support staff and parents. The new Code of Practice is already being put in place. All teaching and support staff have undergone recent training and they meet regularly to discuss special needs provision. As a result of this teamwork, the needs of these pupils are met very effectively in the classroom.
- 71 The provision for pupils with English as an additional language is managed well. As it is such an important aspect of the work of the school, the headteacher devotes a significant proportion of her time towards ensuring that pupils are properly assessed and integrated into classes. Her relationships with members of the community are extremely purposeful. A further member of the senior management team of the school has day-to-day responsibility for assessing pupils' needs, directing the work of teaching assistants, and making sure that teaching resources are available. A great deal of work has been put into ensuring that books in the library are suitable for pupils with developing language skills. The progress of pupils is carefully monitored. Training is given to all members of staff including the classroom assistants, one of whom was herself a pupil at the school. She is now qualified in child care and is an assessor of training herself. The school improvement plan sets out a strategic overview of the provision for the pupils and looks carefully at means of improving the range of activities on offer. The school budget has set aside a significant amount for curriculum enrichment activities, part of which is specifically designed to promote awareness amongst parents of the opportunities that the British educational system can offer to their children, in such fields as music, drama and sport.
- 72 The school has effective strategies in place to promote skills of literacy and numeracy. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators provide very good leadership and the literacy and numeracy strategies are very well managed and have been implemented effectively.
- 73 All staff have curriculum responsibilities. In consultation with staff and governors, curriculum co-ordinators have produced whole school policies that support teachers in their planning. There are very good systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. All co-ordinators provide effective leadership within their area of responsibility. They are involved in the monitoring of standards and have clear action plans linked to the school development plan. As a result, the school is in a good position to make further progress.

- 74 Long term strategic financial planning is very good. Governors are fully involved in establishing spending priorities which are clearly detailed in the school development plan. They carefully evaluate the effectiveness of their decisions and consider a number of alternatives and quotations in order to ensure good value for money. The day-to-day administration and management of finance are very good. The school's administrative officer and clerical assistants ably support the headteacher. Their office provides a welcoming and friendly introduction to the school for parents and visitors, typifying the very good relationships that exist in the school. The collection of money and ordering and checking of school equipment are efficient and ensure minimum disruption to teaching and learning. The school ensures that it makes effective use specific grants such as those to support pupils with special educational needs.
- 75 The school has ample, suitably qualified teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and cater for the needs of all the pupils. The pupil to teacher ratio is very favourable, and the large number of bi-lingual teaching assistants reflects the school's very strong commitment to ensuring that pupils for whom English is an additional language receive the support they need to be able to access the whole curriculum. Highly effective teamwork between senior managers, teachers and support staff is one of the school's major strengths. The teaching assistants are very well led and managed by the home/school teacher. Many of them are studying for additional qualifications. The school places strong emphasis on staff development. Teachers, teaching assistants and governors are given opportunities to attend relevant in-service training and the school has initiated a number of courses for parents. Performance management procedures are firmly established and there are very good arrangements for supporting the induction of newly qualified teachers and staff who are new to the school.
- 76 The accommodation is adequate for the number of pupils on roll. With the exception of the Speech and Language Centre, which is rather small for the number of pupils it caters for at present, teaching areas are spacious and well equipped. The accommodation includes a music room, a recently renovated library and two halls, although these are rather cramped for physical education lessons. The nursery is across the road from the main school. It consists of a large, well resourced teaching area and a secure outdoor playground and grassed area. The reception children and other groups of pupils make good use of the nursery accommodation and resources during the afternoons, when they are not being used by nursery children. The outdoor play area for the main school is adequate in size and imaginatively set out, with playground markings and an attractive seating area. However, the school does not have a playing field. Standards of cleaning and caretaking are high, and the quality of the internal environment is enhanced by colourful displays of the pupils' work which are of a good standard. They are used effectively to celebrate the pupils' achievements, support their learning and promote enquiry.
- 77 All areas of the curriculum are now well resourced. Since the last inspection there has been marked improvement in the level of resources for information and communication technology. Pupils have access to a new computer suite with a very useful interactive white board. This has had a positive effect on raising standards in information and communication technology.

- 78 The school has a clear set of aims. These are reflected in all aspects of the school's work. The school has high expectations of the pupils in terms of their personal and academic development. The school is forward moving and has a positive and supportive atmosphere, putting the needs of the pupils as a high priority.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 79 To improve the school further, the headteacher, staff and governing body should:

- (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

ensuring the clear priorities identified in the school development plan are implemented;

providing more opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills and extending their vocabulary;

ensuring that the work set in lessons is well- matched to the individual targets for each pupil;

continuing to develop the skills of mental and written arithmetic and problem solving;

providing opportunities for higher attaining pupils to plan their own science investigations.

(paragraphs 1 – 10, 110,111,114 – 120, 127, 130, 137 – 139)

- (2) Continue to work with parents to further reduce the amount of time taken by extended holidays during term time.

(paragraphs 4, 24, 56)

THE WORK OF THE SPEECH AND LANGUAGE CENTRE

- 80 The provision for pupils in the speech and language centre is very good. The thirteen pupils, from all parts of Staffordshire, are aged from seven to eleven and have a range of communication and language difficulties. All have statements of special educational need. The teacher in charge of the centre is a member of the school's senior management team and this ensures very good liaison. The school works hard to involve the pupils in all aspects of school life. Language centre pupils are well integrated into school activities such as assemblies, break times, visits and clubs. They have access to the full National Curriculum. Where possible pupils are integrated with their peer groups for some subjects. At present some pupils join classes for mathematics, science, music, and physical education.

- 81 Teaching is good and often very good, particularly for basic skills. Learning intentions are shared with pupils so that they know what they will have to learn. The teacher and therapist have good signing skills which they use very effectively, especially to communicate with pupils who have more severe language difficulties, for example, in expressing themselves clearly or in understanding what is said. In a very good literacy lesson, tasks were well matched to the three groups of pupils. They were given a clear structure to enable them to formulate questions when conversing about a chosen topic. Very effective intervention by staff encouraged pupils' oral language,

developed their vocabulary and clarified understanding. At the end of the session pupils chose 'talk partners' from other groups to report back, finally sharing their conversations as a whole class: this provided very good consolidation to the lesson. Personal and social development is important in order to raise pupils' self-esteem and to help them learn how to function as part of a group. There are clear routines so that pupils know what is expected of them. Behavioural strategies are used to good effect: as a result pupils behave well and stay on task. Lessons are planned to develop progressively their concentration skills. A monthly lunch club is held specifically to encourage pupils to co-operate and to share; staff and pupils contribute food.

- 82 The speech and language centre is very well led and managed, aiming to develop pupils' social and literacy skills so that as many as possible can be integrated back into 'mainstream' school. Of six children who left the centre recently, three were able to do this, whilst the others went to specialist schools. There is very close liaison with these schools in order to make a successful transition, with pupils initially transferring for part of each week. Staff in the centre are highly trained and work very well together as a team. Since the last inspection an additional 0.5 teacher and a part-time support assistant have been appointed to work alongside the full-time teacher, the classroom assistant and the part-time speech and language therapist. The amount of speech therapy has been increased since the last inspection from two sessions per week to three sessions per week. However, this is still very limited for the number of pupils involved.
- 83 Pupils in the centre receive intensive support and consequently make good progress. Staff plan together each week. Pupils' progress is assessed regularly and the information used to plan future work. Pupils have individual, well-focused targets which are set termly. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress. A daybook is kept to record special events or difficulties, which are then relayed to the parents. Formal meetings also take place at regular intervals. There are good links with outside agencies so that their help can be used, when necessary.

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

- 84 Eighty-one per cent of the pupils in school have English as an additional language, and of these just under a half are at the early stages of acquiring the language. Many of them have entered the school older than the normal starting age as they have arrived directly from overseas. They have been integrated into the classes for their age group. This picture is changing as the population is becoming more settled. Half of the pupils in the nursery are now from second generation homes where their parents have resided in Britain for many years.
- 85 Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well. By the age of 11, the majority of pupils who have been in the school for a significant period of time have developed a sufficient grasp of spoken and written English to cope with all aspects of the taught curriculum. Their natural form of communication with adults and with each other when talking about their activities in school is English.

- 86 (As these pupils form the overwhelming majority of those in the school, the overall judgements on aspects of the school, such as the standards attained, and quality of teaching received, may be read as including those with English as an additional language.)
- 87 The principle of inclusion is a very strong factor in the organisation of schoolwork. Pupils with English as an additional language enjoy full access to all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils take full advantage of extra-curricular opportunities such as musical tuition and visits out of school. One very positive example of this is the arrangement of separate swimming sessions for the older girls to avoid a clash with religious sensitivities.
- 88 Pupils who come to the school with English as an additional language are well cared for. Their competence in understanding and using the language is quickly assessed and, if necessary, a high level of support is provided. As they progress through the school, the normal pattern of assessment through tests and reviews of completed work is used to measure their progress. The majority quickly become able to use English as their main means of communication in school. However, the school does not monitor carefully enough the pupils' speaking and listening skills to ensure that they can make extended answers to the teachers' questions. Many of their responses are limited to one or two words. Teachers need to be more consistent in asking questions that require pupils to respond with their own interpretations.
- 89 There has been good improvement in the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Standards of attainment have risen. Levels of staff have been increased, especially among classroom assistants. One member of the teaching staff is bi-lingual. The staff have received much in-service training (including all classroom assistants taking NVQ qualifications). There has been increased provision for parents to become involved in the life of school and to become more aware of opportunities for their children. Resources for pupils to learn about their cultural background both at home and in the wider British setting have been developed. The headteacher has become, if possible, even more committed to developing links with the local community and has inspired the rest of the staff with her objective.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	63
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	31	27	5	0	0	0
Percentage	0%	49%	43%	8%	0%	0%	0%

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	13	211
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	70

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	21
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	81

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	193

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	32
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	7.4	School data	1.2

National comparative data	5.6
---------------------------	-----

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 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	14	17	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	11	13
	Girls	15	14	16
	Total	25	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (74)	81 (71)	94 (77)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	10	9
	Girls	12	16	14
	Total	18	26	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	58 (71)	84 (68)	74 (58)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	14	14	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	6	8
	Girls	9	8	11
	Total	15	14	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (72)	50 (52)	68 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Girls	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Total	n/a	n/a	n/a
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	n/a (55)	n/a (52)	n/a (55)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	149
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	26
Any other minority ethnic group	11

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	1	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	14.3
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	302.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	n/a

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	82.5

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.2
--------------------------------	-----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
----------------	-------------

	£
Total income	654,045
Total expenditure	636,254
Expenditure per pupil	2,932
Balance brought forward from previous year	30,190
Balance carried forward to next year	47,980

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	237
Number of questionnaires returned	151

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	28	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	45	3	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	37	3	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	44	6	3	1
The teaching is good.	55	37	3	3	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	43	5	1.5	1.5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	34	4	5	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	39	1	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	44	45	5	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	42	41	5	2	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	43	50	1	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	42	29	10	3	16

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

- 90 There are twenty six children on the nursery register who attend for morning sessions only. There are twenty children in the reception class. Whilst there is a very wide range of attainment, attainment on entry to the nursery is well below that expected of this age group. Careful assessment made of the new entrants soon after they start nursery indicates that their skills, particularly in personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development are well below those expected. Many children have particularly poor skills in understanding and expressing themselves in English as this is not their first language and in many instances is not spoken at home. Many children's knowledge of life in the world beyond their home is extremely limited. The children's progress is tracked through continuous teacher assessment and by further formal tests on entry to the reception class. Assessment data confirms that, by the time they start in Year 1, almost all children achieve well. This is due to the suitable curriculum and the good quality teaching. Despite the good progress made, overall standards on entry to Year 1 are below the expected level. Whilst many children attain the standards expected nationally in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world a significant minority do not. In personal and social education and creative development children make very good progress and reach the expected standards. In physical development, where attainment on entry is closer to the expected level, children attain the expected standard.
- 91 The school makes good provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is securely based in the six areas of learning appropriate for this age group. In line with the school's philosophy and the children's needs, special emphasis is rightly given to personal and social development, as well as to communication, language and literacy and to mathematical development. Appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy are incorporated into lessons in the reception class. In the nursery, small group teaching in communication, language and literacy and mathematics is regularly provided. Incidental opportunities to promote skills in these areas are incorporated into all aspects of the curriculum. The children are encouraged to enjoy learning and to take part in a wide range of lively practical activities, which support their progress effectively in all areas. The Foundation Stage prepares children well for the next stage of education.
- 92 The quality of teaching is good overall and much is very good. In both the nursery and reception classes, relationships are strong and supportive. The teaching and learning environment is very secure and caring. Teachers know their children well. They have a very good understanding of the learning needs of young children. Lesson planning is of a good quality. Teachers have high expectations of what the children will achieve and this results in good progress and sometimes very good progress being made in lessons. They are very aware of the need to ensure that the wide range of activities provided fully engage the children's interest and contain the right amount of challenge. In this they are successful. The children are very well managed through clearly explained routines and high expectations of behaviour. This results in good behaviour and relationships. Teachers and support staff work extremely well as a team in supporting learning. Bi-lingual support staff provide very effective support for children who are at an early stage of acquiring English. Whilst all teaching is carried out in English, they ensure that children have a clear understanding of activities and

provide translation when necessary. This has a very positive effect on children's acquisition of English and also ensures that they can play a full part in all the activities. Day-to-day assessment and formal testing are used efficiently to plan work, which meets the pupils' needs. Day-to-day assessment and formal testing are used efficiently to plan work, which meets the pupils' needs. Classrooms are well organised so that children learn through direct first-hand experience in a wide range of interesting activities.

- 93 Children with special educational needs are effectively supported and have full access to the curriculum. They make good progress. The great majority of the children are learning English as an additional language. They are well supported by staff who work hard to ensure that children develop their vocabulary and understanding of English. They make good progress.
- 94 Staff throughout the Foundation Stage are keen to involve parents in their children's learning. Admission arrangements to nursery and to school are thoughtfully planned to enable parents and children to feel welcome and settle in securely. Good use is made of homework to support the children's learning in communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Bi-lingual staff play a very important role in helping the school to communicate with parents, many of whom have limited English. The support, guidance and encouragement they offer, help parents to develop confidence in the school and to support their children's learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 95 Teaching is very good throughout the foundation stage and reflects the considerable emphasis given to this area. Opportunities to promote personal, social and emotional development are built carefully into all aspects of the curriculum and staff set, and model high standards of care and consideration. The children achieve very well and by the time they leave the reception class the vast majority will have achieved the early learning goals. All staff work closely together to provide a warm supportive learning environment where children feel valued. The children respond enthusiastically and are eager to learn. In both nursery and reception classes, staff value the children's work and use it to create stimulating displays which enhance the children's self-esteem and confidence. The equipment and resources are easily accessible to children to enable them to become independent learners. The children respond very well and most are enthusiastic and keen to join in all activities. All children from starting nursery are encouraged to become independent in selecting activities for themselves. As they get older, they sustain concentration for increasingly long periods and often complete their chosen tasks without direct adult supervision. Children in nursery and reception are learning to share. Appropriate opportunities are organised, for instance, at snack time. Good manners are required and staff insist that children are polite to each other and to adults. Individual children are keen to take responsibility in giving out biscuits or drinks. In the reception class, group work is carefully organised so that children learn to be considerate of others. They are good at taking turns and in sharing equipment, for example, when cutting and sticking to make models. They show pleasure in their own achievement and are appreciative of the work of others. Timely intervention by staff extends their play and models caring attitudes which children adopt. There is a good blend of free choice activities and teacher direction. The children know the rules of how many children may play at each activity and organise themselves with some independence. The children are becoming independent in dressing and undressing although most still need some help in preparing for physical education lessons.

Communication, language and literacy

- 96 Teaching is very good. The teacher's very good knowledge and understanding of young children and of this area leads to a lively, well-planned curriculum which appropriately emphasises the development of speaking and listening skills as well as promoting the development of reading and writing skills carefully over time. Lessons in the reception class incorporate appropriate elements of the National Literacy Strategy and there is a clear focus on exactly what is to be learnt. The well-planned, clearly focused activities include formal whole class and group teaching as well as informal independent learning, for example, through role-play and daily purposeful interactions across the curriculum. Teachers ensure that work is closely matched to the particular needs of children of different attainment.
- 97 In sharing sessions, children are encouraged to speak to the group. Staff sensitively encourage the development and use of good vocabulary. All staff use questions carefully to help children express and extend their ideas. Many nursery children tend to respond in one-word answers, some of which are unclear and difficult to understand. Reception children are becoming confident to contribute to discussion. Some children are confident when speaking to adults but many still find it difficult to find the appropriate words to say what they want to say.
- 98 Children in the nursery and the reception classes enjoy looking at books and handle them with care. All of the children are encouraged to enjoy stories. Teachers make very good use of additional props such as puppets to bring stories to life and as a result, children listen carefully. Few, however, are confident in retelling the story independently even with props. Some are easily distracted from listening tasks and in discussion, many show that their understanding is poor. Children in the reception class concentrate for longer periods, but their limited vocabulary sometimes hinders their understanding.
- 99 Early reading skills are taught well. Staff use rhymes and jingles to draw children's attention to letters and their sounds. Higher attainers in the nursery recognise a number of letters by shape and sound. By the end of the reception year, children understand how letters and words convey meaning in books. They know how books and stories are organised. Most children recognise some letters by shape and sound, and some high frequency words from simple texts.
- 100 Words and labels are clearly evident in the classroom and children are encouraged to use the writing area in their first attempts at drawing and mark-making. They are developing pencil control and learning how to form letters. They learn how to hold a pencil correctly and gain confidence in the very early stages of writing. Higher attainers are able to write their name. They use their knowledge of letter sounds to spell out words or to write the initial letter. Overall, however, levels of writing are below what is expected of children of this age. A number of lower attaining children have difficulty in forming letters accurately and have limited independence in their writing.

Mathematical development

- 101 Teaching is very good overall. Teachers provide a variety of interesting well-structured practical activities, which support learning well. Staff plan activities carefully targeted to the age and abilities of their children which help to develop their basic number skills. In the reception class the more structured sessions are linked to the National Numeracy Strategy.
- 102 In the nursery, children are beginning to recognise numerals. Higher attainers match the symbols of numbers to the correct number of objects and are able to count, match and order numbers up to ten. Children are also beginning to recognise colours and common shapes.
- 103 In the reception class, most children can count and sequence numbers up to 10. Higher attaining children can count beyond this. Staff make good use of counting songs and rhymes to motivate and interest children in this area of learning. Children are learning to count backwards as well as forwards and higher attainers understand concepts such as 'more than' and 'less than'. The majority of children make good progress in learning mathematical language such as 'more', 'less', 'longer than' and 'shorter than'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 104 Teaching is good overall. Children are encouraged to use their senses to explore a wide range of materials. Resources are thoughtfully prepared and organised so that children learn well. Carefully directed questions extend children's knowledge and help them make sense of the world around them. Language is used carefully and precisely to extend the pupils vocabulary and deepen their knowledge. Staff plan a range of interesting first-hand experiences including out-of-school visits to enhance the children's knowledge of the world around them. Children are encouraged to talk about events in their lives and the environment. Staff use questions skilfully to enable children to make best use of their observations, and encourage them to explore and investigate in practical situations, as when children explore the properties of wet and dry sand and experiment with water. In the reception class, children used magnifying glasses to closely examine fish as part of an art session.
- 105 Children are beginning to consider locations other than their own. Stories are used to encourage pupils to develop concepts of time and place. They recall their experiences through a range of role play situations. The nursery children currently have a 'farm', and the reception class has a 'railway station'. Floor play equipment such as a garage, railways and roadways is used to enable pupils to develop their language use and to make connections with their own surroundings. However, many children have limited experiences outside the home and their general knowledge is weak. Their limited knowledge of English also restricts their ability to explain clearly. Children are able to use the skills of cutting, joining and building using a range of materials. They have access to construction sets which they use with skill to build models. Children talk about their family members who are older than them and are encouraged to talk about past events and they recognise the difference between past and present. Through celebrating festivals such as Christmas and Eid, the children are becoming aware of their own cultures and beliefs, and those of other people.

- 106 Children in the nursery learn to use listening centres to listen to music and stories. These are available for parents and children to use at home. Reception children borrow the listening centres for use at home, but do not currently have access to one in class. Children use computers effectively to support their learning and become gradually more confident in using the mouse to control objects on screen. They have access to the computer suite and the reception class made very good use of this when following a program to develop skills of colour matching. The children demonstrated good control of the mouse to move the cursor around the screen. Children were able, with support, to make use of the menu and enter the correct program.

Physical development

- 107 Teaching is good. All staff manage pupils well with praise and encouragement and are aware of safety factors, for instance, in the use of large equipment. Staff establish clear rules in the use of space and apparatus. Nursery children make good use of the outdoor play area and the range of equipment which provides them with opportunities to run, jump and climb with increasing co-ordination and some independence. They learn to control wheeled toys such as pedal tricycles and use small apparatus such as balls, hoops and quoits. Reception children have easy access to the playground. The school has recently acquired a new range of equipment for outdoor play although this was not yet in use. Both nursery and reception children take part in physical education lessons in the hall. The children move with control and co-ordination, confidence and imagination when responding to music. A good example was the reception class dance based on the story of the Rainbow Fish. They collaborate well with others when using the parachute.
- 108 Many opportunities are provided for children in nursery and reception to improve their fine motor control. They show increasing expertise in using tools like glue spreaders and scissors safely, to complete their tasks. They are given opportunities to use large and small construction kits that develop their manipulative skills well.

Creative development

- 109 Teaching is good. The supportive relationships established between staff and children enhance the children's self esteem and promote confidence in their own ability to explore a range of media without fear of failure. The children explore an interesting range of media, including art materials, construction kits, and musical instruments. Teachers encourage children to develop their own ideas as well as learning skills. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children use paint and collage techniques to fulfil their own independent ideas as well as to work with others to produce a class or group effort. Teachers are imaginative in planning tasks, which capture the children's interest and help them to learn. The attractive provision for role-play is successful in encouraging children to develop their language and personal skills, but many show little imagination in their play. Staff are sensitive to intervene and develop the children's ideas to improve the quality of the play. Children explore colour and texture through painting and printing. Reception children took great care when producing observational drawings of fish. Staff gave constant encouragement for them to look closely and also used the opportunity to develop children's vocabulary and knowledge about fish. Children also model with scrap materials and make collage. Their work is valued and displayed very well to provide a lively environment. Staff make good use of these displays to reinforce learning and develop language. The children enjoy singing and most join in with nursery and number rhymes within a range of class activities. The planning of appropriate activities, along with the use of a

good range of resources, results in children being able to achieve the intended learning outcomes in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

- 110 The school's 2001 results in national tests for eleven-year-olds showed standards which were well below the national average. The school's results of national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 were well below the national average in reading and writing. However, standards have improved since the previous inspection with the number of pupils achieving National Curriculum Level 4 or above at the end of Year 6 rising from 37 per cent in 1997 to 54 per cent in 2001.
- 111 Inspection findings are that standards currently being reached by pupils in Years 2 and 6 are below those found in most schools nationally. Careful tracking of the pupils' attainment from year to year indicates that almost all pupils in Year 6, who have been in the school for at least four years, are making good progress as they move through the school.
- 112 English is not the first language of the great majority of pupils and in many cases it is not the first language of their home. Most have a very limited knowledge and use of English when they come into the school. Levels of attainment on entry are low in comparison with those expected nationally for pupils of this age. The school places a strong emphasis on the development of language and communication skills. Those pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress in relation to the individual education plans. Pupils for whom English is an additional language also receive good support and they make good progress in the acquisition of English.
- 113 The school has developed comprehensive and effective assessment procedures, specific target setting measures for groups and individuals and regular audits to monitor progress and improve standards. The results of end of tests and ongoing assessments are carefully analysed, clearly documented and used very effectively to identify targets for improvement. Teaching and learning is consistently planned to take the needs of pupils into account. The time and effort given to these procedures by everyone in the school has had a clear and positive impact on raising standards from well below national standards to below national standards by the time pupils leave the school. Additionally, governors have invested wisely to provide additional bilingual support. Consequently, all pupils make good progress throughout the school.
- 114 Overall, the standards of speaking and listening are below those found in most schools. Throughout the school, pupils' vocabularies grow, particularly through the additional support they receive from teachers and bi-lingual assistants. Staff make effective use of discussions and questioning to ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of the meaning of words and phrases. Pupils' confidence in speaking and expressing their ideas develops well, but by seven many still have a more limited range of vocabulary than is expected at that age. Whilst some of the higher attaining pupils are enthusiastic to demonstrate to the class, some pupils are not confident in expressing their ideas and tend to wait for others who are more confident, to respond to the teachers' questions. Pupils concentrate on what is being said and try hard to understand what they hear, although their answers to questions demonstrate that many still find it difficult to listen accurately to an unfamiliar language. Higher attaining pupils demonstrate the ability to listen attentively and contribute to class discussion. They give explanations and ask questions with confidence. Others however, have difficulty in understanding. They are unsure about following instructions and seek

frequent reassurance. Pupils learn the social courtesies of listening as a group and taking turns. This is developed as they move through the school and by Year 6, more able pupils listen intently in discussions and form their own questions on the basis of what they have heard. Whilst they develop enough expertise to learn in most situations, their ability to discuss ideas, for instance, in response to a poem, or present their own point of view persuasively, is more limited. By Year 6, many pupils attain the levels expected for their age in speaking and listening, although overall, standards are below those expected for the age group. Pupils listen attentively and take turns to contribute to discussions. They reply appropriately to teachers' questions and have a sufficient technical vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas in most subjects. Higher attainers express opinions clearly and articulately.

- 115 Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to speak in many different situations, such as in assemblies, to visitors, and in lessons. Speaking and listening are given appropriate emphasis in most lessons. However, on a day-to-day-basis, teachers and adults miss opportunities to encourage pupils to speak more clearly or to answer questions at length, rather than with one word. Given the very good quality and range of support available, this is an area for further development.
- 116 Throughout the school, reading is a major focus. Most pupils enjoy looking at books and the school encourages everyone to take books home to read. The progress pupils make in their reading is recorded clearly and efficiently and teachers make good use of the information to plan future support. The school systematically introduces pupils to the names and sounds of letters and teaches them to use this knowledge to help read new words. Pupils make good progress, although, by the end of Year 2, standards are below the national average. Higher attaining pupils are able to read simple texts with some accuracy and the more fluent readers are successfully enjoying short stories. They have a good understanding of what they have read, provide detailed accounts of the story and are able to predict likely outcomes. They use the content of the story and the illustrations to help them to identify new words and talk confidently about the main features. However, some lower attaining pupils are still unable to read a range of texts with accuracy, fluency and expression. Their reading development is hampered by their limited knowledge of English. Some pupils, especially those who are at an early stage of learning English, lack strategies, such as using meaning, to support their reading.
- 117 As they move through school, pupils develop a growing confidence in tackling reading. By end of Year 6, higher attaining pupils read independently from a range of texts and other material, effectively deploying their comprehension skills. They read stories with fluency, expression and understanding. Some are beginning to introduce expression into their reading and give opinions on the stories they read. Many pupils talk about their favourite stories and can retell them, describing the main characters in their books and giving a personal opinion on the content. They understand what reference books are for and can choose a book to help them find information, using the index and glossary. They use dictionaries in their work with confidence. However, a number of pupils, especially those who have recently arrived at the school with more limited English, find reading difficult. They are hesitant when reading aloud and do not have a clear understanding of what they have read.
- 118 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are provided with a good range of opportunities for writing. However, many are still at a very early stage of development and some find writing difficult. By Year 2, standards in writing are below the national average. However, pupils make good progress. Most pupils form their letters correctly and write simple sentences using full stops and capital letters. Higher attaining pupils consolidate their

understanding of story sequence in their own writing, using full stops and capital letters appropriately with simple words spelt correctly. However, some pupils have difficulty in sequencing and developing ideas of their own. Lower attaining pupils are aware of capital letters and full stops although they do not use them reliably. Some of these pupils have difficulty forming letters and in choosing appropriate words to express ideas.

- 119 In Years 3 to 6, pupils extend their range of writing. Observation of lessons, scrutiny of work and discussion with pupils whilst they work suggests that the content of their writing improves and progresses in quality and quantity as they gain confidence and skill in working in English. Pupils are able to write descriptions, instructions and reports. In story writing they consolidate their understanding of narrative structure and the importance of effective beginnings. Pupils plan, draft and improve their work. They make good progress in the range of vocabulary they use in their writing and they write imaginatively with increasing confidence. Pupils are also beginning to include colourful description and introduce atmosphere into their story writing. By Year 6, higher attaining pupils are able to compose pieces of writing which generally demonstrate accurate sentence construction, punctuation and grammar. Progress overall is good as pupils improve their knowledge about parts of speech, the use of speech marks, different tenses, and the use of paragraphs. Average ability pupils write extended strings of sentences in which basic punctuation is usually correct and frequently used words are spelled correctly. A significant number of lower attaining pupils still require considerable input from teachers and support staff to enable them to complete a piece of written work. The school places emphasis on enabling pupils to extend their vocabulary in all curriculum areas. They encourage the use of dictionaries and this ensures good progress in spelling. With varying levels of support, all pupils are encouraged to adapt their writing skills for a wide range of audiences and purposes, both in English lessons and in other subjects.
- 120 Attainment in handwriting improves as pupils move through the school. By the age of seven, many pupils produce neat and careful writing patterns, the more able joining letters and writing independently using short sentences. The writing of lower attaining pupils at this stage is uneven and there is sometimes no spacing between words, so they lack flow and difficult to read. Teachers focus appropriately on the mechanics of writing and spend time with individuals, ensuring they hold pencils correctly and have good writing positions. During Years 3 to 6, pupils develop the style and the speed at which they write. By Year 6, many achieve consistent neatness and accuracy. Some however do not use a joined script and this slows the pace of writing and also detracts from the overall presentation of their work.
- 121 The quality of teaching is very good overall and is never less than good. All teachers plan lessons thoroughly and take account of the needs and levels of everyone in the class. Teaching is consistently imaginative and enthusiastic and promotes great motivation and eagerness to learn. The assistance given by support staff is a real strength and is very effective because of the very good co-operation and relationships among all staff when planning and teaching lessons. The sensitivity shown by bilingual assistants for pupils' who lack confidence in learning a new language encourages them to try hard and improve. Teachers are very good at ensuring that pupils understand their work and they are patient and supportive of those who find the subject difficult. Through good questioning, they encourage pupils to develop their ideas and gain the confidence to join in. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and performance, praising and encouraging throughout the lesson and valuing all contributions equally. They have a good knowledge of individual strengths and weaknesses and this ensures smooth progress through lessons.

- 122 Year 2 pupils, including some at a very early stage of learning English, made good progress in their understanding of the poem 'This is the key to the castle' because of the teachers' clear explanations. Her very good use of questions to assess and develop pupils' understanding of the vocabulary used ensured that they clearly understood what was happening. The lesson proceeded at a good pace and the teacher had a variety of interesting strategies to hold the pupils' attention. The lesson was one of a carefully planned sequence that involved pupils in comprehension of the poem and led to them writing their own imaginative ending. In Year 5, the teacher's clear explanations, high expectations and very well planned lesson enabled pupils to make good progress in producing a leaflet as a guide to the Rainforest. This linked well to work they were doing in Geography. In Year 6, pupils were provided with work which was well matched to their needs and abilities. Higher attaining pupils thought carefully about their writing and produced good opening passages to set the scene for a story. Good questioning made them think about their work and consequently to improve the quality of their writing. The classroom assistant provided good support for the lower attaining pupils and this enabled them to produce written work they would have struggled to complete without help.
- 123 Behaviour in lessons is very good, pupils concentrate well and they try hard, responding well to their teachers' instructions. They thoroughly enjoy and look forward to the imaginative lessons planned for them. Pupils are generally enthusiastic and hard working readers and writers who persevere with their work.
- 124 The strategies for teaching literacy throughout the school are effective and this is having a positive effect on the standards being achieved. Teachers throughout the school plan lessons in accordance with the national literacy strategy. The effective partnership between classroom teachers and support staff ensures that pupils targeted for additional help make good progress. The English curriculum is broad and balanced with a good range of interesting and relevant activities which stimulate pupils' interest. Pupils are encouraged to make use of their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills to support work in other subjects across the curriculum.
- 125 The subject coordinator provides very good leadership and has brought about effective improvements in the curriculum. Her own subject knowledge is good and she has a clear understanding of the developments needed in the subject. She provides clear support and guidance for colleagues and has worked hard to ensure that the National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced. The quality of teaching and learning has been monitored by the headteacher and by staff from the Local Education Authority. This has helped to improve the quality of teaching which has improved since the previous inspection. Consequently, standards in English have risen faster than the national trend in an area where the majority of pupils speak English as an additional language. The school is now in a stronger position to improve standards in all areas of the curriculum. Resources to support learning are good. There is a well-organised library that provides a good resource for readers. In addition, the school has a good range of reading materials in classrooms.
- 126 The previous inspection report stated that the school needed to raise standards in English. The school has addressed this issue in a number of ways. The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced. This has provided a useful structure to support teachers' planning and the development of appropriate skills and knowledge. The number of support staff has been increased and there is more bilingual support available for pupils who are at an early stage of speaking English. Good use is made of initiatives such as the Early Literacy Strategy and booster

groups to enable more pupils achieve the levels of which they are capable. These initiatives have had a very positive effect on raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

- 127 Standards in mathematics are rising. In the 2001 National Curriculum Tests, pupils aged seven attained overall standards that were in line with the national average and which were above those identified in pupils from similar schools. Pupils aged 11 reached standards that were well below both the national average and that of pupils from similar schools. For both age groups, however, these results were part of an increasing trend towards higher achievement that was greater than the rate of improvement seen nationally.
- 128 Evidence from lessons seen during the inspection and from the scrutiny of the work completed by pupils so far this school year indicates that this rate of improvement has been maintained, mainly as a result of teaching that is at least good, and often very good, and the effective implementation of the national numeracy strategy. Overall, pupils achieve well.
- 129 Pupils aged up to seven are achieving overall standards that are in line with the national expectations. The majority are confident in talking about numbers up to 100. They can see patterns within the structures of tens and units, for example in the five times table. They are beginning to develop a mathematical vocabulary, knowing, for instance, the meanings of more than, double, take away and halve. Higher attaining pupils are confident in extending their counting past 100. They can identify the number in the 'tens' column. They can work out in their heads the change they will receive from buying items that cost up to 20p.
- 130 Pupils aged 11 are currently attaining standards that are below the national expectation for their age, but these represent a further improvement over previous years. Most of them have a secure understanding of the structure of numbers past 1000. They are learning their times tables, and can use their knowledge to multiply and divide by numbers up to ten. They know about decimal numbers to two places and can describe the relationships of decimals to fractions and percentages. The lower attaining pupils have a less confident approach to explaining their working out, and as a result, struggle to recall how to solve problems involving more complicated subtractions. Higher attaining pupils are able to use their knowledge of multiplication by single digits to set about solving a problem involving multiplication by numbers greater than 10, but their lack of regular practice leads to some inaccuracies in written work.

- 131 Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make good progress. Their attainments are closely monitored and future learning needs are clearly identified. Teaching assistants are employed well to give advice and encouragement on a one-to-one or small group basis. The school has recently set up a programmed learning activity using the computer suite for pupils to have short, but regular, periods working on individual programs to suit their level of competence and reinforce mental skills. This is very useful for pupils whose confidence in the subject is low. The provision of this type of activity is limited, however, as it does not entail written recording of work and does not cater for any form of verbal articulation of pupils' mathematical reasoning. The school has established 'booster' groups using key skills teachers who are employed on a part-time basis. These provide pupils with the opportunity for small group tuition designed to help lift lower attaining pupils closer to the expected levels of attainment. This is a successful strategy.
- 132 Pupils with English as a second language form the major group in every class. Their needs are assessed appropriately and they are very well supported in most classes by bilingual teaching assistants. These members of staff are highly skilled in ensuring that pupils whose level of competence in English is at early stages of acquisition understand their tasks. Their interventions are discreet and always repeated in clear, accurate English. As a result the pupils make good progress, and by the time they are 11, pupils who have been in the school for a lengthy period talk naturally and freely about working in numbers, using the medium of English. As yet, however, the school has not established a formal system of assessment to find out if any pupils who are reticent speakers of English are more able mathematicians in their first language. The school ensures well that all groups of pupils have an equal access to the curriculum and there are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls.
- 133 The quality of teaching mathematics across the school as a whole is very good. Of the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was never less than good, and it was very good in two-thirds of lessons. Members of staff are well-trained in the methods of teaching both mental and written skills. They are knowledgeable about the subject and their apparent enthusiasm readily conveys itself to the class. This was seen very clearly in a lesson for junior pupils about compass points where pupils had great fun in jumping to face the different directions and their learning about where North-East and South-West lie increased as a result. The school also places an appropriate emphasis on organising active learning wherever possible and this was seen in a very effective lesson for older pupils on making solid figures out of two-dimensional outlines. The pupils investigated for themselves which arrangements of six squares could be made to form a cube. This lesson was also effective in ensuring that all members of the class played a full part in the learning. The teacher insisted, in a very sensitive way, that even the quietest members of the class responded to her questions. In a short time, these pupils showed that they had learned the necessary skills, and began to develop more confidence in expressing their ideas. In all classes, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and attention. Pupils respond well to this and behaviour is very good in most lessons. This was very evident in a lesson on measuring angles for older juniors where the close attention of pupils to the teacher's explanation resulted in them being able to use a protractor successfully to draw acute and obtuse angles that were accurate to the nearest degree. Teaching was also very good in a lesson for six year olds on counting forwards and backwards in fives when pupils had great fun playing a version of 'The Weakest Link' game without any sulking when they were 'out'. This lesson was also characterised by a good emphasis on neatness in setting out work, and an extension activity for higher attaining pupils where they took responsibility for moving

numbers around the display board. On occasions, teachers ask questions that restrict answers to a single word or number and they do not, as a matter of course, ensure that pupils explain their working out. This restricts the development of their speaking and listening skills. Some pupils' workbooks show occasional pages where the work is set down in an untidy fashion. This is a drawback as they are not able to look at their work with a critical eye and find out where mistakes are made.

- 134 The school has effectively implemented the recent Numeracy Hour strategy. This is especially apparent in the strong emphasis placed on developing pupils' competence in mental tasks. Teachers have used the schools' assessment systems to identify targets for learning on an individual and group basis. Group work is then organised that is directed towards these learning objectives. On occasions, these are not aimed at an appropriate level for all members of the class. For example, a pupil whose stated target was to learn about simple fractions, such as one half and one quarter, faced her first piece of work on fractions that term on converting improper fractions into proper fractions. Some targets are too vague, such as 'develop competence in addition, subtraction and multiplication' for a higher attaining pupil. As a result, targets for learning tend to lose their relevance for the pupils. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, none of them could recall their targets without first reading them off the front of their exercise books.
- 135 The curriculum offered to the pupils is well-balanced. Pupils have a wide experience of using numbers. They learn about shapes and how to measure using a ruler, weighing scales and timing devices. Older pupils learn how to collect data and express the results in various forms of graphs. For most of the older pupils, however, there is insufficient regular practice of the more complicated forms of written computation. For example, pupils in Year 4 who are learning to take away using the method of 'borrowing' may not return to the technique for a number of months. This slows the rate of learning, and makes it difficult for pupils to recall them in later tests. There is little planning to reinforce these written skills through regular practice or to build them into the next topics for investigation. Skills in numeracy are used well, however, in other areas of the school curriculum. From the earliest years, pupils use graphical skills, such as making picture charts of how pupils come to school in Year 1. Pupils in Year 2 use their knowledge of numbers and turns to control the movement of a robot called 'The Roamer.' Older pupils collect data on the use of land in the local community; they learn to read temperature scales in scientific investigations and measure the flow of water through rivers. They use computers to enter data onto spreadsheets.
- 136 The subject is very well led and managed. The subject manager has a clear enthusiasm for mathematics which inspires both pupils and staff members. He is very knowledgeable and provides a role model of very good teaching strategies. Co-ordination for the subject is shared with two other members of staff who carry out assessments of pupils' attainments in a wide variety of forms. A comprehensive action plan has been developed to support the school improvement plan, which has an appropriate concentration on this core subject. One member of the governing body has taken responsibility for reporting on developments in numeracy and has attended training sessions with the subject manager. Resources have been supplemented well, especially with new technology. These initiatives have been influential in the good overall improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

SCIENCE

- 137 The 2001 teacher assessments of the attainment of seven year olds show that the percentage of pupils reaching and exceeding the national expected level was well below that of most schools across the country. National test results for eleven year olds were well below the national average. As at the last inspection, work seen suggests that in the present Year 2 and Year 6 classes more pupils are working at the expected level although the number working at higher levels is still lower than the national average. End of year test and assessment results for these pupils show that standards have been rising above the national trend between 1997 and 2001. This is despite the fact that the test results have been affected by pupil mobility and by the number of pupils taking extended leave. Of the twenty-eight pupils taking tests in Year 6 in 2001, a quarter arrived in school after the age of seven, some with little English. The school's analysis of the results shows that those Year 6 pupils who started in school before the end of Year 2 made good progress in science. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls or between pupils of different ethnic backgrounds. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress.
- 138 Most pupils in Year 2 are developing a secure fund of knowledge about the world around them and how it functions. They know the names of common materials and can explain, for example, that table legs are made of metal for strength and that windows are made of glass to let light through. By carrying out tests pupils have found out about reversible and irreversible processes such as water turning to ice and chocolate melting. One higher attaining pupil knew that boiling water became steam and that eventually the water would 'disappear'. Pupils are developing their scientific skills well because their knowledge and understanding is developed mainly through investigation. With support they can carry out a test to see if a car would travel further down a wooden or a carpeted ramp. Many predict that it would travel less far on the rough surface because it is 'bumpy'. A higher attaining pupil confidently explained that the ramp would need to be at the same height and angle and that the cars set off from the same place to make the test fair.
- 139 By Year 6 many pupils can both talk confidently about different areas of science they have studied and in discussion show satisfactory, and sometimes good, understanding. They have acquired a good scientific vocabulary which the majority use accurately in appropriate contexts, for example when explaining about conductors and insulators. However some higher attaining pupils are less secure in their understanding, for example, of the processes of evaporation and condensation or of what happens to substances when they dissolve in water. Others find it difficult to express their ideas orally or in writing because of their limited vocabulary of 'everyday' English. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils have developed satisfactory science skills. Most can make predictions based on their own experiences and show an understanding of how to structure a fair test. However, higher attaining pupils have not had the opportunity to use their own ideas to plan and carry out their own investigations.
- 140 Teaching is good overall; in half the lessons seen it was very good. There has been a good improvement in investigative science since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. Learning intentions are shared with pupils so that they know what they have to learn. Teachers have secure subject knowledge; probing questions are used well to find out what pupils already know and understand and then extend their learning. For example in Year 3 the teacher found out what the pupils remembered about food from an earlier topic, *Keeping Healthy*, before getting them to sort food

according to different criteria. Teaching methods are well-chosen and effective, enabling pupils to be active in their own learning. In an introductory lesson on *Animals in the Local Environment*, Year 2 pupils decided what creatures they might find in the school garden and where they might be: they then used their ideas to go and investigate, recording their findings with a digital camera as well as on charts. Good attention is paid to health and safety and pupils were reminded why they needed to wash their hands after touching the soil. In investigative lessons effective questioning as the pupils worked enabled them to carry out their tests fairly and report back their results. Sometimes pupils were not given sufficient opportunities to express their ideas and report back to the class and this limits their ability to reinforce their learning, especially for pupils whose spoken English is not secure. Although work is appropriately provided for pupils of differing levels of attainment, higher attaining pupils are not always given enough challenge. For example, in an investigation to find out which materials were the best thermal insulators, higher attaining pupils were given some extra challenge in measuring the amount of ice melted and in recording their results. They could have been extended further by being challenged to think why the results of each group did not show the same materials as the best thermal insulator, or why cling-film was always the worst.

- 141 In all lessons pupils with special educational needs and those at an early stage of acquiring English achieved as well as other pupils because of the good support they receive from teachers and support staff. The good or better teaching contributes significantly to pupils wanting to learn. In most lessons there was a real sense of enjoyment and enthusiasm for work, especially when pupils were carrying out scientific investigations. Pupils cooperate well when working in groups. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that there is a good balance between investigational and knowledge based teaching in all classes. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to record their own work and this helps them to consolidate their understanding as well as developing literacy skills, although all pupils would benefit from more opportunities for discussion. Good structures are provided to enable lower attaining pupils to record work successfully. Planning structures for investigations are used for younger pupils: this should enable these pupils to plan and carry out independently as they get older. Pupils record their results using appropriate charts tables and graphs and ICT is used regularly for this. More work at a higher level needs to be planned in order for higher attaining pupils to enable them to improve results in the national tests in Year 2 and Year 6.
- 142 The very good management of the subject has contributed to the rise in standards achieved over the past four years. Planning is thorough: over the last eighteen months a new scheme of work has been put in place, based on national guide lines, and this has improved the provision for investigative science. There are good guidelines for staff to help them to develop pupils' science skills. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly to see how well the scheme is being covered and pupils' work is scrutinised. There have been some classroom observations to evaluate the quality of teaching and useful feedback is given to staff. The results of pupils' attainment in the national science test papers for eleven year olds have been analysed and the findings used to enable the Year 6 teacher to target revision on areas identified as weak. As a result of this the assistant coordinator has produced a useful revision booklet to be used before the tests. The systems for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding are very good and the results are used well by most teachers to plan work to match pupils' needs. The co-ordinator has correctly identified the need for staff to focus more on ensuring that work is planned to give enough challenge for all attainment groups.

ART AND DESIGN

- 143 Attainment in art and design is above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The employment of a part-time specialist art teacher reflects the importance placed on the subject. It has not only improved the quality of work in the lessons she teaches but has also provided a clear focus for all staff.
- 144 Teachers' planning and work on display indicates a range of media including drawing materials, paint, printing, clay work, collage and textiles is provided. Pupils also have opportunities to study the work of other artists and apply this to their own work. Year 2 pupils used the computer to produce their own versions of Mondrian designs. Year 3 pupils looked at the work of sculptors such as Hepworth and Gormley. Year 5 pupils study the work of Susie Cooper as preparation for their own work on creating and decorating containers. Year 6 pupils looked at a range of artists, including Degas and Beryl Cook, as part of their work on people in action.
- 145 Pupils develop an understanding of colour mixing, and the selection of appropriate materials. They are introduced to shade and texture and learn about tone and colour. They express themselves through drawing and painting and modelling and use simple techniques with developing control. Their accuracy in representing what they observe is developing well, but they also have opportunities to express their thoughts and feelings in an imaginative way. Pupils throughout the school have produced some high quality work. In Year 1, pupils used charcoal and chalks to produce self-portraits. Year 2 pupils explored natural designs such as leaves and used these as the basis for drawings, rubbings and simple textile work. They made good use of photographs to develop initial sketches of the school buildings into designs which will be recreated as clay tiles. Pupils in Year 3 made very effective use of printing and stencils to develop work on patterns. In Year 4, observational drawings of chairs were developed into repeat images and this work was also linked well to literacy when pupils designed a chair for a story character. Year 5 pupils used their carefully observed and drawn still life pictures as the basis for exploring colour. They developed their pencil sketches into paintings and also used tissue paper to explore textured surfaces. Year 6 pupils used montage and collage as they developed their work on people in action when they looked at ways to represent movement in pictures.
- 146 Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress because good support is provided to enable them to take a full part in lessons.
- 147 The quality of teaching is good. It has a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress. Work is both challenging and enjoyable, and pupils are encouraged to think about the quality of their work and how they can improve it. Lessons are well planned and prepared with good introductions and clear instructions. Good classroom management is a major factor in promoting high standards and very good use is made of classroom support staff. In a Year 4 lesson on surrealism, the teacher's high expectations and very effective classroom organisation resulted in pupils responding very well and making good progress. Teachers display an enthusiasm for art work which inspires pupils' efforts. Pupils make good use of sketch books to record ideas which are later developed into larger scale work. Pupils' work is displayed with care and imagination and makes a very positive contribution to the school environment.
- 148 Pupils throughout the school make good progress. They demonstrate growing skill and understanding of a variety of media. They have positive attitudes; they listen

carefully and demonstrate enjoyment and independence in carrying out art activities and approach their work with confidence and enthusiasm.

- 149 The school has a satisfactory range of resources for art and has a good collection of reference materials concerning artists and their work. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about art. She provides good support for staff and manages the subject well. There is a school policy for art, and a clear scheme of work which provides useful guidance for staff and supports the development of skills. The school is using the national guidance as the basis for planning a programme of skill development throughout the school. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 150 Standards are at expected levels for pupils aged seven and eleven and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are taught the full design and technology process from an early age and they are learning appropriate skills and using a wide range of materials.
- 151 In Year 1 pupils have made models of houses. Before constructing them they practised cutting, joining and sticking a variety of materials to see which worked best. They investigated ways of strengthening the joints and their finished products are of satisfactory and, sometimes, of good quality. Pupils in Year 2 have learned how to fix wheels and axles and have evaluated a range of model vehicles before designing and making their own. All pupils, some with support, produced clear, labelled designs and itemised the materials they would need. In both year groups pupils are beginning to evaluate their own work and to think of ways to improve it.
- 152 Older pupils develop their skills and, by Year 6, some of their slipper design briefs show good detail and creativity. They have studied the way footwear is made by deconstructing a range of slippers and evaluating them in terms of design, construction and fitness for purpose. They have used this knowledge well to design and make their own slippers, which show satisfactory making skills.
- 153 The quality of teaching is good. Planning is thorough with well-organised activities to enable pupils to achieve well. Good attention is paid to safety and pupils take good care when working with scissors in Year 4 and a sewing machine in Year 6. The teachers' secure subject knowledge results in tasks being explained clearly and simply so that pupils understand what to do. They know which pupils need extra help and this is targeted well to ensure that all pupils are successful. Effective questioning extends pupils' learning by helping them to evaluate their work and to overcome problems. For example, in Year 4, good intervention by the teacher enabled pupils to become more successful in attaching rotating wheels with split pins to create a story book with revolving pictures. The use of specialist language such as 'rotational' and 'mechanism' was encouraged. Good demonstration and support enabled Year 6 pupils to use the hand sewing machine. Pupils with special educational needs and those needing second language support achieved as well as other pupils because of the good support they received. In the speech and language centre the sensitive encouragement of staff enabled all pupils to carry out an evaluation of 'bought' sandwiches based on taste, appearance and smell. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons and show good attitudes to the subject and this has a positive effect on their learning. Year 6 pupils worked with good concentration and there was a very harmonious working atmosphere. They were keen to explain their designs and their choice of fabric. Cross-curricular links have been identified and work in design and technology

provides good consolidation for learning in other subjects, notably literacy, mathematics and art and design.

- 154 Design and technology is led and managed well by the co-ordinator. Since the last inspection very good assessment procedures have been put in place and these are used well to find out what the pupils know and can do. The quality of teaching has also been enhanced by the observation of teaching, the checks made of planning and pupils' work, and the staff workshops led by the co-ordinator. Teachers receive helpful feedback and advice. Resources have been improved and are now good. They are matched well to the topics taught in each year.

GEOGRAPHY

- 155 Standards are at the expected level for pupils aged seven and eleven and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 understand the use of maps and plans and some can find the British Isles and Pakistan on a globe. They have used maps of their locality and have carried out fieldwork; as a result, their knowledge of man-made features is at least sound and often good. Most have a sound understanding of physical features such as rivers, hills, mountains and forests. Many pupils have visited Pakistan and can point out some of the differences between life there and life in Burton. One higher attaining pupil could explain why it could be daytime here when it was night in Pakistan.
- 156 In Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the elements of the geography curriculum although they have only just begun their geographical studies this year. They can use atlases to find information and have used maps with grid numbers. They have a satisfactory knowledge of climate in the world and can explain why, generally, the climate of Pakistan is hotter than our own. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the effect of humans on the environment and can recognise ways in which it could be improved, for example by reducing the use of fossil energy and by preserving rainforests. In their latest topic, *Rivers*, pupils are beginning to understand the water cycle but lower attaining pupils are not yet sure about the processes of evaporation and condensation.
- 157 Teaching is good overall, ranging from satisfactory to very good. In all lessons, support staff are used well to enable pupils at an early stage of learning English and lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, to be fully involved in activities. Where teaching is good or better, teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain clearly to pupils what they are going to do and find out. Activities provide challenge for all pupils and well-chosen resources enable pupils to be fully involved in their own learning. In a very good lesson in Year 2 pupils were encouraged to close their eyes and picture their journey to school in order to focus their thoughts on man made features of the landscape. The very good relationship between pupils and teacher gave the pupils confidence to report back their ideas, having them valued whether 'right' or 'wrong'. A video of a rainforest was a very good starting point for Year 5 pupils to begin to develop their understanding of cause and effect in a changing environment. At stages in the video the teacher would pause the video and, by well-focused questions, ensure that the pupils had a clear understanding. In one satisfactory lesson there was some lack of security in the teachers own subject knowledge when explaining the water cycle although good use was made of first hand experiences in generating discussion about where the rainfall in the playground had gone. Secure class management and good relationships between pupils and teachers lead to calm and purposeful working environments with pupils fully on task. Pupils work with enjoyment, concentrate hard and take pride in

their work and this has a positive effect on their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress because good support is provided to enable them to take a full part in lessons. Pupils' recorded work shows good development of correct geographical vocabulary in all classes. In most classes work is marked in such a way as to help pupils improve. Except in Year 5, much recorded work tends to be factual rather than interpretive and this could be improved. Very good use is made of the local area for fieldwork and Year 6 pupils will visit Coven Outdoor Centre to carry out a river survey and consolidate their classroom studies.

- 158 The leadership and management of geography are good. Although standards have remained the same since the last inspection, there have been good improvements in provision since the co-ordinator took on the role eighteen months ago and these should help to raise standards. Planning for geography has been improved to widen the curriculum and to develop links with other subjects. In a Year 5 religious education lesson the Old Testament story of the Creation was linked to their topic *Caring for the Environment*. Good use is made of Information and Control Technology, for example, by the use of CD ROMs, videos and the Internet. There are very good assessment systems in place to record what pupils know and can do. The Subject Leader has begun a portfolio of work as an aid to teachers. Planning and pupil's work is checked and feedback given to staff and there are plans to observe the teaching of geography in the near future.

HISTORY

- 159 The scrutiny of pupils' work completed so far in the school year, together with the observation of a limited number of lessons, indicates that pupils reach standards in line with the national expectations by Years 2 and 6. Younger pupils study cross-curricular topics in which they learn about homes in the past, and they compare holidays from the Victorian period with those of today. They learn about the reasons for occasions such as Remembrance Sunday and about some important figures from the past such as Florence Nightingale. They are beginning to have some awareness of the passage of time, and to know that people existed many years before they were born.
- 160 Older pupils embark on specific topics from history such as The Romans, and the period of Henry VIII. They learn to look closely at artefacts from the time and make deductions about their function. This was especially well organised in a lesson on Ancient Egypt in which Year 3 pupils engaged in a simulated archaeological dig through which they learned something of the symbolism of objects such as a scarab beetle, and hieroglyphs. In Year 6, pupils engage on a wide ranging topic on life in the Victorian age where they look at various sources of secondary evidence, such as census records. They look with an increasing awareness at the differences between life then and now, appreciating the contributions that developments from that time are continuing to make on our everyday lives. Achievement is good across the school.
- 161 Pupils with special educational needs are often provided with worksheets that are adjusted to provide help for them to complete their work. Younger pupils with English as a second language struggle to relate life and events from the past to their own lives, but they are very well supported by classroom assistants. By the time that they are 11, these pupils have developed a sufficient competence in spoken and written English to enable them to play a full part in lessons, and to use research materials from the library and computer programs. Both groups of pupils make good overall progress.

- 162 Teaching of history is good. Members of staff are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. The topics are well researched and presented, with a good choice of artefacts and books. Teachers ensure that history is full of interest by organising a wide range of visits out of school, for instance to the local Museum of Childhood. The Victorian study culminates in a full day's simulation of a typical day in school, where the pupils dress in Victorian costume and learn about writing on slates and doing physical training. As a result, the pupils are well behaved in lessons and talk enthusiastically about their work. They co-operate well in active investigations.
- 163 The school has responded well to recent changes in the National Curriculum by developing a topic plan which meets statutory requirements. Work in the subject makes very good use of pupils' literacy skills. Younger pupils engage in extended discussions in pairs when they talk about their holiday activities. Older pupils present extended reports of their researches in a variety of written forms, such as conversational writing, demonstrating their ability to think what life would be like for them in years gone by. The school also makes a good contribution towards pupils' cultural development. In addition to the field trips undertaken by each year group, visitors have been invited into school to support studies, such as local senior citizens talking to pupils about their childhood, and a group demonstrating Tudor dances.
- 164 The subject manager makes a very good contribution to the development of pupils' historical studies. She has ensured that resources are plentiful and maintained in an accessible form. Standards of work are monitored through the scrutiny of pupils' completed topics. There has been good improvement in the subject since the last inspection, particularly with the development of school visits, resources and topic planning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 165 At the time of the last inspection, standards were well below average for all pupils and this was a key issue in the report. Since then the school has worked hard to improve provision by creating a suite for information and communication technology (ICT), by providing training for all staff and by introducing a whole school scheme of work to widen the range of pupils' skills. As a result standards are now in line with those expected for the pupils' age.

- 166 Year 1 pupils have learned about the various forms of communication such as CD ROMs, tape recorders, text and photographs. They have begun to use the computer for word processing, using the mouse confidently and are beginning to find their way around the keyboard. By Year 2 pupils are confident in word processing. Most can log on and open the appropriate programme for themselves and are learning to save their work and log off. They demonstrate good skills with the mouse as they click and drag shapes, filling them with colour. With support they have entered information into a database and created a block graph to show food preferences. At present pupils have had few experiences in controlling the movement of 'Roamer' floor robots by entering instructions but this will be developed later this term.
- 167 Older pupils build on these experiences. Year 6 pupils use publisher programmes to make multi-media displays incorporating sound. At present they are working on a presentation for young children, for example, to teach them about animals. Pupils use the Internet and CD ROMs regularly to carry out research. They can use a search engine to find appropriate websites, saving the required information on a word processing programme. They can use spreadsheets confidently, putting in information and re-ordering it.
- 168 The use of ICT across the curriculum is strong. Teachers' planning for each subject area identifies opportunities for its use. Literacy skills are improved by the pupils' acquisition of word processing proficiency and by the use of programmes to improve their skills in reading and spelling. Pupils recorded work is of high quality, for example, 'Winter Poems' in Year 6 are enhanced by the use of graphics. Numeracy skills are improved by regular consolidation work in the ICT suite when pupils in all classes work individually for 10 minutes each day for half a term. Graphical forms are used to present collected mathematical and scientific data. For example in Year 5 pupils constructed line graphs to show the effect of exercise of the body on pulse rate. CD ROMs and the Internet are used regularly for research in History and Geography. In one lesson the Year 5 teacher made good use of an ICT programme to show images of the rainforest to pupils, at the start of their environmental topic. Paint and draw programmes are used regularly from an early age and are developed across the school.
- 169 Teaching is never less than satisfactory, with two thirds of lessons judged very good. Good use is made of the ICT suite where the teachers can give clear demonstrations and guidance by modelling tasks on an interactive whiteboard which shows the computer screen. This ensures that pupils make a good start on their own tasks. When this is used well there is a good balance between teacher exposition and the development of skills. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and lessons are planned with clear, well-focused objectives which are built on previous learning experiences. This enables pupils to make at least satisfactory and, most often, very good progress. In a very good lesson on the use of databases in Year 5, higher attaining pupils were given extra challenge. They had to interpret the difference between 'How many birds are over 20cm long and lay more than five eggs' and 'How many birds are over 20cm long or lay more than five eggs'. They consolidated their learning by explaining to other pupils how they worked this out. In another very good lesson well chosen activities enabled Year 4 pupils to develop their understanding of branching databases. The use of learning support assistants is tightly focused on helping pupils at an early stage of acquisition of English and those with special educational needs. As a result these pupils make equal progress with others. Teaching in a lesson for younger pupils was satisfactory although pupils did not have sufficient time, after the exposition by the teacher, to develop their own skills.

- 170 The leadership of ICT is very good. Since the last inspection, pupils have been able to experience a broader range of ICT and the developments required to raise standards have been very well managed. Very good assessment systems are in place and they are used well to chart progress and to provide follow up work with sufficient challenge for all pupils. Lesson observations are carried out, checks on planning and assessment take place regularly and feedback is given to all staff on strengths and areas for improvement. The co-ordinators have carried out a very comprehensive whole school audit to evaluate the impact of recent development. This has resulted in a new development plan which prioritises the purchase of new computers for the ICT suite and the distribution of present machines to the classrooms. This would enable all classes to have computers available during all lessons and would strengthen further the use of ICT across the curriculum.

MUSIC

- 171 At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainments at the ages of seven and 11 were found to be matching the national expectation. These standards have been maintained and there have been good improvements, especially with the provision of instrumental tuition, where some pupils are making a positive start in playing techniques. Overall achievement is good.
- 172 In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn the difference between playing simple percussion instruments in steps and slides. Younger pupils have difficulty in modulating the volume of their notes to show loud and soft sounds. The older pupils have more awareness, and their singing changes in pitch appropriately in response to the teacher's conducting. They begin to develop an appreciation of other pupils' compositions.
- 173 In Year 3, pupils begin to understand some of the basic elements of music, such as rhythm and beat. They learn to co-operate in playing instruments in groups. Pupils in Year 5 have good experience of singing in rounds, and most can maintain the tune successfully through to its end. They can play xylophones, recognising which single note they have to play, but they have difficulty when asked to try to find two notes that sound harmonious when played together. Year 6 pupils successfully compose music on percussion instruments in groups of four or five that shows a transition from peaceful to 'spooky' moods. They listen with pleasure to the efforts of other groups, but their responses do not suggest ways in which they could be improved. Group singing in the older classes is generally enthusiastic, and pupils keep to the note. The school choir sings harmoniously and in a lively manner.
- 174 Pupils with special educational needs have a full access to the music curriculum. They are encouraged to join in with class activities in a sensitive manner, and both supervisory staff and their peers in the class appreciate their efforts. Some learn to play stringed and brass instruments. As a result, they make good progress. Pupils with English as a second language make up the majority members of all mainstream classes. It is to the credit of the school that most of the music lessons are supported by the classroom assistants, many of whom are bi-lingual. They assist pupils who are at the early stages of acquiring English in a very discreet manner, ensuring that they understand the tasks and learn the names of the instruments. This enables the pupils to make good overall progress.
- 175 Teaching of music in the school is very good. Most class teaching is taken by a member of the local education authority music support staff, whose services are

contracted by the school. The teacher has a good grasp of demonstrating techniques of singing, playing instruments and learning notation that are very suitable for young pupils. He knows the pupils well, and has developed good relationships with them. As a result, the pupils come to music lessons eager to take part, and lessons are conducted in an orderly manner, yet with a proper sense of enjoyment. This was especially evident in a lesson for pupils from the speech and language unit, where great fun was had by all in singing and clapping to 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes', while at the same time the pupils were learning about playing in time to the beat. The pupils are inspired by the teacher's playing expertise and knowledge. The school also employs the services of string and brass instrumental tutors, and pupils are able to take the opportunity of learning to play instruments without charge for the first year of tuition. This valuable service is well supported and is leading to a significant number of pupils learning the techniques of reading music and performing to audiences.

- 176 The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development. A wide range of instruments has been chosen to represent a variety of cultures. Pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 have a visit each year to a local theatre, often to see a musical entertainment. Musical groups, such as an Afro-Caribbean steel band, visit the school regularly. There has been a Tudor Music workshop, in connection with a school history topic. Pupils perform an annual concert for parents, and the choir sings to groups of local residents. There is a wide variety of musical recordings available to all classes to support work in other areas of the curriculum. The school has yet to take full advantage of the use of information and communication technology in developing pupils' musical abilities, especially with regard to learning notation. The music curriculum is well organised to follow recent national guidelines, and it enjoys a high profile in the school's activities. Although music is an integral part of the school assemblies and pupils listen well to chosen pieces, the work of famous composers is not known by most pupils.
- 177 The subject is very well led and managed jointly by a member of staff and the visiting teacher. There has been a strong commitment by the governing body and senior managers to developing pupils' musical awareness and abilities. Resources, such as xylophones and drums, have been steadily increased and most are maintained in good condition. The school has its own music room which is put to very good use.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 178 The school provides a programme of physical education which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Pupils learn to play games, participate in gymnastic activities and respond to music through dance. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations, by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have opportunities for swimming lessons. However, attainment in swimming is below expectations.

- 179 All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. Pupils at an early stage of learning English are supported well. Bilingual assistants ensure that they have a clear understanding of the activities and enable them to take a full part in all lessons.
- 180 In Years 1 and 2, pupils make sound progress as the result of effective teaching that covers the appropriate skills and understanding. They develop physical control and coordination as they learn to move in a variety of ways, take their weight on different parts of their bodies, and link these actions into simple sequences. In Year 1, pupils demonstrate adequate awareness and use of the space around them. They follow instructions accurately, adjusting the pace and direction of their movement in response to signals from their teacher. By the end of Year 2, they perform simple jumps and rolls competently and are aware of the need to land safely and softly. Most pupils visibly enjoy the activities that have been planned for them. They are enthusiastic, try hard during the lesson and have positive attitudes to their work that enhance their quality of learning. All pupils are becoming increasingly conscious both of the benefit of exercise and the importance of warming up for physical activity.
- 181 In Years 3 to 6, pupils continue to make sound progress. As a result of a series of effectively planned lessons, pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills in gymnastics. Pupils develop a range of skills that are appropriate for their age. They find different ways of moving around the floor and on apparatus. They link jumps and rolls effectively to develop, refine and demonstrate sequences. Year 6 pupils work well with partners to devise more elaborate sequences. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 attend the local swimming pool for instruction. For many of the pupils, this is the first time that they have visited a swimming baths and few make visits other than with school. They are making satisfactory progress and more pupils are achieving awards from the local authority swimming scheme. However, many do not achieve the skills expected for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- 182 The quality of teaching is good, overall. Teachers set a good example by dressing correctly for lessons and this has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes. They begin lessons with an appropriate warm-up session and take opportunities to remind pupils of the benefits of physical exercise. Where teaching is most effective, lessons are lively, energetic and move along at a brisk pace, with new challenges set for each activity. Most teaching makes best use of good performers to demonstrate new skills to the rest of the class. Pupils also have opportunities to evaluate their own and each other's work. Teachers plan appropriate activities for all areas of the curriculum using the guidelines in the scheme of work. In the most effective lessons, teachers offer plenty of praise and immediate feedback to the pupils. They set appropriate challenges, provide clear instructions and explanations and encourage pupils to develop skills. Relationships and class management are good. This results in safe, controlled lessons where pupils listen carefully and follow their teachers' instructions. Teaching is enthusiastic and this is reflected in the pupils' response. However, there are times when pupils are not sufficiently busy, for example when waiting their turn to use the apparatus.
- 183 A good range of extra-curricular, physical and sporting activities is planned throughout the year and supports the physical education curriculum. These activities enhance physical education for those who take part. The school also takes part in competition with other schools. Effective use is made of outside coaches to develop pupils' interest and skills in sports such as cricket and football. A Health and Fitness week involves parents and pupils and linked the importance of healthy eating and exercise to healthy living.

- 184 The co-ordinator provides clear leadership. There is a policy and a scheme of work that provides useful guidance for teachers. The school has a good selection of apparatus and equipment to meet National Curriculum requirements. The accommodation for physical education is restrictive. Although the school has two halls, they are both quite small and class groups have limited space for gymnastics, dance and indoor games. Outdoor facilities consist of playground areas. These are used well to promote physical education. In addition to lessons, a good range of equipment is available for pupils to use at breaktimes. The school does not have a playing field, although it does make use of a local sports centre.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 185 During the inspection, only a small number of lessons in religious education were observed. These were confined to Years 3 to 6. As a result it is not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Judgements on the standards achieved by these pupils are based on a scrutiny of pupils' books and the portfolio of examples of work maintained by the subject manager.
- 186 At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment in religious education were found to be in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for both pupils aged up to seven and for those aged up to 11. Since that time, there has been very good improvement and standards for both age groups are now above expectations. Pupils have a natural interest in, and respect for, the beliefs and practices of faith communities and they write well about the variety of symbols, festivals and artefacts that they study.
- 187 Throughout the school, pupils achieve well. In Year 1, pupils visit the local church. They make careful drawings of the outside of the building. They study topics such as 'People who help us', learning that many people help others as a result of their religious conviction. Year 2 pupils start to learn about the sacred texts used in religions, such as the Qu'ran and the Bible. They learn that these books are treated with great respect.
- 188 Year 3 pupils continue to learn about comparative religions, when they study the celebrations of Hannukah, Divali and Shrove Tuesday. They link this to a study of the way different forms of food and fasting are important aspects of religious belief and practice. The similarities between religious practices are looked at in Year 4 when the theme of 'rules for living' helps pupils to look at the 10 Commandments, and the Five Pillars of Islam. The breadth and depth of work increases in Years 5 and 6 where pupils extend their comparative study of religions to include Hinduism, Sikhism and Buddhism. Year 5 pupils learn about famous people in religions, and understand that their beliefs affected their behaviour and feelings of responsibility. Their writing shows a developing ability to put themselves in the position of someone caught in a moral dilemma. In Year 6, pupils increase their understanding of religious symbols, writing about the meaning of the cross in Christianity and the Aum from the Hindu faith. They carry out research into the Holy Days from a variety of faiths, such as the Jewish Sabbath, and Ramadan.

- 189 In class, all pupils generally complete work on the same topic. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported when working in small groups, by the class teacher or by the teaching assistant. On occasions they are given worksheets or drawing exercises to make the work easier to complete. They make good overall progress.
- 190 Many of the pupils with English as an additional language have a developing knowledge of the Muslim faith community's beliefs and practices. They use this experience as a basis for further study of other major world religions, and also make good progress.
- 191 In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was very good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject. They gave pupils very good opportunities for engaging in personal and group research, such as looking at the writing style used in the Book of Genesis, or when finding out about the Jewish Sabbath. They have high expectations of good behaviour and pupils respond to their enthusiasm well. They remain on task for long periods when engaged in research. This was evident in one lesson when a pupil was heard to exclaim 'Oh, Miss' when told that the class had to pack up their books. The teachers use very well the extensive range of research books and display material, including artefacts, that has been collected. Most classes are well supported by classroom assistants who give help where it is needed, either to pupils with special educational needs or to those with English as an additional language. Many of them have knowledge of Islam, and they provide a wealth of information and resources.
- 192 Scrutiny of pupils' completed work also reveals the very good way in which pupils' skills in literacy are used and extended in this subject. This is especially evident in the work of the older pupils. In Year 5, pupils write poems about the life of a figure from the Christian tradition. They write discursively about their own beliefs and rules for living. They put themselves in story writing as if they were there when the Prophet Muhammed was preaching. They write play-scripts about the story of Zaccheus. In Year 6, pupils write their own version of a creation story, after having looked at the accounts related in the major world religions. They use tabulations when looking at similarities between faiths, and their skills of finding information from research books are well developed.
- 193 The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development. Visiting speakers and a programme of visits to places of worship further develop the pupils' interest in religious practices, and they are sensitively encouraged to think about their own beliefs and responsibilities towards others. This culminates in the school's annual One World Charity Week and other fund raising events.
- 194 The subject is very well led by an experienced and qualified manager. The school's programme of topics has been extensively revised, following national and local guidelines. She carries out a very good audit of the standards of work completed, maintaining an up-to-date file of pupils' exercises throughout the school. She has attended relevant in-service training course and the outcomes have been reported back to the staff in school. The school has been very pro-active and successful in liaising with parents and the local community to ensure that religious education is managed in such a way as to respect the beliefs and practices that are an important aspect of many pupils' home lives. As a result, the teaching staff are all committed to teaching the subject, and parents have confidence in the school's provision.